

April 10th, 2024

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Thursday, 11th April 2024 at 7:00 pm**
in **Church Street, Newtownards.**

Agenda

Agenda

[Agenda PP.11.04.24.pdf](#)

Page 1

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest

Reports for Approval

3. Tourism Service Unit Plan 2024-25

Report attached

[3.0 Tourism Service Unit Plan 2024-25 Report.pdf](#)

Page 3

[3.1 Tourism Service Unit Plan 2024-25 - unsigned.pdf](#)

Page 6

4. Economic Development Service Unit Plan 2024-25

Report attached

[4.0 Economic Development Service Plan 2024-2025 Report.pdf](#)

Page 22

[4.1 Economic Development Service Plan 2024-2025 unsigned.pdf](#)

Page 24

5. Regeneration Service Unit Plan 2024-25

Report attached

[5.0 Regeneration Service Plan report.pdf](#)

Page 38

[5.1 Regeneration Service Plan 2024-25 unsigned.pdf](#)

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6. Capital Projects Service Unit Plan 2024-25

Report attached

[6.0 Strategic Capital Service Plan report.pdf](#)

Page 54

[6.1 Strategic Capital Development Service Plan 2024-25 unsigned.pdf](#)

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7. PEACEPLUS Theme 6 – Place shaping of Towns on the East

Border Region

Report attached

[7. PEACEPLUS Theme 6 Placemaking of towns on EBR.pdf](#) Page 68

Reports for Noting

8. Levelling Up Round 3 response from Secretary of State

Report attached

[8. Levelling Up Fund Round 3 - Response from Sec of State.pdf](#) Page 72

[8.1 App 1 - Ltr to NI Sec of State - 21.12.23 re LUF3.pdf](#) Page 74

[8.2 App 2 - Response from NI Sec of State re LUF3 - 12.3.24.pdf](#) Page 75

9. Footpath provision at Ballyhalbert - Response from DfI Permanent Secretary

Report attached

[9. Footpath provision at Shore Road, Ballyhalbert.pdf](#) Page 78

[9.1 SR to Perm sec Denis McMahon DfI - Shore Road Ballyhalbert.pdf](#) Page 80

[9.2 DfI Perm Sec Response re Ballyhalbert NOM.pdf](#) Page 82

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

Reports for Approval (In Confidence)

10. Project 24 Allocation of Infrastructure

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

Report attached

[10. Project24 Allocation of Infrastructure.pdf](#) Not included

11. Kinnegar SOC

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

Report attached

[11. Kinnegar SOC Update Report.pdf](#) Not included

 11.1 Kinnegar SOC March P&P Report.pdf	Not included
 11.2.1 240228 Kinnegar Acquisition SOC.pdf	Not included
 11.2.2 Appendix 1 - Kinnegar Logistics Base Report - LM - updated.pdf	Not included
 11.2.3 Appendix 2 - GL Hearn - Kinnegar Presentation on 29th March_DRAFT.pdf	Not included
 11.2.4 Appendix 3a - CyberSpark Information Pack ESTONIAN VISIT.pdf	Not included
 11.2.5 Appendix 3b - CyberSpark LOS - Edgescan.pdf	Not included
 11.2.6 Appendix 3b - CyberSpark LOS - Infosec.pdf	Not included
 11.2.7 Appendix 3b - CyberSpark LOS - Nihon Cyber Defence - Vision.pdf	Not included
 11.2.8 Appendix 3b - CyberSpark LOS - Prescient Capital.pdf	Not included
 11.2.9 Appendix 3b - CyberSpark LOS - Salt Communications.pdf	Not included
 11.2.10 Appendix 3c - MOU CS-ANDBC.pdf	Not included
 11.2.11 Appendix 4a1 - B9 Letter.pdf	Not included
 11.2.12 Appendix 4a2 - Kinnegar location for Belfast Power-to-X Project v6.pdf	Not included
 11.2.13 Appendix 4b - B9 Letters of Support.pdf	Not included
 11.2.14 Cost Benefit Analysis.pdf	Not included
 11.2.15 Appendix 6 - Legal Opinion.pdf	Not included
 11.2.16 Appendix 7 - Option Shortlisting.pdf	Not included
 11.2.17 Appendix 8 - Giants Park Development Brief.pdf	Not included
 11.3 Council reports and decisions on Kinnegar.pdf	Not included
 11.4 Council March Report Kinnegar D1.pdf	Not included
 11.5.1 D1 Kinnegar.pdf	Not included
 11.5.2 Belfast Kinnegar Logistic Base Map.pdf	Not included
 11.6 Disposal of Public Assets Northern Ireland October 2018.pdf	Not included

11b. Addendum – Disposal of the Kinnegar Logistics Base D1 Expression of Interest Questionnaire

Report attached

 *11.b Disposal of the Kinnegar Logistics Base D1 Expression of Interest Questionnaire.pdf*

Not included

 *11.b.1 Expression of Interest Questionnaire.pdf*

Not included

Reports for Noting (in confidence)

12. Belfast Region City Deal and Bangor Waterfront Update

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

Report attached

 *12. BRCD and Bangor Waterfront Update.pdf*

Not included

 *12.1 Appendix 1 BRCD Council Panel Minutes Jan24 Draft.pdf*

Not included

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

5 April 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend an in-person meeting of the Place and Prosperity Committee of the Ards and North Down Borough Council which will be held in the Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards on **Thursday 11 April 2024**, commencing at **7.00pm**.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest

Reports for Approval

3. Tourism Service Unit Plan 2024-25 (report attached)
4. Economic Development Service Unit Plan 2024-25 (report attached)
5. Regeneration Service Unit Plan 2024-25 (report attached)
6. Capital Projects Service Unit Plan 2024-25 (report attached)
7. PEACEPLUS Theme 6 – Place shaping of Towns on the East Border Region (report attached)

Reports for Noting

8. Levelling Up Round 3 response from Secretary of State (report attached)
9. Footpath provision at Ballyhalbert - Response from DfI Permanent Secretary (report attached)

*****IN CONFIDENCE – ITEMS 10 – 12*******Reports for Approval (in confidence)**

10. Project 24 Allocation of Infrastructure (report attached)
11. Kinnegar SOC (report attached)

11b. Addendum – Disposal of the Kinnegar Logistics Base D1 Expression of Interest Questionnaire (report attached)

Reports for Noting (in confidence)

12. Belfast Region City Deal and Bangor Waterfront Update (report attached)

MEMBERSHIP OF PLACE AND PROSPERITY COMMITTEE (16 MEMBERS)

Alderman Adair	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	Councillor MacArthur
Alderman McDowell	Councillor McCracken
Councillor Ashe	Councillor McCollum
Councillor Blaney	Councillor McKimm
Councillor Edmund	Councillor McLaren
Councillor Gilmour	Councillor Rossiter
Councillor Hollywood	Councillor Smart

Unclassified

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ITEM 3**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Prosperity
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Tourism
Date of Report	25 March 2024
File Reference	TO/MAR4/160167
Legislation	n/a
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other X If other, please add comment below: Screening in progress
Subject	Tourism Service Plan 2024/25
Attachments	3.1

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 2024/25 is attached. This plan has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the draft

Unclassified

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Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). 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 2024/25 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.

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 agrees the attached Service Plan.

Unclassified

TOURISM SERVICE

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

20 FEBRUARY 2023



**Ards and
North Down**
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Sharon Mahaffy	Clare McGill	Ann McCullough
Head of Tourism	Head of Economic Development	Director of Prosperity

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1. Introduction to Service

Name of Service	Tourism
Directorate	<i>Prosperity</i>
Introduction and Reflection	<p>The Tourism Service consists of:</p> <p>Tourism Development (Experience, Food and Drink Development and Visitor Servicing); and</p> <p>Tourism Events (delivery of Council tourism events, management of third-party event grants and capacity building).</p> <p>We work closely with our colleagues in Borough Marketing to promote the destination.</p> <p>Our mission is to facilitate, sustainably grow and promote the tourism offering in the borough to benefit our businesses, communities, and visitors, focussing on key strengths that resonate with our identified markets, to increase the overall NI visitor market share and economic return to the Borough in line with the targets set by the Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2018-2030 (ITRDS). This aligns with Outcome 4 of the Big Plan and with the Economic Priority of the draft Corporate Plan 2024-2028.</p> <p>Key successes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the increase in attendees at all, except one tourism-delivered event (Sea Bangor was a special Queen’s Jubilee event in 2022), increase in attendee spend and zero waste contamination at all tourism delivered events in 2023. • Delivery of 16 experiences with 60% OoB, (out of Borough) attendees, securing a share of Shared Island Funds (totalling €350,000) to deliver two strategic product development feasibility studies; • development and internal delivery of the Food and Drink Destination Development Plan 2023-27; and • servicing circa 25,000 visitor enquiries (through to end January 2024) via our VICs, outreach and reopening of Cockle Row Cottages. • A new key service collaboration with Parks delivering an enhanced “Chili Fest” with over 3,000 visitors. <p>Although the post pandemic travel environment has ‘stabilised’, the impact upon local hospitality businesses and tourism services is still apparent. No recent local government data is available re: visitor overnight and spend (latest NISRA data 2019), however the impact to directly delivered council tourism services reflects a reduction in out of state visitors (both in events and VICs).</p> <p>Data to support OoB attendees at experiences and tours remained stable in 2023 compared to 2022; however, it must be noted this is based on limited numbers. Anecdotally, there is a mixed picture regarding how accommodation and attractions are performing. Some accommodation providers indicate a growth in out of state visitors and some report a similar picture to the previous year.</p> <p>Latest statistics for local attractions (NISRA 2022) also showed a mixed picture with some showing substantial increases in visitation vs reductions in others.</p> <p>Therefore, a key priority for the Tourism Service will be to work with our providers to expand their tourism ‘offering’ sustainably, whilst ensuring they remain competitive in the highly competitive domestic and close to home markets. Getting the right balance between the perception of value, against achieving an increase in visitor spend and dwell time will be critical to attract a share of NI’s out of state visitors.</p>

Key learnings include:

- the importance of understanding and supporting the hospitality industry's current requirements. This includes difficulties with staffing, ability to plan, human and financial resource, business priorities over 'testing' or diversifying their product portfolio and how they can best apply environmental, economic, or social sustainability into their business models.
- There is also a requirement to address seasonal staffing in our own services via a multi-disciplinary approach.
- Changing weather patterns throughout the year continue to be a challenge. Therefore, resource and time must be attributed to better mitigate against cancellation or last-minute event programming requirements.
- Continuing partnerships to achieve best return for service delivery, in the most efficient way, will be a continuing key requirement in 2024/25.

Work is underway with the Transformation Service for a mid-point Borough Event Strategic Direction review.

2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI Executive budget may reduce ability to deliver the latest draft Tourism Strategy – a 10-year Plan e.g. no Tourism NI Events Sponsorship Fund in 2023, no confirmation of capital funds programme to date; • ANDBC Transformation agenda – pressure for efficiencies and potential for reduced service i.e. face to face visitor servicing; • Localised budget pressure; • Home Office introduction of new travel visa – the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme – obstacle to travel from ROI to NI; • Global Conflicts.
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential failure of local tourism businesses as struggle to regain market/shift in consumer expectations and cost-of-living crisis; • Restricted capacity of businesses to open due to staffing; • Potential reduction of internal budgets which seek efficiencies; • External funding opportunities with very short delivery timelines – very difficult to deliver best return with resource and governance processes in place; • Strength of other currencies vs £sterling - customers may stay at home as travel beyond UK becomes unaffordable; • Strength of other currencies vs £sterling makes UK more attractive for international travel; • Close competitor with lower VAT rate; • Cost of doing business; • Labour market and competition for skilled staff.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latest Tourism NI research indicates travel demand remains high and consumers are adapting their spending behaviour to maximise their budget; • Strong demand for VFM travel, however ‘Cost vs conscience’ is key. The trend of ‘responsible travel’ is on the rise, as consumers are making conscious choices while on a trip which have a positive impact on the local area (TNI, Tourism 360, Dec 2023); • Shorter lead times, uncertainty for bookings for businesses or opportunities with last minute bookings.
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing shift to mobile/online information digital channels/services for customer tourism research and booking; • Digital transformation including virtual travel experiences, booking while still at home and touchless tech solutions; • Covid19 accelerated remote working and collaborative opportunities, however, equal face to face requirement in tourism which is a social/people industry; • Expectation that governance arrangements can meet industry demand on digital platforms of ‘choice’; • Expectation of consumer re ability to have access to fully functioning mobile services in all of the borough – holidays and trips ‘led by’ mobile technology from start to end of journey.
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon targets and offsetting (Climate Change Act (NI) 2022); • Pending Martyn’s Law for events delivery; • Compliance with relevant legislation re GDPR, procurement, land use, road closures, safety and risk etc.; • ETA scheme (electronic travel authorisation).
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unforeseen weather patterns across Europe (NI climate attractive); • 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 – increase in costs for delivery of experiences and events; • Climate change and impacts – increase in costs for delivery for events.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of family /visitor attractions and activities – 3 of the top 10 visited attractions in NI, 10 golf courses, range of accommodation and high density of creatives – day trip market • 116 miles of coastline (Strangford Lough AONB and Belfast Lough) • Breadth of natural and heritage resources with environmental designations • Strategic development plan via ITRDS – thematic priorities in marketing, experience development, food and drink development and events delivery • Strong relationship with key tourism partner Visit Belfast – additional reach capabilities to market at lower cost • Committed Tourism team with long term experience and relationships with the local tourism sector • Award winning region for Food and Drink, both nationally and globally • Areas showcased through film and TV • Proximity to Belfast and George Best City Airport • Developed website with growing audience/engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive market locally with no clear stand out or ‘iconic’ signature attractor • Proximity to Belfast • Poor public transport network in Borough • Lack of hotel base suitable for tour operators • No key international event(s) • Minimal tourism development budget to work up projects in advance of funding opportunities (no specific central government ‘tourism’ grant at time of writing) • Restricted marketing budget • Events delivery primarily free at point of consumption, increasingly difficult to grow events in line with strategy due to increased costs, legislative requirements and reduction in budgets • Lower % of market share of holiday visits and tourism revenue of NI • No Local Government District tourism statistics since 2019 • Limitations of the current hospitality staffing ‘pool’
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangor Waterfront, Queen’s Parade and Whitespots Country Park redevelopments (linked to Columban Way and Ark Open Farm) developments to bring additional footfall into Borough • Four Points Project – development and promotional opportunities alongside ROI partners • Sustainable tourism businesses and experiences development • Food and drink offering • Wellness, eco and transformative tourism (adding purpose to their visit) • Screen tourism • Visitor servicing at point of highest footfall – Citizens’ Hub and Waterfront development. • ‘Bid for’ events (partners) and more commercial use of existing council venues / spaces to attract visitors • Digital advancements – AR, VR and Artificial Intelligence in bookings, itineraries etc. • Proximity to Belfast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another national pandemic and ensuing restriction. • Increased costs • International and national competition • Partner expectations on supporting and funding role/resource • No / limited private sector investment in the area • Limited visitor offering ‘off season’ or reduced during the week due to local business operating models • ETA • Continuing reduced access to development funds • Weather and climate change impacting seasonality and requirement to ‘weatherproof’ activities • Digital advancements – AR, VR and Artificial Intelligence in bookings, itineraries etc. • Businesses not adopting requirement to be fully ‘mobile’ – contactless, notifications, automated and flexible, cancellations, self-service check-in etc. • Inability to recruit seasonal staff

Challenges

- Maintain stand-out in a competitive domestic and international marketplace.
- Ensure visitor dispersal into the Borough from key points of entry – requires a national and partnership approach.
- Attract sufficient overnights to increase visitor spend which is dependent upon availability of appropriate accommodation.
- Increase dwell-time and spend in shorter trips.
- Increased costs to deliver safe, sustainable events which remain free to consume.
- Lack of localised robust data to support strategic decision-making or business case development.
- Maintain required seasonal staffing 'pool'.

Key Assumptions

- Tourism budget will not be reduced.
- Borough marketing budget will not be reduced.
- External grants will be sourced to deliver and supplement existing work programmes in Events and Tourism Development.
- Staffing complement remains/ any ensuing vacancies are filled timeously.
- Travel market continues to stabilise and increases in comparison to pre-pandemic levels. Expectations regarding visitor volumes for 2024 are largely positive, with the majority of businesses anticipating similar or higher visitor volumes than 2023. Just under one fifth expect visitor volumes to be below this year's performance levels (TNI Industry Survey, Nov 23)
- Operating hours for partner businesses may remain on reduced opening.
- Routes to NI remain or increase.
- Repeat business to the Borough remains.

3. Service Improvement

Service development/improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
1. Review of Borough Visitor and Trade Information provision and servicing	Service Quality	It is recognised that how visitors and trade obtain destination information is changing. This is evidenced in national/ internal data and industry liaison feedback. Visitor Information Centre (VIC) footfall has not returned to pre-C19 levels and the Service needs to provide information via platforms/places most used by consumers e.g. outreach/digital or other. Trade shows mean face-to-face platforms are critical to developing tour operator/officer relationships.	Tourism Development Officer - Visitor Servicing and Product Tourism Manager	Internal: Communication and Marketing, Events Property and Assets, Transformation. External: “Honeypot” visitor sites, event organisers, trade shows. Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland.
2. Implementation of Year 1 outputs Food and Drink Destination Development Plan (FDDDP) Plan 2023-27	Service Quality	First Council Food Destination Plan completed. In the interim years a Food and Drink Officer has been appointed and the specific sector has undergone significant change. The new plan was approved by Council and launched in October 2023. Key outputs are deliverable annually or across its lifespan.	Food and Drink Officer Tourism Manager	Internal: Corporate Communications and Marketing, Economic Development, Property and Assets. External: ANDBC Food and Drink sectors. Trade bodies. Tourism Bodies.
3. Accessibility Audit for AND Tourism Events	Fairness	This will cover both disability access and safeguarding at events. An exercise of this nature has not been undertaken since merger in 2015. Anticipated that this will be undertaken in partnership with external facilitator and will review all direct delivered events, subject to budget.	Event Manager	Internal: Safeguarding and Corporate Communications External: Disability Action Group or similar

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
4. Guide for Sustainability at Events	Sustainability	List of protocols to be applied at key direct-delivered Tourism Events. The draft Corporate Plan wishes to deliver a sustainable borough and further protocols in addition to those already implemented at events will continue this journey. A checklist for use by Grant -aided event organisers will also be developed.	Event Manager	Internal: Recycling Officers, Corporate Communications and Marketing, Property and Assets
5. Annual PR/Partnership Plan focused on 2 key tourism themes and key audiences	Service Quality	A plan to be developed delivering on key themes to raise destination awareness in target markets via appropriate platforms - identified as required in an internal exercise.	Borough Marketing Manager Head of Service	Corporate Communications and Marketing

4. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Standing Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and Service Unit Managers
Team Meeting	Monthly	Head of Service and Service Unit Managers

5. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed.

Yes

6. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priorities below:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

Performance Measures	Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service Led	Reporting frequency (6 monthly / Year End)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	102.2%	95%	97.2%	95%	95%	95%	Cumulative
% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	93.8%	95%	96.5%	95%	95%	95%	Cumulative
% of completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	Year End	7	Social	n/a	100%	n/a	100%		100%	Cumulative
Attendance at trade focused shows, tourism and food and drink Service Improvement No. 1	Service Led	6 monthly	3	Economic	N/A	1	1	7	1	7	Cumulative
Attendance at consumer-focused shows - tourism and food and drink Service Improvement no. 1	Service Led	6 monthly	3	Economic	N/A	1	1	4	2	4	Cumulative
No. of sites/events supported by visitor servicing outreach Service Improvement no. 1	Service Led	6 monthly	3	Economic	15	15	20	20	15	20	Cumulative
% of Out of Borough (OoB) ticket sales– experiences and walks and tours) * % includes anomaly in recording of walks and tours due to ticket system failure in summer 23. (Experiences 60% and walks and tours 33% cf 54% 22/23 year)	Service Led	Year End	3	Economic	57%	50%	47%*	50%		50%	Cumulative
% of OoB ticket sales – food and drink experiences.	Service Led	Year End	3	Economic	40%	33%	23%	33%		33%	Cumulative

Performance Measures	Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service Led	Reporting frequency (6 monthly / Year End)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
Delivery of training seminars (tourism/ food and drink sectors)	Service Led	Year End	3	Economic	3	0	0	3		3	Cumulative
Food and Drink Destination Development Plan 2023-27 No. of key new outputs for Year 1	Service Led	Year End	3	Economic	n/a	n/a	n/a	2		2	Cumulative
Service improvement No. 2											
% of food network members (from total membership) on TASTE FB social media group page	Service Led	Year End	3	Economic	n/a	n/a	n/a	55%		55%	Cumulative
% increase in followers to Visit AND social media against previous year	Service Led	6 monthly	3	Economic	52%	10%	29%	20%	10%	20%	Cumulative
Number of targeted destination awareness AND PR/partnership articles – Food and one other theme to NI and ROI markets	Service Led	6 monthly	3	Economic	19	10	16	15	6	15	Cumulative
Service improvement No. 5											
% engagement rate of ezines to tourism trade and consumer database	Service Led	6 monthly	4	Economic	45%	30%	39%	30%	30%	30%	Fixed
% increase in followers to VisitStrangford social media against previous year	Service Led	6 monthly	4	Economic	n/a	5%	6%	5%	2.5%	5%	Cumulative
Accessibility Audit – Tourism Events	Service Led	Year End	4	Social	n/a	n/a	n/a	1		1	Fixed
Service Improvement No. 3											
Guide for Sustainability at Events	Service Led	Year End	2	Environmental	n/a	n/a	n/a	1		1	Fixed

Performance Measures	Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service Led	Reporting frequency (6 monthly / Year End)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
Service Improvement No. 4											
Number of attendees at Tourism Events	Service Led	6 monthly	4	Economic	92,166	75,000	78,700	81,000	61,000	81,000	Cumulative
% customer satisfaction at Tourism Events	Service Led	Year End	4	Economic	89.9%	85%	81.63%	85%		85%	Cumulative
% attendees from OoB at Tourism Events (*2 Switch On events not included in this KPI)	Service Led	Year End	4	Economic	26.7%	25%	23.7%	25%*		25%	Cumulative
Average spend per attendee at Tourism Events	Service Led	Year End	4	Economic	£11.77	12.00	£9.01	£10.50		£10.50	Cumulative
Number of attendees /participants* at grant-aided events (based on Economic category - from Events and Festivals Fund)	Service Led	Year End	4	Economic	81,484	64,007	56,140	58,000*		58,000	Cumulative
Cost per attendee/participant – grant-aided events (as above)	Service Led	Year End	4	Economic	£1.01	£1.33	£2.10	£1.40		£1.40	Cumulative
Number of sessions delivered for training/capacity building via Festival Forum.	Service Led	6 monthly	1	Economic	16	40	30	*4	2	4	Cumulative
*new KPI – 2023 no. of participants trained											
Delivery and management of Year 1 of 3-year Growth Events Fund and 1 'Bid for' Event in 24/25	Service Led	Year End	3	Economic	n/a	n/a	n/a	2		2	Cumulative

7. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Detail of KPIs that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Delivery of online maps (screen and food & drink)	Both projects complete in 23/24	Officer time	No impact – alternative activity planned	No impact – alternative activity planned	Staff time reallocated to other activity
Delivery of tour operator FAM visits to the Borough (including virtual)	With return to face-to-face trade shows being the dominant method of B2B, securing familiarisation visits is via attendance at shows which is included in the plan	Officer time and budget	No impact – alternative activity planned by attendance at trade shows	N/A	No impact – alternative activity planned by attendance at trade shows
Development of food and drink “meet the buyer” event for local food, drink and hospitality businesses	Project complete in 23/24, adopted as Business as usual (BAU) activity	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU
Delivery of ANDBC Visitor Experiences (ANDBC experiences, walks and tours and food and drink experience programmes)	This is fully established and is BAU activity	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU
No. of Tourism and Food and Drink Clusters supported	The Cluster workstreams are incorporated into BAU activity	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU
Review of Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy outputs	Internal review completed in 23/24	Officer time	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU
VAND web platform one technical enhancement initiative	BAU activity and budgeted	N/A	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU	N/A as BAU
Management of Open House Contract – monitoring of SLA	End of 3-year SLA in 23/24	Budget reallocated to Growth	Application received for the Growth Events	No impact	No impact. Administration of GEF will be similar

		Events Fund (GEF)	Fund. This fund will be monitored.		
Market Research Plan implemented at key tourism events	Model of market research now implemented and in place (internal and external methods)	Reduced market research budget	No impact - reports still available	Some events are evaluated by the internal team	Additional resource and therefore increase to EO workload
Creation of 3-year Events Plan aligned with procurement	Now implemented	Economy of scale savings	Reduce administration on an annual basis	No impact	Planned workload
Development of Higher Tier Grant Scheme	Scheme now in place (GEF)	Budget movement	No impact	Range of grants available to organisers	No impact

Unclassified

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ITEM 4**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity Committee
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Prosperity
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	22 March 2024
File Reference	
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 Service Plan 2024/25
Attachments	4.1 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.

Not Applicable

23

A draft plan for 2024/25 is attached. This plan has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). 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 2024/25 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.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council adopts the attached plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

22 FEBRUARY 2023



**Ards and
North Down**
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Clare McGill	Sharon Mahaffy	Ann McCullough
Head of Economic Development	Head of Tourism	Director of Prosperity

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1. Introduction to Service

Name of Service	<i>Economic Development</i>
Directorate	<i>Prosperity</i>
	<p>The Economic Development (ED) Service includes two service units: Economic Development and Development Projects which work to support and impact the sustainable economic growth and wellbeing of the Borough. The Service reflects and aligns with the corporate vision specifically in areas outlined in Plans and strategies below.</p> <p>Community Plan (The Big Plan)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcome 4: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy. <p>Corporate Plan 2024-2028</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased economic growth to focus on attracting more business and more jobs ▪ Improved wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality <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 Service plays a key role in the delivery of actions and key targets to realise a more prosperous and thriving Borough.</p> <p>The last year has been challenging as EU funding streams and related interventions came to a close, and much work was required to align the work of all NI Councils to prepare for new support services and new funding mechanisms. One of the key successes has been the development and launch of the new Enterprise Support Service ‘Go Succeed’ and its approved funding under the Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>The Labour Market Partnership (LMP) has successfully demonstrated the importance of Co-design and has provided support which has been transformative, enabling those out of work to be able to enter the labour market, acquire skills and find new pathways to employment while also addressing employers’ recruitment needs.</p> <p>The economic situation continues to prove challenging for much of the business community. The pandemic and the subsequent business recovery period has demonstrated that, we can be, and need to remain, agile and flexible in delivery of support to continue having a meaningful and positive impact on the creation of new businesses and the growth of existing sectors.</p>

Introduction and Reflection	<p>While many businesses use the services of the Economic Development Unit, many businesses remain unaware of what we do. Work has been developed with the Borough Marketing team to raise the profile of AND as a place to invest. However, on a wider scale, we have not attracted new high growth businesses to the Borough due to resources and lack of co-ordinated services with other agencies and appropriate designated space. Going forward we will need to address this to have a wider impact on the economic growth of the Borough.</p> <p>The Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) has demonstrated the importance of working across Directorates, especially within both Prosperity and Place. Some of the key learning is that, progressing the delivery of key projects, and achieving the outcomes for the region and the Borough, will involve allocating sufficient time and resources, partnership working (both internally and externally) and prioritising of tasks. We will need to ensure that we have the resources and expertise to deliver on requirements and take learnings from existing agreements to improve future arrangements.</p> <p>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 in year as not every intervention has a direct cause and immediate effect; 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, with an outcomes focus, and secure, where possible, multi-annual budgets to ensure that actions and their impact, as far as possible, can be measured in a meaningful way.</p>
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2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Political	<p>The current economic and political climate remains challenging and government department budgets uncertain. 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.</p>
Economic	<p>With new Ministerial positions now in place the 10X Economy Strategy may be amended. It, along with key outworkings, of the Lyons Report and Place 10X will determine several strategic issues and targets for local government. More specifically, the Integrated Tourism Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2018-2030 (ITRDS) and new <i>Go Succeed</i> Service provide key economic targets in relation to job creation and productivity levels and will inform our plans as go forward.</p> <p>The end of EU Funding and optimising new sources of funding such as UKSPF and PEACE Plus will be key to ensuring continuity of services and support for local businesses.</p>

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 actions, resulting from the ITRDS, we will need to address issues to ensure we have a qualified and able workforce which can meet our businesses' needs right across the Borough. The work being done through the 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. The way people work and spend their income has changed since the pandemic and in light of rising costs. Young people and the long-term economically inactive may be hardest hit by unemployment so we will work with partners, employers and government to deliver the appropriate support.
Technological	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 physical and 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 such as Subsidy Control and the move to include more social clauses in contracts.
Environmental	To assist Council in meeting its sustainability and environmental objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2024-28, 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. Businesses will need support to move to more sustainable business practices and models. The internal Climate Action Working Group will help us collectively to work on progressing more sustainable business practices.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<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, including relationships across other Service Units for collaboration on growing the non-domestic rate base ▪ Horizon scanning to capture latest trends to keep delivery fresh ▪ Relationship building with business base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing delivery demands/projects with finite resources ▪ 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 ▪ Understanding and use of evolving technologies ▪ Declining business base ▪ Limited number of businesses able to scale ▪ Limited investment, marketing & incentives
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New sources of funding ▪ Use of Digital technologies ▪ Belfast Region City Deal ▪ ED Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uncertainty of funding sources and budgets ▪ Increasing delivery demands and competing priorities ▪ Rising costs ▪ Lack of inward investment

3. Service Improvement

The “**Service development/ improvement**” element should identify areas of the service that require development/ improvement along with any new, innovative ideas for future improvements. **Please state clearly in the “Rationale” section why the improvement is being undertaken and what evidence there is to support the decision.**

Only Service improvement activities should be included in this section, ‘business as usual’ activities should be detailed in Section 6.

Please ensure KPIs are included in Section 6 to measure Service development/ improvement(s) outlined below.

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Implementation of the NI Enterprise Support Service ‘Go Succeed’ to create jobs	Service Quality	Council has a statutory target for job creation through business start activities and provides support services to businesses to assist growth and investment.	ED Manager	Internal: Communications, LMP, Tourism, Community Development
Implementation of the new LMP Action Plan for 2024-25	Service Quality	Council, with funding from DfC, has established the local Labour Market Partnership (LMP), based on the Strategic Assessment and needs identified across AND.	ED Manager/LMP Manager	Internal: Business Support team, Community Planning and Community Development officers External: Business representatives, government depts, FE college, voluntary sector representatives
BRCD approval of AND Innovation Hub OBC	Innovation	The Digital Pillar of BRCD and the ITRDS targets for jobs and GVA underpin the development of the OBC for an Innovation Hub to support the growth of the Creative and Digital Tech sectors in Film and TV production.	Head of ED/Development Projects Manager/Creative & Digital officer	Internal: Regeneration, Planning, Finance, CPU External: BRCD PMO, Externally appointed Consultants, SERC, INI, Northern Ireland Screen
Appointment of new operator for Pickie Funpark	Service Quality	As part of the BRCD and Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment, Pickie is one of the five elements of the redevelopment.	Head of ED/Development Projects Manager	Internal: Regeneration, Finance, CPU, Planning, Procurement External: Externally appointed Consultants, Operator

Service development/improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Appointment of a new Operator for Bangor Marina	Service Quality	As part of the BRCD and Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment, Bangor Marina and Harbour is one of the five elements of the redevelopment.	Head of ED/Development Projects Manager	Internal: Regeneration, Finance, CPU, Planning, Procurement External: Externally appointed Consultants, Operator
Development of PEACE Plus project and funding application	Innovation	As part of the outworking of the Digital Strategy and aligning with the ITRDS projects to support the take up and use of digital technologies by the business community are being developed.	Head of ED/Development Projects Manager/Creative & Digital Officer	Internal: Assets & Property, Community Halls, Business Technology External: EBR, SEUPB

4. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Standing Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meeting	Quarterly	Head of Service and SUMs
<i>Other if applicable</i>		

5. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed.

Yes

6. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPI' should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

Performance Measures <small>Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.</small>	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q2	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	83.01%	95%	93.68%	95%	95%	95%	Cumulative
% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	89.06%	95%	92.53%	95%	95%	95%	Cumulative
% of completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A	100%	Cumulative
Number of Jobs created through the Go Succeed Service	Statutory	6 monthly	3	Economic	101	86	63	164	60	164	Cumulative
Number of projects delivered through LMP Action Plan	Service-led	6 monthly	3	Economic	19	12	2	12	3	12	Cumulative
Number of people benefitting from the Health and Wellbeing Initiative	Service-led	Annually	3	Economic	27	24	25	24	0	24	Cumulative
Number of research assignments	Service-led	6 monthly	3	Economic	87	75	70	75	30	75	Cumulative
Number of surveys to identify needs and values of the ED and business support services	Service-led	Annually	3	Economic	1	1	1	1	1	0	Fixed
% draw down of Seal Sanctuary Funding from DAERA	Service-led	6 monthly	3	Economic	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Fixed

Performance Measures <small>Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.</small>	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q2	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
Appointment of operator for Bangor Marina and Harbour	Service-led	Annually	3	Economic	0	0	0	1	0	1	Fixed
Appointment of operator for Pickie Funpark	Service-led	Annually	3	Economic	0	0	0	1	0	1	Fixed
Approval of OBC and creation of action plan to progress Innovation Hub concept	Service-led	Annually	3	Economic	1	1	1	1	0	1	Fixed
Number of businesses supported through the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) programme	Service-led	6 monthly	3	Economic	n/a	6	3	17	9	17	Cumulative

7. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Number of business support group interventions/workshops	Budget reduction as part of the estimates process.	£5,000	None – Workshops provided through the Go-Succeed Service	None – Workshops provided through the Go-Succeed Service	Staff time reallocated to the Go Succeed Service
Number of new jobs created through the Go-For-It Programme	The programme came to an end on 31 st September 2023.	None – It is being replaced by Go-Succeed	None – The Go-Succeed Service replaces GFI and provides a wider range of services	None – The Go-Succeed Service replaces GFI and provides a wider range of services	Staff time reallocated to the Go Succeed Service
Number of PR and thought pieces placed in relevant publications/Channels	Budget reduction a part of the estimates process.	£4,500	None – Work being funded through another section	None – Work being funded through another section	Staff is located in another section.
Number of jobs created in relation to current statutory target	Duplicate target only used for administrative reporting	£0	None – Job Creation target being addressed through the Go-Succeed Service	None – Work being implemented through the Go Succeed Service	No need- the staff is already allocated to Go-Succeed
Number of jobs created in relation to the new statutory target	Duplicate target only used for administrative reporting	£0	None – Job Creation target being addressed through the Go-Succeed Service	None – Work being implemented through the Go Succeed Service	No need- the staff is already allocated to Go-Succeed
Number of one-to-one business advice sessions	The majority of the one-to-one business advice will be done as part of the new Go Succeed service.	£0	None – The team will continue to cooperate with the Go Succeed delivery agents to complement the service	None – All citizens enquiring about business support will be contacted and	No need to re-allocate time. It forms part of what the ED teams provides as part of their new

				signposted as required.	roles under the Go Succeed service
Number of sector-specific fact sheets with best-in-class borough business case studies for promotion on LinkedIn and Locate in AND website	Budget reallocation as part of the estimates process.		None – alternative activity planned by another section	None – Alternative activity planned by another section.	Staff time reallocated to the delivery of other projects
Implementation of the Digital Strategy Action Plan	Budget reallocation as part of the estimates process.	£30,000	None – using the previous Digital Strategy and working through action plans	None - using the previous Digital Strategy and working through action plans	Staff time reallocated to the delivery of other projects
% Operators' compliance with operating agreements	Removing as KPI as part of regular activity	None	None	None	None
Creative Industries Development – number of 1-1 mentoring series	Combined into the Go Succeed programme	None	None - Mentoring provided by Go Succeed programme	None -Work being implemented through the Go Succeed Service	None – staff time will still be allocated to mentoring programme through Go Succeed.

Unclassified

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ITEM 5**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity Committee
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Place
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	12 March 2024
File Reference	
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 Unit Service Plan 2024/25
Attachments	5.1 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.

Not Applicable

39

A draft plan for 2024/25 is attached. This plan has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). 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 2024/25 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.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council adopts the attached plan.

REGENERATION

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

20 MARCH 2024



**Ards and
North Down**
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Brian Dorrian	Clare McGill	Susie McCullough
Head of Regeneration	Head of Economic Development	Director of Place

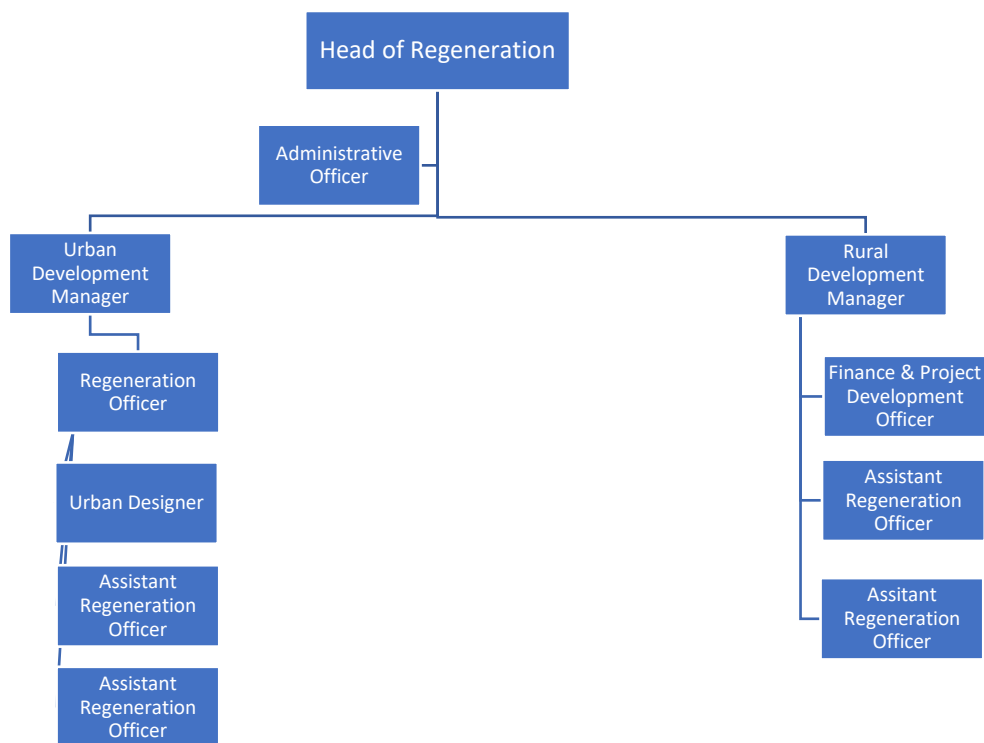
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1. Introduction to Service

Name of Service	Regeneration
Directorate	Place
Introduction and Reflection	<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"> • Economic Growth to focus on attracting more businesses and more jobs into the Borough - The Regeneration Unit strives to consider the views of local residents, business owners, and community/voluntary groups in order to source appropriate funding opportunities develop our City, towns, villages and smaller settlements to grow and meet the needs of all customers, therefore enhancing the sense of Place and supporting the area to thrive to make it more sustainable. • Social inclusion and reduced inequalities - in developing or reviewing the various masterplans and village plans to consider the proposals 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 use consultation methods to ensure everyone can voice their opinion. <p>Over the past year and the year to date the Team has strived to develop mechanisms to better listen to the views of the wider community. Should this be local traders, businesses, or residents. To action this we are looking at ways to reconstitute the Town Advisory Groups and local Village Groups. A review of the town masterplans was lately completed with a new focus on key projects. A process for reviewing the village plans in currently underway.</p> <p>The projects agreed under the Covid Recovery Funding have now been completed and the PPE are showing some very positive outcomes. The projects identified under the Small Settlement Funding, which includes Portaferry Public Realm, are progressing well.</p>

Regeneration Structure



2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Insert a brief narrative on the external issues, including current and anticipated, impacting upon the service – consideration of PESTLE factors may be useful.

The following gives the main points that may affect the delivery of the Service.

Political	Brexit and the issues with trading with GB and EU. How the Executive and Assembly will work. The continuing out workings of the City Deal. Public negativity on local politics. Global political changes with the emphasis on sustainability. Departmental budgets and future planning and where they will be targeted at. Fear that the Executive will be requested to raise more public funding from within NI.
Economical	Brexit and everything which is still unknown about the trading arrangements and regulations. Loss of EU grants. Loss of NI grants due to budget uncertainty. Rate increases, local and regional. Increasing pressure on local businesses. Expectation on Council value for money on rates. Efficiency agenda – more for less. More pressure on the High Streets.

	<p>More sustainable trading practices. The out workings of the Queen's Parade development. High interest rates. Increasing retail sales online.</p>
Social	<p>Lower disposable incomes as wages increases are not linked to inflation. Increasingly older local population. Expectation on the Council to deliver more value for money services. More demand to duplicate Council services throughout the Borough. Expectation that the Council will meet the shortfall from government departments. Expectation that the 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.</p>
Technological	<p>Poor connectivity in rural areas. Better use of social media networks to inform user groups. Change in shopping trends due to better technology. Growth of on-line shopping.</p>
Legal	<p>Social value clauses. Rural proofing. Procurement regulations and processes. Legislative changes due to Brexit. Increased audit scrutiny. Funding offers have more conditions attached to them pre and post funding award. More risks associated with project delivery.</p>
Environmental	<p>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 plans to tackle this. Aging infrastructure</p>

Going forward the Regeneration Section must look at how it delivers its services in line with the new Corporate Plan. One of the key objectives is to grow the non-domestic rate base. When the review of the masterplans was undertaken and as we proceed with the review of the village plans this must be considered. However, many of the groups still favour projects which are localised and delivery community benefits. This balance is always a challenge.

Going forward the delivery of these projects is a real issue as grant funding is becoming harder to source. With no replacement for the Rural Development Programme identified this could lead to the rural areas being at a real disadvantage.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>A good knowledgeable team within the Regeneration section.</p> <p>A well-defined network of groups within the urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Clear plans have been developed or are in the process of being developed.</p> <p>New plans are to be live documents where projects can be amended, added, or deleted.</p>	<p>The various groups in both urban and rural areas change members who then have new ideas and plans.</p> <p>No security around funding sources for delivery of projects in either the urban or rural areas.</p> <p>Councils do not have regeneration powers nor the budget that was previously identified.</p> <p>Groups not wanting to take a lead in projects and expecting the Council to always do so.</p> <p>Decline in public participation levels/ lack of representation.</p> <p>Public perceptions.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>New groups being formed with fresh ideas.</p>	<p>The out workings of the Executive's future budget setting processes.</p> <p>Identified projects not in line with the new Corporate Plan.</p>

3. Service Improvement

The “**Service development/ improvement**” element should identify areas of the service that require development/ improvement along with any new, innovative ideas for future improvements. **Please state clearly in the “Rationale” section why the improvement is being undertaken and what evidence there is to support the decision.**

Only Service improvement activities should be included in this section, ‘business as usual’ activities should be detailed in Section 6.

Please ensure KPIs are included in Section 6 to measure Service development/ improvement(s) outlined below.

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
To create new Town/City Advisory Groups following the review that was undertaken	Service Quality	The Advisory Groups have been operating for the past 8 years. A recent review was undertaken which has identified better ways of working. These now need to be implemented.	Head of Regeneration and Urban Development Manager	The elected members, all Council departments will be expected to work with these Groups as and when required. Support required also from central government departments
To undertake a review of the village plans and agree with the various groups the key priority projects.	Service Quality	The plans that are currently in place need to be renewed or reviewed to ensure they are still relevant for that village. In doing this we will enhance the engagement with local groups to ensure the local voice is heard and consensus, where possible, on key projects is reached.	Head of Regeneration and Rural Development Manager	The elected members, all Council departments will be expected to work with these Groups as and when required. Support required also from central government departments
To create new Village Partnership Groups	Service Quality	Two new village partnership groups will be established for the areas which are not represented on the Ards Peninsula Village Partnership (North Down Villages Partnership and Strangford Villages	Head of Regeneration and Rural Development Manager	The elected members, all Council departments will be expected to work with these Groups as and when required. Support required also from

Service development/improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
		Partnership). This groups will help to shape, influence and inform rural regeneration.		central government departments
To develop a master plan and outline business case for the delivery of a business park at the former NIE site on the Balloo Road, Bangor	Innovation	This site has been in the Council's ownership for many years. Once developed and a Council decision of how to proceed is made this will be in keeping with the vision and obligations set out in the draft Corporate Plan.	Head of Regeneration and the Director of Place	The elected members, some Council departments and support required from central government departments, especially Invest NI.

4. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Standing Committee – Place and Prosperity	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meetings	Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Regeneration Service - full team meeting	6 Monthly	All Regeneration staff

5. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed.

Yes

6. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPI' should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q2	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	86%	85%	90%	95%	95%	95%	
% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	93%	95%	85%	95%	95%	95%	
% of completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	Year end	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	100%	100%	0%	100%	N/A	100%	
To assess and report on the outputs from the two-year Chamber business plans (x5) The plans will seek to enhance Chamber activity and assist in growing and supporting the membership base as well as utilise existing funding to animate the City/Towns.	Service Led	Year of year	3. We have a thriving and sustainable economy	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	5 Chamber Business Plans	5 Chamber Business Plans	End of year	5 Chamber Business Plans	N/A	5 Chamber Business Plans	

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q2	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
To complete the delivery of the Portaferry Public Realm using funding secured from the Small Settlements Grant and undertake the PPEs	Service Led	End of year	4. We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors,	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	N/A	End of year	100%	N/A	100%	
To continue to work with the City/Town Advisory Groups by holding a minimum of 4 meetings per year with each group to develop regeneration improvements for the urban areas and act as a conjugate for other Council services	Service Led	6 monthly	4. We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors,	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	4	5	4	N/A	4	
To develop Urban/Rural projects to procurement stage to access funding streams	Service Led	End of year	4. We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors,	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	N/A	7	0	5	N/A	5	
To deliver projects using the Covid Recovery Small Settlements' Regeneration Programme	Service Led	6 monthly	4. We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors,	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	5	0	4	N/A	4	
To create new Town/City Advisory Groups following the review that was undertaken	Service Led	End of year	1. We have an engaged Borough with	Economic – Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	N/A	5	

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting							
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q2	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed	
			citizens and businesses who have	growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs								
To create 2no new village partnership groups - North Down and Strangford (equivalent to the Ards Peninsula Partnership Group) Meeting quarterly (total of 8 a year)	Service Led	End of year	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and business who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investments	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	4	8		
To commence a review of the village plans and agree with the various groups the key priority projects.	Service Led	End of year	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	N/A	8		
To develop a master plan and outline business case for the delivery of a business park at the former NIE site on the Balloo Road, Bangor	Service Led	End of year	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	1		

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q2	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
To oversee the development works to Marine Gardens and the McKee Clock Arena in keeping with the agreed Quality Specification as part of the Queen's Parade development scheme – anticipated 50% completed by March 2025	Service Led	End of year	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%	N/A	50%	

7. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
To agree a detailed technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the QP project with Bangor Marine.	Completed by March 2024	N/A Activity complete	N/A Activity Complete	N/A Activity Complete	Officer's time now focused on delivering the scheme.
To progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme, to agree a Development Agreement with BYC.	Completed by March 2024	N/A Activity complete	N/A Activity Complete	N/A Activity Complete	Officer's time reallocated to other projects.

Unclassified

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ITEM 6**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity Committee
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Place
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Strategic Capital Development
Date of Report	27 March 2024
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Strategic Capital Unit Service Plan 2024/25
Attachments	6.1 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.

Not Applicable

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A draft plan for 2024/25 is attached. This plan has been developed to align with objectives of The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032; the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). 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 2024/25 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.

The plan is based on the agreed budget.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council adopts the attached plan.

STRATEGIC CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

01 MARCH 2024



Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Andrew Dadley	Brian Dorrian	Susie McCullough
Head of Strategic Capital Development	Head of Regeneration	Director of Place

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1. Introduction to the Strategic Capital Development Service

- 1.1 The purpose of the Strategic Capital Development Service is to support, advise and provide strategic direction across all Council directorates, to support the successful delivery of Council's Strategic Capital Projects. We facilitate the delivery of a strategic project portfolio in line with the 2024-2028 Corporate Plan's vision of creating a sustainable borough through our three economic, environmental and social strategic priorities. The work of our service will assist in: -
- *Reducing carbon emissions as we transition to net zero.*
 - *Increasing Social inclusion and reducing inequalities*
 - *Boosting Economic Growth by attracting more businesses and more jobs into the Borough*
- 1.2 To fulfil this role and deliver an effective and efficient service we continue to lead AND support directorates:
- I. Adopting a structured approach to project delivery, utilising best practice tools and techniques, recognised by Central Government, MAG, HM Treasury and Project Delivery Professionals e.g., Five Case Model, NEC Contracts, the Capital Handbook and Prince 2 principles.
 - II. Proactively assisting in identifying, applying, and securing partner funding from various sources to achieve our ambitions of investing in and enhancing the Borough to drive the economy and attract new visitors, businesses, and residents.
 - III. Prioritising capital projects in order of the strategic economic, environmental and social corporate priorities, readiness, risks, and affordability to deliver Best Value for Money (BVfM) on behalf of Stakeholders.
 - IV. Seeking opportunities to enhance sustainability across both our new and existing assets in line with the 2024-2028 Corporate Plan's vision of a sustainable borough and outcome 2's commitment to transition Council operations to implement net zero carbon targets.
 - V. Embracing technology, ensuring officers are adequately trained and provided with the tools and equipment needed to deliver the required service.
 - VI. Implementing and encouraging other Council directorates to use robust governance procedures to manage the often complex and challenging situations that arise in the delivery of capital projects in Local Government and the Public Sector

Name of Service	<i>Strategic Capital Development</i>
Directorate	<i>Place</i>
Staff	The Head of Service is supported by 3 Project and Programme Managers, 4 Project Officers, a Programme Administrator and an Administrative Officer
Key Achievements	<p>Our service has performed extremely well and responded effectively to the challenges of the past year. Some notable successes include:</p> <p>Enabling cross-cutting engagement across all Council Services through the Capital Projects Advisory Group (CPAG), which is chaired by the Head of Strategic Development to share planned capital projects information and lessons learned on all ongoing and planned Capital Works (construction, maintenance, and sustainability). A database of capital projects across all Council sections has been created on the CPAG Share point and is updated bimonthly to capture all available data and identify opportunities for collaborative working.</p> <p>Conducting a review of the current office estate in order to produce an Office Rationalisation programme in line with the agile working policy, which makes more efficient use of office space, creates more hot desks and will free up underutilised assets.</p> <p>Producing a Capital Sustainable Policy to be adopted by all Directorates.</p> <p>We have progressed the following Strategically Important capital Projects.</p> <p>Cairn Wood – completed. Greenways Comber to Newtownards – Planning permission stage Greenways Newtownards to Bangor – Contractor Tender 3G Sports Pitch Portavogie – Progressed with NIWater infrastructure. Multi Use 3G Pitch Ards Peninsula – Consultants appointed. Donaghadee Sports Facilities – Business Case completed. Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BYC Sailing Centre – Consultants procurement. • Pickie Park – Consultants procurement documentation • Urban Waterfront – Consultants procurement documentation • Open House – Brief Developed • Marina Waterside – Scope Defined <p>Portaferry Public Realm Scheme – On site Whitespots Phase 1 – consultants appointed. Newtownards Citizen Hub – Business Case completed. Cemetery Provision – Options defined. Ward Park de-silting – On site Ward Park Redevelopment – consultants appointed.</p>

Challenges/ Lessons Learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning delays created by Dfl in relation to the Comber to Newtownards Greenway • NI Water lack of infrastructure in relation to the Portavogie 3G Pitch • Donaghadee Sports Facilities, Leisure development of operating model. • Construction Inflation continues to impact on Capital build costs. • Newtownards Citizen Hub on hold till an Office location is agreed
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2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Insert a brief narrative on the external issues, including current and anticipated, impacting upon the service – consideration of PESTLE factors may be useful.

Political	The absence of Central Government at Stormont up until February 2024 has impacted on the availability of external funding and negotiations with potential partners such as DoEd and Libraries NI. Dfl Ineffective decision making has delayed the Greenway project
Economical	Lack of Central Government Budgets, in particular for Dfl, who are an external Funder for the Greenways. Challenge of spending LUF by deadline due to Dfl Network Planners not working in a holist way with the council.
Social	Social Value Policy to be considered by council to align with NICS as required on all funded projects
Technological	Planner statutory consultees response times and demands for excessive detail beyond the planning stage level of requirement.
Legal	Negotiations with numerous landowners along the Greenway routes. High value complex procurement exercises for Bangor Waterfront, which bring a higher risk of challenge.
Environmental	The Council’s corporate commitment to become a Sustainable Borough, comes at an increased cost. Additional funding and resources need to be allocated to projects to achieve BREEAM Excellence / Passivehaus to align with Council and external partner’s increasing sustainable requirements to meet net zero

Insert a brief narrative/ list of the challenges which your services will face over the period of the plan. This should, where relevant, reference external issues highlighted above. A SWOT analysis may be useful for completing this section.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to lead with professional integrity. • Experienced, well-motivated and committed team. • Skilled Workforce, with good breadth of knowledge. • Willingness to lead. • Good relationships with other directorates, Councils, Government bodies • Collaborative Working with internal and external stakeholder • Adaptability, integrity and ability to think outside the box. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary constraints • Third parties' response times • Length of approval process • Length of CPD procurement process
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to expand scope of work beyond current remit. • Ability to forge partnerships with other government bodies • BREAM & Passivehaus standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other directories lack of skill sets and lack of motivation • Delays in the planning process • Resourcing

3. Service Improvement

The “**Service development/ improvement**” element should identify areas of the service that require development/improvement along with any new, innovative ideas for future improvements. **Please state clearly in the “Rationale” section why the improvement is being undertaken and what evidence there is to support the decision.**

Only Service improvement activities should be included in this section, ‘business as usual’ activities should be detailed in Section 6.

Please ensure KPIs are included in Section 6 to measure Service development/ improvement(s) outlined below.

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Prioritising capital projects in order of the strategic economic, environmental and social corporate priorities, readiness, risks, and affordability to deliver Best Value for Money (BVfM) on behalf of Stakeholders.	Strategic Effectiveness	To review the Strategic Capital Projects to align with the new Corporate Plan with a view to report to council on its ability to align and long-term affordability.	Andrew Dadley	CLT
Seeking opportunities to enhance sustainability across both our new and existing assets in line with the 2024-2028 Corporate Plan’s vision of a sustainable borough and outcome 2’s commitment to transition Council operations to implement net zero carbon targets.	Sustainability	The requirements of varies environmental acts working toward Net Zero. CPU have issued a draft sustainability Policy.	Andrew Dadley	CLT
Encourage other Council directorates to up skill and use robust governance procedures to manage capital projects.	Service Quality	To encourage a greater whole life cycle approach with particular reference to VfM	CLT	CPPB
Professional development and accreditation	Professional Development	In line with the organisation’s commitment to professional development, continue in-house training attend industry events	Andrew Dadley	CLT

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
		and support associated recognised Accreditation course as required		

4. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Place and Prosperity Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meeting	Fortnightly	Head of Service and SUMs
<i>Other if applicable</i>		

5. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan, you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed. Yes

6. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	94.68	100%	107.74%	100%			
% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	99.78	95%	99%	95%			
% of completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	100%	100%	0%	100%			
Support the delivery of the Capital Projects Portfolio	Service Led	6 monthly	3. We have a thriving and sustainable economy	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes			

7. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
<i>e.g., EX.01.TO08.001 Number of attendants at large scale event</i>	<i>Activity not planned for the coming year</i>	<i>£5000.00</i>	<i>None – alternative activity planned</i>	<i>None – alternative activity planned</i>	<i>Staff time reallocated to other activity</i>
None					

8. Corporate Plan alignment

1. Review all capital projects and report on how they align with the three Corporate Plan strategic priorities: economic, environmental and social.

Economic Growth to focus on attracting more businesses and more jobs into the Borough A growing economy includes deriving more income from business rates which can then be invested in vital public services, amenities and programmes.

Reduce carbon emissions as we transition to net zero This means that we will focus on reducing the amount of energy used within Council buildings and fleet, delivery of services and capital build projects. Leading by example is important if the transition to net zero is to be meaningful and inclusive of the whole Borough.

Social inclusion and reduced inequalities This means that we will focus on the root cause of social exclusion and disadvantage by promoting wellbeing and creating equitable access to resources, opportunities, and services across our Borough that benefit everyone.

2. Amend the Capital Project Prioritisation scoring to align with the Corporate Plan and mark project against the goals set.

Unclassified

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ITEM 7**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity Committee
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Place
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	20 March 2024
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	PEACEPLUS: Theme 6 - Place-shaping of Towns on the East Border Region
Attachments	N/A

1. PEACEPLUS Programme 2021 – 2027

PEACEPLUS is a cross-border funding programme supported by the European Union, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of Ireland, and the Northern Ireland administration.

The programme is designed to support peace and prosperity across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, building upon the work of the previous PEACE and INTERREG Programmes.

The programme has been divided into six themes:

- Theme 1 – Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities
- Theme 2 – Delivering Socio-Economic Regeneration and Transformation
- Theme 3 – Empowering and Investing in our Young People
- Theme 4 – Healthy and Inclusive Communities

Not Applicable

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- Theme 5 – Supporting a Sustainable and Better-Connected Future
- Theme 6 – Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration

Each new programme aims to address longstanding social and economic challenges which have and continue to impact our communities. Within each theme there are several investment areas – these have a specific focus and target specific organisations. There are 22 investment areas in total.

Theme 6 – Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration

Whilst the PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Programmes have made significant contributions to cementing cross-border collaboration, challenges still persist. Projects under this theme will help organisations across the community to communicate, interact, and learn together.

Theme 6 – Investment Area 6.1 Strategic Planning and Engagement

This investment area will support the engagement of strategic stakeholders targeting legal and administrative obstacles to co-operation in relevant sectors. The funding will focus on enabling joint development and management of strategies; co-operation capacity building; and identification of solutions to reduce obstacles to cross-border co-operation.

2. Proposed Project: *Place-Shaping of Towns on the East Border Region*

Under Theme 6, Investment Area 6.1 Strategic Planning and Engagement, the following project is proposed: **Place-shaping of Towns on the East Border Region.**

Place-shaping provides an opportunity for the partners to work together with local people and stakeholders, unlocking innovation and change, to improve the quality of life in our places across the East Border Region for the benefit of all. The aim of the Place-Shaping project is:

- To improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the selected 'place', through harnessing place shaping powers and functions within Councils and partners.
- To build plans for a place in which local communities are integral to its development and delivery.
- To understand shared obstacles and opportunities across the jurisdiction, identify solutions and apply best practice.

The proposed project will be submitted as a joint application between the following partners:

1. East Border Region
2. Ards and North Down Borough Council
3. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
4. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
5. Louth County Council
6. Meath County Council
7. Monaghan County Council

Not Applicable

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The total amount to be applied across all partners is £2M. This is an allocation of approximately £266K per partner, plus core costs.

The application will propose three strands of delivery:

- Strand 1 – Developing Place Plans
- Strand 2 – Place Learning
- Strand 3 – Pilot Action Delivery

Strand 1 – Developing Place Plans

This strand will provide partners with the opportunity to develop place-making plans tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of their respective area. Partners can create comprehensive frameworks that will aim to transform High Streets and public spaces with the aim of understanding collective needs.

The Council have recently launched its review of the City and Town Masterplans which identifies long-term goals, objectives, and strategies to enhance the development of our towns and city. The actions identified in each Masterplan helps to coordinate development efforts, prioritise investment, and ensure that all changes align with the overall vision for the future of our towns and city. Therefore, ANDBC do not need to submit any projects under this strand, rather the Masterplans will be the framework for projects submitted under strand 2 and 3.

Strand 2 – Place Learning

This strand will provide partners with a series of cluster/shared learning workshops/events and immersion study visits to each partner area to explore approaches to regeneration and place projects, supporting the social, economic, and environmental aspects of a place.

This strand will see the development of a Cross Border Place Network to include all partners and additional stakeholders. It is proposed that the Council fully engages within this strand and become a member of the Cross Border Place Network.

Strand 3 – Pilot Action Delivery

This strand will focus on the delivery of shared place or town centre actions across the partner areas which achieve common outcomes. Pilot actions will include partner wide projects or localised programme/initiatives.

The partners with existing Place Plans/Masterplans have identified numerous cross-over actions common to individual plans; *Wayfinding* for example being a common outcome.

In November 2023, the Council appointed consultants, The Paul Hogarth Company, and Gleeds, to develop *Wayfinding Strategies* for Bangor, Comber, Donaghadee, Holywood and Newtownards, this work emanated from the Masterplan Reviews.

Designing unique and tailored wayfinding strategies for each town and city is crucial for enhancing the overall visitor experience and encouraging exploration of key destinations. By providing clear wayfinding to local heritage, attractions, services and other points of interest, such strategies can help boost local businesses and increase dwell time, ultimately benefitting both residents and tourists alike.

Not Applicable

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It is therefore recommended to submit the Wayfinding Project as a Pilot Action Delivery Project under strand 3. The Wayfinding Strategies being developed by the consultants will provide an indicative cost of delivery per town/city. This will then determine the level of delivery possible within the available budget, a phased approach and/or pilot project may be required.

3. Next Steps

Should the Council agree to enter the partnership and submit a joint application for funding, the Council will be required to:

1. Enter and sign a Partnership Agreement.
2. Work with all partners to develop an application for submission (call will open in approx. 4 weeks).
3. Agree to contribute £1,000 towards the costs for the appointment of a consultant to finalise the application for submission (this can be met from existing budgets).

It is hoped the call for applications will open late April 2024 with funding awarded later in the year. Projects should be ready to commence January 2025, with completion expected by December 2027.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council proceeds to enter a partnership arrangement with the partners listed to submit a joint application to PEACEPLUS for funding of approx. £2M (£226K per partner).

It is further recommended that the Council submits, under Strand 2- Place Learning, and Strand 3- Pilot Action Delivery with Wayfinding as the identified project.

Unclassified

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ITEM 8**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Choose an item.
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity Committee
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Place
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	19 March 2024
File Reference	RDP208
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Levelling Up Fund Round 3 - Response from Secretary of State
Attachments	App 1 - Ltr to Sec of State - 21.12.23 App 2 - Response from Sec of State - 12.3.24

Members will recall that the Place and Prosperity Committee agreed in December 2023 that the Chief Executive write to the NI Secretary of State asking for his intervention to ensure that Round 3 of Levelling Up was opened to NI. Council noted that the Levelling Up Fund did not require the restoration of the Assembly as it was a direct payment from Westminster (Appendix 1).

A response dated 12 March 2024 on behalf of the Secretary of State has been received from the Rt Hon Steve Baker MP (Appendix 2).

The response advises that the UK Government assessed where investment was needed, given the budgetary position faced by the NI Executive in order to stabilise finances and protect public services. It further confirms that the UK Government removed any requirement to 'ring-fence' funding as part of this financial package delivered to the NI Executive in December 2023.

Choose an item.

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The response also advises that the UK Government will continue to work closely with projects and places in Northern Ireland that were awarded a total of £120 million in the first two rounds of the Fund and work with stakeholders on how best to level up communities in Northern Ireland.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes the response from the Secretary of State regarding the Levelling Up Fund Round 3.

RDP208

4th January 2024

The Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Erskine House
20-32 Chichester St Belfast
BT1 4GF

E: correspondence@nio.gov.uk

Dear Secretary of State

LEVELLING UP FUND ROUND 3

I would advise you that Ards and North Down Borough Council was disappointed to learn that Round 3 of the Levelling Up Fund did not include any projects in Northern Ireland.

This was reported to the Place and Prosperity Committee meeting and it was ratified by Council, that I, as the Chief Executive, write to you, asking for your intervention to ensure that Round 3 of the Levelling Up Fund is opened up to Northern Ireland and that the Council notes that the Levelling Up Fund does not require the restoration of the NI Assembly, as it is a fund coming directly from Westminster.

The Council looks forward to receiving your response.

Yours faithfully



STEPHEN REID
Chief Executive



Northern
Ireland
Office

Rt Hon Steve Baker MP
Minister of State for Northern
Ireland

1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Erskine House
20-32 Chichester St
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Follow us on Twitter @NIOgov

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council
By email: stephen.reid@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

12 March 2024

Your reference: RDP208
Our reference: MC/23/621

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 4 January 2024, on Round 3 of the Levelling Up Fund. I am responding on behalf of the Secretary of State.

In Northern Ireland, the Government has confirmed it is not proceeding with this round of the Levelling Up Fund. The related £30m has been reserved for Northern Ireland as part of £708m of new and repurposed funds where the ring-fence has been removed. As you know, overall the Government is providing a £3.3bn financial package which will increase the spending power available to the Executive to allow it to invest against its own priorities.

The UK Government has assessed where investment is needed given the budgetary position faced by the Northern Ireland Executive. As a result of this approach, the Government outlined a financial package to the Northern Ireland parties in December, which would assist the Executive to stabilise its finances and protect public services. Removing the ring-fence from funding streams is a key part of the package and something that was discussed with the parties. Further detail on the financial package is available on gov.uk.

The UK Government will continue to work closely with projects and places in Northern Ireland that were awarded a total of £120 million in the first two rounds of the Fund and work with stakeholders on how best to level up communities in Northern Ireland.

Levelling up remains at the core of the government's long-term vision to grow the economy: ensuring the benefits of economic development are felt everywhere. I therefore welcome the Chancellor's announcements, as part of the Spring Budget, of the £150 million Enhanced Investment Zone funding, Long Term Plan for Towns funding in both Derry-Londonderry and Coleraine and £2 million for Global Trade & Investment.

Locally accountable and devolved local government is the best way to deliver for the people of Northern Ireland, and we warmly welcome the restoration of power-sharing and the Northern Ireland Executive. The Secretary of State and I remain committed to working with Ministers to ensure the long-term prosperity of Northern Ireland.

Thank you for your continued engagement on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Baker', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**THE RT HON STEVE BAKER MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

Unclassified

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ITEM 9**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Place and Prosperity Committee
Date of Meeting	11 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Place
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regeneration
Date of Report	27 March 2024
File Reference	RDP14
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Footpath provision at Shore Road, Ballyhalbert
Attachments	9.1 Council's letter to DfI Permanent Secretary dated 3 November 2023 9.2 Response from the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure dated 22 November 2023

At its meeting in June 2023 Council agreed to respond to the Department for Infrastructure's Permanent Secretary's letter of 24 May 2023, as Members felt the response was unsatisfactory and had played down the road safety issues identified and the Council's suggestion of an alternative pedestrian route. It was also agreed that Council officers should investigate the proposal of the alternative route and report back in due course.

At its meeting in September 2023 Council agreed to further respond to the Department for Infrastructure's Permanent Secretary's letter dated 10 August 2023, as Members expressed disappointment in the Department's response, that despite being a priority need & road safety concern in the village for over 20 years the construction of a footway link on Shore Road Ballyhalbert is still not a priority for the

Not Applicable

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Department. Further that Council invites them to a site meeting with the Peninsula DEA members to view the area and see the road safety issues for themselves.

The Permanent Secretary has further responded, and his letter of 22 August 2023 is attached. (Unfortunately, due to an administration error this was only received by the Regeneration Unit in March 2024.) He has again highlighted that any works on this stretch of road would have a significant cost, outlining the challenges with budget and confirmed the Department's position that they will not be taking this forward. The Permanent Secretary also declined the meeting request but did outline that if the Council found a solution using the privately owned lands, that the Department may be able to connect the road network to this.

Officers will be investigating the proposal of a potential alternative route and will report back to Council in due course.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council notes the response.

SCORR-0343-2023

3 November 2023

Dr Denis McMahon
Permanent Secretary
Department for Infrastructure
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB

Sent via email only: perm.sec@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Dear Denis,

Shore Road, Ballyhalbert

You may be aware that the Council has been in correspondence with your predecessor, Dr Julie Harrison, for the past number of months over road safety issues at the above location.

The Council has considered the responses from the Department and resolved that I write to you expressing disappointment with the responses it has received, showing a lack of understanding that, “despite being a priority need and road safety concern in the village for over 20 years, the construction of a footway link on Shore Road, Ballyhalbert, remains not a priority for the Department”.

At a recent meeting of the Council, it was again agreed that I write to invite you to attend a site meeting in Ballyhalbert to see at first hand how unsafe this stretch of road is for pedestrians. The Elected Members for the area would also be in attendance to emphasise the concerns of their constituents.

If this is acceptable, please advise accordingly and we can arrange a suitable date and time for a visit.



**Ards and
North Down**
Borough Council

I look forward to your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive

From the Permanent Secretary
Dr Denis McMahon



Your Reference:
Our Reference: SINV-0259-2023

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive Ards and North Down
Borough Council

Via email:
Stephen.Reid@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Room 701
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone (028) 9054 1175
Email: perm.sec@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

22 November 2023

Dear Stephen,

SHORE ROAD BALLYHALBERT

Thank you for your letter of 3 November 2023 which expressed your disappointment at previous correspondence relating to a request for a footway link on Shore Road, Ballyhalbert. You have requested a meeting with elected members at the location. While I recognise and understand the points that you have made, it is important to see this issue in the context of an extremely constrained budget position in the Department for Infrastructure.

All requests for improvements to the road network, including the provision of footway schemes or upgrading works, are assessed in line with our current policies and guidance. Works are subject to prioritisation with all viable proposals competing for the finite amount of funding available. Accordingly, and in line with policy, the Department's position remains unchanged regarding taking forward a footway link along the Shore Road.

In your letter of 9 May 2023 you helpfully suggested a potential link through private land. You suggest that Council may wish to give this further consideration as an off-road Active Travel path as part of your long-term Greenway and Active Travel proposals. The Department could also consider linking into this route from the road network.

As the Department has explained its position in previous correspondence, there would be little to be gained by having an onsite meeting and, as such, I must respectfully decline your invitation at this time.

I am sorry the Department cannot be more helpful on this occasion.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr Denis McMahon'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

DR DENIS McMAHON
DfI Permanent Secretary