

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

25 February 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of the Regeneration and Development Committee of the Ards and North Down Borough Council which will be held on **Thursday, 3 March 2022**, commencing at **7.00pm virtually via Zoom**.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Evaluation Report, Tourism Events Programme 2021-2022 (report attached)
4. Tourism Performance Report for Quarter 3, 2021-2022 (report attached)
5. Tourism Service Plan 2022-2023 (report attached)
6. Renewed Ambition Programme 2022-2023 Update (report attached)
7. Business Start Update (report attached)
8. Ards and North Down Interim Labour Market Partnership Update (report attached)
9. Belfast Region City Deal Innovation Hub Update (report attached)
10. Economic Development Performance Report for Quarter 3, 2021-22 (report attached)
11. Economic Development Service Plan 2022-23 (report attached)
12. Project 24 Update (report attached)
13. Regeneration Performance Report for Quarter 3, 2021-22 (report attached)

14. Regeneration Service Plan 2022-23 (report attached)
15. Levelling Up, Housing and Community White Paper (report attached)
16. Seacourt Print Workshop Update (report attached)
17. Independent Review of Invest NI (report attached)
18. Consultation on the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (report attached)
19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor Edmund

That this Council tasks officers to bring back a report on Enhancement and Regeneration of Kircubbin Promenade as a potential village renewal scheme for the benefit of residents and tourists alike in seeking to deliver the Kircubbin village plan.

20. Any Other Notified Business

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

21. Deputation from Brookland Property
Long-term Plans for the Regeneration of the Flagship Centre and Car Park
22. Flagship Update (report attached)
23. Ards and North Down Social Entrepreneurship Programme (ANDSEP) 2021-2023 (report attached)
24. Update on Full Fibre NI, Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Programme and Digital Surge Programme (report attached)
25. Development Proposal for Hibernia Street Car Park, Hollywood (report attached)
26. Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme (report attached)
27. Belfast Region City Deal Update (report attached)
28. Queen's Parade (verbal update)

MEMBERSHIP OF REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Alderman Girvan	Councillor Brooks
Alderman Menagh	Councillor Cummings
Alderman McDowell (Chairman)	Councillor Dunlop
Alderman Wilson	Councillor Gilmour
Alderman Smith	Councillor Kennedy
Councillor Adair	Councillor McClean
Councillor Armstrong-Cotter	Councillor McKimm (Vice Chair)
Councillor Blaney	Councillor Walker

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ITEM 3

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Tourism
Date of Report	10 February 2022
File Reference	TO/EV3
Legislation	N/A
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Evaluation Report - Tourism Events Programme 2021/22
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Summary of Tourism Events Evaluation

Background

In January 2021 Council agreed the following Tourism Events programme:

Event	Date	Budget
May Day, Holywood	May	5,000
Pipe Band Championships	May	26,500
Festivals by the Sea	June	80,000
Spring Food Festival Including Comber Earlies Food Festival	June	74,000
Autumn Food Festival Including Portavogie Seafood Festival	Sep/Oct	74,000
Bangor Christmas Switch On	Nov	12,500
Newtownards Christmas Switch On	Nov	12,500
TOTAL		284,500

Further reports were presented to Council in March and June 2021, with proposals on how to adapt the programme in the face of ongoing Government Covid-19 restrictions. Members will be aware that no events/large gatherings were allowed to take place in Northern Ireland for a significant part of 2021, with this guidance in place until July 2021.

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The Government Covid-19 restrictions and guidance from the summer 2021 changed and therefore the programme was adapted and approved by Council to enable events to take place to include:

- attendance at any event was not to exceed 500
- events must be designed to be compliant with that maximum attendance, and manageable within all Covid restrictions, including social distancing guidelines
- the budget to be spent to attract a maximum attendance of 500 represents value for money for ratepayer funds.

Council agreed the final 2021 Tourism Events Programme below, and this report presents an evaluation of those delivered:

Event	Final Agreed Budget	Event
May Day	£5,000	Rescheduled to Autumn event
Pipe Band Championship	£26,500	Changed to 'Pipeband Festival' rescheduled to 4 Sept 2021
Spring Food Festival inc. Comber Earlies Festival	£0	Cancelled
Festivals by the Sea	£40,000	Changed to one-day animation rescheduled to Sat 21 Aug 2021
Autumn Food Festival	£61,000	Tide and Turf Festival with other food activity – Sat 18 Sept 2021
Bangor Christmas Switch On	£12,500	Sat 20 Nov 2021
Newtownards Christmas Switch On	£12,500	Sat 27 Nov 2021
TOTAL	£157,500	

This report presents an evaluation of the six events delivered in the period from August to November. It was unfortunate that one event, the Newtownards Christmas Switch On, had to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

The 2021/22 tourism events programme delivered a total of 17,000 attendees against its revised target of 25,000. The attendee target was revised 'in year' due to the changing programme and changing delivery environment.

There were no reportable health and safety or anti-social behaviour matters. The programme is currently within budget at £130,470 (some minor costs still to be attributed) against the revised budget of £157,500.

May Day event, rescheduled to Autumn – Saturday 30 October 2021

Holywood and District Community Council's event, to mark the reinstallation of Holywood's iconic Maypole, was held on Saturday 30 October 2021 with an exhibition and launch at the Maypole, and brass bands and street theatre around the town throughout the day. This event was organised by Holywood and District Community Council with assistance, advice and financial support provided by the

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Council. No attendee target was set due to the nature of the event, nor was any market research undertaken.

Back in Bangor, Bangor – Saturday 21 August 2021

At the time of delivery, government restrictions had limited spectator numbers at outdoor events to 500. 'Back in Bangor' was a programme involving a one-day animation of the town to promote Bangor as a place to enjoy/shop. The programme was designed as a re-animation of the seafront and town centre, including a food and craft market at Project 24 and "lower key" activity encouraging enjoyment of Bangor in recovery. Elements included:

- Food and Craft Market at Project 24
- A series of window animations and pop-up performances extending the whole way along Main Street, up High Street and to Project 24 and the promenade towards Pickie. There were also performances on a boat in the harbour.

The event was impacted by very bad weather conditions, a cold and wet day, which deterred many visitors from venturing along the promenade.

Given attendee restrictions, marketing for this event was kept minimal and local.

The UK's Strongest Woman event was also held at McKee Clock Arena on Saturday 21 August, organised and promoted by Ultimate Strongman Promotions with grant-aid from Council's Tourism Event Grant. This was attended by 500 visitors.

Ards and North Down Pipe Band Festival, Bangor - Saturday 4 September 2021

Due to ongoing Covid related restrictions on September events, the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association NI (RSPBANI) approached Council to discuss adapting their event for safe delivery. Ticketing the event was agreed as the safest way to enable it to proceed. McKee Clock Arena was identified as the most suitable venue due to arena size, enabling fencing and ticketing entrances to be installed. Attendee numbers were agreed at 1,000 and tickets were sold at nominal cost of £1.00 per visitor. This allowed the income (retained by Council) to offset infrastructure costs for fencing, seating and stewarding, and accommodated a track and trace facility.

The full quota of tickets was issued within a week of release. Council officers managed the infrastructure and event set-up, with RSPBANI organising programming and management of the competition/festival. As previously agreed by Council in May 2021, an Economic Appraisal was not undertaken (due to the change of event model and location). At that time, Council further agreed that the Ards and North Down Pipe Band Championship will take place in Castle Park, Bangor in 2022 to allow the Economic Appraisal to be undertaken for comparative purposes with the original event model and location.

Tide and Turf, Portavogie - Saturday 11 September 2021

The Borough Events Strategy identified Portavogie Seafood Festival as a 'growth' event. Recognising the opportunity to expand the breadth and theme of the programming, the event name was changed to 'Tide and Turf Festival', with inclusion of a range of beef produced in the Borough.

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Separate sections of the site were themed 'Tide' and 'Turf', each had its own demonstration kitchen with celebrity chefs, including Suzie Lee (winner of Best British Home Cook), and Oliver Peyton from Great British Menu, cooking/compering throughout the day. Each section had a 'Buy It, Cook It' area, giving attendees the opportunity to buy fish or meat from sellers and have it cooked by SERC students.

This programme was enhanced by a range of entertainment from musical artists; Shanty Boys and Singing Mermaids, brass bands and a funfair.

The event faced some challenges including stall recruitment - many small traders reported difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, and many had taken up residencies at the increasing number of weekly events/markets. Furthermore, some celebrity chefs were forced to withdraw at the last minute due to Covid. Despite these challenges, the event was very well supported with 6,000 visitors.

Tide and Turf, Portavogie was used as a pilot event for the development of a sustainability audit. This provided useful learnings for future events and will form the basis of new processes to be applied across the programme for 2022 and beyond.

Bangor Christmas Switch-On - Saturday 20 November 2021

Working with Bangor Chamber of Commerce, the agreed aim of this event was to bring increased footfall into Bangor throughout the day. 41 Stalls were placed along Main Street in front of vacant shop units from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm and 10 stalls were placed in the Sunken Gardens. An entertainment programme took place at Trinity Presbyterian with a range of local performers.

Local schools and groups took part in a lantern parade sponsored by 'My Main Street', along with performers from SERC's Christmas pantomime.

'Urban Markets' organised a 'Mills Row Bazaar' with the intention of offering a further range of activity and stalls running from 3.00 pm to 9.00 pm. The organisers had difficulty attracting stalls, and due to the low number of attendees, finished the event at 8.00 pm.

Along with the objective to drive and retain footfall in the Town centre throughout the day, the Chamber and Council wished to differentiate the event to Switch Ons held in previous years. It was therefore agreed by all partners, to move the Switch On element to the Danske Bank site.

Stall trade and the atmosphere in the town centre were reported very successful by traders, town centre retail, the market organiser, and Bangor Chamber. However, for the period of the Switch-On, the volume of attendees caused difficulties meaning that the traffic had to be stopped and the parade could not progress as planned. A full debrief including Switch-On location was carried out by officers with all of the parties and agencies involved. Further work in identifying and agreeing a suitable location for the 2022 Switch-On is underway.

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Newtownards Christmas Switch-On - 27 November 2021

This event was scheduled to take place on 27 November 2021. The programming and activity were organised in conjunction with Newtownards Chamber. Council was responsible for infrastructure and set up of the event, as well as the actual Switch-On Ceremony, with the Chamber responsible for recruitment of the market traders and daytime entertainment.

In the week leading up to the event, concerns were raised by Council officers and the Chamber regarding an Amber Weather warning which had been issued, meaning most elements of the event could not proceed safely. Advice was sought from the Risk Manager and the Emergency Planning Officer and after daily monitoring the difficult decision was taken by the Chamber and Council to cancel the Switch-On event.

Some cancellation fees had to be paid, as per the contracts, for traffic management and the proposed Light Show, due to cancellation within a 7-day period. This is reflected in the final budget figures.

Market Research

Market research was carried out at four of the above events by an appointed market research company. Due to the Covid 19 environment researchers collated email addresses on site (or via social media) to reduce contact with attendees, deeming face to face interviews too high a risk. It should be noted that the results are based on a total sample size of 542 and that should be considered by any reader interpreting the results.

The research carried out at four events indicated they delivered a net positive economic impact into the Borough, by varying degrees for each event. The spend generated by the four events was estimated at £170,823.39 with circa 17.45% (£29,820.26) generated by Out of Borough (OoB) visitors.

There was limited data collected attributable to overnight stays therefore this element has not been included in the estimate of overall spend. This figure is based on attendee spend at the event such as main meals, snacks, shopping and sightseeing.

Additional data showed 82.5% of responses rating sustainability at events very/fairly important as well confirming social media as the most effective way to reach our audiences. 43% Reported finding out about the events via Facebook.

A full summary is included at Appendix 1.

Challenges

Delivery of outdoor events in 2021 presented many challenges, both in terms of the ongoing Pandemic and restrictions changing rapidly, to staff shortages/sickness with suppliers and contractors who play a key role in event delivery and their success. The fact that many were able to proceed is a testament to the commitment and flexibility of suppliers, partners and officers.

Another challenge noted during this year's event season and highlighted by Council's Emergency Planning Officer is consideration of the impact on events of

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Climate Change. Some of the weather episodes experienced over recent years, with increasingly high winds, storms and gales, suggest what we might face in future. Mitigations will need to be built into the 2022 event programme such as programming events that are less affected by extreme weather conditions.

Tourism Events Programme – 2022/23

Subject to any further Covid-19 restrictions and/or weather challenges, the 2022 Tourism Events Programme, as agreed by Council, is outlined below.

Event	Date (2022)	Budget	Target Attendees
May Day, Holywood	Mon 2 May	£10,000	5,000
Ards and North Down Pipe Bands Championships, Castle Park, Bangor	Sat 14 May	£21,500	5,000
Sea Bangor/Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Bangor	Sat 4 & Sun 5 Jun	£80,000	30,000
Summer Food Festival, inc Comber Earlies Food Festival (CEFF Sat 25 Jun)	Mon 20 Jun – Sun 3 Jul	£71,500	10,000
Autumn Food Festival, incorporating Tide and Turf, Portavogie (T&T Sat 24 Sept)	Sat 10 Sep – 25 Sep	£71,500	8,000
Bangor Switch On	Sat 19 Nov	£15,000	10,000
Newtownards Switch On	Sat 26 Nov	£15,000	7,000
		£284,500	75,000

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

APPENDIX 1 - TOURISM EVENTS EVALUATION REPORT 2021/2022

Event	Date	Sample Size	Revised Budget	Actual cost	Target Attendees ⁱ	Actual Attendees	Cost per Attendee	Total Estimated Attendee Spend	Estimated Average Spend per Attendee	OoB ⁱⁱ % of attendees	% Customer Satisfaction
May Day Rescheduled Autumn event ⁱⁱⁱ	30 Oct	n/a	£5,000	£3,818	n/a	500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Back in Bangor	21 Aug	97	£40,000	£47,754 ^{iv}	5,000	3,000	£15.92	£49,066.62	£16.36	41.2%	80%
Ards and North Down Pipe Band Festival	4 Sept	151	£26,500	£11,542	1,000	1,000	£11.54	£11,186.11	£11.19	45.7%	84%
Tide and Turf, Portavogie	11 Sept	185	£61,000	£55,000	4,000	6,000	£9.17	£63,229.74	£10.54	17.8%	85%
Bangor Switch On	20 Nov	109	£12,500	£8,000	10,000	9,000	£0.89	£47,340.92	£5.26	9.2%	53%
Newtownards Christmas Switch On	27 Nov	n/a	£12,500	£4,356	5,000	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTAL		542	£157,500	£130,470	25,000	19,500		£170,823.39^v			

ⁱ Amended figure against original service plan target as the programme was revised in year

ⁱⁱ Out of Northern Ireland visitors recorded due to C19 restrictions was minimal, only Out of Borough OoB ie within NI reported

ⁱⁱⁱ No research undertaken at May Day event due to rescheduled event type ie civic

^{iv} Overspend due to additional Covid-related costs eg additional stewards and equipment hire

^v Circa 17.45% (£29,820.26) was generated by Out of Borough (OoB) visitors ie direct external economic contribution to the Borough

Please note that market research carried out during 2021 was conducted by email as face-to-face interviews were deemed too high risk.

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ITEM 4

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	3 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Tourism
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	TO/TD15
Legislation	n/a
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other x If other, please add comment below: Performance report
Subject	Tourism Performance Report for Quarter 3, 2021/2022
Attachments	None

Context

Members will be aware that Council is required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil this requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlines the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2021)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2021)

The Council's 17 Service Plans outline how each respective Service will contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

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Reporting approach

The Service Plans will be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 3 2021-22 is attached.

Key points to note:

- An online toolkit to assist Event Organisers has been completed 'How to Manage your Event'. It offers advice on event management planning, legislation and useful contacts. It is scheduled to be available online in Q4.
- A cohort of internal candidates has completed the pilot OCN Level 2 Event Management course at SERC. A session will be available to recipients of Tourism Events Grants from March 2022.
- Recruitment is in progress for vacant posts in the Visitor Information Centre, Marketing and the Events Service.
- Events has not been able to meet targets due to a restricted and reduced programme.
- Food Seminars in partnership with Economic Delivery are scheduled to take place in February and March 2022.

Key achievements:

- Social media audience growth increasing overall 'following' by 66% since start of the financial year.
- New visitandsandnorthdown.com website is now live and has further enhanced the online communications channels for visitors. Built on the same Destination Management System platform as used by Tourism NI and other local authorities. The new layout ensures easy navigation, clear customer journeys and content including a new blog, dedicated offers section is refreshed regularly, as well as integrated feeds to Facebook and Instagram.

Emerging issues:

- The tourism and hospitality industry has continued to operate in a challenging environment. This has impacted on the Service's originally planned activity eg Food Showcases. These have been difficult for restaurants to commit to in the current environment.

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Action to be taken:

- Continue to work closely with providers to develop Experience and Food and Drink activity for 2022/23.
- Review of evaluation and feedback data to continue to improve customer satisfaction levels.
- Complete recruitment.
- Monitor web performance cumulative to date.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.
















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Quarterly Performance Report - Tourism












Generated on: 11 February 2022

Last Update Q3 2021/22

Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	PI Short Name	Performance Data Current Value	Performance Data Current Target
	% spend against budget	87.21%	100%
	% customer satisfaction at events	77.25%	90%
	% staff attendance	93.93%	95%
	% staff receiving team briefings	100%	100%
	Borough Marketing Strategy - No of campaigns (cumulative)	3	1
	Increase VAND web views audience by 10% annually	-3%	7.5%
	Increase VAND social media audience by 10% annually	66%	7.5%
	% Out of Borough Visitors on Experience Tours	51%	15%
	No. of Experience Tours (cumulative)	15	13
	% of OoB sales Taste of AND Food Tours/showcases (cumulative)	8%	20%
	No of Taste of AND Food Tours/Showcases (cumulative)	4	8
	FDDP Year 2 - Activity 2 - No of markets (cumulative)	3	2
	Tour Operators - Delivery of in person familiarisation tours (cumulative)	2	1
	Number of attendees to grant assisted events	91,506	67,000
	Number of Clusters (cumulative)	2	2

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Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	PI Short Name	Performance Data Current Value	Performance Data Current Target
	Development of bookable experiences (cumulative)	10	6
	Delivery of ezines to tourism trade database (cumulative)	39	30
	Average engagement rates from e-zine	32%	25%
	Refresh online content weekly/monthly (cumulative)	36	30
	Visitardsandnorthdown.com user figures (cumulative)	169,560	90,000
	Launch new VAND web platform	1	1
	No of Tourism/food webinars/seminars (cumulative)	0	3
	% of Out of Borough Visitors attending events	28%	16%
	% of Ex NI Visitors attending events	0%	1%
	Event Visitor spend per attendee	£11.26	£15.00
	Number of attendees at Tourism events (cumulative)	19,500	40,000

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ITEM 5

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Tourism
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	N/A
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below: Screening in progress for new programmes
Subject	Tourism Service Plan 2022/23
Attachments	Service Plan

Since 2017/18 Service Plans are produced by each Service in accordance with the Council's Performance Management policy.

Plans are intended to:

- Encourage compliance with the new legal, audit and operational context;
- Provide focus on direction;
- Facilitate alignment between Community, Corporate, Service and Individual plans and activities;
- Motivate and develop staff;
- Promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice;
- Encourage transparency of performance outcomes;
- Better enable us to recognise success and address underperformance.

A draft plan for 2022/23 is attached. This plan has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the Corporate Plan 2020-24 and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan

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(PIP) 2022/23. The Plan will also support delivery of the ITRDS. The agreement of the plan will also aid toward achievement of the Council's performance improvement duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

The Service Plan highlights where the service contributes to the Corporate Plan and, where this is the case, sets out the objectives of the service for the 2022/23 year. It further identifies the key performance indicators used to illustrate the level of achievement of each objective, and the targets that the Service will try to attain along with key actions required to do so.

The plan has been developed in conjunction with staff, officers and management and consultation with key stakeholders where relevant, including consultation for ITRDS.

The plan is based on the agreed budget. It should be noted that, should there be significant changes in-year (e.g. due to Council decisions, budget revisions or changes to the PIP) the plan may need to be revised.

The Committee will be provided with update reports on performance against the agreed plan.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council adopts the attached Tourism Service Plan.

Tourism Service

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Head of Service signature	<i>Sharon Mahaffy</i>
Date	26/01/2022
Peer Review signature	<i>Clare McGill</i>
Date	27/01/2022
Director signature	<i>Susie McCullough</i>
Date	17/02/2022

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1. Introduction

Name of Service	Tourism
Included Service Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Development including Experience Development, Visitor Servicing, Food and Drink Destination Development and Tourism Administration. • Events including delivery of Council tourism events and management of grants to third part event organisers and capacity building. The management of Open House SLA transferred from Economic Development to Tourism in 21/22. • Borough Marketing, previously included as a service unit within Tourism will move to Corporate Communications by April 2022, as part of the centralisation of Marketing. However, direct Corporate Communications support for the Tourism service will be provided with necessary resource retained.
Directorate	Regeneration, Development and Planning
Purpose of Service	Our purpose is to facilitate, sustainably grow and promote the tourism offering within the Borough, focusing on key strengths that resonate with identified markets, to increase the overall NI visitor market share and economic return to the Borough in line with the targets set by the ITRDS and the Prosperity priority within the Corporate Plan.
Key customers/ stakeholders and their needs	<p>Our key customers/stakeholders include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors • Tourism sector and Food sector • Elected members • Tourism NI, TIL and Visit Britain • Event and experience delivery partners • Other councils • Other services • Staff <p>A full analysis of needs is included in Appendix 1</p>
Context, challenges & key assumptions	<p>Context: The Tourism service continues to operate within the framework of the ITRDS, launched In March 2018. This sets a series of outcomes/targets in the context of a visitor, investor and place proposition. The first of these, the visitor, is the priority proposition for the Tourism service. The service has four key thematic priorities which will enable the Council, working with external partners, to develop tourism against the requirement to deliver an increase in visitor share and spend – especially of/by overnight visitors.</p> <p>In collaboration with all relevant Council services, the Tourism service feeds into action plans to deliver on the integrated actions and sub-actions identified within the ITRDS, across the short and medium-to-long term.</p> <p>See Appendix 2 for PESTLE analysis.</p>

Key challenges: The most significant aspect of the current tourism context is the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on:

- the AND tourism sector's ability to welcome visitors
- visitors' intention and ability to travel, as reflected in actual tourism journeys to be taken in 2022/23.

Uncertainty arising from these factors will continue to impact all or most elements of the service's operations and budgets, with both likely to have to be reconfigured on a continual basis throughout 2022/23.

Ultimately the recovery of all parts of the tourism sector, including in AND, will depend on the interlinked consequences of the pandemic.

At the time of writing this document the most recent Tourism NI Tourism Barometre released in December 2021, indicated that although some sectors had been showing quicker signs of recovery, others were impacted by international travel and changes of consumer behaviour related to the pandemic, with many still operating at reduced capacity. For the minority of businesses that had seen an uplift when compared to 2019, NI and ROI were driving this increase. Key challenges cited include attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, supply chain issues, energy and overhead costs. Industry cited marketing (other than direct financial support) as the type of support most likely beneficial into 2022¹.

Tourism NI's most recent Consumer Sentiment Analysis (NI and ROI markets) provides analysis on consumer confidence, propensity to travel and consumer concerns. This research indicated that there continues to be a pessimistic outlook regarding the likely continuing impact of the pandemic. Consumers in both markets are more content to engage in outdoor activities, and motivations to travel centre around relaxation and escape from it all and being able to enjoy great food and drink. Good value for money and Covid secure environments are motivators, with the ability to make flexible bookings a priority. Aligning products and experiences to appeal to the younger market is likely to yield better results as intentions to take short and long breaks is highest amongst Social Instagrammers and Aspiring families, with greatest confidence on intent to travel from March 22 onwards².

The Tourism service will have to remain agile to react to potential restrictions: the impact this has on the industry once again and AND direct delivered activity. Sustainability is now key in travellers' decision making and must remain to the forefront of the work the Tourism service delivers.

Assumptions: There may be a period/s of restrictions in 22/23 with tourism businesses continuing to face challenges.

The Tourism service will retain at least its current level of resource, both financially and staffing, to deliver the actions as outlined in this plan and that

¹ Tourism Barometer – trade insights, survey of 369 businesses undertaken 30 September – 9 November 2021 (survey undertaken prior to Omicron variant).

² Consumer Sentiment Analysis fieldwork undertaken 11 November – 1 December 2021. Covid cases were increasing in both markets at this time; media coverage relating to the Omicron variant did not emerge until the latter stages of the research.

<p>Reflection on previous performance – successes and lessons learned</p>	<p>internal resource in other supporting services will remain. The resource/support to deliver marketing will remain at the current level.</p> <p>The Tourism Service continued to have a challenging year in 2021/22. A number of staff remained on furlough in redeployed posts within Council until later in the year (leading in some cases to permanent moves and reduction to VIC staff). All staff, excluding the VIC staff, have remained home working with site visits and meetings only necessitating face to face activities.</p> <p>Once some restrictions were removed Tourism was able to deliver tourism experiences which were greeted favourably by locals and visitors. The development of these experiences has increased relationships with the sector and has provided a pilot model for further development. The Tourism Development Service has secured 3 more experiences in the Embrace a Giant Experience portfolio and has been used as an exemplar model with other local authorities. This brings a total of 9 within the EAGS portfolio for Ards and North Down. It has also secured funding via Tourism NI for the delivery of experiences in the remainder of 21/22 financial year.</p> <p>The Ards VIC reopened in May and Bangor in June with the Local Visitor Information provision successfully opened in Exploris once attractions were able to reopen in May. Some outreach was possible at two of the direct delivered events, however due to restrictions this has not progressed to date as intended. Unfortunately, Cockle Row Cottages have remained closed due to restrictions. This will be kept under review in line Covid restrictions and Transformation of Visitor Servicing.</p> <p>Events, although restricted in the delivery of direct delivered events (one recovery event and one event as programmed 'Tide and Turf', one Switch On event), the Unit has successfully supported all Tourism Event Grant applicants throughout the year, plus year one of the EuroPro Golf NI Masters tournament at Clondeboy Golf Club. It has also developed and delivered with SERC an Event Management course, piloted by internal staff.</p> <p>Marketing resource was significantly stretched during the year with a 3-prong approach for marketing – recovery, investor and destination promotion. However, the successful delivery of two key visitor seasonal campaigns plus food and experiential campaigns has paid dividends with increases in engagement levels on the newly launched visit social channels. Partnership activity with TNI and Visit Belfast (VB) continue to grow and yield good results – funding direct from TNI to deliver the newly launched Visit website, campaign supports and added value packages attributed to the AND VB membership.</p> <p>Relationships through collaborative work in all sections of the Tourism service have developed and strengthened, through increased direct communications and access to wide number of participants available for digital meetings, not normally the case with 'in person'. Key lessons are that the service is operating in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world and it must prepare and deliver services with that in mind at all times, with relevant contingencies and unknown outcomes a likelihood.</p>
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2. How does our Service contribute to community planning outcomes and PEOPLE priorities?

The Tourism Service can be expected to have a direct impact on the following:

Community Planning Outcome	PEOPLE priority	Our focus for 2022/2023
Benefit from a prosperous economy	<p>Prosperity</p> <p>Growing our local economy</p>	<p>The tourism service will focus on contributing to a prosperous economy by:</p> <p>Growing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> growing the tourism offering (experiences, events and visitor services) promoting it to key markets <p>Better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving services in line with identified trends/needs of customers <p>Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work in partnership with key stakeholders <p>In doing so the service will attract visitors, especially on overnight trips, to spend in the local economy.</p>
	<p>Excellence</p> <p>Growing a high-performing Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage our resources and budget to optimise costs and efficiencies.
Tourism has indirect impact on the below		
Feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment	<p>Environment</p> <p>Growing a cleaner, greener local and global environment</p>	Ensuring all tourism experiences, events and promotional activity have sustainability to the fore in both planning and execution.
Fulfil their lifelong potential	<p>Opportunity</p> <p>Growing the lifelong potential of our community</p>	Continuing to provide support (information, advice, collaborative platforms and promotional opportunities) to local tourism sector businesses. Developing the capacity of the local events sector.
Live in communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure	<p>Pride</p> <p>Growing empowerment, respect, and safety of our community</p>	Ensuring all communities can see their communities represented positively to visitors through tourism products and experiences developed across the Borough.

3. Key activities for 2022/2023

SERVICE:	Tourism		
Community Plan Outcome:	All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy (The Big Plan - Outcome 4)		
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority:	Prosperity and Excellence		
Council KPI(s):	£ increase in the visitor economy		
Service Objective:	To promote Ards and North Down as a tourism destination		
What difference will it make?	Increase visitors to the Borough and increase visitor revenue		
Underpinning strategies:	Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2018 - 2030		
Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Experience Tours	Ongoing	Tourism Development Officer (TDO)	Tour guides, suppliers, Marketing, Corporate Comms, other services within Council
"Taste of AND" Food Tours/Showcases	Ongoing	Food and Drink Development Officer (FDDO)	Food providers, entertainers, Marketing, Corp Comms, other services within Council
Delivery of tour operator familiarisation visits to the Borough (including virtual)	Ongoing	TDO	Local tourism providers, tour operators, Tourism NI, Visit Belfast
Development of bookable visitor experiences	Ongoing	TDO	Local business suppliers, tour guides, Marketing,

			Council services, TNI
Continued support for development of existing Cluster/Network groups	Ongoing	Tourism Manager (TM) and TDO	Strangford Lough Tourism Cluster, Green Network
Continued management of Ice Cream and Hot Drinks Licences	Ongoing	TM/TDO	Lands, Environmental Health, Licensing, Vendors
Visitor information provision via VICs (Ards and Bangor), Local Visitor Information Office (Portaferry Exploris and Local Information Office (Pier 36), tourism information points (TIPs) and outreach.	Ongoing	TDO	Pier 36, Exploris and stakeholders with TIPs
Running of tourism/food webinars/seminars	March 23	TDO / FDDO	Economic Development, tourism trade, training facilitators
Promote the borough as a tourism destination via the Visit AND Destination Social Media Strategy with key messaging focused on potential visitors, including digital media campaigns with calls to action	Ongoing	Borough Marketing Manager (BMM)	Corp Comms, Tourism NI (TNI) Tourism Ireland (TIL) Visit Belfast (VB)
Develop proactive partnership programmes with key strategic partners to leverage reach for AND destination campaigns	Ongoing	BMM	TIL, TNI, VB, NMNI, National Trust (NT)
Deliver an up-to-date Visitor What's on Guide available in digital and /or print formats, aligned to the ITDRS and reflecting Visitor Proposition	March 23	Marketing Officer (MO)	TDO team, Events team, Corp Comms, Arts, Community, tourism trade partners

Implement key deliverables laid out in Year 2 of Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy (BMCS) through key campaigns via selected promotional communications channels and web enhancement	Ongoing	BMM/MO	Corporate Comms, Economic Development, Regeneration
Management of Grant Aided Events Programme	Ongoing	Events Manager (EM)	Event Organisers, Marketing and Corporate Comms
Management of Open House Festival Contract	Ongoing	EM	Open House Festival Board Procurement
Continued Development of Bid For Event Strategy	Ongoing	EM	TNI, event organisers, Events team, Leisure, Tourism Marketing
Market Research at Events	Ongoing	EM/ Events Officer	Appointed company Event attendees
Delivery of Tourism Events Programme	Ongoing	EM	Town Chambers, PSNI, P&A, Cleansing, Lands, Licensing, Environmental Health, Risk Manager, Translink, FDDO
Adhere to finance policies and manage and report on budgets, being conscious of the need to deliver value for money for our ratepayers (applies to all teams within Tourism Service)	Ongoing	HOS/TM/EM/BMM	Finance
Deliver team engagement/briefings and conduct Pride in Performance Conversations	Ongoing	HOS/SUMs	OD &HR

Service Objective:

What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2022/2023?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Delivery of planned programme of Visitor Servicing outreach across the borough	Service Quality, Availability, Innovation,	Users are increasingly obtaining visitor information via alternative means. As part of the transformation of the Visitor Information service it will adapt to a flexible mixed provision of centre and mobile outreach delivery of services.	March 23	TDO (VS)	Non-Council partner sites
Review and development of and updated Food Destination Development Plan	Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Availability, Sustainability, Efficiency, Innovation	The delivery of the FDDP 2018-2021 has been heavily impacted in the last 2 years due to the pandemic. A review and re-shaping of the plan is now required.	March 23	FDDO, TM	External food and drink providers, strategic partners e.g. Food NI, Hospitality Ulster, Marketing, Corporate Comms., other council departments
Creation of online mapping of a AND coastal driving trail	Service Quality, Availability, Efficiency, Innovation	The creation of this sustainable map will highlight the key sites/amenities across the borough in a digital format to provide visitors with a 'holistic' view of the coastal experience	March 23	TM/TDO	External developer, Web provider, Marketing
Develop a PR plan to target and secure thought leadership pieces and press releases in key markets	Innovation	Developing a PR plan to proactively gain editorial exposure in key markets in travel and destination media will lead to stronger target audience awareness of AND and stimulate visitor stays and spend.	March 23	BMM	TNI, TIL, relevant media
Develop new visitor-centric blog content for the new website for visitandsandnorthdown.com	Innovation & Service Quality	Continue to develop the new VAND website and web platform database, aligned with and funded by Tourism NI.	March 23	BMM	TNI

What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2022/2023?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Creation and implementation of a Sustainability Action Plan for events delivery	Sustainability	A sustainability audit was carried out at 2021 Tide and Turf event. The findings from this will be used to develop an Action Plan which will be tested at key events in the 2022 programme.	March 23	EM, EO	Compliance Officer, TNI Mentoring, Waste
Capacity Building for External Events organisers	Service Quality	Following the completion and implementation of the pilot OCN Event Management to internal staff, this plus a series of bespoke courses eg market research and others will be developed.	March 23	EM/EO	Event Organisers, trainer, IT, ED

SPECIFIED ASPECTS OF IMPROVEMENT

What will this improve?	Definition
Strategic Effectiveness	<i>is key to linking the community plan, and the ongoing processes that underpin it, with a council's improvement processes. The Department would expect that a council's strategic community planning outcomes and objectives should be central to that council's improvement activity and clearly contribute to the strategic effectiveness aspect.</i>
Service Quality	<i>all relate to service provision by aiming to meet the needs of citizens and ensuring fair ease of access to the most suitable services that meet their needs. Clearly, all of these objectives can be demonstrated individually or collectively. Fairness can also be demonstrated by exercising non-service functions in ways which reduce disadvantage and improve social well-being, for instance by improving citizens' access to information or by addressing inequalities experienced by Section 75 groups.</i>
Service Availability	
Fairness	
Sustainability	<i>When carrying out its functions or providing services, a council may demonstrate improvement when it operates in a way that contributes towards the sustainability of its area, as required under the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and the associated Northern Ireland Executive Sustainable Development Strategy. on-going efficiency may also be shown if fewer resources are utilised while maintaining provision of substantially similar or better services. Should a council choose to alter the manner by which a service is provided and in so doing it uses fewer resources or more integrated services, it will not only be demonstrating efficiency, but may demonstrate improved sustainability as well</i>
Efficiency	
Innovation	<i>any changes to service design and delivery methods that are intended to yield improvement under any other aspect and are reasonably likely to do so. This allows councils to make changes which may not have tangible effects within the same reporting year, but are likely to in subsequent years, and still count them as improvements.</i>

Service Objective:

What service / activities will we be stopping / changing in 2022/2023	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Food Destination Development Plan 2018-2021 delivery	3 year plan up to 2021. Elements delivered to date but huge impact of Covid on the industry and subsequent delivery. New plan.	n/a	Will allow for re-evaluation of the FDDP in line with the impact of Covid and continuation of food and drink development in borough.	Minimal as a new fit for purpose plan will be devised. The current plan will progress in the development timeframe, taking cognisance of new opportunities.	Staff focus on updated delivery plan and support to industry.
Accommodation audit to provide an investors' guide to potential accommodation development opportunities in the borough	Workstreams aligned to BAU TD activity. Future development opportunities to come forward from industry pre planning to determine investor opportunity.	n/a	Focus on daily TD advisory activity in this area.	n/a	Normal advisory duties and provision of proposition data.
Exploris developed as a new Local Visitor Information Office	Centre has been established	Reduction in annual running costs.	n/a as centre will continue to operate	n/a as the centre will maintain same provision	Support from ANDBC on outreach basis
Creation of green/sustainable tourism cluster	Network has been established	n/a	Work will now focus on BAU support.	n/a	n/a
Management of Ice Cream and Hot Drinks Licences	Contract remains as 21/22 for 22/23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Develop Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy	Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy completed in 2021	Staff resource	Improved planning	n/a	n/a

What service / activities will we be stopping / changing in 2022/2023	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Tourism web platform transition - VAND website will be changing to new web platform aligned to the discoverni.com website	Visitardsandnorthdown.com new website was launched in October 2021.	Overall project will save £10k over 5 years while leveraging almost £25k added value via the TNI funding (compared to the status quo – retaining the current VAND site, with no upgrades or inflationary allowance).	Will raise AND's online profile as a visitor destination gaining an enhanced, tourism-specialised website with leading edge functionality. Strong alignment and collaboration with the national tourism body Tourism NI – will enhance presentation of AND to potential visitors.	Enhanced communications online for potential visitors to the borough, including ease of itinerary planning, generating interest in AND as a tourism destination and driving visits and visitor spend.	n/a
Capacity Building at Events will focus on external organiser training programme as pilot complete	Pilot Scheme delivered to internal staff cohort of 12 in Dec 21	n/a	ONC Level 4 course set up at SERC, to be offered to external organisers (criteria to be determined).	Volunteers organising events will have the opportunity to improve their skills and gain a qualification	Events Officer to attend 8 week evening course to support and feedback
Develop a Transformational Action Plan for the delivery of the Borough Events Strategy	Action Plan 'Heart and Soul 2021-26' complete.	n/a	Creates key workstreams for events for the next 5 years	n/a	n/a
Sustainability Audit at 1 event in 2021 programme	Audit complete at Tide and Turf Festival in September 2021	n/a	Findings to feed into Sustainability Action Plan for key events in 2022. Improved processes.	Market research conducted at events in 2021 highlighted sustainability as an important factor for attendees at events.	n/a

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
Number of Experience Tours	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	16	15
% of Out of Borough (OoB) sales of Exp Tours	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20%	7%	10%
Number of Food Tours/Showcases	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	4	8
% of OoB sales of Food Tours/Showcases	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	7%	33%
Delivery of tour operator FAM visits to the Borough (including virtual)	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	10	10
Number of new bookable experiences	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	15	10
% of OoB sales of bookable experiences	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	51%	35%
Number of Tourism and Food and Drink Clusters/ Networks supported	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	3	3
Number of maintained TIPs across the Borough	Existing	Annual	35	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
Number of visitor servicing outreach activities	New	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15
Number of tourism / food webinars/seminars	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	3
Completion of updated Food and Drink Destination Plan	New	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Feb 23

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
Creation of online coastal driving route	New	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Number of campaigns – Key output Year 2 of BMCS	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
% Increase in social media (revised target) - Key output Year 2 of BMCS	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7631 page views	11,805 page views 1302 Facebook Fwrs	2765 FB Fwr 1105 IG likes	10%
Number of PR pieces - Key output Year 2 of BMCS	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10
Number of blogs - Key output Year 2 of BMCS	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10
Number of print publications - Key output Year 2 of BMCS	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Management of SLA with Visit Belfast (revised target)	Existing	Annual	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100%
Enhance new VAND web platform – one initiative - story and event submission sections	New	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	July 22
% engagement rate of ezines to tourism trade and consumer database (revised target from number of ezines to % engagement)	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	4	4	4	84 NB C19 impact	25	25%
Number of attendees at Grant Aided Events	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	91,160	121,482	81,494	60,656	n/a cancelled due to C19	90,506 (one grant to finalise)	78,175

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
Cost per attendee – Grant Aided Events	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	91,160	121,482	81,494	£1	n/a cancelled due to C19	£1.13 (one grant to finalise)	£1.04
Management of Open House Contract – monitoring of SLA	New	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%
Development of Bid for Strategy	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	March 23
Market Research Plan implemented at key tourism events	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
Number of attendees at Tourism Events	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	146,500	168,700	157,000	147,500	Cancelled C19	19500	75,000
% Customer satisfaction at Events	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	90%	80%	96%	96%	n/a events cancelled	77%	85%
% of attendees from OoB at tourism events	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16%	n/a events cancelled due to Covid	28%	20%
% of attendees at tourism events from outside NI	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.67%	n/a events cancelled due to Covid	0%	1%
Average spend per event attendee	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	£16.75	events cancelled due to Covid	£11.26	£16.00

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
Develop Sustainability Action Plan	New	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	June 22
Number of event organisers receiving support/training	Existing	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	36	40	n/a due to Covid	24	20
% staff attendance	Corporate	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	95%	97.91%	95.73%	94.38%	93.93% Q3	95%
% spend against budget	Corporate	Quarterly	88%	89.3%	95%	92.33%	87.08%	97.07%	87.2% Q3	95%
% staff reporting regular receipt of team engagement/briefings	Corporate	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a NB C19 impact	n/a NB C19 impact	100%	100%
% staff receiving Pride in Performance conversations	Corporate	Annual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a NB C19 impact	n/a NB C19 impact	100%	95%

4. Risks

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
CR2	Failure to maintain human resource to effectively deliver services & optimise opportunities	4	4	16	<p>HOS and Manager one to ones and Manager and Team updates/one to ones</p> <p>New staff inducted and supported</p> <p>Staff team day Monthly team meetings</p> <p>Utilise more effective resourcing pathways to fill vacancies</p>	4	3	12	Action	<p>Monitor staff and apply and adhere to good team communication</p> <p>Regular phone calls and Teams meetings to maintain communication while working from home (WFH)</p> <p>WFH RAs completed and WFH interim arrangements reviews conducted.</p>	WFH interim arrangement reviews at appropriate 1/4ly 1/2yearly internals as per C19 environment. Throughout 2022/23	<p>Head of Tourism</p> <p>Tourism Manager</p> <p>Events Manager</p>	
CR5	Failure to engage key stakeholders fully in outputs relevant and deriving from the ITRDS, impacting on Borough experience/product	4	4	16	<p>Industry updates (monthly ezines)</p> <p>Engagement platforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAGs & Chambers (events where applicable) - Event one to ones re C19 	4	3	12	Tolerate	Continue as per C19 environment	Throughout 2022/23	<p>Borough Marketing Manager</p> <p>Tourism Manager/Events Manager</p>	

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism one to one business support re C19 - Food Network adapted to Teams C19 and one to ones 								
CR3	Failure to secure funding to deliver projects/ programmes	3	5	15	Review budgets aligned to projects.	3	4	12	Action	Monitor and review per project. Identify all available streams of funding.	Throughout 2022/23	Head of Tourism Tourism Manager Events Manager Borough Marketing Manager	
CR3	Failure to deliver against performance targets	4	4	16	Monitoring against financial targets as per Finance schedule Quarterly reviews against KPIs by managers Annual review and reporting of Service Plan to Council Monthly HOS-SUM meetings at which performance against KPIs are discussed	4	2	8	Action	Monitor and review Addition of Risk review on monthly agenda	Ongoing Throughout 2022/23	Head of Tourism Tourism Manager Events Manager Borough Marketing Manager	

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
CR6 and CR3	Theft of stock and cash from Visitor Information Centres. Risk to staff.	3	3	9	Daily cashing-up routine Spot checks monthly basis CCTV in larger centre No or managed lone working Staff training	1	2	2	Tolerate	n/a	Ongoing	Tourism Manager/TDO VS	
CR2	Poor staff morale causing poor service performance	3	4	12	Team Briefings, investment in staff development, focus on positive working environment Team Day All staff updates circulated	3	2	6	Action	Maintain focus on communication and engagement and training internally Fortnightly SUM/HOS meeting catch up. One to one meetings as per SUM request. Return to monthly all team meetings via Teams now staff returned to work post furlough.	Throughout 2022/23	Head of Tourism Tourism Manager Events Manager	
CR3	Non-adherence to procurement / governance requirements leading to financial cost.	4	3	12	Governance arrangements, Audits Monitoring against financial targets as per Finance schedule	4	2	8	Action	Continue to review tenders/quotes. Staff training if required on panels	Ongoing	Tourism Manager Events Manager All relevant officers	

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
	audit and public criticism Inadequate controls over financial management and resource planning resulting in poor service delivery and financial loss to the Council									Monthly HOS/SUM financial monitoring		HOS	
CR4	Inadequate contingency / emergency plans for tourism events	5	4	20	RA and Safety Plans for individual events Effective Communication process in place with key stakeholders/agencies Event cancellation insurance being investigated re suitability Insurance in place for all events	4	2	8	Action	Event Management Plan per event including RA Interagency/ stakeholder communication per event with post evaluation debrief meetings completed Promote Events Toolkit to relevant groups	Throughout 2022/23	Events Manager	

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
										Tourism events to work under Covid restrictions and RA's included in EMPs			
CR1	Failure to respond to the challenges of Brexit	3	2	6	Monitoring of advice related to Brexit.	2	1	2	Tolerate	Maintain and monitor to respond to negative impacts in some markets, opportunities created from others.	Ongoing	Head of Tourism Tourism Manager	
CR7	Failure to adhere and monitor GDPR requirement	3	5	15	Controls include password and minimised access to databases. GDPR permission forms for photography and imagery in place with content to be reviewed in line with data compliance officer guidance. GDPR to be added as regular agenda item on team monthly meetings.	3	3	9	Action	Implement all required GDPR related measures as per guidance from Compliance officer-ongoing.	Throughout 2022/23	Tourism Manager Events Manager Borough Marketing Manager	

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
CR6	Failure to adhere to government guidance re Covid 19	4	4	16	<p>Application of C19 SD and Government Guidance and legislation as per service delivery.</p> <p>Work from home whilst guidance dictates and any return to office post RA's and mitigations implemented.</p>	4	3	12	Action	<p>RA C19 required across operations as required e.g. Office space, experience and event delivery.</p> <p>RA any face to face meeting scenarios dependent upon C19 environment.</p> <p>Follow Council guidance as issued.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Tourism Manager for VIC</p> <p>Tourism Manager and Events Manager for experience and event delivery</p> <p>HOS/SUMs for office/meetings</p>	
CR3	Risk of Fraud in administering grant applications	5	3	15	Develop robust systems with advice from other relevant departments. Formalise process, have staff trained	4	3	12	Action	Source staff training, adopt and agree new process for Tourism Grants	Ongoing	Events Manager and Events Officer (Grants and Evaluation)	

5. Resources

Are all actions resourced within the current (2022/23) budget plan?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Will additional resources be required?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(If no please comment in Section A below how the actions will be funded, ie Staff Resources, Equipment, Revenue Budget, Capital Budget.) (If yes please detail additional resources in Section B below.)		
Section A:		
The service budget has been approved via the Rates Setting process via Revenue and Capital Budgets. Staffing resource is aligned to deliver as set out in the service plan. It is anticipated however, that flexibility within the Revenue Budget may be required to manage any further requirements on service delivery with regard to Covid-19. Staff will continually seek to identify and apply for external funds when these appear.		
Section B:		
Staff:		
n/a current staffing		
Financial:		
The total Tourism 22/23 budget is £1,903,200.		
Other:		
n/a		
If the required additional resources are NOT available, please state:		
What is the likely impact on performance?		
n/a		
What is the likely impact on the public?		
n/a		
What is the likely impact on staffing?		
n/a		

6. Monitoring and Review

- Regular communication between HOS and SUMS to address challenges to the plan as soon as they arise
- Monthly updates meetings between HOS and SUMs at which reporting on progress against KPIs is a standard agenda item
- Quarterly reporting of performance to the Regeneration and Development Committee, via reports generated from the Pentana system.

7. Conclusions

This plan has been written with an optimistic view on what the tourism environment may present for 2022/23, however it is anticipated that there will be a likelihood that a level of adaptable will be required for the Service and regular adjustments made during the year.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of Key Customers/Stakeholder and Needs

Appendix 2 – PESTLE Analysis

Appendix 1 – Full list of key customers/stakeholders and needs

Customers	Needs
Visitors	(Globally, but especially from rest of NI, GB, and the Republic of Ireland) Information and promotional offers for trip planning; easily accessible quality products and experiences, Covid-safe.
Tourism Sector (tourism providers)	(Includes hospitality businesses, attractions, activity and experience providers. Information, advice, marketing and networking opportunities and support for collaborative working to attract visitors.
Food Sector (tourism providers and producers)	(Includes hospitality businesses, food and drink producers and producer/retailers. Information, advice, marketing and networking opportunities, support for collaborative working, retail opportunities.
Elected Members	Information, responses to ratepayer queries and complaints, delivery of agreed strategies, observance of agreed policies, formal reports for governance purposes.
Tourism NI	Collaborative/partnership working with ANDBC, including guidance on local tourism products and experiences, to support the national strategic vision for tourism. Distribution of information and promotion of training and national marketing campaign opportunities, including securing AND trade offers.
Tourism Ireland	Marketing information on AND to support the all-Ireland strategic vision for tourism in global markets.
Visit Belfast	Information on AND experiences and marketing messages to aid promotion of AND as part of "Belfast Plus" region, including via travel operator and travel writer engagement platforms.
Event Delivery Partners	(Including event organisers, Town Advisory Groups, Chambers, internal Events Group, emergency services, Translink and SERC etc.) Collaborative/partnership working to ensure successful and safe tourism events.
Other external agencies/ organisations	(Includes funders, central government departments, statutory agencies and various relevant partners - National Trust, ORNI, KNIB, HU, Boat Folk, Open House, Chambers of Commerce, SLLP, NITA, Clondeboye Estate, Invest NI, Strangford Lough Tourism Cluster) Collaborative/partnership working with ANDBC to ensure ongoing provision of sustainable tourism products and experiences, for mutual gain.
Other Councils	Collaboration/partnership working to achieve shared funding and/or economies of scale; mutual benchmarking and sharing of ideas and knowledge.
Service Units	Council-wide – Needs centred around integrated working and good communication to ensure best performance outcomes for ANDBC across all services.
Residents/Community Groups	General awareness of new tourism projects and experiences, and of promotion of all regions of the borough to visitors; engagement/consultation on new tourism products where impacted.
Staff	Resources, training, development opportunities, mentoring and support.

Appendix 2: PESTLE Analysis

<p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid restrictions on travel imposed by national governments • Brexit –in some markets creating negative sentiment re travel to the UK (but this may also boost travel to Ireland, including NI, by visitors arriving in Dublin). • NI Executive budget may reduce ability to deliver Tourism Recovery Plan • Additional funds for recovery via NI Executive to be confirmed at time of writing report • ANDBC Transformation agenda – pressure for efficiencies 	<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential failure of local tourism businesses as government support schemes end or do not re-emerge if restrictions are reimposed • Restricted capacity of reopened tourism businesses due to Covid restrictions • Potential reduction of internal budgets, due to continuing C-19 challenges • External funding opportunities with very short deliver timelines – very difficult to deliver best return with resource and governance processes in place • Strength of other currencies vs £ • Status of air access/routes to NI • Cut in APD on domestic routes • Recovery of aviation sector, especially long-haul • City Deal funding for Bangor Waterfront
<p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing uncertainty on travel re Covid • Strong demand for tourism remains but curtailed by restrictions • Increased traveller caution - seeking Covid-safe locations and flexible travel options, including re cancellation • Visitor sentiment in favour of closer-to-home holidays and staycations • Heightened demand for “slow travel” – fewer and shorter trips with more relaxed itineraries boosting physical and mental wellbeing – shorter lead times, uncertainty for bookings for businesses 	<p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of vaccine programme and medicines boosting traveller confidence • Continuing shift to mobile/online information digital channels/services for our tourism research and booking. • Digital transformation including virtual travel experiences, booking while still at home and touchless tech solutions • Pandemic has accelerated remote working for staff and use of wider engagement • Expectation that governance arrangements can meet industry demand on digital platforms of ‘choice’.
<p>Legal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid restrictions impacting travel, including required quarantine • Vaccine passports for travel • Carbon targets and offsetting • Legislative changes due to Brexit • Compliance with relevant legislation re GDPR, procurement, land use, road closures, safety and risk etc 	<p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence of new Covid mutations/variants • Potential new wave/s of Covid in 2022 • Heightened awareness of and demand for sustainable travel and tourism/ “green” credentials • Crowded and highly competitive tourism marketplace • ANDBC drive to integrate sustainable materials and processes across all services • Climate change and impacts



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ITEM 6

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	RDP196
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Renewed Ambition Programme 2022-23 Update
Attachments	N/A

1. Renewed Ambition Background

Council agreed to be a member of the Renewed Ambition Programme (RAP) in January 2022. RAP is a joint public and private sector-led initiative and aims to work collaboratively to showcase investment and development opportunities across the Belfast City Region as we seek to deliver on our shared ambitions for the region as an exciting place to work, live, visit and invest. It is a 5 pillared programme focused on activities to ensure that Belfast and the wider city region is well positioned to continue to attract investment and to deliver on inclusive growth.

The 5 pillars:

- 1) Programme of Content aimed at the local and international real estate audience which aims to showcase the Belfast City Region for future real estate investment through participation at virtual and in-person conferences and showcase events.
- 2) Programme of Engagement and Advocacy to facilitate two-way conversations with policy makers and to showcase real estate opportunities to the investor community. This aims to position the Belfast City Region positively and seeks to identify and try to address barriers that investors, developers, and occupiers may face when they consider Belfast as a destination.
- 3) Media and Stakeholder Engagement, reinforcing positive messaging around Belfast's investment proposition through international marketing and

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communication campaigns, targeting the national and international real estate investment and development community.

- 4) A shared access Repository on the investinbelfast.com website which facilitates sharing of data, marketing collateral and intel to help ensure consistent messaging and shared narrative is used by all partners when promoting the city region.
- 5) Research aligned to the impact of real estate investment to inform the city proposition and narrative.

2. Current Status Programme Update

The full programme of activity for 2022-23 is still being developed, however, it has been agreed that the RAP partners, led by Belfast City Council, will participate in UKREiiF, the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum which is a new three-day event taking place in Leeds from 17 - 19 May 2022.

This event will bring together the public sector – with every core UK city and region involved – alongside Government, investors, funders, developers, housebuilders and more.

Participation in the event will offer:

- 3,000+ In-Person Attendees
- 250+ Speakers Across 14 Stages
- 100+ Exhibitors
- 50+ Fringe Events

Key programme themes are:

- UK's Net Zero Target
- Social Value and Inclusive Growth
- The Future of Real Estate
- Building Better Communities and a focus on inward investment via our Investor Centre.

Belfast has been invited to join a panel discussion on the Levelling Up Stage to discuss "Levelling Up Across The UK". This session will take place following the keynote session (TBC Prime Minister or High-Level UK minister) on Day 1. Other speaking opportunities are being investigated.

UKREiiF Proposed RAP activities include:

- Belfast Region branded exhibition stand (8*3m) in the exhibition hall to act as a meeting point for partners and showcase investment opportunities.
- Investment showcase and networking reception
- Private investor lunch
- Speaking opportunities on main and fringe event programmes.

Attendance at UKREiiF is included as part of the £15k sponsorship package which was approved by Council in January. It also includes 2 delegate passes for each Council. Participants are expected to cover their own travel and accommodation costs which are estimated to be approximately £600 per participant, depending on time of booking.

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As previously reported, a full programme of activity for 2022-23 is being developed and further update reports will be brought to Council.

Attracting investment into the Borough is an integral part of our Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy (ITRDS) and collaborating with the Renewed Ambition Programme to attend UKREiiF will help to raise the profile of AND and reach into wider markets.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approves the attendance of three ANDBC officers at UKREiiF, as part of the Renewed Ambition Programme at an estimated cost of £1,800, which will be met from existing budgets.

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ITEM 7

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Business Start Update
Attachments	Appendix 1 SOLACE response to DfC Consultation

DfC Consultation on Business Start Targets

As part of the transfer of functions and Local Government Reform, responsibility for business start-up and support for under-represented groups, in terms of enterprise support, transferred to councils.

When the transfer took place in April 2015, the then DoE (now DfC) set the job targets based on the 2011-2015 Programme for Government (PfG) target and on a Proportional Formula (PF), creating 6500 local jobs, or 1625 jobs per year in NI. The total job numbers were then split across each council area, and loosely aligned to the Regional Business Start-up Programme (**Go For It**). For Ards and North Down the statutory target was set at 85 per year. These targets have remained in place since that date and, in the case of Ards and North Down, have been exceeded each year.

In considering the basis of allocating Job Creation targets, the Capaxo Review, commissioned in 2018, recommended that the Proportional Formula (PF) was a reasonable basis on which to set new targets. The targets were not implemented at the time as the Executive was not sitting.

A report was brought to Council in March 2018, detailing the draft review of Business Start targets, recommending that they, "...be used as a baseline in the new Business

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Start Programme to be suggested to DfE when recommending new Statutory targets to DfC for public consultation on the future programme targets.”

The targets articulated in the Consultation paper are reflective of that work.

A response to the consultation paper, at Appendix 1, has been approved by SOLACE and will be returned on behalf of all the Councils.

Future of Business Start Support

Currently the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund), supports interventions such as 'Go For It', the 11-Council Business Start programme, and business development mentor programmes such as SHINE and Digital Growth, at a level of 60%, with additional 20% funding from Invest NI.

As Members will be aware the current phase of EU Funding will finish in March 2023.

To prepare for the future, officers have been working with the other 10 Councils and bodies to ensure that appropriate successor funding is identified and secured, and that sufficient plans and partnerships will be in place to provide continuity of support for local businesses.

There is a considerable 'case for change', looking forward. There are shortfalls in NI's business start-up performance (relative to other UK regions/the UK average position) that create the need to review/reposition the support infrastructure, with a view to a step change in performance. Furthermore, the enterprise ecosystem is complex and difficult to navigate, meaning that those seeking support often find it difficult to get the right help at the right time. It would seem there is a need for a more effective ecosystem of support that offers greater connectivity and simplification for clients.

The cessation of ERDF funding in March 2023 is an opportunity to identify other resources/funding sources that may be more conducive to the future ambitions of the Councils in this arena.

Through the SOLACE Economic Recovery Group, Morrow Gilchrist Associates (MGA Ltd), has been commissioned by Belfast City Council (BCC), on behalf of the 11 Councils to undertake an Options Analysis to inform the delivery of business start-up support post 2023. A Working Group has been established to feed in and direct an approach to ensure a programme of support that is fit for purpose is designed and, that appropriate funding is identified to leverage optimum delivery models.

Further reports will be brought to Council as this work progresses over the coming months.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

REPORT

Meeting: SOLACE NI – 4 February 2022

Subject: **Consultation on The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Responsible Officer: Lisa Toland, Senior Manager Economy, Belfast City Council

Purpose

The Department for Communities has launched a consultation on The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022. This takes account of proposed changes by the Department for the Economy to performance indicators relating to job promotion and linked to Business Start-up activity. These targets were initially established in 2015 as part of the transfer of functions to local government.

The purpose of this paper is to provide Chief Executives with an update on the consultation and to set out a proposed joint response from SOLACE on behalf of each of the 11 councils across the region.

Background

Chief Executives will be aware that, as part of the transfer of functions and Local Government Reform, responsibility for business start-up and support for under-represented groups in terms of enterprise support transferred to councils.

When the transfer took place in April 2015, DfE set the job targets based on the 2011-2015 Programme for Government (PfG) target, namely creating 6500 local jobs, or 1625 jobs per year. The total job numbers were then split across each council area, and loosely aligned to the Regional Business Start-up Programme (Go For It). These targets have remained in place since that date.

The Department for Communities has now launched a consultation on The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022, to take account of proposed changes to these targets. DfE made a commitment to work with councils to review targets through their Economic Recovery Action Plan, published in summer 2021.

Proposed revision

The consultation period opened in December 2021 and runs to 28 February 2022. It includes a proposal to broadly retain the current Economic Development indicators at this time, and to amend

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the standards to reflect the outcome of research undertaken in 2019 (the so called “Capaxo work”). The result of this is an adjustment to the specific targets in some council areas (see details in table below). This amendment will bring statutory targets in line with the targets currently being delivered through the current wave of the Northern Ireland Business Start Up Programme 2021-2023. Individual councils have been engaging directly with DfE on these targets.

Council	Proposed New Standards	Existing Standards (2015)
Antrim and Newtownabbey	80	80
Ards and North Down	123	85
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	182	165
Belfast	325	325
Causeway Coast and Glens	128	125
Derry and Strabane	140	140
Fermanagh and Omagh	170	170
Lisburn and Castlereagh	116	85
Mid and East Antrim	111	85
Mid Ulster	153	210
Newry, Mourne and Down	173	155

While some figures have changed across council areas, the reality is that these targets are largely arbitrary: they have no impact on the financial transfer from DoF to councils for the start-up support and other enterprise work. Likewise, they are based on a formula that makes an assumption about the number of jobs that can be attributed to a business plan created under the programme. In reality, there is limited testing of these job outcome figures, given that the output measurement for the current programme is “business plans generated”.

The Northern Ireland Business Start-Up Programme

The “core solution” delivered collaboratively across all council areas – the Northern Ireland Business Start Up Programme (Go for It) – is scheduled to run until March 2023. While the programme supports a significant number of new start businesses, there are recognised inadequacies with the current provision which have been previously acknowledged. One significant area of concern relates to the methodology for measuring success. At present, the approach is to measure job outcomes based on a formula linked to the delivery of a client-led business plan.

Through the Economic Recovery Group, councils have been working over the last 12 months to inform the future investment approach required to deliver a more progressive approach to business start-

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up support across the region. Research undertaken by the Enterprise Research Centre has now been used as the basis to develop a future programme of activity in partnership with each of the 11 councils. In November 2021, Belfast City Council on behalf of the SOLACE Economic Recovery Group successfully secured funding from Invest NI to develop a business case based on this model. This business case is currently in development and will be completed by end March 2022. It will be used as the basis for engagement with DfE, Invest NI and other funding bodies in anticipation of establishing a more effective and coherent solution that can support economic growth in local areas post March 2023.

In parallel with this work, we have also commenced our engagement with DfE on the findings of the research particularly in relation to developing measures for business start-up. They acknowledge the shortcomings of the current approach and are committed to reviewing this as part of their Entrepreneurship Strategy which is being developed aligned to 10x.

At the last meeting of the Economic Recovery Group (17 January 2022) council officers agreed that it would be helpful for SOLACE to submit a response to the consultation. An overview of key points for consideration within the SOLACE response are attached in **Appendix 1**. Officers are aware that SOLACE also has a Performance Improvement Working Group that engages with DfC and NIAO on performance targets. We will work with this group on any proposed response to ensure alignment with their wider programme of engagement.

Recommendations

Chief Executives are asked to:

- Note the update on the Consultation on The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022
- Agree to the submission of a joint consultation response which provides a collective view on behalf of all councils, based on the points outlined in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1 – Draft Consultation Response

Background

On behalf of SOLACE, I am delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the Consultation on The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022.

We acknowledge that the proposed targets will have no material impact on councils at this point, as they align with the targets in the current Go for It Programme that is already operating. With that in mind, we have no overall objection to the proposal put forward in the consultation document. Having said that, we do not consider that the current approach is either sustainable or appropriate in the longer term for a number of reasons and we welcome the opportunity afforded through this consultation to highlight some of our key concerns.

We acknowledge the close collaboration between council officials and the Department for the Economy on this work over the last year in particular. We propose that the focus for our engagement going forward should be on reconfiguring the standards to ensure that they are more reflective of activity undertaken and that there is transparency in how they are set and monitored. Finally, while these are performance standards for local government, we recognise that our work is closely aligned with activity undertaken by other government departments. In particular, we note the importance attributed to entrepreneurship in the 10x economic vision and we would suggest that the revised standards are set in the context of the emerging Entrepreneurship Strategy.

Specific comments

We welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with the Department for the Economy with a view to restructuring the job promotion target in the future, as indicated in sections 4.8 and 4.9 of the consultation document. The current Go for It Programme will be delivered to 31st March 2023 and work is already underway to consider support for entrepreneurship beyond that period. Our shared view is that the current approach to measuring business plan outputs from one single programme does not adequately reflect the work of councils in supporting job growth and economic development in local areas. Neither is this a metric that can allow us to realistically benchmark ourselves against comparator regions. Finally, the proxy figure for assessing job outcomes from business plans makes assumptions that cannot be substantiated through the current data collection approach.

While we recognise the desire to establish a target that can be easily understood, we contend that there are a number of additional metrics that could be considered and that would reflect the wider range of activity undertaken by councils. These include total early-stage entrepreneurial activity, levels of female engagement in entrepreneurship, number of registered start-ups, 1 and 2 year business survival rates and numbers of scaling businesses. We consider that this is a much more coherent method of measuring progress across the enterprise ecosystem, and would encourage DfE to consider this approach.

The targets set out in the consultation emanate from a financial settlement that was agreed in 2014, ahead of local government reform. This settlement – both in terms of the overall allocation and the methodology – has never been reviewed since that time. SOLACE contends that there is an urgent need to review the level of funding allocated to councils for the delivery of this statutory function. The settlement should be reflective of the significantly changed economic circumstances since 2015 as well as the articulated ambition, through 10x, to create a globally-competitive economy. The current settlement falls dramatically short of what we need to deliver this statutory function and represents a significant reduction in real terms from the original allocation.

We also acknowledge that the current approach to target setting does not provide any real

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accountability. We consider that this is at odds with the ambition to establish performance targets that can support councils to improve their services. We would be content to commit to a clearer line of accountability. However, if that is to happen, we need to ensure that the financial settlement is appropriate and adequate to enable us to deliver the statutory function competently.

Finally, we wish to clarify a point with regard to the proposed standards. Section 4.3 of the consultation suggests that “the proposed revised standards are based on an independent review of the NIBSUP/ GFI job target figures commissioned by the councils in 2018”. In reality, only some of the standards are based on those figures. Others relate to the figures from the original economic appraisal on the NIBSUP back in 2015. Going forward, we would advocate for a more coherent and consistent approach to setting standards, in line with the proposals outlined above.

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ITEM 8

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	09 February 2022
File Reference	RDP47
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	AND Interim Labour Market Partnership Update
Attachments	

Context

Members will recall that the Department for Communities (DfC) has made funding available for each of the 11 Councils to develop its own Interim Labour Market Partnership (ILMP) with funding available until the end of March 2022. Additional funding for an Interim Action Plan for 2022-23, and a further 3-year Action Plan for 2023-2026 will be subject to the Executive's approved funding.

Ards and North Down LMP Action Plan

Council previously approved the Ards and North Down LMP 2-year action plan for 2021-22 and 2022-23. Subject to a few amendments required by the Department for Communities, the final draft was presented and is currently with the Regional Board (Employability NI) for final approval. Approval and funding for the 2021-22 plan is imminent. Once this is approved by the Regional Board (Employability NI), a Letter of Offer (LoO) will be issued which will enable the LMP to commence delivery of its Action Plan. (Members will recall that a separate Letter of Offer has been received to fund the set-up and administration costs of the LMP).

Procurement

The LMP is keen to maximise delivery of the 2021-22 Action Plan as any actions not completed following receipt of the LoO, would result in funding having to be returned to DfC. To try to expedite plans and be ready to deliver immediate results for the LMP, partner Officers have undertaken the following procurement exercises to

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deliver on 5 projects from the Action Plan, subject to confirmed funding from DfC and at no cost to Council:

- (i) Two scoping exercises to gather information in respect of existing job portals and support and training programmes;
- (ii) The creation and training of a pool of mentors to assist people to get into employment or up-skill;
- (iii) Creation of a video highlighting the skills within two employment sectors - Engineering and Food Processing - for use in primary schools as part of their careers programme; and
- (iv) The development and delivery of an HGV drivers training programme.

It should be noted that the Department for the Economy (DfE) has been working with the DfC in the creation of LMPs and has also issued a Letter of Offer in the amount of £50K to each of the 11 Councils. This Letter of Offer has been signed by the Council's Chief Executive and will be used immediately to commence a procurement exercise for delivery of a HGV drivers' training programme. DfE has allowed this funding to roll over into the 2022-23 financial year.

It is hoped that by the end of the procurement process on each of the above projects, the LMP will have received its funding, and the projects highlighted above will be able to commence and be delivered within their appropriate timeframe.

Unfortunately, due to tight timeframes, some of the projects will not be commenced but will transfer to the 2022-23 Action Plan as allowed and in accordance with approved funding.

Because of the tight timeframes to deliver, two of the quotations issued in January have not received any response from the delivery agents contacted. It is likely that the funding for these projects will not be spent by the end of the financial year as it would not be feasible to deliver these projects and submit the required claim to DfC by 31st March 2022.

This is reflective of the challenges in dealing with the short-term funding timescales and plans and procedures instigated by central government departments but given to Councils to create and deliver against end year deadlines.

Recruitment

Members will recall that Council approval was granted in January for the recruitment and appointment of a Labour Market Partnership Manager and LMP Administrative Officer, the funding for which will be covered from the DfC administration budget.

The recruitment process included publicly advertising the two posts through the usual channels and in the local press, and the LMP Manager post was also advertised in the Belfast Telegraph. Unfortunately, there have been no applications received for either the LMP Administrative post or for the LMP Manager post. This situation is not unique to Ards and North Down; it appears that all Councils are experiencing the same recruitment difficulties.

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An 11-Council trawl has now been undertaken for the post of LMP Manager, offering the position on a secondment basis. If not successful, officers will seek to recruit through agency.

Successful recruitment is critical for the implementation of the partnership and its plans as the work is currently being carried by officers on top of their usual duties; this is not sustainable in the long-term.

Further updates will be brought to Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

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ITEM 9

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	14 February 2022
File Reference	RDP22
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	BRCD Innovation Hub Update
Attachments	

BRCD Background

Members will be aware of the background to the Belfast Region City Deal, which has a vision to create 20,000 jobs through a £1 billion capital investment programme in a number of projects, under the four key themes: Innovation, Digital, Tourism and Regeneration and Infrastructure; all supported by an Employability and Skills Programme.

Innovation Hub Background

Following discussion and review of the Innovation Hub OBC with the Department for the Economy and Invest NI, who have been appointed by the department to work with Council to progress the Innovation Hub OBC, officers are now undertaking a further update on the OBC. This includes a review of the location for the Hub, including investigations on the opportunity for it to be located closer to Holywood where a creative cluster already exists.

The initial vision and concept remain the same, but Council has been asked to investigate the possibilities and opportunities in respect of land availability and demand, together with any issues this might cause in relation to displacement.

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Current status

Following discussions with DfE and Invest NI in respect of investigations into the possibilities of available land in Holywood, Council placed an Expression of Interest in the local and regional press, seeking a response from anyone who had lands or premises which would accommodate an Innovation Hub.

One response was received and officers are working on the next steps.

An amended OBC may need to be prepared and officers will need to work with the appointed consultants to reflect the location of the Innovation Hub in Holywood.

This work will be carried out over the coming months with further reports being brought back to Council in due course.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this update.

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ITEM 10**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	3 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	160167
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Economic Development Performance Report, Quarter 3, 2021-2022 (Oct-Dec, 2021)
Attachments	N/A

Context

Members will be aware that Council is required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil this requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook. The Performance Management Handbook outlines the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (2015-2019 plan in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (2018/19 plan published 30 June 2018)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April 2018).

The Corporate Plan 2015-19 sets out 17 objectives for the plan period based on themes of People, Place, Prosperity and Performance. The Council's Service Plans outline how each respective Service will contribute to the achievement of the

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Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

Reporting approach

The Service Plans will be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for the third Quarter of 2021-22 is below.

Key points to note:

- There has been a slowdown in this quarter of businesses starting and existing creative industries businesses taking up support as they concentrated on dealing with C-19 restrictions while also preparing for the Christmas period. Since the new year activity has picked up again and the team is confident that the numbers will recover over the next period.
- Staff attendance is under target due to longer absences of team members due to illness.

Key achievements:

- Delivery of support continues to work well through digital channels which businesses report offers them and their staff more flexibility.
- Despite closures and restrictions due to C-19, Exploris and Pickie Fun Park have been recovering well and are seeing numbers return to and even exceed pre C-19 figures for this time of year.

Emerging issues:

- As the current phase of EU Funding will soon draw to a close, officers continue to work with other Councils and bodies to ensure that appropriate successor funding is identified and secured, and that sufficient plans and partnerships will be in place to provide continuity of support for local businesses.
- The establishment of a Local Labour Market Partnership (LMP) and the creation of an Action Plan has been approved and submitted to the Department of Communities however, there will be challenges going forward as there were no responses to the Ads placed to recruit the LMP Manager and Administrative post. This situation puts added pressure on current staff and broader workstreams as they are diverted from the requirements of their substantive roles.
- In addition to the difficulties with recruiting for the LMP posts, there are also several vacancies within the ED team caused by staff retiring or leaving for other posts. While the replacement of required posts takes place, there will be challenges for current team members to continue to respond to all the work

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requirements across the broad spectrum of tasks. Workloads will need to be carefully monitored and managed.

Action to be taken:

- An 11-Council trawl has been issued to try to attract LMP staff on a secondment basis and, should this not be successful, recruitment through agency will be investigated as the resources will be necessary to effectively deliver the Action Plans. The team will work with HR to recruit and fill all posts as quickly as possible.
- We will need to continue to monitor the situation regarding C-19 and prepare appropriately for any return to the office, to ensure health and safety measures are in place and are effective.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.















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Quarterly Performance Report - Economic Development

Generated on: 11 February 2022

Last Update Q3 2021/22

Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	PI Short Name	Performance Data Current Value	Performance Data Current Target
	% spend against budget	93.99%	100%
	Monitor contracts through operational agreements via monthly and quarterly meetings	100%	100%
	% staff attendance	91.44%	95%
	Team Briefings to be communicated to all available staff monthly (unless Sick or on leave)	100%	100%
	PR & thought pieces placed in relevant publications	4	3
	No of workshops/group interventions	13	9
	No of 1:1 Business Advice sessions	24	25
	Number of business research assignments	16	15
	Number of commercial premises and land inquiries	6	2
	Creative Industries Development – number of group interventions/workshops	3	6
	No of new jobs created through NIBSUP2	27	32
	Number of businesses supported through the Digital Growth Programme	12	9
	Effective draw down and utilisation of grant claims	100%	100%
	Creative Industries Development – number of 1-1 mentoring sessions	1	9

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ITEM 11**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	N/A
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Economic Development Service Unit Plan 2022-2023
Attachments	Appendix 1 - ED Service Plan 2022-2023

Since 2017/18 Service Plans have been produced by each Service in accordance with the Council's Performance Management policy.

Plans are intended to:

- Encourage compliance with the new legal, audit and operational context;
- Provide focus on direction;
- Facilitate alignment between Corporate, Service and Individual plans and activities;
- Motivate and develop staff;
- Promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice;
- Encourage transparency of performance outcomes;
- Better enable us to recognise success and address underperformance.

A draft plan for 2021-22 is attached, which has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the draft Corporate Plan 2020-24 and the draft Annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) 2020/21. The Plan will

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also support delivery of the ITRDS. The agreement of the plan will also aid toward achievement of the Council's performance improvement duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

The Service Plan highlights where the service contributes to the Corporate Plan and, where this is the case, sets out the objectives of the service for the 2022-23 year. It further identifies the key performance indicators used to illustrate the level of achievement of each objective, and the targets that the Service will try to attain along with key actions required to do so.

The plan has been developed in conjunction with staff, officers and management and in consultation with key stakeholders where relevant, including consultation for ITRDS.

The plan is based on the agreed budget. It should be noted that, should there be significant changes in-year (eg due to Council decisions, budget revisions or changes to the PIP) the plan may need to be revised.

The Committee will be provided with update reports on performance against the agreed plan.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council adopts the attached plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Head of Service signature	<i>Clare McGill</i>
Date	27/01/2022
Peer Review signature	<i>Sharon Mahaffy</i>
Date	07/02/2022
Director signature	<i>Susie McCullough</i>
Date	17/02/2022

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1. Introduction

Name of Service	Economic Development				
Included Service Units	Economic Development Unit Development Projects Unit				
Directorate	Regeneration, Development and Planning				
Purpose of Service	<p>The Economic Development service promotes and supports the economic wellbeing and growth of the Borough to make it a place to live where all can benefit from a prosperous economy. The service reflects and aligns with the corporate vision as outlined in the ANDBC plans and strategies below.</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2020-24</p> <p>The activities of the Economic Development Service Plan will support the priorities of the proposed Corporate Plan concentrating on Priorities 1, 3 and 6, while contributing to each through cross cutting collaboration as appropriate.</p> <p>Priority 1: Prosperity: Growing our local economy Priority 2: Environment: Growing a cleaner, greener local and global environment Priority 3: Opportunity: Growing the lifelong potential of our community Priority 4: Pride: Growing empowerment, respect and safety of our community Priority 5: Life: Growing the health and wellbeing of our residents Priority 6: Excellence: Growing a high-performing Council</p> <p>Community Plan</p> <p>Outcome 4: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy.</p> <p>Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development 2018-2030 (ITRDS)</p> <p>The ITRDS presents a coherent vision for the Borough in which the Economic Development section plays a key role in the delivery of actions and key targets to realise a more prosperous and thriving Borough.</p>				
Key customers/ stakeholders and their needs	<p>The list below presents the customers/stakeholders which the ED units serve and engage with to deliver services throughout the year. Business needs are accessed through working groups, business feedback and surveys, and plans are developed together with delivery partners to provide the support to meet those needs.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"><i>Customers/Stakeholders</i></th> <th style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"><i>Needs from the service</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Businesses</td> <td>Ongoing support requirements for business advice, access to knowledge and skills development, sources of funding and support, commercial premises and land</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Customers/Stakeholders</i>	<i>Needs from the service</i>	Businesses	Ongoing support requirements for business advice, access to knowledge and skills development, sources of funding and support, commercial premises and land
<i>Customers/Stakeholders</i>	<i>Needs from the service</i>				
Businesses	Ongoing support requirements for business advice, access to knowledge and skills development, sources of funding and support, commercial premises and land				

Residents	Requirement for good place making, a vision for a prosperous Borough, job creation and investment
Customers/Stakeholders Needs from the service	
Employees	Quality and supporting environment, adequate resources, on-going training and development, involvement in planning and recognition of achievements
Elected Members	Regular updates on economic data and timely reports and recommendations on interventions and opportunities enabling service delivery to support the economic development of the Borough
DAERA	Data and reports supporting funding streams
DfE, DfC	Reports according to project timelines, support and input for development of strategic plans for growth, skills and employability, investment
Invest NI	Sharing of local information and joint working to support inward investment, businesses looking to export, use of land and job creation support programmes
Partner Councils	Information sharing and collaboration on strategic planning; delivery of support mechanisms and projects
Partner Organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pickie Fun Park • Exploris • Boatfolk 	Funding and support to develop product/service offering
Enterprise Agencies	Collaboration to support job creation, pre-employment initiatives and commercial property development
SERC	Co-operation to support priorities in the Big Plan and to support local students and businesses to drive economic wellbeing and growth
Dept Culture Media & Sports (DCMS)/Building Digital UK (BDUK)	Timely reporting and joint working to facilitate digital development projects
Public Health Agency	Partnership working to support wellbeing initiatives
Other Service Units	Sharing of information, timely communication and collaborative approach to joint projects
East Border Region	Input into design and development of projects, their implementation and timely reporting.
Labour Market Partnership Members	Collaboration to support business needs for job creation, employment pathways and skills initiatives
Context, challenges &	There will be many continuing challenges due to the impact of COVID-19 – from home working of our staff, remote support to businesses, to increased use of

<p>key assumptions</p>	<p>technologies and ensuring our ability to understand and adapt our support to business needs brought about by the changing ongoing economic situation.</p> <p>To work towards outcomes relating to the Community Plan and delivery of the ITRDS and to feed into associated strategies as required, we will have to continue to work in partnership with stakeholders but also cross-departmentally to deliver results.</p> <p>This will involve taking the lead and ensuring resource in a number of projects which are summarised in the broad themes below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: Promote to attract Invest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inward investment programme and local working support ▪ Enterprise Promotion and Support • Theme: Connect our Places and People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Digital Infrastructure Network ▪ Collaborative Networks • Theme: Equip with Skills and Spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills, apprenticeship and volunteering programme ▪ BRCD projects • Theme: Understanding our Progress and Potential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the Economic Development Forum and associated subgroups <p>It will also involve working with other departments to ensure delivery of outcomes, led by them.</p> <p>Supporting the Directorate’s contribution to the Belfast Region City Deal to achieve outcomes for the region and the Borough will involve allocating sufficient resource, keeping up to date with the emerging issues, partnership working, both internally and externally, to progress the delivery of key projects. We will need to ensure that we have the resources and expertise to deliver on requirements.</p> <p>EU Funds have been central to the delivery of support for our local businesses and have helped to optimise budget spend. As we enter this final phase of current EU Funds, which have supported SME growth and competitiveness, we will now need to develop plans for the next period, ensure that we keep up to date with potential new sources of funding to leverage the work we undertake e.g. UK Shared Prosperity Fund, PEACE Plus.</p>
<p>Reflection on previous performance – successes and lessons learned</p>	<p><i>Reflect on prior year and year to date. Key Learning (Identify any objectives, KPIs or actions that you are not taking forward to this year and why e.g. achieved, shift in focus or have a better version of it etc. If it was achieved state what difference it made.)</i></p> <p>The Economic Development Section has performed well over the last period, with all functions broadly meeting each of the KPIs set. Feedback from our client base and associated members has been very positive and satisfaction levels high.</p> <p>The year 2021-22 threw up many challenges for the delivery of services and support to help our local businesses deal with the difficulties that the continuance of the COVID pandemic created however, the team whilst continuing to work from home has engaged with our client base to deliver remote mentoring, webinars, telephone support and enhanced e-communications. This has demonstrated that</p>

we can be and need to remain agile and flexible in delivery to continue having a positive impact, while also helping to save costs.

Given the increasing demand for support services, one of the key learning points from the previous year is, that in order to meet demand and to offer a service which meets a wide range of needs, we have had to flex the activities of some team members to ensure we have the staff resources to deliver, but we need to continue to partner more, to leverage expertise with other organisations and Councils but become more focussed to deliver the greatest impact.

One of the successes over the year has been the rollout of the FFNI project. This has been due to the ability of the team to work in collaboration both internally and externally and to drive project management through online meetings, tools and communications to ensure key milestones have been met.

While many businesses use the services of the Economic Development Unit, it is clear that many businesses are not aware of what we do. On a wider scale we have not been able to attract high growth new businesses to the Borough due to resources and lack of clear marketing messages and appropriate designated space. Going forward we will need to address this to have a wider impact on the economic growth of the Borough but be mindful of the context of the economic situation.

In order to ensure that we meet the targets set within the ITRDS and BRCD we will need to constantly review the impact of the services we provide. This is often a difficult task as not every intervention has a direct cause and effect and often the results are longer term than can be captured in a one-year service plan or, contribute to elements which sustain a business rather than hit headline achievements. We will need to ensure we get the balance right and ensure that actions and their impact, as far as possible, can be measured and that we plan more with an outcomes focus.

The learning from our previous programmes will be taken on board for new programmes that will run in the coming year. The last year has demonstrated that services can be adapted and transform to meet business support needs. The mix of 1:1 mentoring and workshop elements will be adapted to reflect the current restrictions, along with the demand for more tailored interventions across: Pre-employment and skills development, Business Start; Post-Start and Growth, whether this be existing businesses or attracting new investments. Social Enterprises and sector specific programmes will be renewed and delivered to reflect the needs identified.

Learnings from third-party contractual arrangements, such as Pickie Fun Park, Exploris and the Marina, will be used to ensure that officers' time is best spent to support the Operators' activities; to encourage improved performance and communications and ensure that Operators' obligations are clear.

One of the other key learnings is to ensure regular involvement and communication with all team members so that everyone understands our objectives, and the processes needed to effectively deliver the service. The requirement to work from home since March 2020 has meant that effective communication has become more important and continued efforts are required to ensure staff cohesion and clear understanding of internal and external requirements.

2. How does our Service contribute to community planning outcomes and PEOPLE priorities?

The Economic Development Service can be expected to have a direct impact on the following:

Community Planning Outcome	PEOPLE priority	Our focus for 2022/2023
Outcome 1: All people in Ards and North Down fulfil their lifelong potential	OPPORTUNITY: we will work with our partners to develop the potential of our residents, young and old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop skills, apprenticeship and volunteering programmes. • Support partnerships to enable pathways to employment for disadvantaged individuals.
Outcome 4; All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy	PROSPERITY: we will create the conditions for businesses to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local enterprise including start-up, incubation and business development. • Create and support the environment for businesses to invest and grow. • Partner with others to focus on employability, skills and mentoring, pathways to employment. • Support entrepreneurial and skills development for our key sectors. • Collaborate with others on projects to support innovation, regeneration and development. • Optimise opportunities to leverage funding sources which support sustainable economic development. • Work with contracted operators to enhance our Council facilities to attract visitors and encourage spend in the borough. • Support measures to facilitate better broadband access, increase digital optimisation and capability
Outcome 2: All people in AND enjoy good health and wellbeing	LIFE: Provide support for businesses that want their employees to be healthier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other bodies to encourage health and wellbeing within our local businesses
	EXCELLENCE: Growing a high- performing Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek and use best practice models and collaborations. • Manage our resources and budget spend to optimise costs and efficiencies

3. Key activities for 2022/2023

SERVICE:	Economic Development		
Community Plan Outcome:	All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy		
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority:	<p>PROSPERITY: We will create the conditions for businesses to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable.</p> <p>LIFE: We will support and deliver initiatives to improve the emotional wellbeing of our businesses and people</p> <p>OPPORTUNITY: We will work with partners to develop the potential of our businesses and people through skills and apprenticeship initiatives</p> <p>EXCELLENCE: We will work to be a high performing section to increase residents and business satisfaction in our services and make them accessible.</p>		
Council KPI(s):	<p>£m investment delivered</p> <p>Number of businesses supported</p> <p>Numbers of jobs created from the 'Start a Business' Programme and other support programmes</p> <p>Number of skills programmes delivered</p>		
Service Objective:	Promote business start-up and growth across the Borough and promote Ards and North Down as an attractive destination in which to do business and invest.		
What difference will it make?	We will increase employment, skills levels and the economic wellbeing of the Borough will be improved through business growth and enhanced connectivity		
Underpinning strategies:	Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2018-2030		
Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
1. Assist the development of the Creative and Digital sectors through a programme of support	Ongoing	DPM CDDO	ED, Arts and Heritage, Regeneration, procurement, external expertise, communications Local businesses, External speakers and trainers, internal Council departments, Corporate Communications

2. Identify the options to take forward the BRCD Innovation Hub	Ongoing	HOS	ED and Regeneration Team BRCD team Sector experts and economist Local businesses
3. Manage and deliver the Digital Programmes including Digital Growth and Digital Transformation	Ongoing	DPM CDDO	Newry Mourne, and Down District Council, local businesses, communications All NI Councils, Invest NI
4. Develop and implement the Digital Strategy and associated Action Plan. The elements of the Action Plan are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Sector • Digital Infrastructure • Digital Skills 	Ongoing	DPM CDDO	DfE, SERC, businesses, communications, procurement, Business Technology, Assets and Property, Capital, Compliance
5. Maximise draw down of funds from LoO via grant claims	Ongoing	DPO DPM	DAERA Delivery agent through AEL at Exploris and other Council departments
6. Support facilities and manage contracts for the operation of Council Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pickie Fun Park • Exploris • Bangor Marina 	Ongoing	DPM DPO	Operators of the facilities Assets and Properties Capital Projects team Procurement
7. Development of work to facilitate business accommodation needs	Ongoing	HOS /EDM	Council Performance Improvement Services, Regeneration, Tourism, Planning, Assets and Property, Corporate Communications. DfI INI External Consultants Private businesses
8. Support local Labour Market partnership through collaboration with relevant stakeholders and Government Departments	Ongoing	HOS/EDM/LMPM	DfC, DfE EA

			Colleges Universities Private Sector Community
9. Provide a business intelligence service to local businesses	Ongoing	EDM/BBE	NISRA Databases Internal departments Local estate agents
10. Work in collaboration with key partners to deliver a cross sectoral programme of business support and advice	On-going	EDM BDE EDO	INI SERC DfC DfE Chambers Key Industry bodies Cross-departmental
11. Provide local businesses with commercial premises intelligence	On-going	EDM BFO	Local Estate Agents Planning Services Invest NI Private Developers
12. Manage the delivery of the Go-For-It Business Start programme	On-going	EDM EDO	INI LCCC 11 council's group Contractors Corporate Communications
13. Support the delivery of employability and skills programmes for under- represented groups	On-going	EDO FFO	Prince's Trust YENI NOW Group Stepping Stones GEMS Kilcooley Women's Centre 4CURFuture ENI DfC DfE Corporate communications LMP

14. Manage the delivery of the AND Social Entrepreneurship Programme	On-going	EDM EDO	Delivery agent Existing Social Enterprises SENI Corporate Communications
15. Delivery and management of the SHINE (Business Growth) Programme	On-going	EDM EDO	Invest NI DIE Private Sector Delivery Agent Corporate Communications Private sector
16. Delivery and management of a Women's Business Support programme	On-going	EDM EDO	WIB Corporate Communications Private sector
17. Support the agri-food sector through targeted supported interventions	On-going	TM/FDDO EDM EDO BDE	Private Sector Food and drink producers
18. Support a Health and Wellbeing programme of initiatives for local businesses	On-going	EDM EDO	PHA Environmental Health Mind Body Business partners
19. Undertake Business survey to identify needs and value our services	On-going	EDM BDE	Local businesses
20. Implementation of Borough Marketing and Investment Strategy ED Action Plan	On-going	HOS BMM	Corporate Communications
21. Manage spend against Budget	On-going	HoS/EDM/DPM	Finance
22. Maintain a healthy working environment a. Manage staff attendance b. Regular team briefings c. Conduct Pride in Performance conversations	On-going	HOS EDM DPM	HR OD All team members

Service Objective:					
What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2022/2023?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Delivery of ILMP Action Plan	Strategic Effectiveness Service Quality/ availability Fairness	To deliver the Interim Labour Market Partnership Action Plan	31 March 2023	EDM, LMPM, LMPO	Council Service Units DfC, DfE, ILMP Members, external consultants, local businesses
Development of work to facilitate business accommodation needs	Strategic effectiveness / Foreign Direct Investment / Local investment/	To assist businesses identify land and commercial premises to grow and expand and to attract investors to AND.	31 st March 2023	HOS ED Officers GIS Officer External experts Local businesses	Council Performance Improvement Services, Regeneration, Tourism, Planning, Assets and Property, Corporate Communications. DfI INI External Consultants

SPECIFIED ASPECTS OF IMPROVEMENT

What will this improve?	Definition
Strategic Effectiveness	<i>is key to linking the community plan, and the ongoing processes that underpin it, with a council's improvement processes. The Department would expect that a council's strategic community planning outcomes and objectives should be central to that council's improvement activity and clearly contribute to the strategic effectiveness aspect.</i>
Service Quality	<i>all relate to service provision by aiming to meet the needs of citizens and ensuring fair ease of access to the most suitable services that meet their needs. Clearly, all of these objectives can be demonstrated individually or collectively. Fairness can also be demonstrated by exercising non-service functions in ways which reduce disadvantage and improve social well-being, for instance by improving citizens' access to information or by addressing inequalities experienced by Section 75 groups.</i>
Service Availability	
Fairness	
Sustainability	<i>When carrying out its functions or providing services, a council may demonstrate improvement when it operates in a way that contributes towards the sustainability of its area, as required under the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and the associated Northern Ireland Executive Sustainable Development Strategy. on-going efficiency may also be shown if fewer resources are utilised while maintaining provision of substantially similar or better services. Should a council choose to alter the manner by which a service is provided and in so doing it uses fewer resources or more integrated services, it will not only be demonstrating efficiency, but may demonstrate improved sustainability as well</i>
Efficiency	
Innovation	<i>any changes to service design and delivery methods that are intended to yield improvement under any other aspect and are reasonably likely to do so. This allows councils to make changes which may not have tangible effects within the same reporting year, but are likely to in subsequent years, and still count them as improvements.</i>

Service Objective:

What service / activities will we be stopping / changing in 2022/2023	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Promotion of DCMS Rural Gigabit Initiative (by another name)	Subsumed into FFNI activity	none	none	none	none
Development of the Innovation Hub OBC along with BRCD	OBC to be complete and outworkings to be delivered	none	none	none	none
Servicing and support of the ED Forum and sub-groups feeding into the ED Forum	Sub-Group has been subsumed into the LMP and ED Forum will be convened as needed related to identified tasks	none	none	none	Frees up staff to work on servicing the other work streams
LFFN Wave 3 Funding for ANDBC as part of FFNI Consortium	Funding complete	£6K against budgets from 2021/2022 in addition to WAN savings in Business Technology budgets	none	None	None
Number of Employability and Skills Sub-Group meetings	Succeeded by Labour Market Partnership	none	none	None	none
Manage Open House agreement	Management of Contract moved to Tourism Service Unit				
Creation of new web portal pilot to manage client programme applications	Completed – It is proposed to continue with a full version in 22/23 and to maintain it.	none	none	None - The portal will still be accessible. No impact on the Public	None

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
1a. Creative Industries Development – number of 1-1 mentoring sessions	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	18	5	18
1b. Creative Industries Development – number of group interventions/workshops	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	7	12
2. Approval of OBC and creation of Action Plan to progress Innovation Hub concept	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	March 2023
3a. Number of businesses supported through Digital Growth Programme	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	24	41	35
3b. Number of participants on ERDF Digital Transformation programme	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	14
4. Delivery and implementation of Digital Strategy Annual Action Plan	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
5. % Draw down of Seal Sanctuary funding from DAERA	Existing	Annually	n/a	23.7 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100%	100%	100%
6. % Operators' compliance with operating agreements	Existing	Annually	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100%	100%	100%

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
7. Number of commercial sites mapped on customer facing platform.	New	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	30
8. Number of projects delivered in ILMP Action Plan	New	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	14
9. Number of one-to-one business advice	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	80	100	110	115	115	83	115
10. Number of business support group interventions / workshops	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	15	20	20	34	34	29	30
11. Number of research assignments	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	80	100	110	115	74	50	90
12. Number of new jobs created through GFI	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	138	85	111	105	101	83	133
13.a Jobs uptake by applicants through job fair initiatives	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	25	n/a	Not available	25
13.b Number of ESF participants into employment	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	34	38	10	25
14. Number of jobs created through the Social Entrepreneurship Programme	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	39.5	6	15
15. Number of jobs created through the SHINE programme	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	28	81	27	70
16. Number of participants taking part in a Women Business Support programme – follow-up from YYC	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	52	37	47	30
17. Number of targeted interventions supporting agri-food businesses	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	Not available	4

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
18. Number of business employees registering for Health and Wellbeing initiatives	Existing	Annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	30	25
19. Number of surveys to identify needs and value of the ED and business support services	Existing	Annually	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
20a. Number of PR & thought pieces placed in relevant publications/ channels	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	8
20b. Number of sector-specific fact sheets with best-in-class borough business case studies for promotion on LinkedIn and Locate in AND website	New	Biannually	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
21.% Spend against budget	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	95%	95%	95%	93.5%	95%	95%
22a. % Staff Attendance	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	95%	95%	95%	90%	95%	95%
22b. % staff reporting regular receipt of team briefings	Existing	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
22c.% Pride in Performance Conversations completed	Existing	Annually at end of Q2	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%	n/a	100%	100%

4. Risks

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
CR3	Failure to deliver against performance targets	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly monitoring against financial targets. Quarterly reviews against activity targets by managers Annual review and reporting 	4	2	8		Ongoing monitoring and review	March 2023	Head of ED ED Manager Dev Projects Manager	
CR3	Inadequate contingency / emergency plans for events	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre & Post event planning & reviews Annual review of Procedures Effective Communication process in place Event cancellation insurance put in place for certain events Insurance in place for all events 	3	2	6		Consistent monitoring	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED ED Manager Dev Project Manager Risk Manager	
CR3	Failure of Pickie Fun Park	5	3	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly and Quarterly meetings with Operator to review operations 	4	1	4		Interim and Annual review to assess planning against OA Regular review of contract through MLG	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED Dev Projects Manager	
CR3	Not keeping IT systems up to date to deliver service leading to business failure	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of current systems and ability to deliver Periodic updates with IT Manager 	4	2	8		Review of technology requirements vis a vis service delivery	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED ED Manager Development Project Manager in assoc. with IT Manager	

CR3	Failure to deliver BRCD projects	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings with 5 other Councils Subgroup internal meetings 	4	3	12		Contingency plan to assess projects delivery plans	March 2023	Director RDP Head of ED ED Manager	
CR3	Failure to secure human resources to effectively deliver services & optimise opportunities	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with HR to plan appropriate & timely recruitment 	4	3	12		Follow up and ensure business cases & appropriate reports brought to Council	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED ED Manager Dev Projects Manager	
CR3	Lack of engagement/buy-in of key stakeholders to deliver ITRDS	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular engagement meetings with internal departments and key stakeholder organisations 	2	2	4		Monitoring of progress against plans and targets	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED ED Manager Dev Projects Manager	
CR3	Failure of Exploris	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly and Quarterly meetings with Operator to review operations 	4	1	4		Interim and Annual review to assess planning against Operating Agreement	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED Dev Projects Manager	
CR3	Brexit	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of advice related to Brexit Researching alternative sources of funding for programmes Provision of advice sessions for businesses 	3	3	9		Ongoing monitoring and advice	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED ED Manager Dev Projects Manager	
CR14	COVID 19	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and dissemination of advice and guidance. Adherence to C19 H&S guidelines. Staff working from home where possible. Move to remote working/support 	4	4	16		Ongoing monitoring and advice	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED ED Manager Dev Projects Manager	
CR3	Failure of Bangor Marina	5	3	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly and Quarterly meetings with Operator to review operations 	4	1	4		Interim and Annual review to assess planning against OA Regular review of contract	Throughout 2022-23	Head of ED Dev Projects Manager	

5. Resources

<p>Are all actions resourced within the current (2021/2022) budget plan? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Will additional resources be required? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (If no please comment in Section A below how the actions will be funded, ie Staff Resources, Equipment, Revenue Budget, Capital Budget.) (If yes please detail additional resources in Section B below.)</p>
<p>Section A:</p> <p>n/a</p>
<p>Section B: Budget is required from DfC to run the LMP and deliver the Action Plan.</p>
<p>Staff: <Details of changes to required resources to deliver on objectives> Additional Recruitment of LMP Staff x2</p>
<p>Financial: <Insert budget required to deliver on objectives> Revenue ED Budget of £1.3m has been agreed In addition, both ILMP posts will be funded by DfC at estimated cost of £177,730 (approved to 31 March 2023)</p>
<p>Other: <Insert details of other resources required to deliver on objectives> n/a</p>
<p>If the required additional resources are NOT available, please state:</p>
<p>What is the likely impact on performance? n/a</p>
<p>What is the likely impact on the public? n/a</p>
<p>What is the likely impact on staffing? n/a</p>

6. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review will be undertaken through regular team meetings and throughout the year at the specified intervals detailed above and/or as specified for particular projects. KPIs will be reported to the Regeneration and Development Committee each quarter in 2022-23. The targets and actions which are linked to the ITRDS will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

7. Conclusions

The Economic Development section will continue to strive to deliver an excellent and efficient service throughout the Council and the Borough. The key actions above will be driven by the ambitious targets set in the Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2018-2030, Community Plan and Belfast Region City Deal but have been revised due to the impact of COVID-19. Delivery of services will be monitored and adapted in line with working H&S guidelines.

8. Appendices

8.1 PESTLE Analysis

Political: The current economic and political climate is challenging, and the immediate future is uncertain due to the effects of the pandemic and aspects of Brexit. The NI Executive's decisions and government department priorities over the coming period will impact the business climate and available support for our local businesses. C-19 and the varying approaches to the management of C-19 measures may prove challenging for many sectors.

Economic: The Draft Programme for Government 2016-21 and the 10X Economy Strategy will determine several strategic issues and targets for local government, and the Industrial Strategy for Northern Ireland will inform key strategic priorities. More specifically, the Integrated Tourism Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2018-2030 (ITRDS) provides key economic drivers in relation to the number of jobs to be created and target productivity levels and will still inform our plans as we move into recovery. The effects of C-19 will continue to impact our businesses and support will be key to help many to recover and survive.

Lack of clarity on the UK Shared Prosperity and the end of the current EU Funds will influence service delivery and makes it difficult for Councils to plan for programmes to support the economy going forward.

The outcome of the Belfast Region City Deal will have an impact on resources, budgets and activities within the Economic Development section and will have to be factored into plans and prioritised appropriately and collaboratively within the wider Directorate and across Council.

COVID-19 has had a hugely negative impact on the NI and local economy with hospitality, retail, arts, recreation and transport sectors most adversely affected. Support and engagement will need to be tailored to assist recovery and businesses facing redundancies as we progress throughout the year.

Social: In Ards and North Down we have an aging population and a high percentage of young people with no qualifications while equally ranking high in the percentage of those with qualifications of NVQ level 4 and above. In planning our outworking from the ITRDS we need to be mindful of how we can address issues to ensure we have a qualified and able workforce to meet our businesses’ needs in the Borough and how we can best prepare them for growth continuing to positively contribute to the Borough’s economic wealth. The work being done to establish a local Labour Market Partnership will help to address some of the issues businesses face in filling vacancies while helping to upskill and create new pathways for those seeking entry into employment. COVID-19 will have far reaching consequences on jobs and employment prospects, the way people work and spend their income. Young people and the long-term economically inactive may be hardest hit by unemployment due to COVID-19 so we will work with partners, employers and government to deliver the appropriate support.

Technology: Technology is constantly changing the way people engage with services and want to receive information. This will impact on how we plan, deliver and communicate with our service users and how we help our businesses to be agile and adapt to the changes in order to grow. The lack of digital infrastructure across the Borough presents issues that still need to be addressed. The requirements for use of digital technologies have increased dramatically and with increasing numbers of employees expected to be working from home we will need to address digital literacy, capability and security, while ensuring as many people as possible across the borough get access to fast fibre broadband.

Legal: Ensuring best practice and value for money means that we will ensure that we comply with all regulations regarding procurement of goods and services and that training staff and members is kept up to date, especially in relation to new legislation such as GDPR, new regulations arising from Brexit and the move to include more social clauses in contracts. We will need to ensure messaging around C-19 guidelines is clear and adhered to, as appropriate.

Environmental: To assist Council in meeting its sustainability and environmental objectives we will work to ensure we adopt best practice in working with suppliers, and internally, use technology where possible to reduce our carbon footprint and look at new models of working to reduce unnecessary commuting. The internal Climate Action Working Group will help us collectively to work on progressing more sustainable business practices.

8.2 ED Unit SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cohesive and capable team with ability to adapt to changing needs ▪ Ability to leverage funds to optimise support delivered ▪ Good partnership working to deliver results ▪ Horizon scanning to capture latest trends to keep delivery fresh ▪ Relationship building with business base 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing delivery demands/projects with finite resources ▪ Evolving technologies ▪ Pace of projects and ensuring all team members kept up to speed in a timely manner ▪ Time consuming nature of Government Departments demands on reporting mechanisms against resources
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New sources of funding ▪ Partnership working presents innovative ideas and business support mechanisms ▪ Use of Digital technologies ▪ BRCD ▪ ED Forum and Partnerships 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cessation of EU funding sources ▪ Increasing delivery demands and competing priorities ▪ COVID-19

Unclassified

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ITEM 12**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	10 February 2022
File Reference	141842
Legislation	n/a
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Project 24 Update
Attachments	None

1. Background

Project 24 is a temporary revitalisation project pending the Queen's Parade development. Project 24 utilises 6 bespoke artist pods split into 2 individual mini studios, creating 12 studios in total. The project opened in April 2013 and has run on a phased basis since then.

2. Site Permissions

Members will be aware that an application was submitted to extend the planning consent for both the Project 24 site and The Hub. Currently there is Planning consent for the Project 24 site to 24 April 2023 and for The Hub until 30 June 2023.

3. Queen's Parade Development Scheme – Bangor Marine Proposal

Members have been made aware that Bangor Marine has expressed an interest in taking over the Project 24 scheme. This would be an opportunity to showcase and trial opportunities on the site and bring the vision of the Queen's Parade development to life before construction commences. Bangor Marine proposed to work with the existing operators within Project 24 and to compliment this with food & beverage, retail and leisure opportunities. The existing Hub would remain onsite and be animated by the Council in collaboration with Bangor Marine.

At the time of writing, no agreement has yet been reached between Bangor Marine and the Department for Communities.

Unclassified

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4. Artists

There are twelve studios within Project 24, eight of which are occupied at present. There is a contractual arrangement between the Council and the current Project 24 artists until 31 March 2022, with a view to this being reviewed as the Queen's Parade development and Bangor Marine proposal for use of the site progresses. A further two studios are used as social pods for workshops, meetings, training, equipment storage, etc. If no agreement is reached between Bangor Marine and the Department for Communities, it is proposed the Council seeks to fill the two vacant studios.

5. Events

Over the past two years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, several annual events at Project 24 had to be cancelled. Where possible, 'Market Fresh' and 'Art on the Rails' continued to be delivered (restrictions permitting).

'Art on the Rails' is a contemporary curated art and craft event that takes place on the last Sunday monthly from April to September.

Market Fresh commenced in 2019 as an additional offering to the Art on the Rails event. Due to its success, Market Fresh has become a standalone event, taking place on the second Saturday monthly.

Market Fresh is an outdoor market, providing an opportunity for local traders and makers to sell and showcase their product/craft. It provides visitors and residents an opportunity to come along and browse the selection of local produce with the opportunity to meet the maker.

The Council works in partnership with resident Project 24 artist, Sharon Regan, to deliver Market Fresh and Art on the Rails. Sharon continues to build an extensive range of support and engagement within the local creative and food sectors. Due to the continued success of both events, it is proposed these will continue for the period up to December 2022. It is also proposed to deliver 4 larger-scale Market Fresh events at peak visitor times (Easter, Summer, Halloween & Christmas). The ongoing delivery of Market Fresh and Art on the Rails builds a consistent market within Bangor Town Centre, of which can be facilitated elsewhere within the town following the conclusion of Project 24. A budget for these activities is contained within the rate setting process.

6. Upgrade Works (Queen's Parade Development site)

The Department for Communities (DfC) has advised of the opportunity to apply for capital funding for upgrade works within the Queen's Parade Development site. It should be noted this funding must be spent by 31 March 2022.

Officers will make an application for these works which are estimated at c£30,000 and is 100% funded. The proposed works are:

1. Environmental Health Works within the Project 24 site to include power washing of the pods and the Hub and replacement of damaged picnic tables, etc.
2. General upgrade/repairs within the Project 24 site.

Unclassified

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3. General upgrade/repairs to the Queen's Parade Development site to include installation of temporary vinyls on the windows of the vacant properties located on lower Main Street to improve the appearance of this area and showcase Bangor. It is proposed the vinyls will include historical images of 'old' Bangor with the possibility to include images of upcoming developments (e.g. Bangor Waterfront, Queen's Parade)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council agrees to:

1. Extend the current artist contracts to December 2022. This is conditional on Bangor Marine and the Department for Communities not having reached an agreement by mid-March 2022;
2. The continued delivery of Market Fresh, monthly on the second Saturday through to December 2022, and the delivery of larger scale Market Fresh event four times throughout the year (Easter, Summer, Halloween & Christmas) where Covid-19 legislation and budgets permit;
3. The continued delivery of Art on the Rails on the last Sunday of each month from April to September 2022 where Covid-19 legislation and budgets permit;
4. Proceed with proposed works to the Queen's Parade Development Site should funding be secured.

Unclassified

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ITEM 13

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	3 March 2022
Responsible Director	Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	8 February 2022
File Reference	160127
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Regeneration Performance Report, Quarter 3 (October-December 2021-22)
Attachments	Q3 Report

Context

Members will be aware that Council is required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil this requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlines the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2021)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2021)

Unclassified

The Council's 17 Service Plans outline how each respective Service will contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

Reporting approach

The Service Plans will be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 3 2021-22 is attached.

Key points to note:

- The Business Adaptation and Improvement Grants are ongoing but taking much longer to deliver due to challenges with the supply of equipment and tradesmen. All Letters of Offer have been issued and most payments have been made. Officers are continuing to work with those businesses which have not yet submitted a claim.
- DfC had agreed an extension of the Recovery funding until 31 March 2022, however, a request will now be made for a further extension as there are still key projects to be delivered.

Key achievements:

- The tender for the infrastructure improvements at the Harbour in Portavogie has been issued.
- The work on the Masterplan for the Commons in Donaghadee is progressing.

Emerging issues:

- The Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Communities and Infrastructure have made an award of c£1.7M, subject to a letter of Offer, for projects to be undertaken and developed in the rural areas. The Council has agreed that some of this funding shall be used to undertake the public realm scheme in Portaferry.
- The consideration of regeneration schemes by the Planning Section is taking longer than expected as the NIEA has not the resources to respond to the queries from the Planning Section.

Action to be taken:

- To continue to monitor the implementation of all projects.
- To develop and get the Council's approval for the programme of works under the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme.

Unclassified

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the report is noted.
















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Quarterly Performance Report - Regeneration

Generated on: 08 February 2022

Last Update Q3 2021/22

Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	PI Short Name	Performance Data Current Value	Performance Data Current Target
	% spend against budget	72%	100%
	To deliver the town recovery plans and a rural recovery plan	0	0
	To monitor the compliance of the Rural Development Programme grant from the various applicants	0	0
	% staff attendance	94.98%	95%
	Pride and Performance review complete with all staff	0%	0%
	No of staff meetings including updates on service plan delivery	9	9
	Roll out of Village Plan Actions	2	0
	To develop, agree, secure funding and commence delivery of a public realm scheme for Portaferry	No	No
	To commence phase 1 of a feasibility study for the development of the Parklands in Donaghadee	1	0
	To undertake a feasibility study for the development of the Parklands in Portaferry	0	0
	To agree detailed technical design for Marine Gardens QP with Bangor Marina	0	0
	To progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme, to agree Operating Model with BYC	0	0
	To complete the Portavogie promenade scheme	0	0
	To deliver an agreed scheme and obtain funding for a public realm scheme at Portavogie Harbour	0	0
	To complete the Grey Point fort scheme	0	0

Unclassified

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Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	PI Short Name	Performance Data Current Value	Performance Data Current Target
	Schemes to be delivered via the Heritage Lottery Scheme in Donaghadee	0	0
	Heritage Lottery Scheme grant aid allocated	£0.00	£0.00
	New Chambers of Commerce 2-year Business Plans	5	5
	Manage the full commitment of the Rural Development Programme budget	£0.00	£0.00
	To administer the delivery of the funding that has been allocated for business recovery within the towns, villages and smaller settlements by March 2021	0%	0%
	To continue the activity at Project 24 in order to provide a mean-while use facility and to animate the site	100%	100%

Unclassified

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ITEM 14**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	11 February 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	N/A
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Regeneration Unit Service Plan 2022/23
Attachments	Service Plan

Since 2017/18 Service Plans have been produced by each Service in accordance with the Council's Performance Management policy.

Plans are intended to:

- Encourage compliance with the new legal, audit and operational context;
- Provide focus on direction;
- Facilitate alignment between Community, Corporate, Service and Individual plans and activities;
- Motivate and develop staff;
- Promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice;
- Encourage transparency of performance outcomes;
- Better enable us to recognise success and address underperformance.

A draft plan for 2022/23 is attached. This plan has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the Corporate Plan 2020-24 and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan

Unclassified

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(PIP) 2022/23. The Plan will also support delivery of the ITRDS. The agreement of the plan will also aid toward achievement of the Council's performance improvement duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

The Service Plan highlights where the service contributes to the Corporate Plan and, where this is the case, sets out the objectives of the service for the 2022/23 year. It further identifies the key performance indicators used to illustrate the level of achievement of each objective, and the targets that the Service will try to attain along with key actions required to do so.

The plan has been developed in conjunction with staff, officers and management and in consultation with key stakeholders where relevant, including consultation for ITRDS.

The plan is based on the agreed budget. It should be noted that, should there be significant changes in-year (e.g. due to Council decisions, budget revisions or changes to the PIP) the plan may need to be revised.


The Committee will be provided with update reports on performance against the agreed plan.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council adopts the attached plan.

Regeneration Unit

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Head of Service signature	
Date	04/02/2022
Peer Review signature	Clare McGill
Date	07/02/2022
Director signature	<i>Susie McCullough</i>
Date	17/02/2022

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1. Introduction

Name of Service	Regeneration
Included Service Units	Rural Development, Urban Development, Project 24 and Strategic Projects
Directorate	Regeneration, Development and Planning
Purpose of Service	<p>The Regeneration Unit liaises with strategic partners to drive investment, revitalisation and the renewal of both the urban and rural areas of the Borough. The service supports the following strategic priorities in the Ards and North Down Borough Council Draft Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperity: Growing our economy – the Regeneration Unit strives to listen to the views of local residents, business owners etc and then to source funding to develop our towns, villages and smaller settlements to grow and meet the needs of all customers and therefore aid the area to thrive. • Life: Growing the health and wellbeing of our residents – in developing or reviewing the various town masterplans or the village plans to look at the proposal to ensure they are sustainable and encourage residents and visitors alike to enjoy the open spaces, even if they are in the middle of a town centre. We will also work with our strategic partners, so this aspiration is included in all forward work plans. We also review new funding streams to see where the best deliver fit exists to maximum the grant that may be available to delivery these projects • Pride: Growing empowerment, respect and safety of our community – to work with the five Town Advisory Groups and the various Village Groups to ensure the voice of residents are heard from all age groups. • Excellence: The achievement of all five outcomes of the Big Plan required us to be a High Performing Council – to work internally to ensure we develop our staff and deliver our services to the best of our ability.
Key customers/ stakeholders and their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents - Requirement for good placemaking and a vision for future development in the Borough and to see the out workings of the ITRDS. They also want to see practical projects that targets town and village dereliction and the improvement of these areas. They require to see more synergy between rural and urban development. This will be possible through dialog via the Town Advisory and Village Groups that have been formed. • Employees - Quality and supporting environment, adequate resources and ongoing training and development. Also, a time frame for delivering projects that is realistic and to see how they fit into the delivery of the ITRDS. • Elected Members - Supporting and enabling service delivery and to be included in the planning for the development of the Borough. To see a development plan across all areas of the Borough and where possible have buy-in from local communities. Also, to play their part in the different forums that have been established. • Town & Village Groups - Local people having a say on future developments in their areas. Also, to see actions in trying to tackle the number of businesses closing, or not reopening, following C19 lock down. Sustainable development and green open spaces are essential for the development of all areas. To ensure this the plans are tested on the various Group before the concepts are included in future plans. • Chambers of Commerce/Trade - To assist with practical and financial support to aid growth in the retail core of the five towns. To give leadership and to be a link to central government in advocating for support for businesses.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Departments – DfC, DAERA and DfI Roads. The Unit works closely with these Departments to secure funding and delivery projects.
<p>Context, challenges & key assumptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political - Brexit and the issues with trading with GB and EU. The out workings of these are still unknown. The concerns about the stability of the Executive and Assembly are still evident. Public negativity on local politics and how it effects the delivery of objectives. Global political changes with the emphases on sustainability. Departmental budgets and future planning and whether central government funding will be available to deliver agreed plans. The concerns that the Executive will be requested to raise more public funding from within NI and how that will affect local business. Also, political differing opinions on the future management of C19 Economic - Brexit and everything which is still unknown about the trading arrangements. Loss of EU grants. Loss of NI grants due to budget uncertainty. Rate increases, both locally and regionally. Increasing pressure on local businesses due to higher costs. Expectation on the Council for value for money on rates. Efficiency agenda – more for less. More pressure on the High Streets with more on-line sales. More sustainable trading practices. The out workings of the Queen’s Parade development. Devastating effects of C19. The effects of lock down on the economy and how it can be kick started again. Vast numbers of people working from home and therefore not providing footfall in our towns which results in more demand on local areas and services. Social - Lower disposable income as wage increases are not linked to inflation or have been frozen and the increased unemployment rate. Increasingly older local population. Expectation on the Council to deliver value for money services. More demand to duplicate Council services throughout the Borough. Expectation that the Council will meet the shortfall from government departments. There is also an expectation that Council will take forward all projects identified in master / village plans. Expectation that the Council will undertake services that are no longer provided by Central Government. Supporting normalisation following C19. Demand to reopen and redeliver as many Council services as quickly as possible. Technological - Aging Wi-Fi infrastructure with less budgets for development and an ever-increasing demand with more people working from home. Poor connectivity in rural areas. Better use of social media networks to inform user groups. Change in shopping trends due to better technology and the promotion of safe on-line shopping. With so many people working from home the wi-fi infrastructure is unable to cope. The development and adaptation of software to enable group meetings. Also, the growth in virtual meetings whether this is good or negative. Legal/Compliance – More social value clauses being included in contracts and the knock-on effect of this. Rural proofing and how this can be truly achieved and delivered. Procurement regulations and legislative changes due to Brexit. Environmental - Zero Carbon regulations. Sustainability issues. Poor coastal defence in rural areas. Better promotion of sustainable travel especially in the rural areas. Development potential awaiting the outcome of the Local Development Plan. Climate Emergency and its out-workings. <p>Future Challenges (local and regional):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New opportunities with partnership working from the Big Plan. How will this materialise is yet to be detailed. New opportunities to work strategically through the ITRDS. Challenges include enabling the Council to deliver regeneration projects in the context of changing

	<p>consumer trends, finite financial resources, planning and the available land constraints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of centralised funding vs raising local rates vs sweating/realising unused assets to fund activities. • To revise Urban and Rural Plans, with costed priorities to enable a strategic Blue/Green initiatives and projects that support investment and regeneration whilst celebrating and protecting the built heritage, which is in keeping with the themes identified in the ITRDS. • The Queen’s Parade development to commence and to encourage further development. • How any development of the Flagship Centre helps/hinders the regeneration of Bangor’s shopping core. • The outcome of the Council’s bid for funding from the Belfast Region City Deal. • To ensure the delivery by the Council of multiple capital village renewal projects. Start the prioritizing of the next round of village projects so that the Council is ready to avail of funding opportunities when they arise. • Lack of certainty around how future rural development funding will be delivered. Lobby DAERA to ensure Council has a similar role in next Programme. • Growing global dominance of online retailers is a challenge for town centre traders. • To continue to develop good working relationships with the Chambers of Commerce, based on the out workings of the delivery of each’s two-year business plan with a focus on recovery • Working with DfI Roads to develop better roads infrastructure about the Borough, which is necessary to aid the development of this area as a tourism destination. • To take advantage of the possible disposal of Kinnegar Military base and how the Council can maximise this for the betterment of the Borough. • Differing legislation and standards between NI and the rest of the UK. • Lack of investment or development as many businesses will take years to recover from C19. • Lack of air travel industry. • Lack of tourists and their associated spend.
<p>Reflection on previous performance – successes and lessons learned</p>	<p>Review of last plan period and key achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RDP has committed all the funding allocated to this area, as well as circa £1m of additional resources. All projects are in the final stages of completion. An exit strategy is now to be developed. • 14 village plan projects have been completed. • The job creation target (40) for the RDP has been met and exceeded by 6. • Even with the challenging funding issues with DfC, three town projects were completed. • One major refurbishment project completed under the Town Heritage Initiative. • The Outline Business Case for the Bangor Waterfront Project has been agreed by the Council and has been submitted to the Belfast Region City Deal Board for consideration.

- The C19 Borough Recovery process and action plans which were approved are now being implemented.
- Tranche one and two of the Business Adaptation and Improvement Grant were launched and all letters of offer have been issued. Grants are being paid once the appropriate documents have been received.
- Five Town Advisory Groups and one Rural Recovery Group continue to work well.
- A well-received "Shop Local" marketing campaign was undertaken.
- Delivered the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme on behalf of DAERA to support rural businesses.
- Secured Coastal Communities funding for the first time for the Ballywalter Lime Kiln Scheme and this has now been completed.
- Two applications submitted to the SEAFLAG for capital schemes in Portavogie. One letter of offer has been received with the scheme starting early 2022. The other scheme is currently seeking planning permission before it can be progressed.

A key learning for the Regeneration Unit has been flexibility and how to implement support schemes in as quick and flexible approach as possible, while negotiating a multitude of governance procedures.

2. How does our Service contribute to community planning outcomes and PEOPLE priorities?

The *Regeneration Unit* can be expected to have a direct impact on the following:

Community Planning Outcome	PEOPLE priority	Our focus for 2022/2023
All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy	Prosperity: Growing our economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To administer all remaining claims for the Business Adaptation and Improvement Grant and to deliver the town and rural Recovery Plans. • To administer all remaining claims for the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme on behalf of DAERA. • To work with central government to secure any further grant aid that may be available. • To work with DfC in relation to funding for the Portaferry Public Realm Scheme. • To identify further town and village infrastructure schemes and to source funding and where possible to work the schemes to a deliverable position. • To develop a masterplan for phase 1 of the Donaghadee Parks project. • To complete the masterplan for the Castle Park, Portaferry project. • To continue the partnership with the five Chambers of Commerce • To develop distinct plans and an implementation timeline for the Bangor Waterfront Scheme • To continue with Project 24 until the site is needed for the Queen's Parade development • To continue to work with the Queen's Parade developer to progress to the next phase • To develop detailed plans, costings and obtain planning permission for a covering for Conway Square • To deliver an agreed scheme and obtain funding for a public realm scheme at Portavogie Harbour.

<p>All people in Ards and North Down enjoy good health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Life: Growing the health and wellbeing of our residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To complete all outstanding village renewal schemes • To complete the RDP co-operation scheme at Grey Point Fort in conjunction with HED. • To complete the closure of the Donaghadee THI Project • To deliver an agreed scheme and obtain funding for a public realm scheme at Portavogie Promenade.
<p>The achievement of all five outcomes of the Big Plan required us to be a High Performing Council</p>	<p>Excellence: Growing a high-performing Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet staff attendance requirements • To meet spend against budget targets • To hold regular staff meetings • To complete all Pride and Performance reviews

3. Key activities for 2022/2023

SERVICE:	Regeneration
Community Plan Outcome:	Prosperity - All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy Life - All people in Ards and North Down enjoy good health and wellbeing Excellence - The achievement of all five outcomes of the Big Plan requires us to be a High Performing Council
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority:	Prosperity: We will create the conditions for business to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable Life: We will support the physical and emotional wellbeing of our residents through our services, facilities and partnerships Excellence: Growing a high-performing Council
Council KPI(s):	Prosperity - £'s investment Life - £s invested in maintaining public spaces
Service Objective:	To deliver projects and actions that aid the economic growth within both the urban and rural areas of the Borough To make sure all projects are completed in a sustainable way that permits the local community and visitors to make best use of the facilities To empower and train our people to deliver the desired outcomes
What difference will it make?	It will help develop a thriving economy for both the rural and urban areas More usable outdoor amenities for local communities and visitors to use Provide a better and more sustainable service which can react quickly to the needs of the its users
Underpinning strategies:	Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Development Strategy, Town Masterplans, Village Plans Council policies and decisions

Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
To continue with sustainable Town Chamber business plans that enhance Chamber activity and assist in growing the membership base as well as utilise existing funding to animate the Towns. To aid businesses in the Towns to become more competitive and react to change more quickly	December 2022	Urban Development Manager (UDM)	Five Chambers of Commerce
To commence delivery of the Portaferry Public Realm using funding secured from DfC/DfI/DAERA	March 2023	HOR & UDM	DfC/DfI/DAERA, Town Advisory Group
To complete the administration of the Business as Usual and Covid Grant with completed PPE's	September 2022	HOR, RDM & UDM	DfC/DfI/DAERA
To continue to work with the Town Advisory Groups (TAGs) to develop regeneration improvements for urban towns	March 2023	UDM	Internal services
To continue to work with the Village Groups to develop regeneration improvements through Village plans, growing the membership base and utilising funding streams to animate the villages, increasing footfall and overall visitor attractiveness.	March 2023	RDM	Internal services / Village Groups
To maintain a healthy working environment driven by PERFORM	March 2023	HOR, RDM & UDM	Internal services
To continue to work with the Queen's Parade Developer and DfC and represent Council on the Project Board and agree a design and specification for the Marine Gardens elements of the scheme, subject to securing planning.	March 2023	Head of Regeneration	Bangor Marina, DfC
To play an active key role on the BRCD Bangor Waterfront Project Board, acting as key client and progressing the project as outlined in the Project Timeline.	March 2023	Head of Regeneration	BRCD, DfC, BW Project Board

Service Objective:					
What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2022/2023?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
To develop projects in partnership with EBR for Peace Plus funding	Strategic Effectiveness	Work in partnership with EBR who administer the Peace Plus funding to identify suitable projects for both urban and rural projects	March 2023	HOS/RDM/UDM	EBR
To develop Urban/Rural projects to planning stage to access funding streams	Strategic Effectiveness	To be able to respond to potential funding opportunities by working up 'shovel ready' projects	March 2023	HOS/RDM/UDM	DfC/DfI/DAERA or others
To develop and deliver projects using the Covid Recovery Small Settlements' Regeneration Programme	Strategic Effectiveness	Funding has been allocated from three government departments for each council to undertake this work	March 2023	HOS/RDM/UDM	DfC/DfI/DAERA or others
To undertake a comprehensive revision of the five Masterplans	Strategic Effectiveness	All the Masterplans for the five town are now dated with many of the projects completed or no longer relevant	March 2023	HOS/UDM	DfC and other stakeholders
To work with the MoD to develop a strategic Masterplan for the Kinnegar site. Also, to commence/develop an OBC for the site if required.	Strategic Effectiveness	To work in partnership with the MoD to realise the potential for this site.	March 2023	HOS	MoD

SPECIFIED ASPECTS OF IMPROVEMENT	
What will this improve?	Definition
Strategic Effectiveness	<i>is key to linking the community plan, and the ongoing processes that underpin it, with a council's improvement processes. The Department would expect that a council's strategic community planning outcomes and objectives should be central to that council's improvement activity and clearly contribute to the strategic effectiveness aspect.</i>
Service Quality	<i>all relate to service provision by aiming to meet the needs of citizens and ensuring fair ease of access to the most suitable services that meet their needs. Clearly, all of these objectives can be demonstrated individually or collectively. Fairness can also be demonstrated by exercising non-service functions in ways which reduce disadvantage and improve social well-being, for instance by improving citizens' access to information or by addressing inequalities experienced by Section 75 groups.</i>
Service Availability	

SPECIFIED ASPECTS OF IMPROVEMENT	
What will this improve?	Definition
Fairness	
Sustainability	<i>When carrying out its functions or providing services, a council may demonstrate improvement when it operates in a way that contributes towards the sustainability of its area, as required under the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and the associated Northern Ireland Executive Sustainable Development Strategy. on-going efficiency may also be shown if fewer resources are utilised while maintaining provision of substantially similar or better services. Should a council choose to alter the manner by which a service is provided and in so doing it uses fewer resources or more integrated services, it will not only be demonstrating efficiency, but may demonstrate improved sustainability as well</i>
Efficiency	
Innovation	<i>any changes to service design and delivery methods that are intended to yield improvement under any other aspect and are reasonably likely to do so. This allows councils to make changes which may not have tangible effects within the same reporting year, but are likely to in subsequent years, and still count them as improvements.</i>

Service Objective:

What service / activities will we be stopping / changing in 2022/2023	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
THI Scheme in Donaghadee	Funding for scheme is closed as set by Heritage Lottery Fund	£65K (net)	None	None	Reduction of 1 member of staff
Rural Development Programme (RDP) – complete end of project evaluation	Funding for scheme is closed as set by DAERA	£0	None	Loss of funding for valuable rural projects	The costs of two members of staff now to be borne by the Council

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
Number of Town Chamber business plans	Existing	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	5	N/A	5	5
To secure funding from DfC/DfI/DAERA for the Portaferry Public Realm Scheme and to commence delivery of the Scheme	Existing	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	1
% Business as Usual and Covid Grant with completed PPE's	Existing	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	35%	80%	100%
No of meetings with Town Advisory Groups (TAGs) to develop regeneration improvements	Existing	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	4	4
Number of projects developed in partnership with EBR for Peace Plus funding	New	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Number of Urban/Rural projects to planning stage to access funding streams	New	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7
To commence capital scheme using funding from the Covid Recovery Small Settlements' Programme	New	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5
Number of Masterplan reviews	New	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5
Number of compliance audits of the Rural Development Programme	Existing	Annually	0	0	2	8	13	59	22	26
% Pride and Performance review completed with all staff	Existing	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
No. of staff meetings, physical or virtual, including updates on service plan delivery and risk management	Existing	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	N/A	28	28	30	36	36
% Attendance	Corporate	Quarterly	N/A	97.5%	95%	83.5%	7%	80.9%	95%	95%
The monthly team brief delivery to all staff (virtually) who are not on leave/maternity/long term sick	Corporate	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Spend against budget	Corporate	Quarterly	N/A	91.7%	78.6%	87%	88%	92.6%	95%	95%
Date To agree detailed technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the QP project with Bangor Marina	Existing	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	March 2023
Date To progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme, to agree a Development Agreement with BYC	Existing	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	March 2023
Date To commence/develop a Strategic Masterplan for Kinnegar Logistics Base	New	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	March 2023
Date To commence/deliver an OBC for the Kinnegar Logistics Base development	New	Annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	March 2023

4. Risks

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R					
CR 3	Inability to deliver projects with the timeframe"	4	4	16	Working with DfC DAERA and DfI to obtain an extension to current deadlines.	3	3	9	Tolerate	To have projects at detailed design and planning stage so the various town and rural groups to develop plans and allocated the funding to projects and. Also, to develop other projects to detailed design and planning stage so that they are ready should funding become available.	Ongoing	HOR/UDM/RDM	Rural programme fully allocated closing March 22. New Schemes proposed and commencing.
CR 5	Lack of engagement by external groups/ agencies leading to	3	3	9	Defined terms of reference for each working group and appropriate administration. Timely and accurate	2	1	2	Tolerate	Support working relationship with current groups. Develop an engagement process.	Ongoing	HOR/UDM/RDM	Priorities for partners may be different with, in some cases, an agreed approach

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R					
	inability to deliver programme/ service.				communication and a defined process for feedback/consultation					New Town Advisory Groups are working well as is the Rural Recovery Group.			needing some negotiation
CR 2	Low staff morale and high absenteeism causing poor service performance especially with everyone working from home. Concerns felt about future restructuring and not taking forward the voluntary severance scheme.	3	3	9	Regular team meetings held virtually. More inter-departmental team working to deliver Council priorities. Compliance with attendance policies.	3	2	6	Tolerate	Continue with a two-way communication process and regular team meetings. Push for better interdepartmental working procedures.	Ongoing	HOR/UDM/RDM	This year two members of staff have been on extended periods secondment which has required temporary employees to be appointed. Other employees had hoped to take advantage of the proposed voluntary severance scheme.

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R					
CR 11	Brexit	5	4	20	Monitoring of advice related to Brexit. Researching alternative sources of funding for programmes.	3	3	9	Tolerate	Ongoing monitoring and advice	Ongoing	HOR, UDM & RDM	As yet no information about some programmes that previously had EU funding.
CR 14	Covid 19	4	4	16	Fear of future lockdowns. Continue to follow current guidelines and then deliver most of the Regeneration functions from home working. This however is starting to have a toll on some employees.	3	3	9	Tolerate	Monitor and work with the government departments. Also to ascertain when it is acceptable for staff to return to the offices even on a part-time basis.	Ongoing	HOR, UDM & RDM	Some schemes were greatly delayed and other much harder to manage during this situation.

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
	Costs of projects are increasing greatly because of material and staff costs. This may result in some projects being undeliverable	4	4	16	Constant monitoring of projects and regular updates with any funders. Also, when final costs are determined to have them validated by an independent QS.	3	3	9	Tolerate	Constant monitoring of projects	Ongoing	HoR, UDM, RDM	Based on advice from CPD.

5. Resources

Are all actions resourced within the current (2022/23) budget plan? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Will additional resources be required? (If no please comment in Section A below how the actions will be funded, ie Staff Resources, Equipment, Revenue Budget, Capital Budget.) (If yes please detail additional resources in Section B below.)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff: Current staffing resources are sufficient to deliver the work of the Regeneration Unit.	
Financial: A budget of c£1.13M has been agreed.	
Other: No other internal resources are required.	
If the required additional resources are NOT available, please state:	
What is the likely impact on performance? If Resources not secured, then projects would not progress – performance targets will not be met.	
What is the likely impact on the public? The scheme would not progress – would have impact on the quality of environment / regeneration aspect. Also, projects will not be developed should funding become available.	
What is the likely impact on staffing?	

6. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review will be undertaken throughout the year or as otherwise specified for specific projects. Results will be reported to the Regeneration and Development Committee at the agreed intervals.

7. Conclusions

The Regeneration Section will continue to strive to deliver an excellent and efficient service throughout the Borough. The key targets detailed above are a means by which to measure this. It will also strive to react as quickly as possible to the everchanging environment that Brexit and C19 has created.

8. Appendices

None.

Unclassified

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ITEM 15**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	10 February 2022
File Reference	RDP83
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) White Paper
Attachments	Letter of 2 February 2022 to Councils from M Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

Background

On 2 February 2022 Central Government published their Levelling Up White Paper, detailing a programme of changes to address and reverse disparities across the UK's geographic regions to level up the spread of opportunity equally across the UK.

Appended is the introductory letter to Council Leaders and Chief Executives sent from Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations.

White Paper Missions

At the Paper's core is a commitment to change how Government works with places to level up the mix of factors which support growth. They identify these as: strong innovation, a climate conducive to private sector investment, skills, transport systems, culture, pride in place, safety, and strong local institutions.

Unclassified

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Councils will play a central role in this alongside each devolved Government.

The White Paper promotes a programme of 12 new medium-term, UK-wide missions alongside specific policy interventions, building on the 2021 Spending Review. This forms the basis of a plan to tackle widening disparities and deliver transformative change by giving Local Government more powers and accountability to design effective policies at local level.

The full Levelling Up White Paper can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

Levelling Up Fund

Members are aware that Council was successful in securing £3.2m for Greenways from the first round of bids for Levelling Up Funding. It is anticipated that the second round will open for bids in the next one to two months. There are no details yet, however, it is expected that the funding criteria for Round 2 will be similar to that for Round 1.

An internal cross-directorate officer group is being convened to review which Council projects could be submitted to Round 2. Officers are also working with a number of private sector developers, who have indicated their hopes to submit an application to the Fund.

Updates will be reported going forward as required.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
*Secretary of State for Levelling Up,
Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations*

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing
and Communities**
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Email: michael.gove@communities.gov.uk

2 February 2022

Dear Council Leaders and Chief Executives,

PUBLICATION OF THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

Today marks the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper which sets out a programme of change to reverse the geographical disparities which remain such a stark feature of this country. We know that not everyone shares equally in the UK's success and levelling up is a programme to challenge, and change, this.

We can simultaneously celebrate the economic, academic, and cultural success stories of the UK's counties, towns and cities whilst renovating the economic, social and cultural fabric of those parts of the UK that have stalled so far.

Alongside the private sector, civil society and other public sector organisations, local democratically elected leaders have a crucial role in helping us to deliver this agenda. At the heart of this is a fundamental commitment to changing the way the whole of Government works with places. This is rooted in evidence that shows places need a mix of factors to support growth: strong innovation, a climate conducive to private sector investment, skills, transport systems, culture, pride in place, safety and strong local institutions. Twelve new medium-term missions will galvanise action and form the basis for a comprehensive plan to transform this country.

We are not the first government in the UK to attempt to tackle widening disparities over the past century. Lessons from these past attempts have taught us that we need to be bolder, more coordinated and long-termist. We also need to give local leaders more powers and accountability to design effective policies at the local level. This is about creating the right information, incentives, and institutions to change how decisions are made.

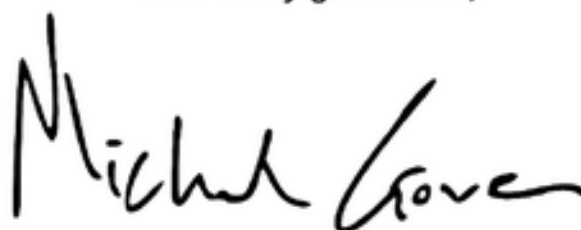
Chapter two of the white paper sets out the details of this new way of working. This includes a commitment to build on the success of City and Growth deals and continue to support those in their infancy. Local leaders also play a vital role for communities, and we need your input and expertise to deliver change at the local level. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund which will see local leaders have more say over local decision making to support this whilst drastically reducing the bureaucracy experienced with EU Funds. This is part of wider work to simplify the complex local growth landscape.

Chapter four of the document sets out the extensive programme of engagement that will be needed to meet these aspirations. You will play a central role in this alongside each devolved government. Teams in my department will be in touch to commence this co-design and delivery and I look forward to working with you all.

The full Levelling Up White Paper can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Gove'.

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon Lewis'.

Rt Hon Brandon Lewis CBE MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

Annex A: The 12 Missions to Level Up the UK

1. By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, and the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
2. By 2030, domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least one third over the Spending Review period and at least 40% by 2030, with that additional government funding seeking to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.
3. By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
4. By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
5. By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
6. By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
7. By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 Healthy Life Expectancy will rise by 5 years.
8. By 2030, measures of well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
9. By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
10. By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.

11. By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.
12. By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution with a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

Unclassified

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ITEM 16**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	18 February 2022
File Reference	RDP220
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Seacourt Print Workshop - Request for Letter of Support
Attachments	

Background

Seacourt Print Workshop, is an open access printmaking studio with charitable status, offering a wide range of printmaking resources, courses and workshops to a membership of master printmakers, multidisciplinary artists, amateurs and those who print to improve their wellbeing.

Established in Bangor 40 years ago, its vision and mission (see over) are closely aligned to many of Council's own objectives for Bangor town centre and the wider needs of Borough residents and visitors, e.g. regeneration, place, instilling civic pride, culture, health and wellbeing and tourism.

Unclassified

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OUR VISION:

Advance printmaking, support regeneration and prosperity, build respectful engaged communities and improve health and wellbeing.

OUR MISSION:

To be a creative institution introducing people to printmaking and visual arts and delivering personal development, community good and an engaging place to live, visit and work.

We believe that creativity is a powerful tool that can transform lives. But we also believe that being creative for creativities own sake is restorative, exciting and a means of opening up possibility.

HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO:

Our main priorities are to provide access to creativity, educational opportunity, contribute to the cultural regeneration of the seaside town of Bangor, and central to all our services is improving health and well-being.

Further information on Seacourt Print Workshop is available on their website at www.seacourt-ni.org.uk

In September 2021, the organisation relocated to the former Ulster Bank building on Main Street, Bangor, which had been unoccupied since 2017. They plan to renovate and redevelop the premises in coming years. Seacourt Print Workshop believes that cultural organisations will help rejuvenate the town centre by attracting people to experience-based tourism. They see their move as giving them opportunities to contribute to town centre regeneration and to play an active role in the reanimation of the high street for the benefit of Borough residents and visitors alike.

Request for a Letter of Support

Seacourt Print Workshop are still working towards completing purchase of the old bank building, which they hope to secure by October 2022. As part of that process, they have requested that Council, along with other local groups and agencies in the community, demonstrate their backing for the venture by contributing a letter of support.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council agrees to write a letter of support to Seacourt Print Workshop in support of their purchase of the former Ulster Bank building on Main Street, Bangor.

Unclassified

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ITEM 17**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development Committee
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	28 February 2022
File Reference	RDP155
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Independent Review of Invest NI
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Ltr of 23.2.22 from Sir Michael Lyons, Chairperson of Independent Review of Invest NI

Following the announcement by the Economy Minister that an independent review of Invest NI would be carried out, a letter has been received by the Chief Executive (Appendix 1) from Sir Michael Lyons, Chairperson of the Independent Review of Invest NI.

The review will provide an independent assessment of Invest NI's efficiency along with its capacity to strategically align and deliver the 10X Economic Vision (a concept which embraces innovation to deliver ten times better economy with benefits for the people of NI).

Sir Michael has stated that he is committed to ensuring that all voices are heard during the consultation and recognises the importance of the voice of local government. There will be a call for evidence in due course and in the meantime he intends to meet with all Chief Executives to explore their views. Further reports, including on the proposed call for evidence, will be brought back to Council once the detail of the process and timelines is understood.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.



Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards & North Down Borough Council
Town Hall
The Castle
Bangor
Co. Down
BT20 4BT

Sir Michael Lyons
Chairperson
Independent Review of Invest NI
info@investnireview.org.uk

23 February 2022
Our Ref: DC02/22

Via email:
stephen.reid@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Dear Stephen

Independent Review of Invest Northern Ireland - Stakeholder Engagement

As you will be aware, the Economy Minister announced an Independent Review of Invest Northern Ireland on 26th January. The Review will provide an independent assessment of the organisation's efficiency and effectiveness as well as its capacity to strategically align with, and operationally deliver, the 10X Economic Vision.

I am pleased to be leading the Review and am committed to ensuring all voices are heard during this evaluation. I intend to actively seek widespread evidence and opinion on the responsibilities and performance of the agency, so that the needs and ambitions of the different parts of Northern Ireland are fully reflected in our eventual conclusions.

An open Call for Evidence will shortly be published, and I would ask you to encourage a considered response from your authority in due course, however, I am also keen to meet appropriate representatives of your council to gauge their views.

I intend to visit Northern Ireland over the coming months and wish to engage in-person with as many key stakeholders as possible in the relatively short space of time that I have been afforded to carry out the Review. I recognise the importance of the voice of local government both for individual communities but also for Northern Ireland as a whole.

Given my time and resource constraints, I do not believe that separate in-person meetings are necessarily the best way to engage effectively but I would welcome your thoughts on how we might best design our consultation program to be both comprehensive and effective. I would be grateful if you could provide any views to info@investnireview.org.uk by 7 March 2022.

I hope to convene an early meeting of all the local authority chief executives to explore your views on the part which local government currently plays in economic development.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Lyons', with a large loop at the end.

Sir Michael Lyons
Chairperson
Independent Review of Invest NI

Unclassified

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ITEM 18**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Regeneration and Development
Date of Meeting	03 March 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	28 February 2022
File Reference	RDP39
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Infrastructure 2050 - Draft Investment Strategy for NI Consultation Document
Attachments	

Members have been asked to review the Draft Infrastructure 2050 – Investment Strategy for NI Consultation Document - (linked here) [Infrastructure-2050-draft-Investment-Strategy-for-Northern-Ireland-FINAL.pdf \(isni.gov.uk\)](#) and the consultation webpage - <https://isni.gov.uk/strategy/have-your-say/>

The Strategy sets out the current state of NI's infrastructure, identifies where it needs to be and explains what is needed to do to get there. It defines the strategic investment priorities and demonstrates how to make best use of its resources. The strategy takes a long-term view, looking forward to 2050.

Many people inside and outside government have already helped in the Strategy's formation, and it is requested that this dialogue continues. A recommended response will be put to Council in March for approval. In the meantime, Members are asked to consider and feed thoughts into the response.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members consider and feed in any thoughts on the Draft Infrastructure 2050 – Investment Strategy for NI Consultation Document, with a proposed response brought to March Council for approval.