



November 11th, 2015

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are invited to attend the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 12th November 2015 at 6:00 pm** in **Downshire Civic Centre**.

The Members of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee are:-

Chair: Councillor R Burgess

Vice Chair: Councillor H Reilly

Members:	Councillor P Brown	Councillor S Burns
	Councillor M Carr	Councillor W Clarke
	Councillor G Craig	Councillor D Curran
	Councillor G Donnelly	Councillor L Kimmins
	Councillor C McGrath	Councillor B O'Muirí
	Councillor B Quinn	Councillor M Ruane
	Councillor W Walker	

# Agenda

**1 Apologies**

**2 Declarations of Interest**

**3 Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee held on 15 October 2015 (copy attached)**

[SPR-17-10-2015.pdf](#)

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*4 Presentations*

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**4a Presentation - Eurocities**

- Laura Leonard, Belfast City Council

**4b Presentation Report from Councillors Burns and Carr re Sister Cities**

Official signing of the Sister Cities Agreement will take place prior to the SPR Meeting.

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*Corporate Planning and Policy*

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**5a Irish Language Strategy (copy enclosed)**

[Irish Language Strategy Report for 12 November 2015 4SPR Meeting.pdf](#)

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[NMDDC Irish Language Strategy Final.pdf](#)

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*6 Local Development Plan*

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**6a Local Development Plan Paper 4 : Town Centres and Opportunity Sites**

[SPR Report Nov'15 re LDP Paper 4-Town Centre and Opportunity Sites.pdf](#)

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[LDP Paper 4 - Town Centres and Opportunities Sites.pdf](#)

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- 7a Capital Projects - Progress Report (copy attached)**  
*Capital Projects Progress Report 6 November 2015.pdf* Page 121
- 7b Kindle Integrated PS - letter from Education Authority (copy attached)**  
*Kindle Integrated PS letter from EA.pdf* Page 124
- 7c Play Area and Mobile at Oriel Drive, Downpatrick (copy attached)**  
*Play Area and Mobile at Oriel Drive Downpatrick.pdf* Page 125
- 7d Orior Park Changing Rooms, Bessbrook (copy attached)**  
*Report re Orior Park Changing Rooms Bessbrook.pdf* Page 129  
*Map of Orior Football pitch.pdf* Page 130
- 7e Request to purchase land at Station Road, Castlewellan (copy attached)**  
*Request to purchase land at Station Rd, Castlewellan.pdf* Page 131
- 7f Request to acquire Lisburn Street car park, Ballynahinch (copy attached)**  
*Report re Car Park, Ballynahinch.pdf* Page 135  
*Appendix 1 Lisburn Street South Car-Park, Ballynahinch.pdf* Page 137  
*Appendix 2 Proposed Acquisition by Supermarket.pdf* Page 138  
*Appendix 3 Proposed floor plan.pdf* Page 139  
*Appendix 4 perspective drawing.pdf* Page 140
- 7g Valuation of Land at Greenbank Industrial Estate, Newry (copy attached)**

**7h Storm Water Drainage at Corraghs Road, Burren Village Green  
(copy attached)**

Storm Water Drainage at Corraghs Road, Burren-Burren Village Green.pdf

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15-265 Rev B C-02 Drainage Layout.pdf

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03 NI Water Correspondence etc.pdf

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**7i Murphy Trust (copy attached)**

Murphy Trust.pdf

Page 158

**7j Council land at The Green, Strangford - Request for use (copy  
attached)**

The Green, Strangford - use of.pdf

Page 159

**7k Parking Issues at Council Offices, Greenbank (copy attached)**

Report on Parking Issues at Council Offices Greenbank.pdf

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**8 Corporate Services**

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**8a Approval for call for Financial Assistance 2016/17 (copy  
attached)**

Financial Assistance Nov.pdf

Page 171

**8a(i) Update on Christmas Events Funding**

Update on Christmas Events Funding.pdf

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Christmas Budget SPP.pdf

Page 174

**8b Elected Member Application to Undertake Accredited Training  
(copy attached)**

Elected Member Application to undertake Accredited Training...pdf

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Appendix 1 Accredited Training Application.pdf

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**8c Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment (copy attached)**

[Letter of Assurance.pdf](#)

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**8d Contributions Expenditure - Update (copy attached)**

[Contributions budget.pdf](#)

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9 Verification

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**9a Appointment of Members to the Board of the Carlingford Louth Commissioners (copy attached)**

Appointment of Members to the Board of the Carlingford Louth Commissioners (only 2 Members of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to be appointed in accordance with the 1867 Legislation)

[carlingford lough commissioners spr nov15.pdf](#)

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**9b Sister City/Twinning Issues (copy attached)**

[Report on Grozny.pdf](#)

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10 Grant Aided Programmes

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**10a SIF - Update (copy attached)**

[SIF Nov.pdf](#)

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**10b PEACE IV (copy attached)**

[PEACE IV update.pdf](#)

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11 Community Planning

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**11a Statutory Guidance for the Operation of Community Planning (copy attached)**

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12 *Items Restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014*

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12a

**Valuation for the sale of land at former Down District Council offices at Strangford Road, Downpatrick (report to follow)**

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Information relating to the financial of business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public, may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business

*Strangford Road Disposal.pdf*

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# Invitees

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## ACTION SHEET- STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2015

AGENDA ITEM	SUBJECT	DECISION	FOR COMPLETION BY DIRECTOR – including actions taken/date completed or progress to date if not yet completed
SPR:171/2015	Land offered to Council: Former Abbey Grammar School, Courtney Hill, Newry	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Ruane to proceed with the acquisition of land comprising 5.44 acres offered to the Council by the Christian Brothers at the former Abbey Grammar School, Courtney Hill, Newry, as there is an identified need for amenity land in Newry City	Ongoing – proceed with acquisition.
SPR:172/2015	Resbrook Community Centre – Hydro & Heat Pump	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Ruane, that the matter be referred to SMT for consideration of Option A or Option B.	Referred to SMT on 9 November 2015
SPR:173/2015	Request from the Quays Shopping Centre to use St. Christopher's Park at Newry Albert Basin for Staff Car Parking for 6 weeks at Christmas 2015	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Donnelly, seconded by Councillor Kimmins, that the request from the Quays Shopping Centre to use St. Christopher's Park at Albert Basin for staff car parking for 6 weeks at Christmas 2015, be acceded to.	Valuation sought and included in SPRC agenda for 12 November 2015
SPR:174/2015	Marketing and Communications Strategy 2015/16	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Donnelly, that the Marketing and Communications Strategy 2015/16, be approved.	Approved
SPR:176/2015	Treasury Management	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to give retrospective approval for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to join a Tender for Treasury Management to be led by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council.	Referred to Robert Dowry

AGENDA ITEM	SUBJECT	DECISION	FOR COMPLETION BY DIRECTOR – including actions taken/date completed or progress to date if not yet completed
SPR181/2015	IT Equipment Storage Devices	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Quinn, to give retrospective approval to spend €18,888 to appoint Capita to supply, install and configure additional computer storage.	Referred to Robert Downy
SPR182/2015	Staff Recognition Event	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Yr Clarke, to give €5,000 under Section 37 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2011 for Council to host a staff recognition event in December 2015.	J Farrell to set up a working group in the Downshire and Monaghan sites to consider the events.
SPR184/2015	Car Loans	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor O'Muirí <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Newry, Mourne and Down District Council adopts the provision in Section 41B of the Local Government Act to allow it to make loans to officers in accordance with the specified conditions.</li> <li>2. That condition 1 on the previously circulated 'Schedule' for which a loan may be made to an officer for the purchase of a motor vehicle is determined by management where it is satisfied that it is essential for officers to use their private vehicles in carrying out official duties.</li> </ol>	Approved.
SPR185/2015	Consultation Response to 511 Report on Review of NILGA	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Donnelly, seconded by Councillor Burns, for the issues raised within the report to be submitted as the Council's formal response to an independent review of NILGA.	Actioned
SPR171/2015	Land offered to Council, i.e. Former Abbey Grammar School, Courtney Hill, Newry	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Ruane to proceed with the acquisition of land comprising 5.44 acres offered to the Council by the Christian Brothers at the former Abbey Grammar School, Courtney Hill, Newry, as there is an identified need for amenity land in Newry City	Ongoing A.Robb

AGENDA ITEM	SUBJECT	DECISION	FOR COMPLETION BY DIRECTOR – including actions taken/date completed or progress to date if not yet completed
SPR-189/2015	2016 Decade of Centenaries Grant Programme	<p>It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Walker:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That an additional £20,000 be allocated within the 2016/17 budget to establish a total budget of £40,000 for a Decade of Centenaries Grant Programme – 2016.</li> <li>• That the call for applications to the Decade of Centenaries Grant Programme 2016 proceed.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing – closing date for applications 03/12/15</p> <p>A copy of the details of this programme will be circulated to all Councillors</p>
SPR-190/2015	Community Planning and the Arts: An Arts Council of NI Symposium	<p>It was agreed that an email would be sent to Party Representatives requesting their nominations to the symposium on 21 October 2015.</p>	<p>Actioned</p>
SPR-191/2015	Sister City Twinning Report	<p>It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Ruane, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The following 4 Sister Cities Twinning projects are adopted for the 2015-2019 period:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Bezons (France) formal structure agreed</li> <li>b) Listowel (Ireland) have formal structure agreed</li> <li>c) Kirovsk (Russia) have formal structure agreed</li> <li>d) Southern Pines (USA) have formal structure agreed.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. The projects above will be evaluated annually and will be tabled at Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in the future.</li> <li>3. The projects of New Ross, South Dakota and the Western Isles of Scotland will undergo further investigation regarding twinning.</li> <li>4. The request from Gronzy, Russia, to twin with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, to be further investigated.</li> </ol>	<p>Report on Twinning project in Gronzy, Russia included on SPAC Agenda for November.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	SUBJECT	DECISION	FOR COMPLETION BY DIRECTOR – including actions taken/date completed or progress to date if not yet completed
SPR/192/2015	Scheme of Delegation for Officers	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Carr, that the Scheme of Delegation Report be adopted.	Adopted.
SPR/194/2015	Tender for the Advertising of Planning Application Notices	Protocol to be brought back to the November Committee meeting for consideration.	Included on agenda for SPHC Meeting on 12 November 2015.
SPR/195/2015	Release of Charge – Mayobridge Community Association	It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Donnelly, seconded by Councillor Burns, that the Council agrees to the Release of Charge registered on 2 May 2000 by the Council as a burden on the land comprised in Folio DN 48560L County Down owned by the Mayobridge Community Association.	Approved.

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Irish Language Strategy 2015-2016
<b>Date:</b>	12 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Mrs. M. Mhic An tSair
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Orna Mhic An tSair

### Decisions Required

Members are asked to consider the contents of the report and agree the Irish Language Strategy 2015-2016.

<b>1. Purpose &amp; Background</b>	This Irish Language Strategy covers the period up to 31 March 2016 and its aim is to outline the Council's approach to creating a supportive environment for the use and development of the Irish language in public, personal, cultural and community life.
<b>2. Key Issues</b>	<p>2.1 The aims of the strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Support quality and sustainable education and learning in the Irish language;</li> <li>➤ Enhance and protect the status and visibility of the Irish language;</li> <li>➤ Deliver sustainable Irish language networks and communities; and</li> <li>➤ Promote the Irish language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>	3.1 Resources to be identified to undertake the implementation.
<b>4. Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications</b>	4.1 The implementation of this strategy will be delivered taking account of the Council's duty to promote a good and harmonious working relationship between Article 75 and Section 75 statutory departments.
<b>5. Appendices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish Language Strategy 2015-2016.</li> </ul>



**Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn  
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne and Down District  
Council**

**Straitéis na Gaeilge 2015/16**

**Irish Language Strategy 2015/16**

**Samhain 2015**

**November 2015**

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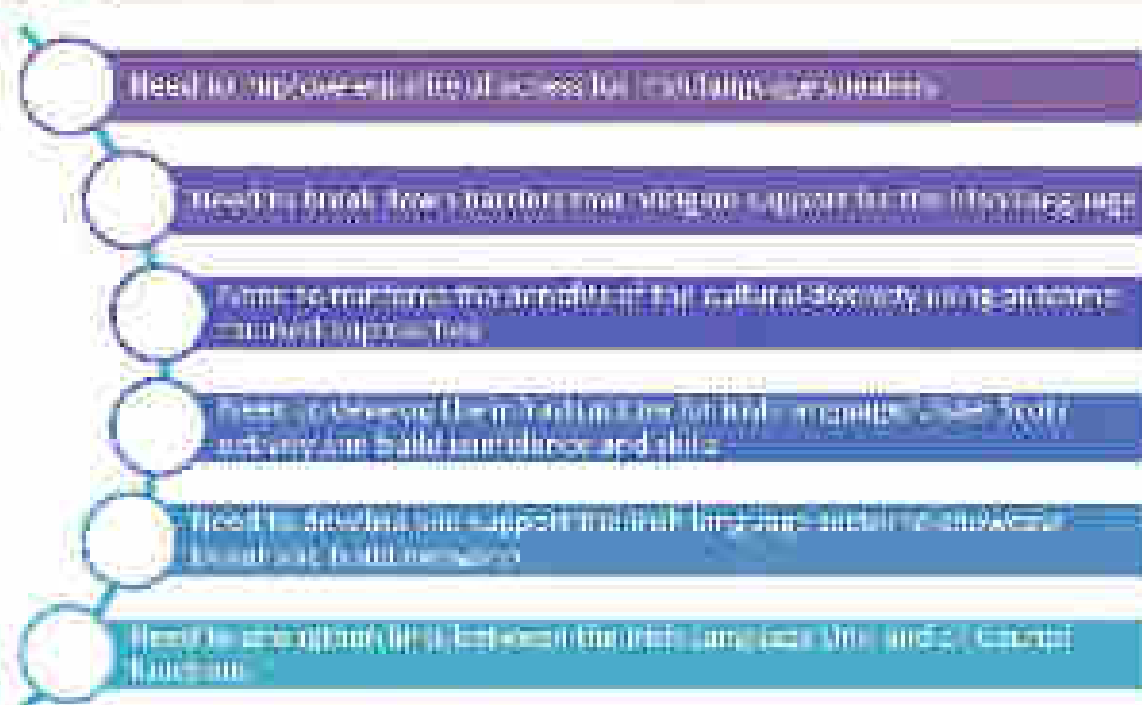


# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Irish Language Strategy creates a framework in which Irish can flourish in the Council area and be accessible to all who wish to use it. It aims to protect and support the development and learning of Irish and to promote wider understanding of the cultural background of the Irish language.

The following sections outline the key elements of the Plan, namely, the needs to be addressed, Vision, aims, objectives, strategic priorities and indicative actions. A detailed Action Plan is presented in Chapter 6.

## NEEDS



## VISION

**“To create a supportive environment for the use and revitalisation of the Irish language in public, personal, economic and community life.”**

## AIMS

- Support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish language;
- Grow and protect the status and visibility of the Irish language;
- Develop sustainable Irish language networks and communities and

- Promote the Irish language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community.

### OBJECTIVES

- To facilitate access to opportunities to learn the Irish language outside of formal education;
- To support an increase in the number of daily speakers of the Irish language;
- To meet all obligations towards the Irish language under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;
- To increase awareness of the economic and social value of the Irish language;
- To develop sustainable local community based Irish language plans and initiatives;
- To provide opportunities to use Irish for as a wide a range of people as possible, by encouraging family, social and community based language networks;
- Positively promote the Irish language in the community;
- Positively promote the Irish language in the Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist community;

- Development of 2016-19 Action Plan;
- Promotion of community-based initiatives to learn Irish;
- Develop Guidelines for the Use of Irish in Council;
- Staff training provision;
- Increased inclusion of Irish language in events/festivals;
- Partnerships between businesses operating through the medium of Irish;
- Irish Language reflected in all Council marketing and communications;
- Strengthen links between Council and the Irish language community;
- Strengthen links between Council and the Irish language community;
- Irish language community involved in DEA work;
- Deliver community based events;
- Distribute information on funding;
- More promotion through social media;
- Support Good Relations to promote the Irish language in PUL communities;
- Scope the Ulster Scots community in NMDDC and provide needs based support;
- Deliver a joint Ulster Scots/Irish language event in partnership with Good Relations;

### ACTIONS

A range of innovative and challenging actions will take place to deliver our Vision. Examples of actions that will take place include:

## DELIVERY

The Irish Language Unit reports to the **Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee** and makes members aware of progress weekly via regular written and verbal reports. The Unit will provide progress updates against key actions on a six monthly basis. They will take the form of written reports to Council and will be available on the Council website. An Annual Overview will be developed and the associated yearly Action Plan will be revised to reflect progress and ongoing business needs and external environment. The Irish Language Unit has a budget of €142,288 in 2015/16. It consists of:

- €103,191.72% for Salaries (including National Insurance etc.)
- €27,000 (19%) for Events (Piping Festival one off funding for August 2015)
- €4,800 (3%) for Travel
- €1,250 (0.9%) for Advertising, Publications and Facilitation
- €2,217 (1.5%) for Miscellaneous
- €1,530 (1%) for Overheads and
- €300 (0.2%) for Training/Conferences

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 IRISH LANGUAGE STRATEGY

Newry, Moine and Down District Council recognises that the Irish language is an integral part of the heritage, national identity and cultural life of the District. We are committed to the objectives set out in the Bilingualism Policy and have put in place the necessary structures and initiatives to ensure that the Irish language has a sustainable future in the Council area.

Newry, Moine and Down District Council's Irish Language Strategy was prepared within the framework of the Council's Bilingualism Policy. It sets out how we will use the Irish language in the operation of our functions, how we will facilitate the use of the Irish language when communicating with the public and key partners and how we will promote and develop the Irish language across the Council area.

### 2.2 A NEW LANDSCAPE

Local government reform saw the merger of **Newry and Moine District Council** and **Down District Council**. The new Council area covers the Southeast of Northern Ireland, including northern County Armagh and large parts of County Down. It primarily comprises the former Newry and Moine and Down District Council areas, but also includes the Ballyward electoral ward which was previously within the Banbridge District Council area. It is the third largest council area in Northern Ireland, incorporating all of the Moine Mountains Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Beauty. It benefits from an extensive coastline stretching from Strangford Lough to Carrlingford Lough and borders counties Louth and Monaghan in the Republic of Ireland. The district has a population of around 171,000<sup>1</sup> in addition to Newry city, the principal settlements are Downpatrick, Ballynahinch, Killybeg, Newcastle, Warrenpoint and Carranbeg.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Newry, Moine and Down Councils (2016) (2016) (2016) (2016) (2016)



A number of powers have transferred from central to local government. These include increased responsibilities for planning, roads, urban and rural regeneration, community development, housing, local economic development and tourism. The Council also has a new statutory duty of Community Planning and a new General Power of Competence. Urban regeneration and community development responsibilities will transfer in 2023.

Community planning will provide the framework for Council Government departments, statutory bodies and other relevant agencies and sectors to work together to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area, based on community engagement.

### 2.3 ELECTED REPRESENTATION

The Council has strong representation from Sinn Féin and the SDLP, with 14 and 13 seats respectively.

Table 2.1 Membership of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Political Party	Seats
Sinn Féin	14
SDLP	13
DUP	4
UUP	1
Alliance	1
ITCP	1
Independent	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

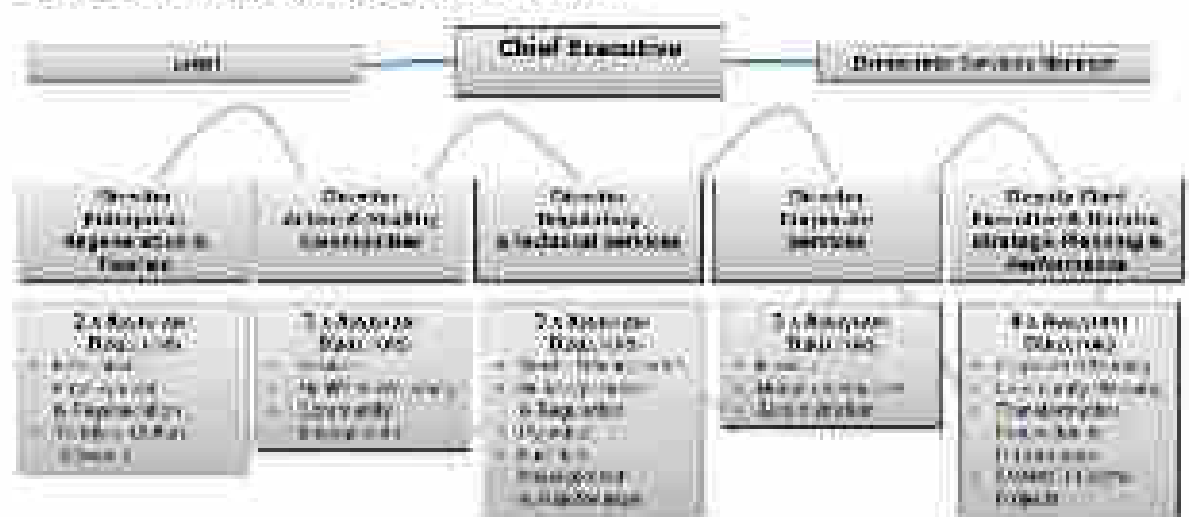
## 2.4 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

New governance structures have been agreed to ensure ownership and scrutiny across the entire organisation. This is represented by a Committee structure, which enables Elected Members of Council to fulfil their leadership and scrutiny roles, as well as a Management structure, to ensure there is sufficient organisational capacity for successful implementation. These are summarised in Figures 2.1 and 2.2.

Figure 2.1 NMDDC Committee and Management Structure



Figure 2.2 NMDDC Management Structure



The Council employs approximately 750 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees and has an annual budget in excess of €50m. This is made up of rates income, grants from various government and from the fees charged for specific Council services.

<sup>1</sup> Newry, Mourne and Down Local Council Plan (2015-19).

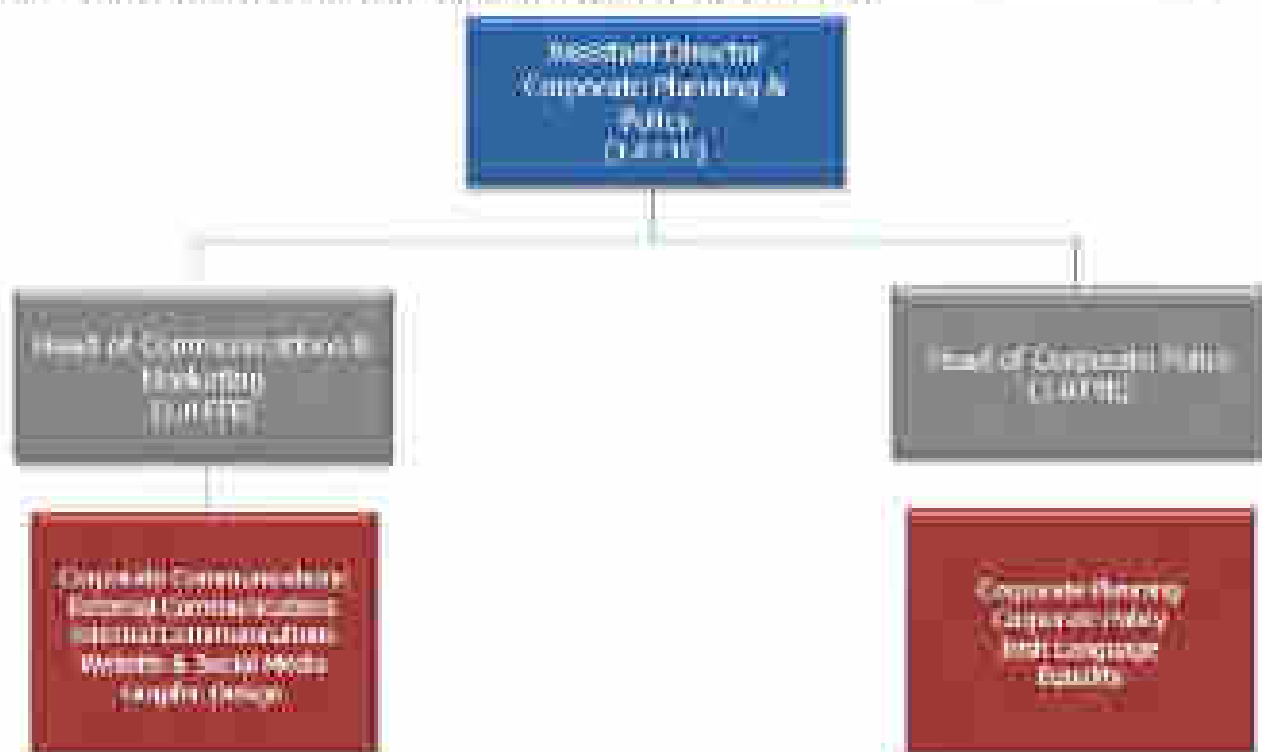
## 2.5 MERGER IMPACT ON THE IRISH LANGUAGE UNIT

The predecessor Down District Council did not have an Irish Language Unit. Instead the Policy was implemented through the Equality and Policy Officer. In the merger Newry and Mourne District Council, the Irish Language Unit was positioned within District Development, alongside culture, arts, community and economic development functions. The Irish Language Unit provided reports to the Irish Language Committee and the Ulster Scots Committee.

Within the new Council, the NMDDC Irish Language Unit is situated within the Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate. This incorporates Corporate Planning and Policy, Community Planning and Transformation, Innovation and Performance, Estates and Capital Projects and Strategic Programmes.

Figure 2.3 illustrates the new structure of the Corporate Planning and Policy Service. The Assistant Director has overall responsibility for Equality, Irish Language and Communications and Marketing functions within the Council.

Figure 2.3 NMDDC Corporate Planning and Policy Structure



### 3. PROFILE OF THE COUNCIL AREA

#### 3.1 POPULATION

With an estimated population of 74,824, the Council accounts for 9% of the total population of NI (n1,929,724).<sup>1</sup>

- Between 2003 and 2013 the population of Newry, Mourne and Down Local Government District (LGD) increased by 18,434 people (12% compared to 7% NI).
- The new District Council area has a relatively low population density with 167% people per square hectare compared to the NI average of 134%.
- The proportion of young people aged under 16 years was 13% (n39,917) slightly higher than the Northern Ireland average (11% n85,107).
- The proportion of older people aged 65 and over was 13% (n24,521) slightly lower than the Northern Ireland average (14% n273,134).
- The median age of the population is 36 years, compared to the NI median of 37 years.
- People of young working age (15-39 years) make up 33% of the population (n55,515) which is the same as the Northern Ireland Average (33% n583,753).
- People of older working age (40-64 years) make up 12% of the population (n19,145) which is slightly less than the Northern Ireland average of 13% (n84,233).
- The total proportion of the working age population is 45% just under the NI average of 46% and
- Under the Multiple Deprivation Measure (MDM) the most deprived ward in the Local Government District (LGD) is Ballymore with a rank of 24. The least deprived ward is Saintfield (552 out of 583 wards in NI).<sup>2</sup>

#### 3.2 RELIGION, ETHNICITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

The District is predominantly made up of people from a Catholic community background with 72% belonging to, or being brought up in the Catholic religion. Twenty-four percent of the population are from a Protestant community background. Around 1,750 people (1%) are from an ethnic minority population background. There is a higher proportion of migrants from the EU in Newry, Mourne and Down 2.81% (n4,811) compared to the NI average (2.51% n65,437). Table 3.1 provides a breakdown of the ethnicity of those living in the Council area.

<sup>1</sup> NI Statistics and Research Centre (2014) (2013) (2013)  
<sup>2</sup> NI Statistics and Research Centre (2014) (2013) (2013)



Table 7.1 Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Number	% NMDDC	% NI	Higher/lower than NI average
Total	171,539	100	100	-
White	169,743	98.96	98.21	higher
Chinese	301	0.18	0.31	lower
Irish Traveller	185	0.11	0.07	higher
Indian	267	0.16	0.34	lower
Pakistani	54	0.03	0.05	lower
Bangladeshi	28	0.02	0.01	lower
Other Asian	158	0.09	0.24	lower
Black Caribbean	25	0.02	0.02	same
Black African	125	0.07	0.12	lower
Black Other	92	0.05	0.05	same
Mixed	439	0.26	0.31	lower
Other	135	0.08	0.13	lower

A higher proportion of residents perceived themselves to be Irish (94%) followed by Northern Irish (10%) and British (29%).

### 3.3 LANGUAGES SPOKEN<sup>6</sup>

The main languages spoken by people over the age of 3 years are as follows:

- ▶ 96.97% of people speak English as their first language, slightly higher than the rest of NI at 95.85%
- ▶ 3.33% of people speak a language other than English as their first language. This equates to 4,568 people
- ▶ 16.05% have some knowledge of Irish
- ▶ 4.43% have some knowledge of Ulster-Scots

Table 7.2 illustrates the main languages of residents in the District:

Table 1.2 Main Languages Spoken

Main spoken (3 years+)	Languages	Number	% NMDDC	% NI	Higher/lower than NI average
Total		163,917	100	100	-
English		158,949	95.99	96.86	Higher
Polish		2,179	1.30	1.52	Higher
Lithuanian		862	0.51	0.36	Higher
Irish		157	0.22	0.21	Lower
Portuguese		86	0.05	0.15	Lower
Slovak		134	0.08	0.13	Lower
Chinese		121	0.07	0.13	Lower
Tamil/Thai/Indo-Thai		58	0.03	0.11	Lower
Latvian		208	0.13	0.07	Higher
Russian		109	0.07	0.07	Same
Malayalam		87	0.05	0.07	Lower
Hungarian		74	0.05	0.06	Lower
Other		730	0.46	0.75	Lower

The concentration of the population who do not speak English as their first language varies across the 34 NMDDC wards:

- From 0.5% in the Strangford ward to 11.1% in St Marys ward;
- In nine of the 34 wards (27%) between 5-11% of the population do not speak English as their first language. These wards are all located within Newry and Mourne District;
- The percentage of residents who have some ability in Irish ranges from 3% in Ballymaglave ward to 28% in Silverbridge ward; and
- The percentage of residents who have some ability in the Ulster Scots language ranges from 1% in Silverbridge ward to 11% in Terrytony ward.

Table 1.3 provides a breakdown of reported National Identity and language use by ward.

- In the former Down District Council area ability in Irish is highest in the Castlemullan (21%) and Moyneore (19%) wards and lowest in Ballymaglave (3%), Killyleagh and Kinnegone (4.7%) and Terrytony (5%) wards;
- In the former Newry and Mourne District Council area ability in Irish is highest in Silverbridge, Camough, Oreggan (23%) and Forkhill (27%) wards and lowest in Kinnegone Central (5%), Annalong and Binnoran (2.2%) wards; and

- The Tanshoy (71%), Bilmare and Sainfield (66%) wards in the former Inver District Council area report the highest levels of Ulster Scots ability, whilst in the former Newry and Mourne District Council area, ability is strongest in Binnian and Killeel Centre (33%).

As can be seen from Table 3.3, there appears to be an association between perceived National Identity and ability in Irish/Ulster Scots. For example 71% of the population in Creggan perceive themselves to be Irish and 29% have some ability in Irish, whereas 85% of the Killeel Central population describe themselves as British and 13% have some ability in Ulster Scots.

Table 3.3 Main Languages Spoken by Ward

Ward	Previous LGD	% National Identity			% Ability In		% English NOT first language
		British	Irish	N.Irish	Irish	Ulster Scots	
Ballyward	Barrhead	42.6%	55.5%	53.4%	1.4%	3.1%	1.0%
Ardslass	Down	45.1%	49.6%	34.7%	12.0%	1.4%	1.0%
Castle's Gap	Down	20.2%	47.0%	32.5%	14.1%	2.2%	0.0%
Ballymagone	Down	73.6%	8.6%	27.0%	1.0%	2.6%	2.0%
Ballymore	Down	75.1%	21.6%	23.0%	12.4%	3.4%	2.0%
Ballymore East	Down	52.0%	21.0%	22.0%	0.1%	10.0%	4.0%
Cardizen Inn	Down	21.1%	32.0%	29.7%	21.1%	1.1%	2.0%
Ca. Tully	Down	28.7%	42.6%	55.0%	12.4%	2.6%	1.0%
Conroy	Down	44.1%	77.6%	42.7%	8.5%	6.0%	2.0%
Cratloe	Down	59.2%	15.6%	24.1%	4.0%	11.1%	0.0%
Downal	Down	34.9%	25.4%	35.2%	14.0%	4.1%	1.0%
Drumcannon	Down	28.7%	33.0%	40.7%	10.1%	2.0%	1.0%
Drumna	Down	34.0%	42.9%	34.1%	12.1%	2.0%	1.0%
Drumree	Down	65.2%	21.6%	31.4%	2.1%	2.6%	1.0%
Edinart	Down	45.0%	41.0%	32.0%	15.5%	4.0%	1.0%
Killdeern	Down	53.3%	14.0%	32.4%	4.2%	8.2%	2.0%
Killmore	Down	58.4%	12.4%	32.0%	4.2%	9.1%	0.0%
Macquith	Down	42.0%	55.4%	42.0%	12.2%	4.1%	2.0%
Scotie	Down	42.6%	42.6%	42.1%	14.2%	4.4%	2.1%
Sainfield	Down	44.3%	32.0%	34.1%	5.1%	4.0%	1.0%
Seahalls	Down	42.0%	12.0%	34.0%	9.0%	10.0%	0.2%
Shilna	Down	12.0%	37.1%	53.4%	11.4%	4.0%	1.0%
Sharnford	Down	24.0%	44.2%	47.4%	12.4%	3.0%	0.4%
Tellmore	Down	22.2%	24.0%	30.0%	14.2%	3.1%	1.1%
Ardslass	Down	51.1%	28.2%	30.2%	11.0%	2.5%	1.0%
Kallan	Down	15.0%	42.4%	51.0%	13.0%	1.1%	4.0%
Bessara	Down	28.0%	41.4%	52.6%	13.0%	4.1%	4.1%
Bishah	Down	40.2%	15.3%	22.2%	12.1%	10.1%	1.1%
Ulmore	Down	11.0%	42.1%	28.0%	24.2%	1.0%	2.0%
Camloch	Down	5.8%	31.3%	35.2%	22.2%	1.0%	2.0%
Clonally	Down	12.5%	55.5%	29.1%	21.9%	1.0%	4.0%
Clonvar	Down	4.4%	21.1%	24.0%	24.1%	2.6%	1.0%
Coatbridge	Down	5.4%	36.4%	30.0%	23.4%	2.2%	2.0%
Down Hill	Down	8.2%	54.1%	22.0%	20.2%	1.0%	0.0%
Downs Hill	Down	13.6%	50.2%	22.2%	22.5%	2.6%	1.0%
Binnmore	Down	12.4%	53.6%	27.4%	13.0%	1.0%	4.0%
Binnmore	Down	41.4%	44.3%	30.4%	12.1%	4.1%	0.2%
Clonmore	Down	2.9%	52.0%	22.0%	24.0%	2.1%	4.0%
Clonmore	Down	13.1%	52.0%	22.0%	19.2%	1.0%	2.0%
Clonmore	Down	4.8%	42.5%	35.0%	22.6%	1.8%	1.0%

Ward	Previous LGD	% National Identity			% Ability in		% English NOT first language
		British	Irish	N. Irish	Irish	Ulster Scots	
Frinagh	Nandly	4.4%	74.2%	71.4%	77.0%	7.7%	11.4%
Killeshel Central	Nandly	14.0%	13.3%	26.1%	3.2%	4.8%	4.8%
Killeshel South	Nandly	14.2%	26.3%	29.2%	12.3%	3.2%	4.2%
Kilshinny	Nandly	35.7%	57.6%	59.2%	16.7%	2.4%	1.7%
Maynooth	Nandly	15.0%	35.1%	37.7%	15.4%	4.7%	1.7%
Kevinstown	Nandly	41.2%	44.4%	22.8%	14.0%	4.7%	2.6%
Boobyne	Nandly	14.3%	23.1%	31.3%	11.9%	1.7%	1.2%
Spacilly	Nandly	15.4%	52.7%	33.7%	11.4%	1.4%	5.8%
Green Prentice	Nandly	4.8%	73.5%	13.6%	20.9%	1.1%	7.2%
Scalra	Nandly	17.4%	54.1%	50.6%	21.4%	1.4%	1.0%
St. Marys	Nandly	11.0%	37.0%	34.7%	14.3%	2.1%	11.3%
St. Patrick's	Nandly	11.0%	25.0%	25.6%	16.0%	2.1%	11.2%
Tullamore	Nandly	33.3%	41.3%	27.2%	16.9%	4.7%	0.9%
Woodhill	Nandly	13.6%	44.0%	29.1%	11.0%	4.5%	4.0%

### 3.4 IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS

An audit undertaken by NMDDC Irish Language Unit identified the following 28 Irish Medium education providers:

- An Scoil Náisiúil Mhárc Ó Rádháil, Castleán Uí Dhúillín
- Irish Language Unit in St. Malachy's High School, Castlewellan
- Bunscoil an Iúil 10: Chinn T3: Newry Irish Medium (IM) Primary School (78)
- Bunscoil Shannra Beirche: Castleán Uí Dhúillín, Moyna: IM Primary School (65)
- Bunscoil Mháire le Pádraig: Dún Pádraig, Downpatrick IM Primary School (61)
- Sacscoil na n-Beann: Cill Chaoil, Moyna Mountains IM Primary School, Killeel (40)
- Sacscoil Phádraig Naoimh Críost Mhór: Dún Dealgan, Crossmaglen IM Unit (37)
- Naisce: an Chéim: St. Croghan Irish Medium Nursery, Doverbridge
- Naisce: an Iúil: Newry 13 assistants; Newry IM Nursery
- Naisce: Dachtair le Castleán Uí Dhúillín, Castlewellan IM Nursery
- Naisce: Chill Locha: Kesh IM Nursery
- Naisce: Dún Pádraig: Dún Pádraig, Downpatrick IM Nursery
- Naisce: na n-Beann: Cill Chaoil IM Killeel IM Nursery
- Naisce: Shilabh gCúillín: Baile an Cháin, Bieve Gullon IM Nursery (Dunstruth)

Adult Education providers include University of the Third Age (U3A) and Southern Regional Council (later University). There are also a range of Irish Language Summer Schools facilitated throughout the District:

- Ballydoonand Primary School, Ballydoonand
- Cúilínse An Trí Céim, Aiticeal

- Coláiste Bhríche Léachas Amalonn
- Coláiste Aon Mhagabóil
- Coláiste Shliabh gúillinn, Drumree,
- Coláiste Uí Fháil, Cullyhanna,
- Coláiste Lúcair L. Theathal Belee
- Coláiste Dh'Íochtaid Mhuigh Eo. Magabridge
- Coláiste Lúcair Chathail, Downpatrick
- Coláiste Lúcair Tine, Cullywillan and
- Coláiste Sainbháid: Bhríche Léachas Lower Mourne Summit College.

## 2.5 IRISH MEDIUM COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS

The wide range of groups operating through the medium of Irish within the District, including youth groups, mother and toddler groups, walking groups, sports organisations and book clubs is as follows:

### South Armagh

- Cairde Gaeilteáil Phódraig: Scarlar Friends of Irish Medium (IM) Unit in St. Patrick's PS Crossmaglen
- Cairde Naiscail an Chraighín: Friends of IM Nursery at Silverbridge
- Cairde Naiscail Shliabh gúillinn: Friends of IM Nursery in Crossmaglen
- Eorla na Cloise: Irish Language community group in Crossmaglen
- Gaeltacht Uirdheisceart Uladh, South East Ulster Gaeltacht
- Grúpa Gaeilte an tsútháin: Bessbrook Irish Language group
- Óigias Drialla: Irish Medium Youth Club in Crossmaglen

### Duane

- Cruinniú Bhríche Léachas de Chonradh na Gaeilge: Lower Mourne Gaelic League
- Teanga Trí Cháidéal: Wainpoint Hill Language Community
- Cúmná: Scúidreánteochta: Irish Language Schools Drama Groups
- Cumann Gaeilge Leath Chathail: Gón Padraig, Leath Irish Language Association, Downpatrick
- Gón Iacmar Tine: Caislean Uidhílin: Irish Language Community in Castlewellan
- Cumann Siúlóide Caisleán Uidhílin: Castlewellan Irish Language Walking Group
- Grúpa Músa is Iacmar: Caislean Uidhílin: Castlewellan Irish Language Mother and Toddlers
- Grúpa Dul la Tachrán: Balla Hill, Hilltown – Mother and Toddlers
- Club Óige Chaisleán Nua – Newcastle IM Youth Club
- Cúmná Cumhrá Caisleán Uidhílin
- Scoil Sainbháid: Sheenais U. Néill

### Newry

- Cruinniú an tUir de Chonradh na Gaeilge – Newry Branch of the Gaelic League

- Cairde Bhunscoil an Iúir – Friends of Newry Irish Medium Primary School
- Cairde Naiscoil an Iúir – Friends of Newry Irish Medium Nursery School
- Cumann Óige an Iúir – Newry Irish medium Youth Club
- CLADAM an Iúir – Monthly lunch Club for Irish Language speakers
- Club Leabhrán Josefa Dala (DCAL Irish Language Initiative) Bookclub

There is also a range of **cultural and sporting organisations** and four community festivals in Carrlough, Down, Lower Mourne and Forkhill which have a large Irish language element in them:

- An Fhleacán Rús – Forkhill
- Michael – Murphy Water School
- An Cumann Seoldomnaíochas – Irish Language Schools/Youth Club Drama Group
- Aisteoirí Dúghialla- Irish Language Adult Drama Group
- Campa Chornaic an Iúir- Newry GAA and Irish Language Camp
- Campa Chornaic an Dúir- Down GAA and Irish Language Camp
- Coiste na Gaeilge – CLC an Dúir – Down GAA Irish language Committee
- Coiste na Gaeilge – CLC An tUachtar – Armagh GAA Irish language Committee
- Comhaltas Ceolainn Éireann – Crochán Láir- Newry Music and Irish Language
- Comhaltas Ceolainn Éireann – An Cairdeán Nua
- Comhaltas Ceolainn Éireann – Rinn Mhic Giolla Rua- Warrenpoint Music and Irish Language
- Cumann Ceoil Cultural Group – South Armagh
- Cumann Cultúrtha Chluainíníníoch: Clonduff Cultural Group
- Cumann Cultúrtha Chill Shléibne: Killybeg Cultural Group
- Cumann Fostaí Aití Chathail: Aitíal Community Association
- Socrú: Arts and Music Festival – Castledowellan

There are five **Irish Language Cultural Centres**. These are Gaeilias Mhic Ardghail, An Dúir, Newry Féilias Mair, Ach na Long, Annalong, T Chulainn, An Mullaigh Bán, Mullaghbawn, An Uisce, Cairdeán Uachtar, Castledowellan and Crochánláir Centre, Aitíal. These centres play an important role in delivering *gairmotha* development services within their respective communities. Furthermore, three National Irish Language organisations have offices in Newry:

1. *Clár na nGaeil*: Lead Organisation with specific responsibilities to develop and promote the Irish language in the community, in business and in family life.
2. *Carrach na Gaeilge*: The Gaelic League providing a platform for Irish language community both in Ireland and around the world. Since its foundation in 1893, members of *Carrach na Gaeilge* have been actively promoting Irish in every aspect of life from legal and educational affairs to the development of new media and services through Irish and

- **Dinnéachtais na Gaeilge**, the Annual Irish Language Arts Festival that is hosted in various towns, cities and rural communities across the island of Ireland and represents the largest annual gathering of Irish language speakers with huge media coverage appealing to both young and old. The Dinnéachtais is a great tourism draw for the district that hosts the event. In 2015 it will be held in Dublin on 27<sup>th</sup> October – 1 November. It will promote a wide variety of Irish medium arts and events both traditional and modern.

Two media companies are based in Newry, Big Mountain Productions an Irish Language Film and TV production company and Raidió Fobair an Tair, Níogy Community Radio. Close based alliances include Comhaíle Mháth de Chonrad na Gaeilge, Úrúscraí Easlinn agus Clocaí, Comhairle O'Leith, Úrúscraí Conversation Group and RGAIA, Cluain Tairbh, Cluain Irish Language Community, Co. Dublin.

## 1.6 ULSTER SCOTS COMMUNITY

At the time of writing the Council had not a comprehensive register of groups who promote Ulster Scots culture and heritage in the Down District area. In the predecessor Newry and Moormac District Council the Irish Language Unit has worked with local groups promoting Ulster Scots arts, heritage and culture and more recently the Council heard the ASPBANI Pipe Band Ulster Championships in Killybegs Barr. Staff of the Irish Language Unit provided support to groups and facilitated the provision of grant aid to local groups through the Council's Ulster Scots Committee. These groups include:

- Ballynea Rural Development Association, Killeel
- Clarendon Cultural Society, Killeel
- Mourne School of Dance, Killeel
- Schomberg Society, Killeel
- Ballynagough Rural Development Association, Killeel
- Schomberg Thistle Club, Killeel
- Orange Old Fife Band, Killeel
- Kingdom of Mourne Military History Society, Killeel
- Clarendon School of Dance, Killeel
- Drumlough and Ballygolan Rural Development Association, Drumlough
- Moneygore Rural Development Association, Moneygore
- Finvard Rural Development Association, Finvard
- Lisnamulligan Rural Association, Lisnamulligan
- Donaghmore Development Association, Donaghmore
- Tullymore Botanical Culture Society, Poyntonpass
- Althausigh House, Newry
- Curley Rural Community Association, Newry
- Coonmore Rural Development Association, Newry
- Hunter Moore Memorial Fife Band, Newry

-  **Blackrock Pipe Band, Roskilde, Denmark**
-  **Whitegate Pipe Band, Newtownhamilton**



## 4. LEGISLATIVE, STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

### 4.1 LEGISLATIVE AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement committed the UK Government to 'recognise the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, including in Northern Ireland, the Irish language, Ulster-Scots and the languages of the various ethnic minority communities, all of which are part of the cultural wealth of the Island of Ireland.'

The use of Irish and Ulster Scots is specifically promoted in order to safeguard them as an important part of our shared cultural heritage. Irish and Ulster Scots are recognised and protected by the UK Government under the [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages](#). The Council has specific responsibilities towards the Irish language under Part III of the Charter. The St Andrews Agreement (October 2006) committed the UK Government to work with the NI executive to protect and enhance the development of the Irish and Ulster-Scots languages. This commitment was consequentially included in amendments to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 placing duties on the Executive to adopt strategies setting out how it proposes to enhance and protect the development of the Irish language and Ulster-Scots culture, heritage and language.

In the Programme for Government (2011-2015), the Executive included a Strategy for the Irish language as a key building block under Priority 4 'Building a Strong and Shared Community'. DCAL's subsequent [Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language \(2015-2025\)](#) sets out a roadmap for the Irish language over the next 20 years in areas such as education, public services, the community and media, taking account of the needs of the Irish language community and international best practice. The key aims are to:

- Support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish language;
- Enhance and protect the status and vitality of the Irish language;
- Deliver quality and sustainable Irish language networks and communities; and
- Promote the Irish language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community.

DCAL published a [Strategy to Enhance and Develop the Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture \(2011 – 2015\)](#). The key aims are to:

- Promote and safeguard the status and respect for the Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture;
- Build up the sustainability, capacity and infrastructure of the Ulster Scots community;

- Foster an inclusive, wider understanding of the Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community. The establishment of an Ulster Scots Academy will be an important element of this strategy.

## 4.2 OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

There are a number of Council Strategies, Policies and Plans which are particularly relevant to the development of the current Plan. These are:

### • NMDDC Corporate Plan (2013-17)

Our Vision is to:

- ✓ Create a district that is an attractive place for doing business.
- ✓ Realise the full economic potential of our people and unlock their enterprising spirit so that there are jobs for us all.
- ✓ Build active and responsible citizenship and encourage everyone to play their part in contributing to social and economic development.
- ✓ Improve health outcomes and facilitate healthy lifestyles, and
- ✓ Be an age-friendly District offering a good quality of life for people of all ages, especially for children and older people who may need more support.

<p><b>Our mission</b></p> <p><b>Our mission as a Council is to lead and serve a District that is prosperous, healthy and sustainable.</b></p>	<p><b>Our Priorities (Strategic Objectives)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Become one of the premier tourism destinations on the island of Ireland.</li> <li>2. Attracted investment and supported the creation of new jobs.</li> <li>3. Supported improved health and well-being outcomes.</li> <li>4. Protected air, water and built environment.</li> <li>5. Led the regeneration of our urban and rural areas.</li> <li>6. Addressed long-term fiscal stability in relation to those issues which really matter to you.</li> <li>7. Expanded and improved the quality of our communities.</li> <li>8. Introduced and modernised the Council, providing a secure as well as a new for money services.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Our values</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Citizen focused</li> <li>- Accountable</li> <li>- Collaborative</li> <li>- Sustainable</li> <li>- Fair</li> </ul>	

**NMDDC Bilingualism Policy**

All District Councils in Northern Ireland have responsibilities under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Charter is an international convention designed to promote and protect regional and minority language as a threatened aspect of Europe's cultural heritage. The Charter's aim is to create a culture where regional and minority languages can flourish alongside each other and along with the majority language of the state. The Charter establishes a minimum core of principles set out in Part II which apply to all regional and minority languages. Part III of the Charter contains specific provisions concerning the case of regional or minority languages in the various sectors of the life of the community. The UK government in ratifying the Charter recognised obligations to protect and promote the Irish language as which has Part III (c) (iii). The Government has adopted 17 of its articles to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, the use of the Irish language in education, the media and to permit its use in judicial and administrative contexts, economic and social life and cultural activities.<sup>8</sup>

The NMDDC Bilingualism Policy sets out the Council's commitment to facilitate and encourage the protection and use of both the Irish language and the English language in the Council area. The aim is to build on the Council's commitment to celebrate diversity by:



1. To ensure the delivery of equality of opportunity for all who avail of and/or provide Council services using progressive realisation,
2. To fulfil Council obligations as contained in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Policy applies to all Council Departments with regard to the functions they deliver and applies to all communication and engagement between internal and external stakeholders. The policy objectives are to:

and external stakeholders. The policy objectives are to:

- Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice.

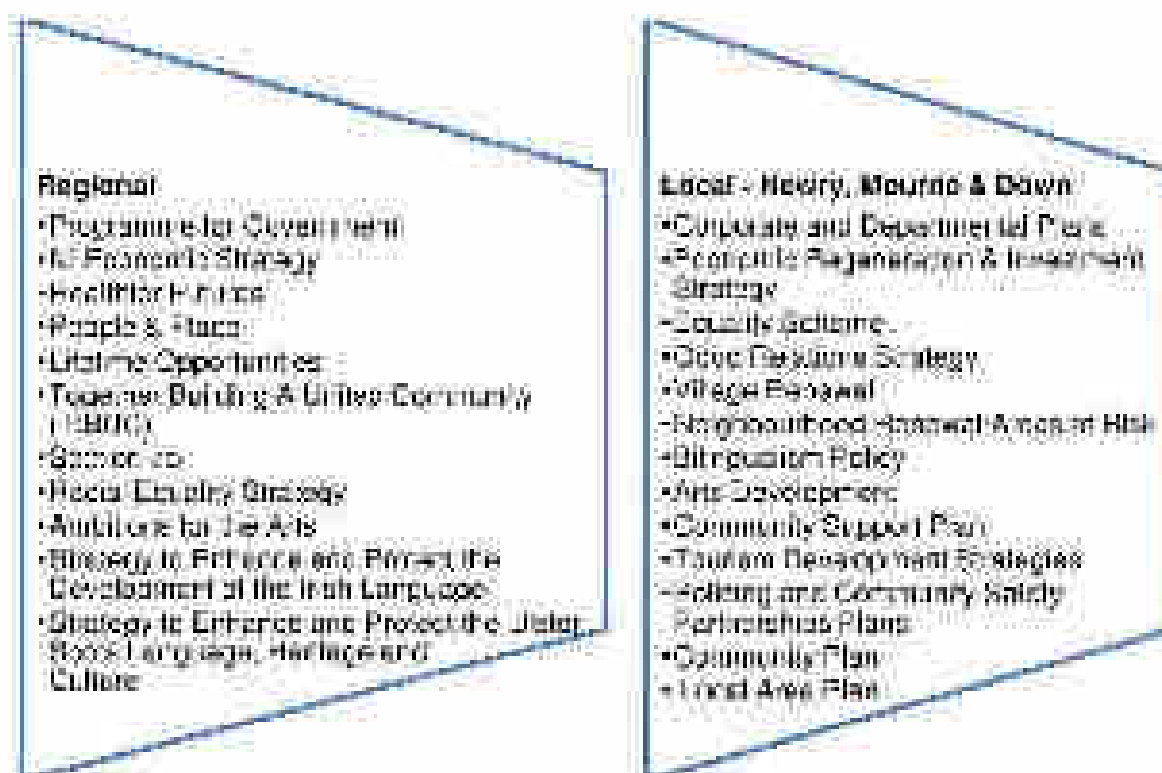
<sup>8</sup> European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (see Agenda 8)

- To foster and promote the use of Irish in the internal administration of Council in its dealings with other public bodies and also with bodies that provide services to the public in the District;
- Recognise that members of the public, Council members, management and employees can express their views and needs better in their preferred language;
- Recognise that enabling the public to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care and best a business practice;
- Aim to remove, where possible, restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of the language.

The Council objectives regarding the promotion, protection and use of the Irish Language will be delivered through the following procedures:

- Corporate Identity;
- Signage;
- Communication;
- Council Activities;
- Publications;
- Public Relations;
- Presentations;
- Marketing Activity;
- Event Management;
- Financials etc;
- Website and Social Media;
- Councillor/Staff Training

The implementation of this Irish Language Strategy (2015/16) must be delivered taking account of the Council's duty to provide a good and harmonious working environment, affirmative actions and Section 75 statutory requirements to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations. A number of regional and local strategies and plans have been reviewed to inform content and ensure complementarity rather than duplication or displacement of provision.



The Irish language strategy develops the Council's commitments to make information and services accessible to those who belong to the Irish language community. However, there is much more potential for the Council to unlock the social and economic value of a well-developed and resourced Irish language sector. The desk review demonstrated the linkage between the aims and objectives that support the implementation of NMDDC Bilingualism Policy and those of a variety of Council functions. Newry, Mourne and Down has rich heritage and tourism assets, stemming from the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which are located within the region. Increasing Irish language infrastructure would have a positive impact upon economic development, including urban and rural regeneration, tourism, creative industries and business support. Indeed the lack of cohesion within the cultural sector, few links with tourism and poor recognition of the contribution of heritage, culture and arts to the economy was identified in the development of the Council's Regeneration and Investment Strategy. Growing the culture and arts sector has a pivotal role within this strategy.



There is a strong Irish language arts and culture base within the region and this has the potential to add significant value to the economic vitality of the area and is a means of building cohesive communities. Relationships between Irish language, Community Support, Arts, Equality and Good Relations functions and need to be developed and promoted. There is a need to explore joint events and programmes which would help promote equality of opportunity to language acquisition and help deliver the TBUC (Together Building a United Community) objectives of building a strong sense of community which positively celebrates and respects cultural diversity.

### 4.3 SWOT ANALYSIS

There are immense challenges ahead in terms of ensuring financial security, safeguarding budgets and services and building a cohesive identity across the geographical area.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Irish Language has recognised Minority Language status</li> <li>◆ National Bilingualism Policy and Procedures already adopted</li> <li>◆ Development Naming Postal Numbering and Fractional Namesakes Policy in Progress</li> <li>◆ Language Awareness Training already offered to Newry and Mourne Council staff</li> <li>◆ Variety of activities: Irish language voluntary and community groups in NMDDC</li> <li>◆ Five Irish Language Culture Centres</li> <li>◆ Turning and expanding Irish Medium Education sector driven by community</li> <li>◆ Presence of Cluiche naí, Concerts na Gaeilge and Oíche naí na Gaeilge</li> <li>◆ Newry and Mourne District Council and Cois Dille Sibúchá Coeilge Hevúineir, in Pairce na Mára (Lower Mourne Gaels) Fragaire's Cultural Centre in Annagrave and Ósálaras na hArdha (Newry's Gaels League Irish Language Cultural Centre in Upper Chapel St Newry)</li> <li>◆ High levels of activism and participation within Irish Language communities</li> <li>◆ Knowledge base within Irish Language Unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Negative perceptions about the Irish language and its speakers</li> <li>◆ Bilingualism Policy and Procedures not fully implemented</li> <li>◆ Need to strengthen and promote the new Council and brand identity</li> <li>◆ Limited funding for Irish language groups</li> <li>◆ Lack of understanding of the role and remit of the Irish Language Unit within Council</li> <li>◆ Ulster Scots is underdeveloped within NMDDC with fewer groups and lower capacity</li> <li>◆ Need to develop a network of cohesion throughout NMDDC</li> <li>◆ Limited financial and staff resources amidst increased expectations for the Unit</li> <li>◆ Lack of joined-up planning and integration between Council functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Synergy with Good Relations and celebration of cultural diversity</li> <li>◆ Strong connectivity between language arts and culture</li> <li>◆ Potential to link with economic development and tourism product</li> <li>◆ Involvement of Irish language communities in NMDDC Community Plan</li> <li>◆ Local TV and Radio companies producing Irish language programmes</li> <li>◆ High percentage of Irish speakers within new Council area</li> <li>◆ To develop the economic potential of the Irish language within the district</li> <li>◆ Linkage to DEAs Fund and outworkings of same</li> <li>◆ Signposting of funding opportunities</li> <li>◆ Linkage to DEAL Strategy</li> <li>◆ Where possible seek funding</li> <li>◆ Enhance promotion of Corporate Brand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Economic climate and reduced public expenditure</li> <li>◆ Potential for Irish language to be perceived as low priority for funding</li> <li>◆ Low support for Irish language in some parts of the District</li> <li>◆ Lower levels of support within RUC communities</li> <li>◆ Concerns that Irish language is perceived as confrontational</li> </ul>

## 5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overarching **Value** for the Irish Language Strategy is:

**To create a supportive environment for the use and promotion of the Irish language in public domain, education and community life.**

Our underpinning **Values** support those of the NMDDC Corporate Plan (2017-23):

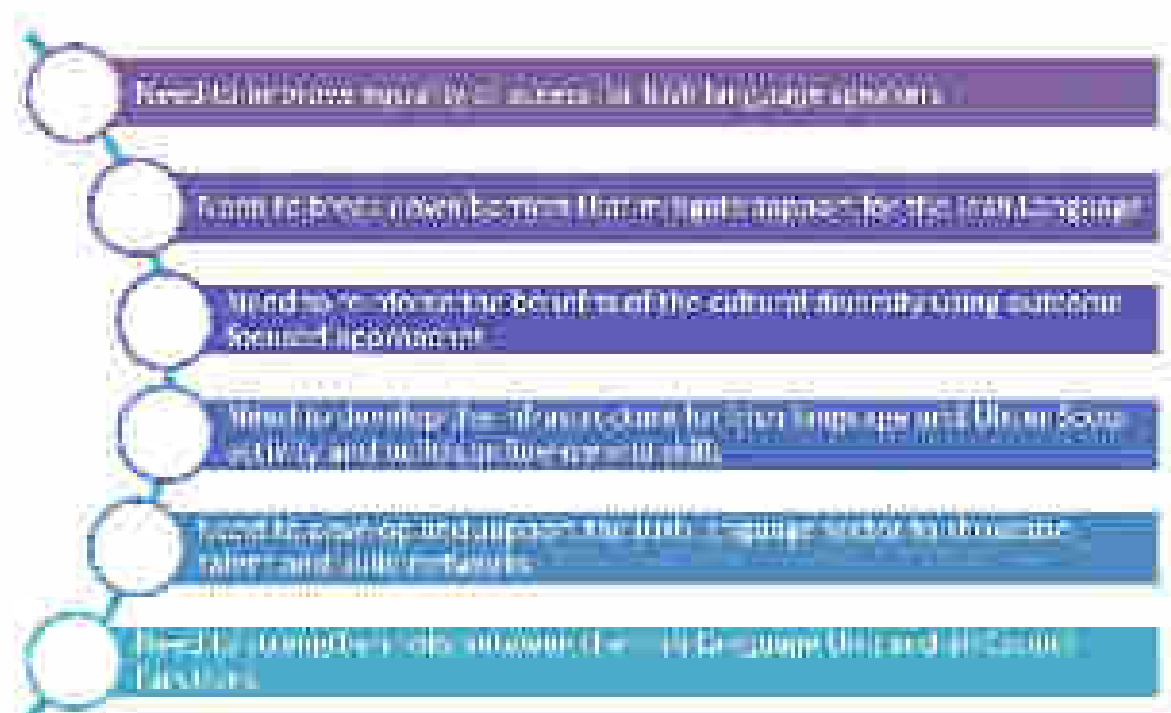
- **Citizen focused:** Actively encouraging citizen and community engagement, as well as listening and being responsive;
- **Accountable:** Making decisions based on an objective assessment of need and operate in a transparent way in addition to openly reporting on our performance;
- **Collaborative:** Actively encouraging and pursuing working in partnership and at all levels to deliver for our District;
- **Sustainable:** We will take into account the social, economic and environmental impacts of all decisions on current and future generations; and
- **Fair:** We will proactively target action at those groups and individuals who are marginalised in our community.

### 5.1 IDENTIFIED NEEDS

This Irish Language strategy has been informed by an audit of Veery and Mourne and Down District Council's Irish language practice. A desk-based activity review was undertaken and this was supplemented by staff consultations.

Based upon the evidence gathered the following needs were identified in relation to the Council's Irish Language services:





## 5.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Irish Language Service provision will reflect the values of the Strategy and actions will be **Citizen Focused** and promote **Sustainability, Accountability, Fairness and Collaboration**. The aims and objectives of the new Irish Language Service reflect and support three of DCAL's Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language (2015-2019) and NMDDC Corporate Plan (2015-19):

**Support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish language, by:**

- Facilitating access to opportunities to learn the Irish language outside of formal education,
- Supporting an increase in the number of daily speakers of the Irish language.

**Enhance and protect the status and visibility of the Irish language, by:**

- Meeting all obligations towards the Irish language under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
- Increasing awareness of the economic and social value of the Irish language.

**Deliver sustainable Irish language networks and communities, by:**

- Developing sustainable local community based Irish Language Strategies and initiatives;
- Providing opportunities to use Irish to as wide a range of people as possible by encouraging family, social and community-based language networks.

Promote the Irish language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community, by:

- 1. Positively promote the Irish language throughout the community;
- 2. Positively promote the Irish language in the Protestant/Unionist/loyalist community;

Figure 5.1 summarises the strategic framework which we will work with over the duration of the Irish Language Strategy.

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**Figure 5.1 Irish Language Service Aims and Objectives**

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## Aim One: Support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish language

- Facilitating access to opportunities to learn the Irish language outside of formal education within the Council among elected members and staff
- Support an increase in the number of daily speakers of the Irish language

Learning a second language can benefit a person in a number of ways, for instance, exposure to a different culture, developing problem solving and creative thinking skills. Knowledge of a second language is a valuable skill to have.

Irish language awareness initiatives and courses directed at non-Irish speakers or those with a little Irish all contribute to embracing, protecting and developing the language. In a staff survey carried out by Newry and Mourne Council in 2009, 16 Irish speaking staff within the Council were identified. Ten were learning Irish and 34 expressed a desire to learn the language. Twelve staff reported that they can speak, read and write in Irish and three staff had specific skills related to the use of Irish in the workplace (e.g. translation services or bilingual service delivery).

In order to promote adult Irish language learning and promote Irish as a useful skill in the workplace, NMDDC will continue to provide Language Awareness Training to Council staff and to support them in integrating the Irish language throughout the Council. For example, in 2014 Newry and Mourne Council Irish Language Unit partnered with the Good Relations Unit to enable those staff to achieve their silver badge. We will continue to promote these learning opportunities to those who wish to avail of them.

## Aim Two: Enhance and protect the status and visibility of the Irish language

- Meeting all obligations towards the Irish language under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
- Increasing awareness of the economic and social value of the Irish language

NMDDC is fully committed to fulfilling its duties under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (the Charter) in our dealings with the public – ensuring that the Irish language is used and visible in the provision of public services. Irish speakers should be able to conduct their business through Irish and all Departments of the Council should facilitate the use of Irish both orally and in writing.

The Council has adopted and is implementing a Bilingualism Policy and Procedures, which apply to all Council Departments with regards to the functions they deliver. The Bilingualism Policy applies to all our communication and engagement between internal and external stakeholders. It is crucial that we monitor and audit all goods, services and functions of the Council in order to ensure compliance with the

Bilingualism Policy within each Departmental remit. In this regard an inter-departmental Internal-Liaison Committee will be established to provide oversight and review.

The provision of our Irish Language Awareness Training programmes will ensure an increased understanding of Irish amongst Council staff and will assist with the integration of the Irish language within Council functions. We aim to provide simultaneous translation services for the use of Irish for meetings of various committees and functions of the Council.

The use of Irish in a range of printed material can assist the development of the language in a variety of ways. It helps increase the visibility of the language, it enhances the status of Irish by being used in our corporate branding, publications, official documents and forms in line with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. We are committed to making information available through the medium of Irish, for more people access Council information online and via social media, we need to ensure that the Irish language is included across all communication platforms.

The Irish Language Unit has a central role in the successful implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and the promotion of the Irish language across the NMDDC area. Hence, there is a need to publicise the skills of its staff and the services available both internal and external to Council. We also need to ensure greater levels of partnership between the Unit and other Council Departments, particularly with regard to the delivery of social and economic outcomes.

The Council through its Development Naming, Postal Numbering and Erection of Nameplates Policy and Procedures, facilitates the preservation and signposting of Irish place-names and the naming of new housing developments bilingually. We will continue to facilitate and extend this dual language approach with the support of local residents, groups and businesses. This plays an important role in making areas welcoming to the community that live there, but also increases the visibility of Irish within everyday life. It enables visitors to see both Irish and English as being integral to the cultural heritage experience. There are further opportunities to facilitate the inclusion of the Irish language in arts, cultural and tourism events throughout the District – providing a platform for the development of a very unique and area-specific tourism/economic product. The Irish language also has economic value as a marketing tool, particularly in developing and delivering services through the medium of Irish and the use of Irish language signage or bilingual signage.

### **Aim Three: Deliver sustainable Irish language networks and communities**



Developing sustainable local community-based Irish language plans and initiatives.

- Providing opportunities to see Irish by as wide a range of people as possible by encouraging family, social and community based language networks.

The Irish language is the oldest spoken literary language in Europe and was spoken by the majority of people in Ireland until around the middle of the 19th century. Today Irish is a modern European language and there is renewed interest and commitment in its continued revival. The value of linguistic diversity is recognized both nationally and internationally. Languages are our principal tools for identifying and for expressing ideas, emotions, knowledge, memories and values. Languages are also ordinary vehicles of cultural expressions and heritage, essential to the identity of individuals and groups. The key role of language in the expression and transmission of cultural heritage is recognized in the United Nations 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Language is transmitted culturally, that is, it is learned. One of the most important functions of language is its role in the construction of reality. Language is not simply a tool for communication, it is also a guide to social reality. If language is transmitted as part of culture, culture as a whole transmitted through language insofar as it is socially taught. Language transmission in the home and community is a crucial element in the effort to increase the number of fluent Irish speakers in succeeding generations. An Irish Language Strategy (2016-19) will be developed to help support sustainable language communities and networks throughout the District where Irish speakers live, work and use services to ensure the protection and longer-term sustainability of the Irish language as an integral part of the economic and social viability of the region.

It is important to develop an area-based approach which focuses on supporting those places in which Irish language communities exist or are being developed, for example through pre-school groups, book clubs, youth groups, community groups etc. We recognise the need to understand more about the Irish language community in the district and how Council can support their community development requirements to enable them to become self-sustainable. The Community Planning process will be an important opportunity to ensure that the voices of Irish language speakers and related cultural organisations and groups are heard and community infrastructure developed and sustained. We also need to increase our understanding and collaboration with the Ulster Scots community in our promotion of mutual understanding between the District's linguistic communities.

### **Aim Four: Promote the Irish language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community**

- Increasing positive attitudes to the Irish language throughout the community.



Increasing positive attitudes towards the Irish language in the Protestant Unionist/Loyalist community.

It is important that steps are taken to gain support and acceptance for linguistic and cultural diversity from all sections of the community.

Language is recognised as being a primary means of communication, but it is no more than this. A common language may help express the unique character of a social group and encourage common social ties. Our use of language makes us unique and differentiates us from others. Its preservation safeguards our sense of continuity as individuals as well as our distinctiveness.

Language can be a robust marker of social identity, capable of both binding and dividing groups. However, the development and protection of the Irish language should not be viewed as divisive or a threat to any member of our community. This Strategy aims to make the Irish language more accessible, to break down the barriers and myths and to support and enable people to use it.

Priority 4 of the Executive's Programme for Government 2011-2015 and DCAL's Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language (2015-2017) identify a role for the Irish language as a key building block for developing relationships between communities. We recognise that there are particular challenges involved in promoting the Irish language within the PUL community. Therefore the Irish Language Unit must work with others to positively promote the Irish language throughout the entire community by encouraging more understanding, recognition and engagement with the language as an important strand in our common heritage.



## 6. IRISH LANGUAGE STRATEGY (2015-16)

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter details recommended actions in the delivery of the Irish Language Strategy (2015-16). These have been developed in line with the Irish Language Unit's strategic aims and objectives.

Table 6.1 provides detail on how each of the four Strategic Aims set out in Chapter Five will be implemented. They also demonstrate how the indicative actions relate to the NIF EDC Corporate Plan and provide information on:

- Aims and objectives;
- Indicative actions;
- Performance indicators;
- Budgets and
- Outcomes.

A summary timetable is also provided at Table 6.2.

Table 6.1 Irish Language Strategy until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016

Aim	Support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish language	
<p><b>Objective 1</b></p> <p>Facilitate access to opportunities to learn the Irish language outside of formal education</p> <p><b>Indicative Actions</b></p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>	<p>1 Support, complement and facilitate the development of Irish Language resources for other Council Departments working with BSL/Medium schools, youth groups etc.</p> <p>2 The Irish Language Unit promotes community based opportunities to learn the Irish language</p> <p>1 Staff Training on use of Irish in the Council with a view to increasing number of staff who can deal with enquiries etc.</p>	<p>Performance Indicators</p> <p>4 Education Partners (both internal and external)</p> <p>Website and social media promotion of learning opportunities (tweets and Facebook posts)</p> <p>2 Language Awareness Sessions</p> <p>20 Language Awareness Participants</p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b></p> <p>Support an increase in the number of daily speakers of the Irish language</p> <p><b>Indicative Actions</b></p> <p>1</p> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p>	<p>1 Ensure Irish Language is reflected in all Council marketing and communications, to include management of Irish Language content on website</p> <p>2 Increased opportunities to learn and use Irish</p> <p>3 Better understanding of Irish language amongst staff</p> <p>4 More people speak/have knowledge of the Irish language</p>	<p>Performance Indicators</p> <p>4 Bilingual Press Releases</p> <p>Up-to-date Irish language content on new Council website</p> <p>100 Social Media profiles reviewed and developed where possible</p> <p>Irish language / bilingual publications</p> <p>Radio/television interviews</p>

2015  
Corporate Plan

Objectives / Embed, ed and improved the capacity of our communities  
Objective 5: Train, develop and promote staff the Council, providing accessible, as well as value for money services

Priority 2		PROJECT II FLAVOURS	
Aim		Enhance and protect the status and visibility of the Irish language	
Objective 1		Marking commitments towards the Irish language under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages	
Initiative Actions	1	9	Irish Language Strategy (2015-19) for the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and Procedures
	2	9	Development of Irish Language Strategy (2015-19) for implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and promotion of the Irish language within Council and within the Community
	3	9	Communication with Directors, Deputy Directors, Councillors and staff on implementation of Bilingualism Policy
	4	9	Promote the Irish language Unit and Irish language resources within Council (eg. Bilingual materials, translation training)
Objective 2		Increase awareness of the economic and social value of the Irish language	
Initiative Actions	1	10	Research, update and maintain the database of dual language street names for NMDDC
	2	11	Research and update the Townlands database
	3	12	Research place names in accordance with Developed Naming, Postal Numbering and Election of Nameplates Policy and Procedures

4	13 Work in co-operation with the Tourism sector and the Irish Language Community to realise the potential for increased Irish language content in festivals and tourism events.	Liaison With Events Team; Tourism/IL Partnership events; Irish Language Festivals.
5	14 Facilitate the generation of partnerships amongst local businesses utilising the Irish language.	Irish language businesses engaged

**Outcomes**

- ✓ Improved experiences of accessing public services in Irish
- ✓ Increased visibility of the Irish language
- ✓ Social and economic benefits of linguistic diversity acknowledged and unlocked
- ✓ Increased job opportunities through the circulation of the Irish language

<p><b>Links to Corporate Plan</b></p>	<p>to Objective 1: Increase use of the annual tourism destination on every island of Ireland                  Objective 2: Attract investment and support the creation of new jobs                  Objective 5: Lead the generation of new ideas and initiatives                  Objective 6: To enhance and modernise the Council, providing accessible as well as a digital customer service</p>
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Pillar 3		SUSTAIN THE LANGUAGE		
Aim		Deliver quality and sustainable Irish language networks and communities		
Objective 1		Develop high quality local community based Irish language strategies and initiatives	Performance Indicators	
Initiative Actions	1	15	Scope Irish language community across District through Irish Language audit to be undertaken early 2015 to establish needs and appropriate actions	Register of Irish language groups 1 Year Irish language Strategy developed
	2	16	Irish language community engaged in UBA (c) and Community Planning Process	IL groups involved; Needs of Irish language community to be reflected in Community Plan
	3	17	Deliver community based events which promote the Irish language and the work of the Irish Language Unit	community based Irish language Unit events; community events with Irish Language Unit input
Objective 2		Provide opportunities to use Irish for as wide a range of people as possible by encouraging family, social and community based language networks	Performance Indicators	
Indicative Actions	1	18	Strengthen links between Irish Language Unit and community/voluntary Irish language sector clubs societies, Committees and groups	Target groups identified; ILU/Community Partnerships
	2	19	Promote the services of the Irish Language Unit within the community	Representation on 1 community working group System developed to record public enquiries
	3	20	Promotion of community-based Irish language activities by Council	Community directory developed by end March 2016
	4	21	Continue to build the capacity and infrastructure of the Irish language community	New Irish language projects; 30 groups receiving ILU services; Funding information circulated

<b>Outcomes</b>	✓ <b>Quality and sustainable local Irish language communities and networks</b>
<b>Links to Corporate Plan</b>	<p>Objective 1: Become one of the premier tourism destinations on the island of Ireland</p> <p>Objective 3: Empowered, improved local and wellbeing outcomes</p> <p>Objective 5: Lead the regeneration of our urban and rural areas</p> <p>Objective 6: Associated on your behalf specifically in relation to those issues which really matter to you</p> <p>Objective 7: Empowered and increased the capacity of our communities</p> <p>Objective 8: Transform and modernised the Council, providing strategic co-ordination value for public services</p>

TRINITY 4		LEARN THE LANGUAGE	
<b>Aim</b>	<b>Promote the Irish language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community</b>		
<b>Objective 1</b>	Positively promote the Irish language throughout the whole community		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	1	21	Increase understanding of the shared nature of the Irish language and dispel myths and stereotypes
	2	22	Support networking across language and cultural sectors
<b>Objectives</b>	Positively promote the Irish language within the PUL community		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	1	24	Work with Good Relations to increase understanding of the shared nature of the Irish language and dispel myths and stereotypes within the PUL community
	2	25	Scope Ulster Scots community within NMDDC and identify their needs
	3	26	Work with Good Relations on joint cultural event – Ulster Scots and Irish Language
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More positive attitudes towards the Irish language resulting in improved cross-community attitudes and understanding;</li> <li>Quality and sustainable local Ulster Scots communities and networks</li> </ul>		
<b>Links to Corporate Plan</b>	Objective 1: Become one of the premier tourism destinations on the island of Ireland Objective 2: Support and improve local and walking tourism Objective 4: Lead the regeneration of our urban and rural areas Objective 5: Empower and improve the capacity of our community		



Table 6.2: Timetable for 2015-16

Implement from	April 2015 – March 2016
<b>STRATEGIC THEME</b>	
<b>GROW THE LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>Objective 1</b>	
Support, complement and facilitate production of Irish Language resources for other Council Departments working with CM schools, youth groups etc.	On-going until end of March 2016
Irish Language Unit promotion of community based opportunities to learn the Irish language	End of March 2016
Staff Training on use of Irish in the Council	End of March 2016
<b>Objective 2</b>	
Ensure Irish Language is reflected in all Council marketing and communication:	On-going until end of March 2016
<b>PROTECT THE LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>Objective 1</b>	
Strategy (2015-18) for the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and Procedures	End of November 2015
Strategy (2015-18) for implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and promotion of the Irish language within the Council and within the Community	End of March 2016
Communication with Councillors, Deputy Directors, Councilors and staff on implementation of Bilingualism Policy	End of December 2015
Promote the Irish Language Unit and Irish language resources within the Council (e.g. bilingual materials, translations training)	On-going until end of March 2016
<b>Objective 2</b>	
Research, update and maintain the database of dual language street names for NMDDC	On-going until end of March 2016
Research and update the Townlands database	
Research place names in circumstances in accordance with Database of Naming, Numbering and Placenames National Policy and Procedures	
Work in co-operation with the Tourism sector and the Irish Language Community to explore the potential for increased Irish language element to festivals and tourism events	
Facilitate the generation of partnerships amongst local businesses utilising the Irish language	

Implement from... <b>STRATEGIC THEME</b>	April 2015 – March 2016
<b>Objective 3</b> Ensure corporate branding is collected from Council marketing and communications	On-going until end of March 2016
<b>SUSTAIN THE LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>Objective 1</b> Scope Irish language community across District to establish needs and appropriate actions	End of February 2016
Irish language curriculum engaged in DEA Top and Community Planning Process: Deliver community based events which promote the Irish language and the work of the Irish Language Unit	End of March 2016 On-going to end of March 2016
<b>Objective 2</b> Develop links between Irish language Unit and community/voluntary Irish language sector (clubs, societies, Committees and groups) Promote the services of the Irish Language Unit within the community Provision of community based Irish language activities by Council Build capacity and infrastructure of Irish language community	On-going to end of March 2016
<b>SHARE THE LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>Objective 1</b> Increase understanding of the shared nature of the Irish language and dispel myths and stereotypes Support networking across language/cultural sectors and geographies	On-going to end of March 2016
<b>Objective 2</b> Work with Good Relations to increase understanding of the shared nature of the Irish language and dispel myths and stereotypes within the PLC community Scoping Ulster Scots community within NMDDC to identify their needs Work with Good Relations on joint cultural events – Ulster Scots and Irish language	On-going to end of March 2016

## 7. DELIVERY MECHANISMS

The restructuring of the Irish language services for NMDDC will be challenging, with new responsibilities, leadership and ways of working. This chapter provides detail on operational approach, staffing, management and resource allocation.

### 7.1 OPERATIONAL APPROACH

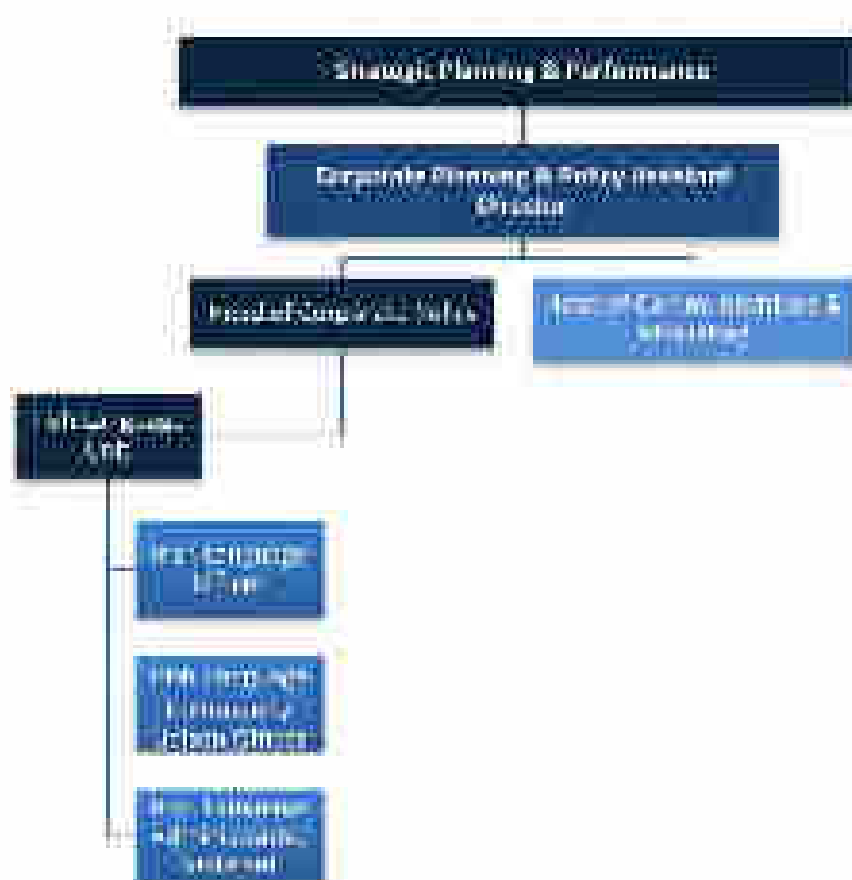
We are conscious of the need to deliver a targeted approach in order to reduce duplication and overlap where possible. Therefore, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money have been considered in resource allocation.

Irish Language Unit staff will deliver the Strategy on the ground. Specialist services will be procured as and if required.

### 7.2 STRUCTURE

Figure 7.2 illustrates the staff structure of the Irish Language Unit. The Irish Language Development Officer reports to the Head of Corporate Policy who reports to Assistant Director of Corporate Planning and Policy within the Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate. There are currently three full-time positions within the unit.

Figure 7.2 Irish Language Unit Staff Structure



The **Irish Language Unit** is the first point of contact and drives the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy with a Council. The **Irish Language Development Officer** is responsible for leading the Irish Language Team in raising the profile and usage of the language and increasing job opportunities through the stimulation of economic, community development and language awareness schemes. The Irish Language Development Officer's role in developing local, national and international links requires the initiation, co-ordination and delivery of cultural schemes within the District in conjunction with internal departments of Council and outside agencies. The Irish Language Development Officer also has responsibility to promote all aspects of the Ulster Scots heritage, tradition, culture and language.

The **Irish Language Community Liaison Officer** has a community facing role which promotes use and understanding of the Irish Language through the development of the District's Irish language community, in partnership with Economic Regeneration, Arts, Good Relations, Equality and Community Support initiatives. The role includes assistance with Irish language Summer Schools and Schemes and contact with education providers in addition to providing support to Irish language clubs, societies, Committees and community and voluntary groups.

Officers also carry out translation duties and maintain the Council's Simultaneous Translation System, update the Council's Dual Street Names database and provide research, guidance and support to other Council functions on the implementation of the Bilingual Policy and Procedures, in addition to working with external stakeholders and the public.

The **Administrative Assistant** provides administrative, clerical and secretarial services to the Unit.

### 7.3 FUNDING AND BURSARIES

The predecessor Newry and Mourne District Council administered grants through the Irish Language Fund and the Ulster Scots Fund. Since April 2015, small grants up to £5,000 have been centralised and consequently, the Irish Language Unit no longer administer funding to groups.

### 7.4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND MANAGEMENT

The Irish Language Unit reports to the **Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee** and informs, in addition, of projected activity via regular written and verbal reports. The Unit will provide progress updates against key actions on a six monthly basis. This will take the format of written reports to Council and will be available on the Council website. An Annual Overview will be developed and the associated yearly Action Plan will be revised to reflect progress, on-going business needs and external environment.

Decisions on expenditure are authorised by the Corporate Planning and Policy Assistant Director.

### 7.5 RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The Irish Language Unit has a budget of £142,788 in 2015/16. This consists of:

- £108,400 (76%) for Salaries (including insurance etc.);
- £21,000 (15%) for Events (Ulster Festival one-off funding for August 2015);
- £4,800 (3%) for Travel;
- £3,250 (2%) for Advertising, Publications and Translations;
- £2,217 (1.5%) for Miscellaneous;
- £1,530 (1%) for Overheads; and
- £2,580 (1.8%) for Training/Conferences.

### 7.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Local Government Act (No 2014) (hereafter 'the Act') conferred on councils a new duty of performance improvement from 1st April 2015. The Act sets out the framework for the operation of Council Performance Improvement and places a general duty on a council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement

In the exercise of its functions and to set improvement objectives for each financial year. Councils will be required to gather information to assess improvements in their services and to issue a report annually on their performance against indicators which they have either set themselves or that have been set by Departments. Local Councils performance improvement plans and the arrangements made to deliver on those plans will be audited by the Local Government Auditor.

All Irish Language Unit (ILU) activity will be informally and formally monitored and evaluated throughout the lifetime of the Strategy within the context of Performance Improvement. Six monthly reports will be produced in order to measure performance against the Irish Language Strategy and to help us improve our services. The following Key Performance Indicators will be adopted for benchmarking purposes for the period up to 31 March 2016.

### 5.2.10 IRISH

#### Education Partners

11. Website and social media promotion of learning opportunities

2 Language Awareness Sessions

20 Language Awareness participants

Increase in the number of staff who can deal with enquiries etc. from IL community

6 Bilingual Press Releases

10 to date Irish language content on website

11 Social Media Presence

#### Phase 2: 2016-17

2015-16 Irish Language Strategy

Scoping of Functions of Council completed

Internal Liaison Committee established

2016-17 Irish Language Strategy

2 Staff Information Sessions

Guidelines for use of Irish in Council produced

Councillors engaged

6 Bilingual materials produced

4 Bilingual Events in Council

4 Events in Council with Irish Language Unit input

Dual language street name templates

Dual language nameplates which promote the townlands

Place names promoted + new developments streets etc

Liaison with Events Team

Tourism/IL Partnership events

Irish Language Festivals

Irish Language Businesses engaged

500m + for ILU 2016

Audit of needs of Irish Language community needs throughout the District.  
 Register of Irish Language ILU groups.  
 3 Year Irish Language Strategy developed.  
 IL groups involved in community planning.  
 IL needs reflected in Community Plans.  
 2 community based Irish Language Unit events.  
 2 community events with Irish Language Unit input.  
 Target groups identified.  
 ILU/Community Partnerships.  
 Representation on 1 community working groups.  
 System for recording public enquiries to ILU developed.  
 Community directory published.  
 Community events calendar published.  
 2 new IL projects initiated.  
 30 groups receiving ILU services.  
 Funding information distributed.

#### Shine Fúil Language

Community Awareness Programmes.  
 Community Awareness participants.  
 Inter-community networking & study visits.  
 Target FUL groups identified.  
 Programmes delivered in FUL community.  
 Register of Dúster Scois groups.  
 Action Plan developed.  
 Dúster Scois groups supported.  
 53/111 national event participants.

## Appendix 1

**Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Deáin**  
**Polasai Dátheangachais**  
**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council**  
**Bilingualism Polasai**

**1. Title**

The Bilingualism policy sets out the Council's commitment to facilitate and encourage the promotion and use of both the Irish language and the English language in the Council area.

**2. Statement**

Council approves this policy to ensure linguistic equality for all who avail of and/or provide Council services as far as is reasonably possible.

**3. Aim**

The aim of this policy is to build on the Council's commitment to celebrate diversity by:

1. The delivery of equality of opportunity for all who avail of and / or provide Council services using progressive realisation
2. To fulfil Council's obligations contained in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages\*

**4. Scope**

The Bilingualism Policy applies to all Council Departments with regard to the functional role(s) and applies to all communication and engagement between internal and external stakeholders.

The policy objectives are to:

- Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice.



- To foster and promote the use of Irish in the internal administration of Council, in its dealings with other public bodies and also with bodies that provide services to the public in the District.
- Recognise that members of the public, Council members, management and employees can express their views and needs better in their preferred language.
- Recognise that enabling the public to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care and not a concession.
- Seek to remove, where possible, restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of the language.

## ➤ Appendix 1: Forthard

## 5. Related Policies

- Dual Street Name.
- Street Naming and Numbering.
- Corporate Brand Guidelines.
- Guidelines for the Use of the Irish Language in the Council.
- Comply with its statutory requirements under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).
- Linkage to wider policy and legislation<sup>9</sup>.

## 6. Definitions

Definitions at Appendix 1

## 7. Policy Owner

Gerard Vc O'Leary, Director of District Development, Tel: 02835313233

## 8. Contact details in regard of this policy are:

Tel: 028 3031 3233 Email: [community@newcastlecountycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:community@newcastlecountycouncil.gov.uk)

## 9. Policy Authorisation

<sup>9</sup>Article 15(2)(b)(ii)

TMT Authorised on

Executive Committee Authorised on

\_\_\_\_\_

Council Authorised on

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Policy Effective Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

**11. Policy Review Date**

*Policy should be reviewed at least every four years.*

**12. Procedures**

*None, Moynagh and Dohen District Council Bilingualism Procedures.*

**13. Equality Impact Assessment**

*Policy equality – policy to be equality checked by policy owner & Equality Officer*

## DEFINITIONS

### Progressive Realisation

The Council will take steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realisation of the Bilingualist Policy using affordable resources.

This is known as the principle of "progressive realisation". It acknowledges that some of the actions may be difficult in practice to achieve in a short period of time and be subject to resource constraints, but requires the Council to act as best it can within its means.

### The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages:

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) is a European treaty (CETS 148) adopted in 1992 under the auspices of the Council of Europe. It created and promote historical regional and minority languages in Europe.

### Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).

The statutory duties under Section 75 require public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and also to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

### The Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement)

The Good Friday Agreement or Belfast Agreement was signed in Belfast on 10 April 1998 (Good Friday) by the British and Irish governments and endorsed by most Northern Ireland's political parties. The accord was endorsed by the voters of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in separate referenda of 23 May 1998.

### St Andrews Agreement

The St Andrews Agreement was an agreement between the British and Irish Governments and the political parties in relation to the devolution of power to Northern Ireland. The agreement resulted from multi-party talks held in St Andrews, Fife, Scotland from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 13 October 2000, between the two governments and all the major parties in Northern Ireland. It resulted in the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the formation (on 8 May 2007) of a new Northern Ireland Executive.

## Linkage to wider policy and legislation

This policy relates directly to the following:

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages states that policies, legislation and practices are to be based on the following objectives and principles:

- a) the recognition of the Irish language as an expression of cultural wealth;
- b) the respect of the geographical area of the Irish language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Irish;
- c) the need for resolute action to promote Irish in order to safeguard the language;
- d) the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Irish, in speech and writing, in private and public life;
- e) the maintenance and development of links between groups using Irish and other groups in the State employing the Irish language in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups of the State using different languages;
- f) the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of Irish at all appropriate stages;
- g) the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of Irish living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;
- h) the promotion of study on and research into Irish at universities or equivalent institutions;
- i) the promotion of appropriate types of transactions (e.g. cross-border exchanges).

Article 10 of The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages refers specifically to Administrative Authorities and Public Services and the relevant principles designed to guide them:

- a) To ensure that users of Irish may submit oral or written applications to the administrative authority;
- b) To allow the Administrative authorities to draft documents in Irish;
- c) To use Irish in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;
- d) To use or adopt, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official

### Language(s) of Instruction and names of places/venues in Irish

With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Council must undertake to:

- To allow users to submit a request in Irish.
- To provide translation or interpretation as may be required.
- To allow the use or adoption of family names in Irish at the request of those concerned.

## Appendix 2

### Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin Nósanna Imeachta an Pholasáí Dhátheangachais Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Bilingualism Procedures

#### 1. TITLE

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Bilingualism Procedures

#### 2. STATEMENT

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to the protection and encouragement of the Irish language. The Council recognises the Irish language as an expression of cultural wealth and there is a need for the Council to promote Irish in order to safeguard and strengthen it.

#### 3. AIM

The procedures will build on the Council's commitment to celebrate diversity by:

5. The delivery of equality of opportunity for all who avail of any / an service Council services using progressive realisation\*
6. To fulfil Council's obligations as contained in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages\*
7. Comply with its statutory requirements under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998)\*

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

The procedures apply to all Council business and functions and are intended to deliver linguistic equality for all who avail of and / or provide Council services (using progressive realisation\*).

The procedures will:

- Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services, or participates in the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice
- Ensure and promote the use of Irish in the normal administration of Council, in its dealings with other public bodies or agencies that provide services to the public in the Council District.

- Ensure members of the public, Council members, management and employees can express their views and needs better in their preferred language
- Ensure that enabling the public to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care and not a concession
- To ensure members of the public and employees can use their name and address in Irish
- To ensure the right of employees to use Irish within the workplace and that of members of the public to use Irish within Council buildings

The Council objectives regarding the Irish Language will be achieved through the following procedures:

## 5. IDENTITY

### 5.1 Corporate Identity

The corporate identity, Council logo and reputation are all part of the Council brand. The logo of the Council will be consistent and projected as a primary vehicle for business contact on all printed material.

Outsides on building and using the bilingual corporate identity as detailed in the Council's Corporate Brand Guidelines, will be issued to staff, designers and others who reproduce the Council's written material.

The front of Council reflects the Council's commitment to promoting the Irish language and should always be bilingual with the Irish language above the English and when side by side the Irish Language should be to the left of the English.

### 5.2 Signage / Visibility / Exhibitions

The Council will continue to apply Dual Street Name and Street Naming and Numbering policies (which are currently under review). An index of dual language street names will be maintained and updated. Certain exemptions will apply e.g. safety warnings at quays / harbours which will be cost will incur progressive realization.

A pressed implementation plan will be devised for the erection of English and Irish internal and external signage on Council owned properties.

Irish will be incorporated into some display material. Marking of exhibitions to include Irish using progressive realization.

## 6. COMMUNICATION

### 6.1 Reception

Guidance will be offered to receptionists and telephoneists, through the provision of a 'hotway code' allowing them to respond appropriately to enquiries in Irish.

### 6.2 Mail and Email

Written communications received in Irish will be responded to in Irish within an agreed timeframe. Guidance provided to staff on how to deal with written communications in Irish. Disputes should try to be resolved in Gaelic first.

### 6.3 Telephone

Guidance will be given to staff on how to deal with calls from Irish speakers. When no Irish speaker is available calls received in Irish will be returned by an Irish speaking member of staff or outside source where that is the preference of the caller.

### 6.4 Internal / External Forms

Irish versions of all internal documentation, with the exception of technical / long documents which will be dealt with using progressive realisation, will be made available to the public and staff on request.

## 7. COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

7.1 Council will work to ensure people attending Council meetings are able to contribute through the medium of Irish. Using progressive realisation and where practical use has been reached.

7.2 Council will provide interpretation facilities using progressive realisation when requested to do so.

7.3 When English and Irish presentations need to be made, simultaneous translation services will be made available to employees who have no knowledge of the Irish language supported by Irish speaking members of staff.

7.4 Council will establish a budget for delivery of the policy and to follow normal Council business processes i.e. Council motions to include costs / expenditure in yearly estimates and business plans.

7.5 According to need and as resources allow, information leaflets, flyers and other Council literature should be available to the public in English and Irish to mutual where appropriate.

7.6 According to need and as resources allow forms will be produced in English and Irish format.



## 8. PUBLICATIONS

### 8.1 Printed Material

The Council's main documents will be provided in bilingual format, e.g. Corporate Plan, Annual Report and incorporate Irish in non-Irish publications. Irish language versions of materials will be made available on request.

### 8.2 Website

The Council's website will include an English and Irish format with the Irish language text added in line with the English text where possible. These pages receiving most user traffic, for example main front pages, will be available initially in English and Irish format. Headings of dynamic sections will also be of English and Irish format.

## 9. RELATIONS

### 9.1 Public Relations

Council will use the Irish language in a range of written material to increase the visibility of the language e.g. Irish or bilingual versions of selected press releases to be made available.

### 9.2 Media Relations

Council will issue press releases issued in Irish for the Irish Language media and where possible provide a bilingual spokesperson. Press releases will be selected for translation on the basis of qualitative criteria.

## 10. PRESENTATIONS

### 10.1 Public Speaking

Council representatives at civic events will be permitted to use Irish in their presentations and public speaking where advance notice has been provided. Provision of simultaneous interpretation services will be made where resources allow.

### 10.2 Events

Council will ensure that planning of festivals / civic celebrations consideration is given to the opportunity to promote the Irish language as a component part of such events. Council will support Irish language and cultural activities by facilitating events within Council buildings and services using progressive realisation.

## 11. COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES / STAFF

### 11.1 Training

Council representatives will be provided with training opportunities in the Irish language; the level and type of training required to be identified through the Performance and Development Review process.

### 11.2 Personal Development Review (PDR)

Staff training requirements in the Irish language will be identified as part of the Performance and Development Review process.

## 12. PROCEDURE OWNER

Gerard McGivern  
Council

Director

## 13. CONTACT DETAILS REGARDING THESE PROCEDURES:

GERARD.MCGIVERN@NMDDC.NI.GOV.UK

Tel: 02893103103

## 14. PROCEDURE AUTHORITY

Governance Committee Authorised on

10 February 2015

Council Authorised on

## 15. PROCEDURES EFFECTIVE DATE

## Appendix 3

## Linkage to wider policy and legislation

This strategy relates directly to the following:

## The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages states that:

policies, legislation and practices are to be based on the following objectives and principles:

- the recognition of the Irish language as an expression of cultural wealth;
- the respect of the geographical area of the Irish language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of Irish;
- the need for resolute action to promote Irish in order to safeguard the language;
- the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of Irish, in speech and writing, in private and public life;
- the maintenance and development of links between groups using Irish and other groups in the State employing the Irish language in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages;
- the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of Irish at all appropriate stages;
- the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of Irish living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;
- the promotion of study on and research into Irish at universities or equivalent institutions;
- the promotion of appropriate types of international exchanges (i.e. cross-border exchanges);

Article 10 of The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages refers specifically to Administrative Authorities and Public Services and the relevant principles designed to guide them:

- To ensure that users of Irish may submit oral or written applications to the administrative authority;
- To allow the administrative authorities to draft documents in Irish;
- To use Irish in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State;
- To use or adopt, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s) of traditional and correct forms of place-names in Irish;

With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Council must undertake to:

- To allow users to submit a request in Irish.
- To provide translation or interpretation as may be required.
- To allow the use or adoption of family names in Irish at the request of those concerned.

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Newry, Mourne and Down Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies Paper 4: Town Centres and Opportunity Sites
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Anthony McKay, Chief Planning Officer
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Andrew Hay, Development Plan Manager

### Decisions Required

Note the content of this report:

#### 1.0 Purpose & Background

- 1.1 Preparatory studies are essential in providing the evidence base for preparing the Local Development Plan (LDP). A reliable and comprehensive evidence base is vital to informing and justifying the 'soundness' of the LDP documents (Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan) and to show how policies and projects can help to achieve the social, economic and environmental objectives for the plan area.
- 1.2 As part of the programme of preparatory work, the purpose of this report is to present 'Paper 4: Town Centre and Opportunity Sites' for Members consideration.
- 1.3 The paper, attached at Appendix 1, provides members with an overview of the current retail offer within the Newry, Mourne and Down towns, examine the take up of town centre development opportunity sites and reviews vacancy rates. The paper builds on the existing evidence base and sets out:
  - regional and local policy context for formulating local development plan policies for retail development;
  - an overview of Retail Trends in Northern Ireland;
  - provisions of town centres, primary retail cores and development opportunity sites within existing Development Plans;
  - a review of Town Centre Masterplans and relevant Village Plans;
  - town centre studies focusing on town centre health checks; and
  - key recommendations.

#### 2.0 Key Issues and Conclusions

- 2.1 As part of a review of town centre designations within the existing Development Plans (i.e. Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 and Sandridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015), the paper looks at each designated town centre and considers the various designations contained within them, including primary retail cores and Frontages, development opportunity sites, and housing areas; and the contribution these designations make to the diversity and vitality of the town centres across the District.

- 2.3 The paper also reviews the relevant Masterplans and Village Plans in relation to each town centre and considers the development and regeneration processes and projects identified and the potential these have in enhancing and developing the town centres.
- 2.4 As part of a review of Town Centre Studies, as available for some of the District's towns, the paper considers the range of convenience and comparison retailing, vacancy levels and public realm improvements, across the District and looks at the extent to which these meet the viability and viability of the District's town centres.
- 2.5 As part of the settlement appraisal work, the paper recommends that any candidates for reclassification from a village to a town should also be assessed to establish if there is sufficient retail offer to warrant a town centre designation.
- 2.6 The paper proposes that the Preferred Options Paper should seek public comment to suggest where changes should be made to the town centre boundaries and retail designations, and/or identify additional town centre development opportunity sites.
- 2.7 The paper also suggests that case study locations should be appraised to establish whether any existing shopping facilities in Newry or Downpatrick should be identified in the Preferred Options Paper as local or neighbourhood shopping centres.
- 2.8 Data gathered as part of this and other preparatory studies will be used to establish the baseline of the social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the plan area and enable the Council to identify the issues which need to be addressed by the LDP. Furthermore, it will provide a sound basis on which to formulate the plan strategy, policies and proposals within the LDP that will be subject to independent public examination.

#### 4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are requested to note the content of this report.

#### 4.0 Resource Implications

- 4.1 N/A

#### 5.0 Appendices

- e Paper 4 - Town Centres and Opportunity Sites



Comhairle Ceantair  
**an Iúir, Mhúrn  
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne  
and Down**  
District Council

**Local Development Plan  
Preparatory Studies**

**Paper 4: Town Centres and Opportunity Sites  
November 2015**

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**APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Town Centre Health Check Indicators & Retail Capacity Studies Best Practice Guidance
- Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms
- Appendix 3 City/Town Centre Boundaries & Development Opportunity Sites
  - Part 1 Newry
  - Part 2 Downpatrick
  - Part 3 Ballynahinch
  - Part 4 Crossmaglen
  - Part 5 Killeel
  - Part 6 Newcastle
  - Part 7 Newrytownhillier
  - Part 8 Warrenpoint

## Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide Newry, Mourne and Down Council with an overview of the retail provision in the Council area and to provide information to help determine the need to formulate a detailed retail strategy to accommodate growth and enhance the vitality and viability of existing town centres up to 2030.

## Content

The paper provides:-

- The regional policy context for retailing in Newry, Mourne and Down;
- a brief overview of retail trends across Northern Ireland and the UK;
- an overview of town centre policy within the current Area Plans, an examination of current Masterplans, and the provision of opportunity sites (including take-6s);
- an overview of the health and vitality of existing towns based on the findings of Town Centre Studies for the towns within Newry, Mourne and Down; and
- a summary of recommendations.

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform the Members for Newry, Mourne and Down about the nature of the current retail offer within Newry City and the main towns in the District, the take up of town centre development opportunity sites and vacancy rates. The focus of the paper is on Newry, Downpatrick, Warrenpoint/Burton, Ballynahinch, Crossmaglen, Killybeg, Newcastle and Newtownhamilton. In compiling the paper the main sources of information have included the South East Coast Masterplan, and the Masterplans for Newry City Centre, Downpatrick Town Centre and Ballynahinch Town Centre. The findings of a report by GL Hearn<sup>1</sup> looking at town centres in Northern Ireland on behalf of DOE Planning 2014 as part of the formulation of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) are also included in this paper. The paper allows Members to commence consideration of how policy for the enhancement of town centres may be formulated within the context of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) and the SPPS.

## 2.0 Regional Policy Context

2.1 The Regional Policy Context is provided by the NI Executive's Economic Strategy and Sustainable Development Strategy, the Department for Regional Development's RDS and the Department of the Environment's SPPS. A summary of these documents as they pertain to formulation of town centre and retail development policy and proposals in the Local Development Plan (LDP) is provided in the following sections:

### (a) Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)

2.2 The RDS is the key policy guiding development in Northern Ireland and is underpinned by a Spatial Framework and Strategic Planning Guidelines. The Spatial Framework consists of urban hubs<sup>2</sup> and clusters<sup>3</sup>. The RDS identifies Newry and Downpatrick as main hubs, forming clusters with the local hubs of Warrenpoint and Newcastle respectively. Newry is the South Eastern City gateway<sup>4</sup> due to its proximity to the land border and the port of Warrenpoint. Newry is also well positioned on a key transport corridor while a link corridor connects Downpatrick to the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area.

2.3 Policy SP2 11 within the RDS aims to promote economic development opportunities at hubs. Hubs perform important economic roles in their area and

<sup>1</sup> A consultancy contract awarded by GL Hearn Limited was awarded in February 2015 by DOE Planning to carry out research into how to better link town centres and markets in Northern Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> Urban and local towns which play a strategic role as centres of employment and services for both urban and non-urban areas.

<sup>3</sup> Cities and towns which can work together to create a critical mass to attract economic development and deliver services.

<sup>4</sup> Strategically important transport interchange points which connect ports and air routes to the Ireland National Network.

have the potential for further economic expansion. This policy thus directs LDPs to consider the hubs and clusters of hubs first for any new development proposals. In reference to the RDS infrastructure, which<sup>18</sup> retail provision at each settlement level would be considered as follows:

- Level 1 (Villages): These are locations that will have shops primarily to meet residents' needs. They may also have other commercial services e.g. pub, post office, petrol station. Any growth is likely to be minimal. Consideration should be given to defining village centres in the LDP.
- Level 2 (Urban or District Centres/Smaller Towns): These are locations that meet both the daily and weekly needs of surrounding residents. They offer supermarkets, restaurants and a mix of retail facilities.
- Level 3 (Regional Towns/Clusters): These are locations where the proximity of business facilitates competition from which all consumers are able to benefit and maximises the opportunity to use a means of transport other than the car. They will have shops to meet the weekly and longer term needs of residents. They will also have a mix of different retail/commercial facilities e.g. shopping centres, retail warehouses, range of restaurants/cars.
- Level 4 (Principal Cities): These are locations which in addition to those services provided in Level 2 settlements also have department stores, specialist shops, arts and cultural activities.

2.4 It may be useful to investigate if there are any locations worthy of designation as a District or Local Centre (definition within glossary) within the Newry, Mourne and Down City/Towns. These are locations within an existing town, usually beyond the town centre boundary that provide locally accessible convenience goods to meet the daily and weekly needs of local residents. A local centre is currently designated at Ticesways in Newry and at Ballymole in Downpatrick. There are no District Centres currently designated in the Newry, Mourne and Down City/Towns.

2.5 The RDS makes specific reference to the retailing in the District. It acknowledges that Newry is a significant employment centre with a strong retail offering, which benefits from its strategic location on the Belfast-Dublin corridor. It recognises that Downpatrick performs a higher order role than might be expected by its size, with it being the main location for retail provision for the surrounding area. It also recognises that Downpatrick and Newcastle act as important centres for retailing, commerce and business and serve a substantial number of dispersed rural settlements.

<sup>18</sup> Retail Development in Newry - Review No.24, Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Development Work

## (b) Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

2.6 The Department of the Environment's SPPS (September 2015) will eventually replace existing planning policy statements once a Council has its LDP (and Strategy adopted). However in the case of retailing policy the SPPS replaces the existing policy provisions within PPS 5 Retailing and Town Centres with immediate effect. The SPPS states that there should be a town centre first approach for retailing and other town centre uses. This is reflective of the 'sequential approach' introduced in Draft PPS 5\*. The SPPS also states the importance of adopting a variety of uses, good urban design and accessibility within the town centre.

2.7 In preparing Local Development Plans, the SPPS requires Councils to undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses across the plan area. A key element in developing this evidence base will be the preparation of Town Centre Health Checks and the SPPS also requires Councils to undertake and regularly update them (at least once every five years). They will contain information on a range of indicators, including:

- existing town centre uses;
- vacancy rates;
- physical structure and environmental quality – including opportunities, designations and constraints;
- footfall;
- retailer representations;
- attitudes and perceptions;
- prime rental values; and
- commercial yields.

2.8 The SPPS suggests that as part of the process of identifying sites to be allocated for town centre uses in the plan Councils should undertake a 'call for sites' exercise. An example of this process can be examined further here:

<https://www.lchfielddc.gov.uk/Council/Planning/The-local-plan-and-planning-policy/Local-plan/Local-Plan-Allocations.aspx>

2.9 Lichfield District Council (LDC) commenced a 'call for sites' in 2015 inviting anyone who wished a site within the District to be considered for development to complete and submit a call for sites suggestion form. LDC sought a range of information to enable all potential development sites to be fully considered. The information sought included a description of the proposed future use and its scale/capacity, details of site ownership, the degree of market interest in the site, the availability of utilities on the site and any site constraints.

\* Published in July 2009 but never finalised. In April 2013 the Department announced that Draft PPS5 would not be taken forward as it was not fit for purpose and a further version would not be published as the SPPS.

2.10 The requirement to allocate sites should be considered on the basis of fulfilling sustainably and objectively assessed needs for retail/economic development during the plan period.

2.11 Arising from the evidence base, LDP's should include a Retail Strategy and contain appropriate policies and proposals that must promote town centres first for retail and other main town centre uses. Plans should also:

- define a network and hierarchy of centres – town, district and local centres;
- define the spatial network of town centres and the primary retail core;
- set out appropriate policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in the hierarchy of centres and other locations, and the factors that will be taken into account for decision taking;
- provide for a diverse offer and mix of uses, which reflect local circumstances; and
- allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and form of retail, and other town centre uses.

### **(c) Planning Policy Statement 5 – Retailing and Town Centres**

2.12 As highlighted in paragraph 1.6 above, PPS 5 Retailing and Town Centres has now been cancelled by the Department of the Environment following introduction of the SRPS. Many of the themes running through PPS5 have now been reiterated in the SRPS.

### **(d) NMD District Council Corporate Plan**

2.13 The Plan highlights the importance of the retail sector across the District with 17.23% of the workforce employed in this area. Whilst the District is seen to be well served with a strong retail offering the challenge is the vulnerability of the retail sector to exchange rate fluctuation and the rise in online shopping.

2.14 The new LDP has an important role to play in not only protecting but enhancing town centres through policies and proposals which promote diversity in town centres, promote high quality design and improve accessibility. The LDP will aim to support and sustain vibrant town centres making them attractive to retailers and consumers alike.

### 3.0 Overview of Retail Trends in NI

3.1 As part of the preparation of the SIFPS a study was undertaken by GL Hearn on behalf of DOE planning to research issues surrounding town centres and retailing in Northern Ireland (January 2014). This included health checks for a number of town/city centres as designated in adopted plans using a variety of health check indicators. For the Newry, Mourne and Down District Newry, Downpatrick and Newcastle town centres were included within the study. This research also included an assessment of town centre and retail trends. Overall the town centre checks did not identify any towns that were performing badly, but equally there was little evidence of any particularly strong performance. Therefore there is room for improvement in the vitality and viability of town centres and a policy stance which seeks to protect and enhance town centre performance and diversity will contribute to uplifting existing city centre vitality and viability.

3.2 In compiling the GL Hearn study, town centre composition data was obtained from Experian Good<sup>1</sup> who carry out physical town centre surveys and prepare occupier plans for most town centres in the UK. Some of the key findings regarding town centres in Northern Ireland included:

- Newry has a city centre footprint floorspace of 132,710 sqm, Downpatrick 61,190 sqm and Newcastle 27,920 sqm. In comparison to towns in the rest of the UK, Northern Irish towns tend to have smaller catchment areas.
- Diversity of uses shows the importance of the service sector in town centres (42%), followed by non-food shops (35%). Service uses take up a larger proportion of town centres by unit number, reflecting the smaller sized units these units tend to occupy.
- Convenience goods footprint is focused in a proportionately small number of larger units reflecting the wider UK trend of the dominance of larger supermarkets in meeting shopping needs.
- Independent operators typically compose 76% of town centre occupiers. In most centres, independents have a strong offer in food, non-food and service sectors. Unlike many town centres in the rest of the UK, local independent food retailers remain a feature of Northern Irish towns. Newry, Mourne and Down area has a good representation of independent long established family businesses offering convenience and companionship retailing and service uses.
- The proportion of other town centre uses was notably higher in NI than the UK average. The other category includes transport services, employment and commercial activities, religious buildings, wholesale trade, civic and unclassified buildings.

<sup>1</sup> Experian Good is a retail property intelligence system that provides retail location plans and reports covering over 2,000 shopping areas in the UK and Ireland.

- Having a range of other uses within town centres should be considered a positive attribute which confirms town centres are performing as a hub for a range of activities thereby contributing to overall vitality and viability.
- In 2013 the Northern Ireland vacancy rate is notably higher, both by floorspace and unit numbers (14.5% & 11.9%) than the UK average (12% & 10%).
- NI City/Town Vacancy rates for 2013 (both by unit numbers and floorspace) are shown in the graphs below (Figures 1 & 2).

Figure 1: NI vacancy rates by unit numbers

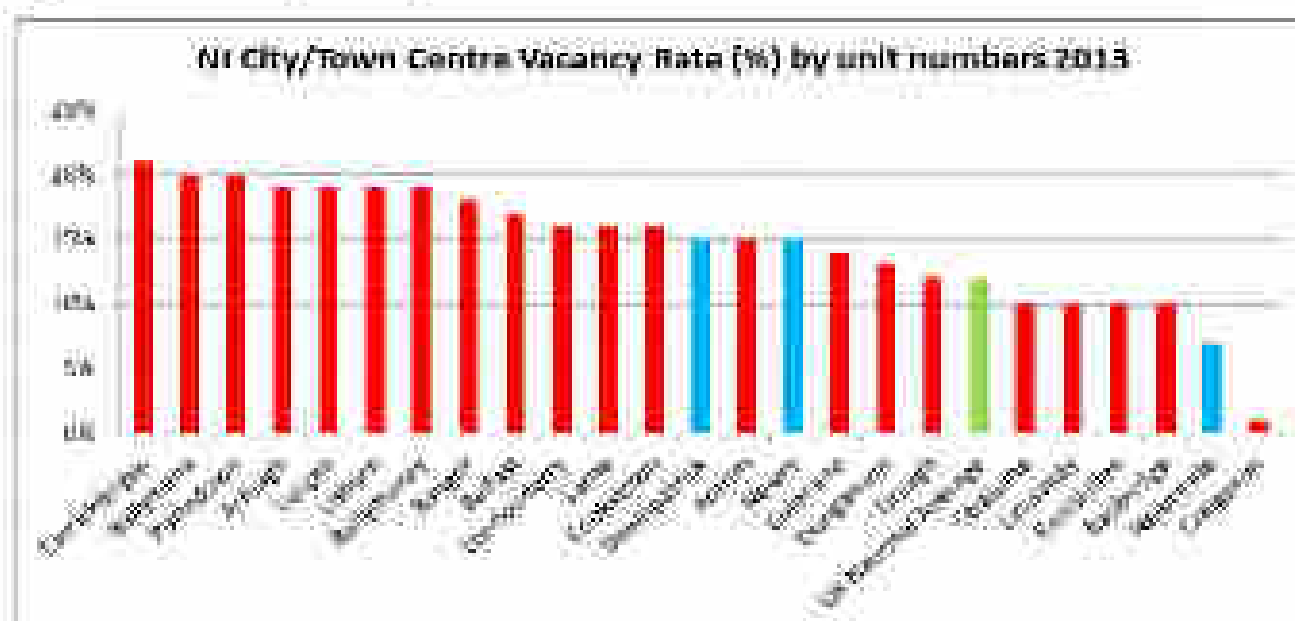
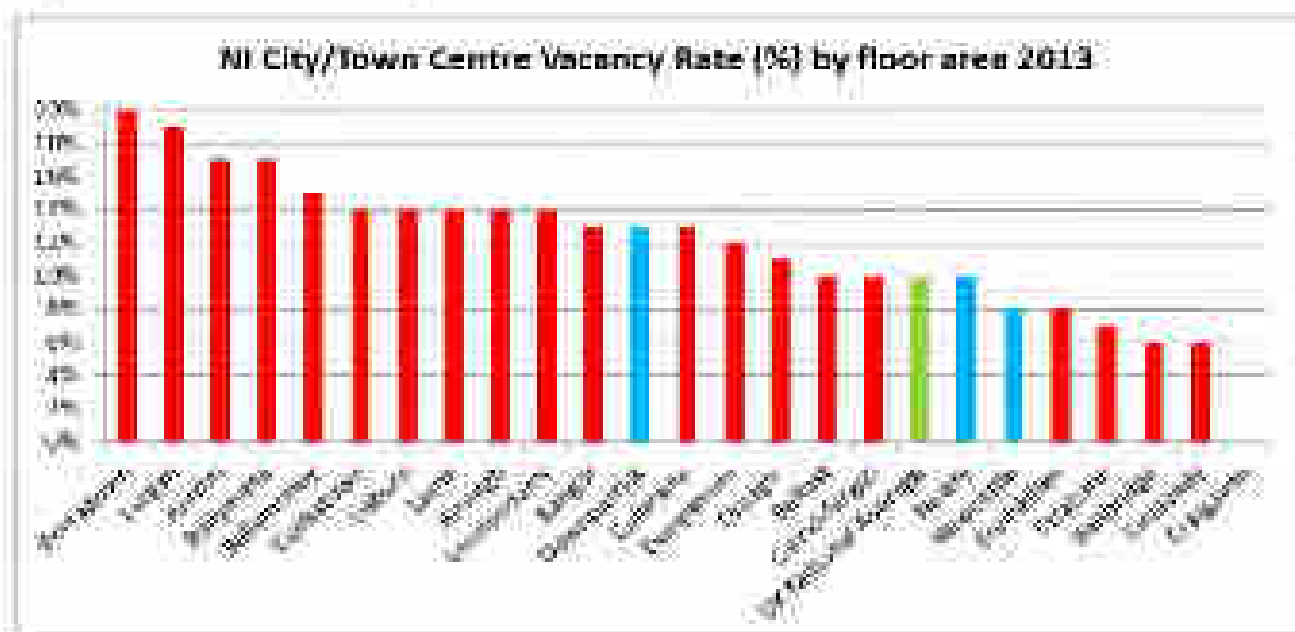


Figure 2: NI Vacancy rates by floor area





**3.3.3.3 SOURCE: REPORT FROM WITHIN THE LDP TOWN CENTRE AND OUTLET HUBS**

Further detail on the main findings of the town centre health checks for the Newry, Mourne and Down Area is provided in Section 6.0 covering Town Centre Studies.

- 3.3 The report highlighted that out-of-centre retailing is focused outside larger town centres or on strategic routes. In terms of functions, the role of these retail parks is almost exclusively retail. In comparison to the rest of the UK, leisure uses such as cinemas and bowling alleys are not commonly found in these locations. The report indicates that in Newry, Downpatrick and Newcastle, there are no notable out-of-centre retail parks, however this is not the case as Damolly Retail Park is located approx. 1.5 miles north of the city centre. Damolly Retail Park is considered further within this report at paragraph 6.13.
- 3.4 There are also a number of town centre issues facing Northern Ireland towns which are summarised in Table 1 below. The weaknesses and threats identified by GL Hearn "indicate that it would be appropriate to have a stronger policy stance on protecting and enhancing town centres, encouraging private sector investment and development, and making town centres the focus for not just retail but other significant footfall generating uses."

Table 1: Town Centre Issues

Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity of existing town centres.</li> <li>• Strong local independent retail offer.</li> <li>• Good quality physical environment.</li> <li>• Town centre parking, particularly short stay for street penetration.</li> <li>• Employment uses within town centres.</li> <li>• Good accessibility and public transport hubs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancies and potential obsolescence of some floorspace.</li> <li>• Low and falling retail rents.</li> <li>• Amount and profile of out-of-centre retailing.</li> <li>• Development pipeline.</li> <li>• Limited private sector investment/development in town centres.</li> <li>• Heavy traffic flows and congestion leads to conflict with shoppers.</li> </ul>

- 3.5 The retail sector is constantly evolving and adapting in response to consumer and lifestyle trends and other market influences. Much of this change has been in the growth in personal income and disposable consumer spending, coupled with population growth. Such trends and influences have and will continue to transform traditional high street retailing and commercial leisure development. The economic downturn has had a negative effect on consumer spending and retail spending is forecast to remain low for the next three to four years.
- 3.6 National trends in consumer expenditure show a growth in home shopping and electronic-commerce. The home shopping sector includes a number of retailing

channels including catalogue sales, direct retailing, TV shopping and internet shopping<sup>4</sup>. The growth in online shopping habits does not however mean the end of the high street. Whilst online sales are increasing so too is 'click and collect' where consumers order online but visit the store to collect their goods. This service can help ensure that town centres will attract people and remain viable.

- 3.7 Although there are fewer retailers actively looking for units in Northern Ireland than elsewhere in the UK, certain retailers are taking new units. These include discount stores; the likes of Home Bargains and Poundworld. The food sector including restaurants and coffee shops are also showing growth.<sup>5</sup> This report states that there is a growing trend by national multiple retailers to achieve increasing economies of scale. This results in centralisation of services whereby larger stores serving an extensive catchment are replacing a number of smaller stores. These new stores are unlikely to be accommodated in existing town centres.

- 3.8 The GL Hearn report concludes that many of Northern Ireland's towns have remained reasonably vital and viable due to a number of factors:

- many towns merit a good mix of uses, in particular services within the heart of the centre;
- most towns have reasonable/good accessibility on the street and nearby surface parking;
- most visits appear to involve a number of linked trips (shopping, leisure, social and business);
- many have a high level of independent and long standing family business providing provenance of food and quality of service;
- there is a degree of loyalty to the town centre as being the heart of the community; and
- some towns are finding niche markets or their own "brand" identities – cultural, visitation, seaside, gateway to countryside, specialist food etc.

- 3.9 Town centres however do need to offer an experience above the average functional shopping trip which might otherwise be carried out online or at an out-of-town retail park.

#### 4.0 Existing Development Plans

- 4.1 The existing adopted Area Plans, the Banbridge/Newry and Mourne Area Plan (BNWAP) and Ards and Down Area Plan (ADAP) are the statutory Development Plans for the District and provide the policy framework against which to assess development proposals. Newry, Downpatrick, Ballynahinch also have their own non-statutory Town Centre Masterplans which provide the basis and

<sup>4</sup> DDP 11-07, Hearn Report, January 2014

<sup>5</sup> Statistics of Northern Ireland 2013 - 2014

justification for the Department for Social Development's decision making on the promotion, implementation and timing of urban regeneration initiatives in the respective town centres.

- 4.2 The existing Development Plans designate Town Centre boundaries and Primary Retail Cores (PRC) within Newry, Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Newcastle. Regional Strategic Planning Policy for town centres and retailing is now contained in the SPPS following its publication in final form in September 2015. Where town centres are defined it was anticipated that commercial activity would concentrate within them. The vitality and viability of the town centres is retained by new shopping and office development. Within the Development Plans for the District, Development Opportunity Sites are also identified for the main towns. These sites are identified within the Plans as having special merit for a particular land use. The status of the sites is illustrated in Tables 1 - 3 below. Within a number of towns the Plans also designate Areas of Townscape Character, Areas of Archaeological Potential and Local Landscapes Policy Areas. However these designations do not unduly limit the potential for retail development within the towns.

### **Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP)**

- 4.3 To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres the Plan adopts a strategy for accommodating retail, commercial and leisure growth within existing centres based on their role within the settlement hierarchy. It recognises that bars, cafes and restaurants have an important role complementing the primary shopping function of city and town centres and contributing to tourism and the evening economy. Town centre housing also has an important role both in terms of vitality of a city/town centre and offering a sense of security.

### **Newry**

- 4.4 A city centre boundary together with primary retail core and frontage have been designated in Newry to ensure the continuance of a compact and attractive shopping environment, offering both choice and convenience. The Newry Conservation Area covers all of the primary retail core and additional lands to the west (Abbey Way) and north (Trevor Hill, Sugarhouse Quay and New Street).
- 4.5 The city centre boundary (see Appendix 3, Part 1) extends north to the largely office area of the Downshire Road and the commercial/industrial area north of Upper Edward Street and Coal Street, west to the campus of the Southern Regional College and neighbouring business, and south to the Quays shopping complex and major brownfield development opportunity sites at the Albert Basin and Warrenpoint Road.

- 4.6 The primary retail core centres around Hill Street, John Mitchell Place, Merchant's Quay and the upper part of Monaghan Street, together with Buttercross and The Quays shopping centres.
- 4.7 A primary retail frontage is designated along both sides of Hill Street. This is to retain the focus of retail use and ensure the maintenance of a compact shopping environment.
- 4.8 The plan also contains a policy on town centre housing. It is acknowledged that specific housing areas provide valuable housing stock and are homes for established communities which contribute to the variety and vitality of life in the city centre. Accordingly there is a policy restricting change of use to non-residential uses. In addition proposals for new housing on derelict or backland sites and re-use of upper floors for residential use can help support variety and vitality within the city centre.
- 4.9 Ten Development Opportunity Sites have been identified within the City Centre. Table 1 provides the current status of the development opportunity sites identified in the SAMP;

Table 1: Newry Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
NY01	Lower Faulkner St	Office and residential use	<b>Final Planning Stage</b>	Outstanding – Approved 2016/2017
NY02	Merchant's Quay North	Office, commercial, leisure and cultural together with residential	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NY03	Merchant's Quay Middle	Office, commercial, leisure and cultural together with residential	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NY04	Bank Parade	Residential, retail, leisure and cultural	Not developed	Associated development (45 residential units, cafe and office) Approved
NY05	Merchant's Quay South	Retail, office, commercial, leisure and cultural	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NY06	North Street	Office, leisure and residential use	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NY07	John Mitchell Place/Mack's St	Retail, office, and commercial together with residential	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NY08	County Hill	Employment, leisure and residential use	Not developed	Development of Community Treatment and Day Centre Scheme Approved 14/05/2018
NY09	Millbrook Aber Bush	Mixed use – office, leisure and residential	Not developed	Upgrading existing pathway and access along gateway, new pedestrian crossings at the war and victoria led, gates – Decision Pending
NY10	Monaghan Road	Mixed use	<b>Final Planning Stage</b>	Retail and mixed use scheme incorporating a food superstore, 60 residential units, 60 office units and 50 No apartments Approved 20/09/2018

NY01-10: Source: Planning and Building, Part 11

## Crossmaglen

- 4.10 The largest town in South Armagh, it has developed around a large market square. More recently the focus of commercial activity has moved from the square to North Street. There are opportunities for retail activity within the town centre in particular around Cardinal O'Flaherty Square and along Newry Street where there are vacant and underutilised units.
- 4.11 A town centre boundary is designated for Crossmaglen (see Appendix 3, Part 4). This includes Cardinal O'Flaherty Square, North Street leading to No. 7 Blaney Rd, Newry Street as far as No.26 and Cuffeille Rd to the PSNI station. An Area of Townscape Character is also designated, this incorporates most of the town centre with the exception of the PSNI station, Crossmaglen Enterprise Centre and the Health Centre.
- 4.12 Three Development Opportunity Sites have been identified within the town centre. Table 2 provides the current status of the development opportunity sites identified in the BMAP. The Mill Lane opportunity site comprises the cattle market and adjoining under-utilized backlands. The Cardinal O'Flaherty Square site occupies a prominent position fronting onto the square and entails a vacant plot of land. The Dundalk Road site comprises undeveloped rear outbuildings of 29-30 Cardinal O'Flaherty Square and is adjacent to No.9 Dundalk Rd.

Table 2: Crossmaglen Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
CM03	Mill Lane	Commercial & residential	Not developed	Planning Application
CM04	29-30 Cardinal O'Flaherty Square	Commercial & residential	<b>Fit for Survey Stage</b>	New office premises – Approved 2/03/2014
CM05	Dundalk Road	Commercial & residential	Not developed	P/2011/3964F Retail Unit and 4 apartments Approved L/07/03/50780/P Hotel Unit and 4 apartments Pending

(The LDP: Crossmaglen Opportunity Sites (LDP 4))

## Warrenpoint

- 4.13 A town centre boundary is designated for Warrenpoint (see Appendix 3, Part 8). It includes Charlotte Street and Church Street between the PSNI Station and the Church of Ireland and on the opposite side between the Square and Great Georges Street (South). It also includes the Square and Dock Street. An Area of Townscape Character is also designated and incorporates the town centre and seafront.

4.14 There are opportunities for new retail activity within the town centre particularly on Church Street where there are vacant and under utilised units. These have the potential to be re-developed or refurbished with an option to use the upper floors for non retail use.

4.15 Five Development Opportunity Sites have been identified within the town centre. Table 3 provides the current status of the development opportunity sites identified in the BNMAP. The Newry Street, Dockside site entails a car park. The current plan suggests that new development fronting Newry Street with car parking relocated to the rear would provide enhanced visual approach to the town centre.

4.16 The site of the former Liverpool Hotel on Mary Street is identified as an opportunity site. Now demolished this vacant site could be suitable for residential, hotel or office use. The site at the corner of St Peter's Street and Thomas Street comprises the old technical college and adjacent under-utilised yard.

Table 3: Waterpoint Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
WE 23	Newry Street, Docksida	Residential, office or retail	Not developed	Nothing applicable
WE 23	Mary Street	Residential, home or office use	Not developed	Nothing applicable
WE 31	St Peter's Street/Thomas Street	Office and residential	Not developed	P2007/07214, Hotel run and converted to 2 self contained flats
WE 32	Caroline Hotel, Caroline Promenade	Residential, private use	Not developed	P2188/1251 Apartments & townhouses Approved 14/07/2015/238407
WE 33	The Falls, Sarsfield	Leisure, sports or performance facility	Not developed	Re-development of the site entails: Public facility, wheelchair and accessible, existing Artwork Centre, Community Facility Room, Fenced outdoor, Office and external amenity space. Decision pending.

Map 005: Opportunities and Access, Part B

### Newtownhamilton

4.17 It is acknowledged that Newtownhamilton is smaller both in terms of population (800<sup>11</sup>) and its services and facilities base in comparison with other towns across the District. Nonetheless it is a market town with a high level of service provision for its size which operates as a service centre and focal point

<sup>11</sup> 2006 Census 2011 - <http://www.csa.govt.nz/data-releases/2011/census> for Newtownhamilton

for a large rural area. The Planning Appeals Commission in their Public Examination Report on the BNMAF concludes that "recognition of its town status is necessary to provide the framework for its growth and development".

4.18 A town centre boundary is designated for Newtownhamilton (see Appendix 3, Part 7). It includes part of Armagh Street and Dundalk Street, Shamble Lane, the Common and part of Newry Road.

4.19 Seven Development Opportunity Sites have been identified within the town centre. Table 4 provides the current status of the development opportunity sites identified in the BNMAF 2015. The Armagh Rd/The Common comprises a derelict service station with adjoining undeveloped land, together with the livestock market. The site adjacent to No. 60 Armagh Street entails a linear plot with narrow road frontage and is situated between existing residential boundaries on the northern end of Armagh St. The Shamble Lane site is adjacent to the Church of Ireland and forms part of a Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) encompassing the church and its setting. The site of a former public toilet block, now demolished, the Stormalo Lane/Newry Rd site entails a prominent road frontage site opposite the PSNI station. The Newry Street site entails an undeveloped road frontage site opposite the PSNI station with a community centre and a public house at either end.

Table 4: Newtownhamilton Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
NN 08	Armagh Rd/The Common	Mix of commercial and residential	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NN 09	Adjacent to no. 60 Armagh St	Residential	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NN 10	29-33 Armagh St	Small business units	Partly developed	P2887/2008-F Housing Development (3 units) approved 16/07/2008
NN 11	Shamble Lane	Residential or community use	Not developed	P2886/1586-F Residential Development of 10 apartments. Approval lapsed
NN 12	Shamble Lane/Newry St	Residential or commercial premises	Not developed	P2888/1606-F Residential Development of 27 apartments. Approval lapsed
NN 13	Newry St	Hotel or office development with residential or other uses	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
NN 14	45-47 Dundalk Street	Mixed use development	Developed	P2812/2008-F Temporary Hotel food outlet - 3 year approval granted 07/2012

(For CDE details see map in Section 5, Part 7)

<sup>19</sup> PWC report entitled 'BNMAF 2015', Para 4.19/4.22.

## Kilkeel

4.20 A town centre boundary is designated for Kilkeel (see Appendix 3, Part 5). It includes part of Newry Street and Greencastle Street, part of Harbour Road adjacent to the square and Newcastle Street.

4.21 Three Development Opportunity Sites have been identified within the town centre; Table 5 provides the current status of the development opportunity sites identified in the SNMAP 2015. The opportunity site at Harbour Road contains a mixture of occupied and vacant properties with an under used car park at the southern end. Harbour Road provides a direct link from the town centre to the harbour. The former Health centre site in Knockdree Ave, now demolished, entails a road frontage site flanked by established residential properties. Given the established residential character, adverse impact on amenity is a consideration for any development proposals at the Knockdree Ave site.

Table 5: Kilkeel Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
RL 28	Newry St Greencastle St	Supermarket & pharmacy PMU approved 28/1/09	Developed	P/2006-0785 PMU application, with associated car parking P/2006-1832 - Ground floor change of use to retail unit. Approved 13/1/08
RL 29	Harbour Road	Retailing and offices, reception at a hotel and leisure	TRC site <a href="#">View site image</a>	P/2006-0173 PMU application developed - Approved 16/02/07 P/2012-0943 PMU Change of use of former Museum Store and Amusement arcade to car mechanics and busy workshop. Approved 16/07/18
RL 20	Old Health Centre, Knockdree Ave	Chic, boutique offices or residential	Undeveloped	P/2006-0173 PMU LAO/2015/01174 Exec. planning in submission for pre-trial approval. Parking

Map 100 - Kilkeel Town Centre Opportunities Sites, 2015



## Aids and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP)

### Downpatrick

- 4.22 The focal point of the town centre (see Appendix 3, Part 2) is Breen's Corner, with a number of streets extending out in a radial pattern from this point. Market St extends to the south west, English St which runs westwards to the Holy Trinity Cathedral and Irish St which runs south east towards St Patrick's Church. Church St which extends to the north of Breen's Corner, St Patrick's Ave and part of Sleam St are also included within the town centre boundary. The Conservation area runs in an arc along English Street, Irish Street and Sleam St and is anchored at three points by the town's key ecclesiastical buildings.
- 4.23 The primary retail core is linear in shape, comprising mainly of shops in Market Street, but also includes stretches of Irish Street, Scotch Street, English Street and St Patrick's Avenue. The retail core is short and compact with few breaks in the frontages. The Down Retail Park on the Ballydugan Road is considered too remote to be included within the primary retail core.
- 4.24 There are a number of established residential communities within the town centre and these are designated protected housing in the plan. As well as contributing to the variety and vitality of the town centre, housing can also assist in securing the refurbishment and reuse of buildings of architectural and historic interest and importance.
- 4.25 The town centre housing areas also contain listed buildings at 73 Irish Street, 9 & 10 The Green, Irish Street and 14-24 Saul Street.
- 4.26 Within Downpatrick town centre five Development Opportunity Sites are identified. The details of the sites and their current status is provided in Table 7.

Table 6c: Downpatrick Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
24/25	Southwards to the canal English Street	Specialist retailing, craft workshops, coffee shops	Partly developed	Approved 2011 for refreshment and extension to hotel, pub and restaurant.
24/25	Southwards to the canal Irish Street	Specialist retailing, craft workshops, coffee shops	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
24/25	Frontage to the Canal Park at Scotch Street	Key frontage, no specific use	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
24/25	Location of Market Street and Irish Street	Shops and offices	Not developed	Nothing Applicable
24/25	Police Station, Irish Street	Residential or offices	PSNI Station still in use	Nothing Applicable

## Ballynahinch

- 4.27 The town centre (see Appendix 3, Part 3) includes Main Street, High Street, Droopda Street, Harmony Road and part of Lisburn Street, Church Street and Windmill Street.
- 4.28 The primary retail core is focused on Main Street and High Street including the square and a portion of Windmill Street and Droopda Street. The commercial uses in the town are concentrated in the core area and comprise a mix of shops, premises, cafes, service uses, bars and small business/office uses.
- 4.29 Town centre housing on parts of Church Street provide a valuable housing stock which contributes to the variety and vitality of the town centre. These are designated in the plan and subsequently afford protection against non-residential development proposals.
- 4.30 Within Ballynahinch town centre five Development Opportunity Sites are identified. The details of the sites and their current status is provided in Table 7.

Table 7: Ballynahinch Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location	Area Plan Proposal	Current Status	Planning History
BH27	Between the junction of High Street and Droopda Street, Ballynahinch Blarney	Commercial, civic, and public use	<b>TBC or future stage</b>	R20/20371/F Demolition of existing buildings and development of 2 new retail units with associated parking and car servicing. Approved 24/04/18
BH27	Corner of the junction of Droopda Street and Windmill Street	Office, commercial use	Not developed	Nothing applicable
BH27	Corner junction adjacent to High St	Flexi, restaurant, commercial use	Not developed	R20/20530/F Direct linkage structure with apartments above and access to footpath and junction. 12 apartments and parking and a 2 storey town house to rear. Pending
BH27	Gap Site adjacent to Droopda Street	Mixed retail	Not developed	R2007/1091/F 2 Replacement retail units and 4 apartments. Approved
BH27	Harmony Road	Food, office, residential use	Not developed	Nothing applicable

Other DO Sites see map in Section 3, Part 3.

## Newcastle

- 4.31 The town centre boundary (see Appendix 3, Part 6) extends in a linear form from Railway Street and Donard Street at its northern limit, along the full extent of both Main Street and Central Promenade to the northern side of the Bryanston Road. Main Street runs parallel to the seafront separating the promenade from the main residential area to the west of the town centre.
- 4.32 Newcastle's retail area is dispersed along Main Street into two pockets of independent shops and commercial uses. A primary retail core is drawn to consolidate these areas considered to be the core areas of retail activity.
- 4.33 In addition the plan contains a policy on Amusement Arcades. Amusement Arcades are a facilities recreational and commercial use often found in established seaside resorts, such as Newcastle. They can interrupt the cohesion of the retail frontage particularly if dispersed along the street frontage. In Newcastle's case Amusement Arcades have clustered along the central promenade, accordingly the plan has sought to retain this focus through the designation of an area reserved for Amusement Arcades. This area extends south from the Shimna River along the Central Promenade.
- 4.34 As previously indicated the plan seeks to protect town centre housing through restricting the change of use in certain areas. Within the Newcastle town centre Valencia Place and Donard Place provide an opportunity to contribute to the variety and vitality of life in the town centre and the plan seeks to restrict the spread of commercial uses into these housing areas.
- 4.35 Within Newcastle town centre 11 Development Opportunity Sites are identified. These opportunity sites are pedestrian linkages and offer the opportunity for continued access to the seafront and Valencia Ave (see Table 3).

Table 3: Newcastle Development Opportunity Sites

Plan Ref	Location
NE 01	Between Donard Road, Main Street
NE 05	Donard Place
NE 25	Adjacent to Newcastle Promenade on Causeway
NE 29	Swavy Lane
NE 35	Between 88 & 90 Main Street
NE 36	South Wood
NE 39	Between 119 & 115 Main Street
NE 40	Castle Place
NE 20	Post Office Lane
NE 38	Causeway Place

(Ref: 1308-2016-0000-0000-0000-0000-0000-0000-0000-0000)

## 5.0 Town Centre Masterplans and Village Plans

- 5.1 Whilst the Development Plans provide the statutory planning framework for land use proposals, Town Centre Masterplans, which were commissioned by the Department for Social Development (DSD) in partnership with the former District Councils, are non-statutory documents which focus on regeneration initiatives and public realm improvements in town centres. Town Centre Masterplans set out a vision for a particular town centre and identify key proposals for realising that vision over a set period of time. Newry has a City Centre Masterplan, the South East Coast Masterplan covers Waterfront, Killeel and Newcastle, and Downpatrick and Ballynahinch both have masterplans. In addition Village Plans for a number of settlements including Crossmaglen and Newrytownhamilton were commissioned by Newry and Mourne District Council under sponsorship of DARD and the EU Agricultural Fund.

### Newry City Centre Masterplan

- 5.2 The Newry City Centre Masterplan (October 2011) sets out the blueprint to inform regeneration and development decisions relating to Newry City over a 10-15 year period and is informed by a detailed information gathering process and analysis. Rather than a prescriptive blueprint, the masterplan establishes key principles and identifies projects for seven key areas of the city centre.

In terms of physical attributes the masterplan identifies Newry's own watercourses (the Cleryve River and Newry Canal) as a key feature of the city centre. Flowing side by side through the length of the city centre they provide a strong visual link to the city's history, a natural habitat in a central location and a special focal point setting Newry apart from most urban centres.

- 5.3 The Masterplan sets out 6 development principles:

- protect and enhance historic buildings and landmarks;
- introduce a sustainable transport hierarchy;
- develop a network of streets not roads;
- ensure frontage onto Good Quality Open Space;
- support and strengthen communities; and
- animate Newry through appropriate Mixed Use Development.

- 5.4 Masterplan proposals are made for seven key areas of the city centre:

- **Waterfront** – creating a world class, city centre. This entails a comprehensive waterfront project extending from Sugar Island to Albert Basin.
- **Sugar Island** – Nurturing a unique, creative quarter. Proposals include flagship extension to the lower mall, new public square and modernised and extended arts centre as part of a mixed use scheme.
- **Four Parks** – Establishing a new network of city parks. Improved linkages and coordinated enhancement to Heather, Kilmory and the

Rocks Park together with new public park in grounds of former Abbey Grammar School.

- **Hill Street and Abbey Way** – Regenerating Newry's primary streets. Hill St proposals include Public realm works; redevelopment to provide modern retail space and shop frontage improvements. Relocation of Health & Soda Services Clinic and long term goal of returning Abbey Street from dual carriageway to a city centre street.
- **Monaghan & Upper Edward Street** – Restoring key areas through health and education. Recreation of Monaghan Row Council office and extension to Daisy Hill hospital. Comprehensive redevelopment of land north of Upper Edward St to include new health village and leisure facilities.
- **Buttercrane & the Quays** – Integrating city centre retail. Improved pedestrian linkage with rest of town centre together with creation of a new waterfront.
- **Albert Basin** – Establishing a flagship city quarter. An opportunity to regenerate the 6 hectare waterfront site on Middlebank Island and reconnect with the rest of the city.

### South East Coast Masterplan

5.5 The South East Coast Masterplan (January 2013) provides guidance on the location and form of development in the town centres of Newcastle, Killybegs and Warrington over a 20 year period. It sets out a range of proposals showing how and where development opportunities might be realised:

5.6 Whilst the Masterplan focuses on improving the local economy through tourism it acknowledges that retail remains the foundation of any town centre. It indicates that a number of initiatives could be followed by all three towns which would not only improve their retail offering for local residents but put them in a stronger position to capture spend from tourists visiting the area:

- Shop front improvement schemes
- Retail performance programmes
- Development of vacant or derelict sites
- Introduction of town centre markets
- Urban Development Grants
- Vacant unit animation schemes
- Purple flag programme
- Car parking strategy

5.7 The masterplan suggests that Newcastle would benefit from the redevelopment of Railway Street to provide fit for purpose retail units on ground floor with office or residential accommodation above. Creation of a new public square in Railway Street would also enhance this gateway location into the town centre. The Newcastle Centre and Tropicana are also identified as opportunity sites where redevelopment could entail retail and craft village together with a new

hotel, Islands Park could be redeveloped into a new outdoor leisure development with the potential to draw tourists into the heart of the town.

- 5.8 Killybegs would benefit from the development of a riverside park and walkway stretching from the town square to the harbour. Highlighted in the previous paper on economic development, this has the potential to attract tourists into the town centre through a linkage of the harbour and retailing centre. This area has the potential to support a new indoor leisure centre which would again draw people into the centre of the town.
- 5.9 In Warrenpoint the masterplan proposes a redesign of the town square. The square has the potential to be a high quality pedestrian friendly space, acting as a hub of activity in the town. The masterplan suggests that improved use and design of this space could encourage more restaurants and cafes to open with a knock on effect on the main shopping street.

### Downpatrick Masterplan

- 5.10 The Downpatrick Masterplan (July 2010) sets out a vision for the future development of Downpatrick up to 2030. The vision seeks to capitalise upon the town's rich heritage, while ensuring appropriate new development can take place to enhance the town's economy and make it better equipped to compete with other areas.
- 5.11 The information gathered for this study was wide ranging and helped to establish the strengths and weaknesses associated with retailing in the town centre. In addition the analysis identified key opportunities for regeneration and development.
- 5.12 The historic buildings in Downpatrick are generally three storeys in height, feature pitched roofs, rendered stone and have a consistent rhythm along the building line. These architectural elements and streetscape contribute to a strong sense of character in Downpatrick. Throughout the town centre however there are a number of examples of lesser quality architecture, including a number of single storey buildings along market street. The tight street pattern which has evolved is fundamental to the town's character but also contributes to the town centre congestion.
- 5.13 A survey of the retail property market highlighted a number of key issues:
- Importance of retaining the historic buildings and streetscape benefits due to the associated unique charm and history;
  - Limited retail offer;
  - Significant retail leakage to Ballynahinch, Newcastle, Belfast, Lisburn and Banbridge for convenience goods;
  - Inadequate restaurant provision;
  - Lack of evening economy;

- Limited office market, highly dependent on the public sector;
- Relatively low employment in financial and business services sector; and
- Negative impact of traffic congestion.

5.14 The masterplan suggests that tourism and visitor activity should be the primary driver for rejuvenation of the town centre, providing a stimulus to business development. It points to a number of development opportunities within Downpatrick which require particular attention to enhance the environmental quality. These include Courney Square, The Grove and the area of car parking behind The Grove Shopping Centre.

5.15 The masterplan identifies a range of projects within four distinct areas. Two of these areas focus on streets that make up the town centre and primary retail core. These are the Church Street, English Street, Fruit Green area and Market Street area. The masterplan contains a number of proposals which seek to enhance and interlink these areas:

- **Laneways, Arcades and Reopened Entries** – one of the objectives of the masterplan is to enhance the historic fabric through the development of new laneways, arcades and reopened entries.
- **English Street Public Realm** – opportunity to enhance setting of historic buildings.
- **St Patrick's Square** – building on existing public realm improvements. The masterplan proposes a second phase to double the size of the square.
- **Market Street Renewal** – renovation necessary to modernise retail units whilst retaining the historic integrity. Replace single storey units with two and three storey buildings.
- **The Grove Retail Quarter** – Comprehensive redevelopment of this area to create a retail-led, mixed use quarter. Opportunity to enhance and expand retail offering.
- **New Link Road** – through the site of the PSNI station between Irish Street and St Patrick's Ave. Part of Transport NI's traffic study in 2015, seen as medium term proposal (3-10yrs).
- **Frontage Improvement Scheme** – focused primarily Market Street but also including sections of Irish Street, Church Street, English Street, Scotch Street, and St Patrick's Ave.
- **Living over the Shops** – these schemes encourage the conversion of vacant and derelict upper floors of retail and commercial units.

5.16 Since publication of the Masterplan a town centre public realm scheme has been introduced.

## Ballynahinch Town Centre Masterplan

5.17 The Ballynahinch Masterplan (Oct 2014) provides a platform upon residents and traders alike can develop a shared vision for the future development of the town over a fifteen to twenty year period. It identifies a series of strategic objectives for the town, and in turn outlines proposals to bring about the realisation of these objectives.

5.18 A number of the Masterplan proposals focus on improving landscape quality, improving accessibility, improved signage and environmental improvements and include the following:

- **River Pathway** – The masterplan proposes the extension of the riverside pathway along the entire length of the Ballynahinch River this.
- **Town Centre Frontage Improvements** – Targeted Frontage improvement scheme focused on Market Square.
- **Town Centre Living** – The masterplan suggests that all new town centre development projects should include an element of residential use. Efforts should also be made to convert upper floors of existing buildings re-establishing the town centre tradition of ‘living over the shops’.
- **Laneways and Archways** – Enhance movement throughout town centre through linking key streets, car parks, open spaces and residential neighbourhoods more effectively;
- **Conservation Area** – In order to safeguard and promote the existing quality streetscape, the masterplan proposes that the merits of introducing a town centre conservation area be explored.

5.19 The urban form of Ballynahinch town centre, while generally orientated around Market Square is made up of three main streets, namely High Street, Main Street and Windmill Street. The cohesive and attractive street layout is compromised by a number of prominent backland areas within the built form. Used largely for off street car parking, these large backland areas, coupled with closed pedestrian access routes, significantly undermine the built environment and quality of pedestrian connectivity throughout the town centre.

5.20 The development of opportunity sites will be a key driver in enhancing Ballynahinch town centre. The low quality backlands identified in the masterplan are reflective of a number of the opportunity sites designated in the Ards and Down Area Plan and identified in Table 7 of this paper.

5.21 The masterplan proposes reconfiguration of the Windmill Street car park, including new development to provide active frontage over the car park and strengthen the building line along Windmill Street. The masterplan also proposes a new street and linear park on the backlands between High Street and the River. Under the statutory ADAP it is acknowledged that this area is under-utilised and represents a genuine resource within the town centre.



however land assembly is seen as a significant hurdle to any development proposals.

5.22 To help inform the Masterplan a retail capacity study was undertaken, this indicated that there was limited capacity in expenditure terms and retail would continue to be influenced by competition from nearby larger centres. Nevertheless there was high demand for more and better convenience shopping provision within the town. Referencing a CBRE Property and Market Context and Analysis Report<sup>11</sup> the study concluded that an opportunity existed to provide a large food store in the town centre to prevent food leakage to large supermarkets outside the town.

5.23 A town centre health check was carried out and identified issues which were impacting from the vitality and viability of the town centre. Both town centre user and business surveys highlighted traffic congestion particularly at peak times such as school hours being a problem on the town centre, and an issue which affected both the quality of life and commercial growth of the town. Limited cycle provision and linkages to green spaces and the river.

### **Newtownhamilton Renewal and Development Plan**

5.24 The Newtownhamilton Renewal and Development Plan (July 2012) is a Village Plan produced under the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme. This proposes a range of initiatives and a number of these are particularly relevant to the town centre. Traffic management through the town was seen as a significant issue. The combination of a large volume of through traffic, narrowness of the street and on street parking all contributed to traffic congestion. The plan suggested that a transport study should be undertaken considering:

- One way system;
- Provision of accessible car parking as an alternative to on street parking;
- Potential traffic calming measures in Armagh Street, Dundax Street and Dungormley Estate.

5.25 The town contains a number of derelict units and sites which represent development opportunity sites.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cbre.com/ireland/sectors/retail/retail-capacity-study>

### Crossmaglen Cluster – Village Renewal and Development Plan

5.26 The Crossmaglen Renewal and Development Plan (September 2012) is a Village Plan produced under the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme with the aim of creating a long term vision for the village and surrounding area.

5.27 The plan built on the earlier Strategic Development Framework (March 2004) vision for Crossmaglen as a *‘Vibrant Tourist Service Centre’* and a number of proposals were suggested that could help deliver on this vision.

- Community Centre Extension;
- Creating a high quality shared space – Cardinal O’Flaithigh Square;
- Redevelopment of underused and vacant units; and
- Development of Community Enterprise.

5.28 The community centre was identified as a key building in the square and the development of this would provide a greater visual and community focus.

5.29 The square was identified as a major asset which was not being used to its full potential. The plan indicated that the square would benefit from an environmental improvement scheme. Redevelopment of the square could enable festivals and events to be held bringing increased footfall to the surrounding retail and service uses. A review of parking and provision of children’s play area was also proposed. A vibrant, attractive square would act as an economic driver for the rest of the town, bringing in visitors and investors.

5.30 In the short term the plan proposed that the appearance of derelict and run-down buildings could be improved through painting and initiatives which animated vacant and derelict shop units. Development of a street frontage improvement scheme would be pursued and pop up shops encouraged through rate relief.

5.31 The development of an enterprise centre which would support local business creation and development was seen as key to the future development and growth of the town centre.

## 6.0 Town Centre Studies

- 6.1 Regional Planning Policy requires Councils in preparing a Local Development Plan to undertake both an assessment of the health of town centres and a retail capacity study<sup>11</sup>. A town centre health check is essentially a qualitative assessment in that it looks at the attractiveness, accessibility and amenity of the town centre. Although no single indicator can effectively measure the health of a town centre, the use of a series of them can provide a view of performance and offer a framework for assessing vitality and viability (see Appendix 1). Vitality is a measure of how busy a centre is and viability is a measure of its capacity to attract on-going investment for maintenance, improvement and adaption to changing needs.
- 6.2 A retail capacity study is a quantitative assessment of the need for additional retail floorpace over the plan period. This will include catchment area definition, calculating total expenditure and turnover of town-centres and comparison goods, and projection of future needs.
- 6.3 As a health check or retail capacity study has not yet been carried out to inform this section of the paper, we have instead relied on the findings from a review of existing town centres in Northern Ireland contained in the 2014 GL Hearn report, the 2014 Ballynahinch Retail Capacity study produced by Strategic Planning<sup>12</sup> and the South East Coast Retail Capacity Study published by Rodrick MacLean Associates<sup>13</sup>.
- 6.4 It should be noted that where there is reference to a particular retailer, this is included to give an indication of the retail variety within a city/town centre at the time the health check was undertaken. This represents a snapshot in time and does not take account of any changes in retail provision that may have taken place in the intervening period.
- 6.5 Vacancy rates are considered as an important measure of how healthy a town centre is. According to the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium (2015), town centre vacancy rates have fallen in NI from 20% in 2011 to 16.3% in January 2015. Despite this welcome fall in the NI vacancy rates, they still remain significantly higher than the UK average (10.4%).

<sup>11</sup> Strategic Planning Policy Statement – Town Centres and Retailing, paragraph 6.274

<sup>12</sup> In June 2014 Strategic Planning was commissioned by the Local Growth Company in behalf of the Department for Social Development (DSO) to prepare a Retail Capacity Study for Ballynahinch.

<sup>13</sup> In July 2014, Strategic Planning worked with Newry & Downpatrick Urban Forum and the South East White to produce a Metropolitan Centre for the South East Coast. A key component of this was the Retail Capacity Study prepared by and consulted to Rodrick MacLean Associates Ltd.

## Newry

- 6.6 The GL Hearn report shows that the total floorspace within the city centre is estimated to be 132,710 sq. metres.
- 6.7 Newry has a diverse selection of national and international multiples, independent and more traditional traders spread throughout the City. There are four distinct and differing shopping areas within and outside the City Centre. These are as follows:
1. Hill Street
  2. Butterane Shopping Centre
  3. The Quays Shopping Centre
  4. Old Brewery Retail Park
- 6.8 A number of smaller scale local independent retailers are located in the Sugar Island, Canal Street and Minaghlan Street Areas located within the town centre. Another popular shopping location, the Danelly Retail Park, is located outside the town centre adjacent to the Newry bypass. There are also a number of neighbourhood retailing centres/facilities throughout the city.
- 6.9 Hill Street is situated at the traditional heart of the City Centre, beside the Cathedral and is the City's main shopping and commercial area. The entire street is located within the Newry Conservation Area and the quality of the build environment is high with many fine granite buildings. Some UK national multiple retailers (such as Boots) are located on Hill Street however most are located in the Quays and Butterane Shopping Centres. Local independent retailers currently occupy the majority of units on Hill Street. Also present on Hill Street are the major banks, building societies and community services. At the time of the GL Hearn health check surveys in 2013 there were only two vacant properties along the entire length of Hill Street.
- 6.10 The Quays provides a modern shopping and leisure/entertainment complex, situated along the Albert Basin. The centre is anchored by a Debenhams department store, Sainsbury superstore and Omplex cinema. The Complex consists of the main shopping centre and a refurbished Drumalane Mill which accommodates three 185 sq. m units of specialist retail floorspace. Drumalane Mill also contains four 557 sq. m office suites. The Drumalane Mill Complex has specialist retailers Usher Weavers, Place of Dress and Café Lanza at ground floor level while HMV Chartered Accountants and Parker Green occupy part of the office complex the rest of which is available to let. The third element to The Quays is retail warehousing units which accommodates O'Halla Sports, Springsteens Restaurant and Toyzone. The main shopping mall of the Quays a number of UK multiples including Boots, HMV, Monsoon, Early Learning Centre, Cliford Cards, Index, Next, Thomas Cook, Waterstones and Sports Direct. As well as offering high quality shopping facilities the Centre also has a ten screen Omplex Cinema and food outlets. At the time of the health check survey there was one vacant unit which the centre manager stated was

currently under offer. No information was publicly available on footfall through the centre. In July 2013 planning approval was given for an additional 7,794 sq. m of retail floorspace and 1091 sq. m of restaurant space on the site of the former petrol filling station and adjacent parking bays. This is currently under construction. Parking provision within the complex has reduced from 1204 to 1038 as a consequence of this development.

- 6.11 Moreaghan Street is the more traditional commercial part of the City, home to a number of family run and independent businesses. The Old Creamery Retail Park is located between Moreaghan Street and Merchants Quay on the site of the Old Corn Market. Tenants include Dunnes Stores, Argos, Peacocks, Poundstretcher and TK Max. At the time of the GL Hearn health check survey all the units were occupied.
- 6.12 The Sugar Island / Canal Street Area is a secondary retailing area located within the city centre. This area contains many small independent retailers as well as a number of public houses, fast food takeaway outlets and taxi offices. The Sugar Island / Canal Street area lies within the Newry Conservation Area. Also located within the city centre is the Newry Variety Market. For over 100 years the market has operated on Thursdays and Saturdays from a site located at the southern end of Hill Street.
- 6.13 The main out of centre development serving Newry is Donnelly Retail Park which is located around 1.5 miles north of the city centre at the intersection of the A28 and the A1. The retail park is anchored by B&Q along with Next Home, Harford's, Mothercare, Harveys, Currys and Smiths Toys. There is also a Lidl foodstore, a McDonalds drive thru restaurant and a Costa Coffee.
- 6.14 A Tesco Extra Superstore (circa 9,000 sq. m floorspace) opened in 2014 and is located just outside the city centre boundary on the Downshire Road.
- 6.15 Comparison goods retailing predominates within the aforementioned covered shopping centres which house the majority of Newry's multiple retailers. Comparison goods shopping comprises approximately 35% of the city centre total retail and service provision.
- 6.16 The 2013 survey from the GL Hearn found 75 vacant units equivalent to a vacancy rate of 14%, this is slightly below the 15% rate recorded in 2012 Experian Coed Survey. In terms of distribution the survey found that most of the vacant units were located throughout the city centre however the greatest concentrations of vacant premises within the town centre are on St Mary's Street and Hill Street. Both of these areas are very much seen as secondary shopping areas within the city.
- 6.17 Car parking provision with Newry City Centre is well supplied with between 1,300 and 1,400 spaces available in dedicated off-street car parks spread throughout the city centre. On street limited time period car parking (440 spaces) is available throughout the city centre. There are also parking facilities

at the Quays and Hurricane Centre, where over 2,000 private parking spaces are available.

- 6.18 The quality of the town centre is of great importance and can increase business confidence, foster public pride, and enhance local identity. A conservation area extends over and beyond the commercial area and includes a number of listed buildings. The public realm has been enhanced in recent years through projects jointly funded by the Department for Social Development and the Council. A £1.5 million Newry linkages public realm scheme was completed in 2014 along Bullerquane and Merchant's Quay. This saw the enhancement and rejuvenation of Newry's canal through the replacement of the existing canal boundary wall with a new decorative maritime railing and the removal of car parking spaces on the canal-side to facilitate the provision of a new wider granite paved/kerbed pathway. New decorative street lighting, street furniture, tree planting and public art was also introduced. A further £860,000 scheme is currently proposed for the city centre, the Newry Cathedral Corridor Scheme will focus on Margaret Street, Marcus Street, Upper and Lower Hill Street and will include the installation of new kerbing and paving, street furniture and lighting.

### Warrenpoint

- 6.19 In a retail capacity study produced by consultants for the South East Coast Masterplan in 2011 Warrenpoint had 5,300 sq.m (gross) of retail floorspace. In terms of convenience goods Warrenpoint has a limited offer, particularly as there is no mainstream supermarket. The study also noted that the town had a lower level of comparison floorspace when compared to the other towns in the study (Newcastle and Killeel).
- 6.20 The study highlighted that only 23% of shoppers surveyed in the primary catchment did their convenience shopping in Warrenpoint and stated that there was therefore the potential for up to 70% of the convenience shopping to be retained by new retail development in Warrenpoint. However given the proximity of Warrenpoint to Newry the study concluded that supporting an extra 1,400 sq. m of convenience floorspace by 2021 might be difficult.
- 6.21 The main focus for commercial development in Warrenpoint is along Church Street and around the Square, extending a small distance along Duke Street. The area is vibrant, lively and busy, with a wide variety of shops that are mainly independently owned with the exception of the grocery shops. These include a Spar and Nisa shops, two Gordon's Chemists and an Extra Vision.
- 6.22 At the time of the retail survey there was little vacancy in the retail area with only two vacant premises in Church Street and four on Duke Street. There were no vacancies around the Square however there were some vacant residences along the Seafont on Osbourne Promenade. The main industrial areas in Warrenpoint fall outside of the town centre boundary, these are The Docks area, and Warrenpoint Industrial Estate on the Newry Road.

6.23 The quality of a town centre in enhancing local identity has been acknowledged in Warrenpoint through the designation of an Area of Townscape Character. The ATC designation identifies the Square as a key space with many buildings retaining their historic architectural detailing. The Dock, Dock Street, Duke Street and parts of Charlotte Street are also seen as integral to the quality of the square. A public realm scheme centred on Church Street, Charlotte Street, Town Square, Newry Road and Dock Street was scheduled to commence in October 2015. This will introduce new kerbing and paving, new street lighting and furniture as well as bespoke signage and landscaping.

6.24 The main area of car parking in Warrenpoint is the Square with provision for 135 vehicles with a further 139 spaces in car parks located at East St, Kings Lane, Mary St and Newry Street.

### Kilkeel

6.25 In a retail capacity study produced in 2011 by consultants for the South East Coast Masterplan Kilkeel had 3,500 sq. m (gross) of retail floorspace. Convenience floorspace accounted for 3,816 sq. m (gross) of which Asda made up 2,158 sq. m (gross). In the Kilkeel primary catchment (see map 1, zone 2) 77% of those surveyed did their convenience shopping in the catchment with 75% using the town itself. The study concluded that the potential to attract new trade from beyond the primary catchment was limited however the forecast growth in retained expenditure suggested that up to an additional 1,400 sq. m floorspace could be supported by 2021.

6.26 The main focus for commercial development in Kilkeel is centred on Greencastle Street, The Square, Bridge Street, part of Newcastle Street and Newry Street. There are a wide variety of shops that are mainly independent. At one end of Newcastle Street lies the town's main convenience retailing outlet, the Asda supermarket, along with other larger retailers such as Sordan's Currier. Kilkeel also acts as a service centre for the local area as well as providing social and community facilities.

6.27 The retail survey undertaken in 2011 indicated a relatively high level of vacancy and dereliction in the town centre, with buildings in prominent locations lying empty.

6.28 The main car parks in Kilkeel are located in Ben Cronn Place, Bridge St, Harbour Road and Newry St with spaces for 159 vehicles.

Map 1: Primary Catchment Area for Newcastle (zone 1), Kilkeel (zone 2) and Womersley (zone 3).



Source: East Belfast Kilkeel Womersley Forth Council Study December 2011.

### Downpatrick

- 6.29 The GL Hearn report shows that the total floorspace within the town centre is estimated to be 61,193 sq. metres. The retail and central area commercial core of Downpatrick is located on Market Street, St Patrick's Avenue, English Street, Irish Street, Scotch Street and Church Street.
- 6.30 The main frontstore within the town centre is Lidl occupying a frontage site in Market Street. Other food shopping is provided by independent retailers and the town centre has a range of butchers, a greengrocer, a baker, health food store, off-licences and CTNs. The GL Hearn survey identified 17 convenience outlets within the town centre which comprised 7% of retail outlets.
- 6.31 There is a mix of comparison goods shopping and the town centre has a range of clothing and footwear stores including national multiples Top Shop / Dorothy Perkins, DYS and Heptons. The Grove Shopping Centre is located on Market Street is anchored by B & M Bargains. Other multiples located in the town include Boots, Superdrug and Gordons Chemists.
- 6.32 The GL Hearn survey in 2011 found 57 vacant units equivalent to a vacancy rate of 14%. Downpatrick town centre has off street car parking provision in the region of 450 spaces with additional provision in the Down Retail Park.
- 6.33 Close to but outside the town centre is the Down Retail Park on the Ballydugan Road. This is anchored by an Asda superstore (4,553 sq. m gross floorspace) and includes a further seven retail warehouses occupied by Harry



Cerry, Peacocks, Poundstretcher, Newlook, Argos and Halfords. The retail park also has a McDonalds fast food outlet and an Asda petrol filling station.

- 6.34 A £3.2M Public Realm and Environmental Improvement (PREI) scheme was completed in 2011. This consisted of replacement paving and new street furniture throughout the town centre. Improved open space around St Patrick's Square, installation of public art in Scoton St and St Patrick's Square together with improved street lighting. This has enhanced the quality of the town centre environment.

### **Ballynahinch**

- 6.35 Place Solutions<sup>16</sup> within their Town Centre Health Check Report (April 2014) claim that Ballynahinch has a vibrant and mixed town centre with a wide range of shops and services concentrated along Main Street, High Street and Drumont Street. Commercial floorspace was estimated to be 12,749 sq. m (gross) while residential floorspace amounted to 17,631 sq. m (gross). A SuperValu store is centrally located at the important junction of Main Street, Lisburn Street and High Street and this represents the only large convenience store in the town. While there are some national chain stores within the Town such as SuperValu, Iceland, and Lidl, the majority of the shops are smaller family run businesses. Overall there were 6 convenience outlets within the town centre which comprise 7% of outlets.

- 6.36 There are in excess of 400 car parking spaces in Ballynahinch town centre with car parks located in Lisburn St (north and south), Windmill St and Antrim Rd.

- 6.37 The centre however suffers from congestion because of its large volume of through traffic, due mainly to its location on the Belfast to Newcastle road. A bypass is proposed for Ballynahinch to ease traffic congestion. This scheme provides for a single carriageway bypass of Ballynahinch linking the Belfast Road near its junction with the Sainfield Road to the Drumont Road at its junction with the Downpatrick Road. The bypass will cross the Crossgar Road near the old railway bridge and will provide major relief to the town centre.

- 6.38 A £2.1million Public Realm scheme, completed in 2015, has made the town centre a more attractive and pedestrian friendly environment with high quality civic space. In addition a £200,000 revitalisation scheme has supported shop front improvements throughout the town centre.

<sup>16</sup> Place Solutions was commissioned to undertake a Town Centre Health Check with Strategic Planning and Planning Unit to check the status of County Down.

## Newcastle

- 6.39 In a retail capacity study produced in 2011 by consultants for the South East Coast Masterplan Newcastle had 12,400 sq. m (gross) of retail floorspace. Convenience floorspace accounted for 3,450 sq. m (gross) within the town centre. The main food store within Newcastle town centre is Lidl which is housed in the former railway station building. Other food shopping is provided by independent retailers and franchise convenience stores (Centra). Independent foodstores include three butchers, a greengrocer, two bakers, off-licence and health food store and confectionery, and newsagents (CTNs).
- 6.40 The GL Hearn Report notes that in April 2013 Newcastle had 52 comparison goods outlets, equalling in around 30% of the town's overall outlets. Relative to other towns this was considered a low proportion of the comparison offer. Clothing and fashion retailers were present, with a local independent department store (Woolworths of Newcastle) and regional multiple D&B. Other multiple comparison good retailers include Superdrug and Gardens Crucial.
- 6.41 Within Newcastle, the predominant town centre use is retail service comprising over 45% of all outlets. This reflects the town's tourist and leisure role which supports a range of food and beverage offer, hair and beauty salons and financial and professional services.
- 6.42 A Tesco supermarket is located to the north of the town centre at Castlewellan Road. This store has a sales area of approximately 1,485 sq. m (gross).
- 6.43 The GL Hearn survey identified 13 vacant units in 2013, equivalent to a vacancy rate of 7.5%.

## 7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform Members about the nature of the current retail offer in Newry City and the other towns within the Newry, Mourne and Down area, the take up of town centre opportunity sites and vacancy rates. The SPSS requires LDP's to include a Retail Strategy and certain policies and proposals that promote the town centre first for retail and other main town centres uses. In line with this, the new LDP will need to ensure that retail growth remains focused on the main centres. The importance of retail hierarchy is also recognised and retail facilities in the small towns, villages and at a local level can complement the main centres.
- 7.2 A notable development has been the re-evaluation of the commercial rates payable by Land and Property Services (LPS) in April 2015. It is hoped that this may lower the amount payable in key city/town centres areas and make them more affordable to retailers and lessen the vacancy rates in the town centres. This in turn, would also make these town centre locations more attractive than out of centre locations.

- 7.3 Within the existing settlement hierarchy NMD has six smaller local towns: Ballinahinch, Newcastle, Crossmaglen, Killoe, Newtownhamilton and Warrenpoint/Burren. The settlement hierarchy paper presented in September 2015 advised that the settlement hierarchy would be considered further as part of the settlement appraisal work and subsequently explored at workshops with members. The need for additional town centres to be identified will therefore be considered as part of this appraisal work.
- 7.4 While the SPPS states that there should be a town centre first approach for retailing it is worth exploring the role, form and merit of defining district centres, local / neighbourhood centres and village centres. As stated at paragraph 2.4 a local centre has been designated at Fiveways on the Armagh Rd, Newry and at Ballynate in Downpatrick. Neighbourhood Centres are centres within towns which can provide services to meet the daily needs of local residents. Designation of village centres should be considered for larger villages in the new Plan Area (e.g. Saintfield, Killybegh and Castlewellan) as they have the ability to afford protection. Additional designations of local towns, district centres, neighbourhood centres and village centres should be considered in the preparation of the new LDP as to ensure their vitality within the overall hierarchy.
- 7.5 It is considered that further investigation is required to consider the extent of the existing Primary Retail Cores (PRC) the scope for designating them and extending PRCs. Consideration of this will require a thorough examination of retail capacity, full health checks and take up of opportunity sites. It is therefore recommended that a retail capacity study be undertaken primarily to inform actions for public consultation.
- 7.6 A key difference in the past between the masterplans/development strategies and the statutory development Plans has been that the masterplans/development strategies have adopted a more proactive holistic approach to the town centres, whilst the development Plans have been more regulatory in nature. In preparing a new Local Development Plan informed by the Community Plan the opportunity exists to re-define the balance and induce non-land use actions taken by the Council to improve the attractiveness and amenity of the town centres.

## 8.0 Recommendations

8.1 In line with the conclusions from this study it is recommended that:

- That Newry and Downpatrick be reaffirmed as the main city/town centres in the Preferred Options Paper.
- That consideration be given to existing town centre boundaries, retail designations and opportunity sites as they currently exist and consider if they provide an adequate framework up until the new plan is adopted.
- That a retail capacity study be undertaken in the 8 city/town centres to determine their status and establish their capacity to support additional retailing. The options for achieving this, including the commissioning of consultants to undertake this work will be further considered in consultation with Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate which has responsibility for town and city centre management.
- That a comprehensive health check be carried out for the city/town centres. This will be further considered in consultation with Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism Directorate which has responsibility for town and city centre management.
- That an appraisal be carried out to identify whether any settlements should be included in the Preferred Options Paper for reclassification from a village to a town and whether there is sufficient retail offer to warrant a town centre designation. Members input will be sought.
- That candidate locations should be appraised to establish whether any existing shopping facilities elsewhere in the NMD city/towns can be identified in the Preferred Options Paper as district / local / neighbourhood shopping centres.
- That villages should be appraised to establish whether there is sufficient facilities clusters together to warrant identifying as village centres in the Preferred Options Paper.
- That a policy review paper on retail be prepared for inclusion in the Preferred Options Paper. This may include suggested town centre policies and designations to reflect the changing role of town centres from retail led to multi-functional.

## Appendix 1: Town Centre Health Check Indicators & Retail Capacity Studies Best Practice Guidance

### Town Centre Health Check Indicators<sup>17</sup>

1. Existing town centre use, including resident population. Town centre diversity assessed by types of use (by number and floorspace);
2. Vacancy rates: identification of ground floor vacancies;
3. Physical structure and environmental quality – including opportunities, designations and constraints. Assessment looking at dominance of traffic, ease of pedestrian movement and details of any recent investment in public realm. Key opportunities in terms of vacant sites for expansion or clusters of vacancies which might point towards contraction;
4. Footfall: identification of footfall on main shopping streets to assess vitality and identify main attractors within the centres;
5. Retailer representation: reliable retailers present in town and identification of any clear gaps in representation/evidence of retailer requirements in the centres;
6. Attitudes and perceptions;
7. Prime rental values: where available details of rental levels in the prime shopping areas; and
8. Commercial yields: where available, analysis of yield data to provide insight on investor confidence in the centres.

### Retail Capacity Studies – Best Practice Guidance<sup>18</sup>

These studies provide a quantitative assessment of the need for additional retail floorspace within the plan area over the plan period.

They should include the following:

- The catchment area of the settlement being assessed. In order to define the catchment area household surveys should be conducted to establish existing patterns of shopping behaviour and retail consumer expenditure for the settlement. The surveys should quantify shoppers behaviour for the main goods categories: convenience, comparison and bulky comparison.
- Within the catchment area figures for expenditure and turnover should be obtained.
- Details of existing retail floorspace should be obtained for convenience, comparison and bulky comparison goods.
- A calculation of projected retail expenditure over the plan period should be carried out.
- Conversion of resulting expenditure figures into floorspace using appropriate forecast sales densities should be undertaken.

<sup>17</sup> APPS Town Centres & Retailing Policy

<sup>18</sup> APPS Retail, Housing, Town Centres and Commercial Use & Development

## Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

**City/Town Centre:** For the purpose of this paper, city/town refers to city centre or town centres which provide a broad range of facilities and services and which fulfil a function as a focus both for the community and for public transport.

**Convenience goods:** defined broadly as all purchases of food and grocery items (including food, drinks, tobacco, newspapers, magazines, cleaning materials and toilet products).

**Comparison goods:** broadly defined as all purchases on other non-food items that are not classified as being convenience goods.

**Development Opportunity Site:** Development Opportunity Sites are zoned white lands in city and town centres are underutilised or vacant and whose development, which might provide a mix of new uses, could promote the vitality and viability of the town centre, or could enhance the townscape, for example, by closing frontage gaps or replacing unattractive features.

**District Centre:** Groups of shops, separate from the town centre, usually containing at least one food supermarket or superstore and non-retail service uses such as banks, building societies and restaurants.

**Edge-of-Centre:** For the purposes of this report an edge of centre location is one which is, outside the town centre but is easily accessible on foot from the centre. The walking distance does not exceed 250 metres.

**Local Centre:** Small groupings of shops, typically comprising a general grocery store, a sub-post office, occasionally a pharmacy and other small shops of a local nature.

**Out-of-Centre:** A location outside a town centre boundary but within defined development limits.

**Gross Retail FloorSpace:** the total built floor area measured externally which is occupied exclusively by a retailer or retailers, excluding open areas used for the storage, display or sale of goods.

**Nett Retail FloorSpace:** the retail sales floorspace of a store, which is normally defined as the area within the store where members of the public have access or from which sales are made.

**Primary Retail Frontage (PRF):** The PRFs in town centres comprise those parts of the town centre that should be retained in retail use. Proposals for non-retail uses at ground floor level within the primary retail frontages will be resisted in order to retain the focus of retail uses and ensure the maintenance of a compact shopping environment.

**Primary Retail Core (PRC):** PRCs normally contain the traditional concentration of retailing and other town centre functions. The purpose in identifying a PRC is to control the location, scale and nature of new development in each core and to provide conformity with the retail uses.

**Retail Capacity Study:** A technical study to identify, in broad terms, the scope for new retail floorspace.

**Retail Health Check:** Retail Health Checks are produced to monitor the performance, or health, of the main retail centres within the study area.

**Retail Services:** Retail Services comprise, for example, services such as hairdressing, beauty salons, laundrettes, dry cleaners, post office, clothing hire, opticians, travel agents, filling stations and vehicle rental.

**Variance Rates:** This relates to the (%) of vacant units within a defined area (e.g. town centre boundary) and is usually presented by the number of units or by the floorspace (square metres).

**Vitality of Town Centre:** Vitality is a measure of how busy a centre is.

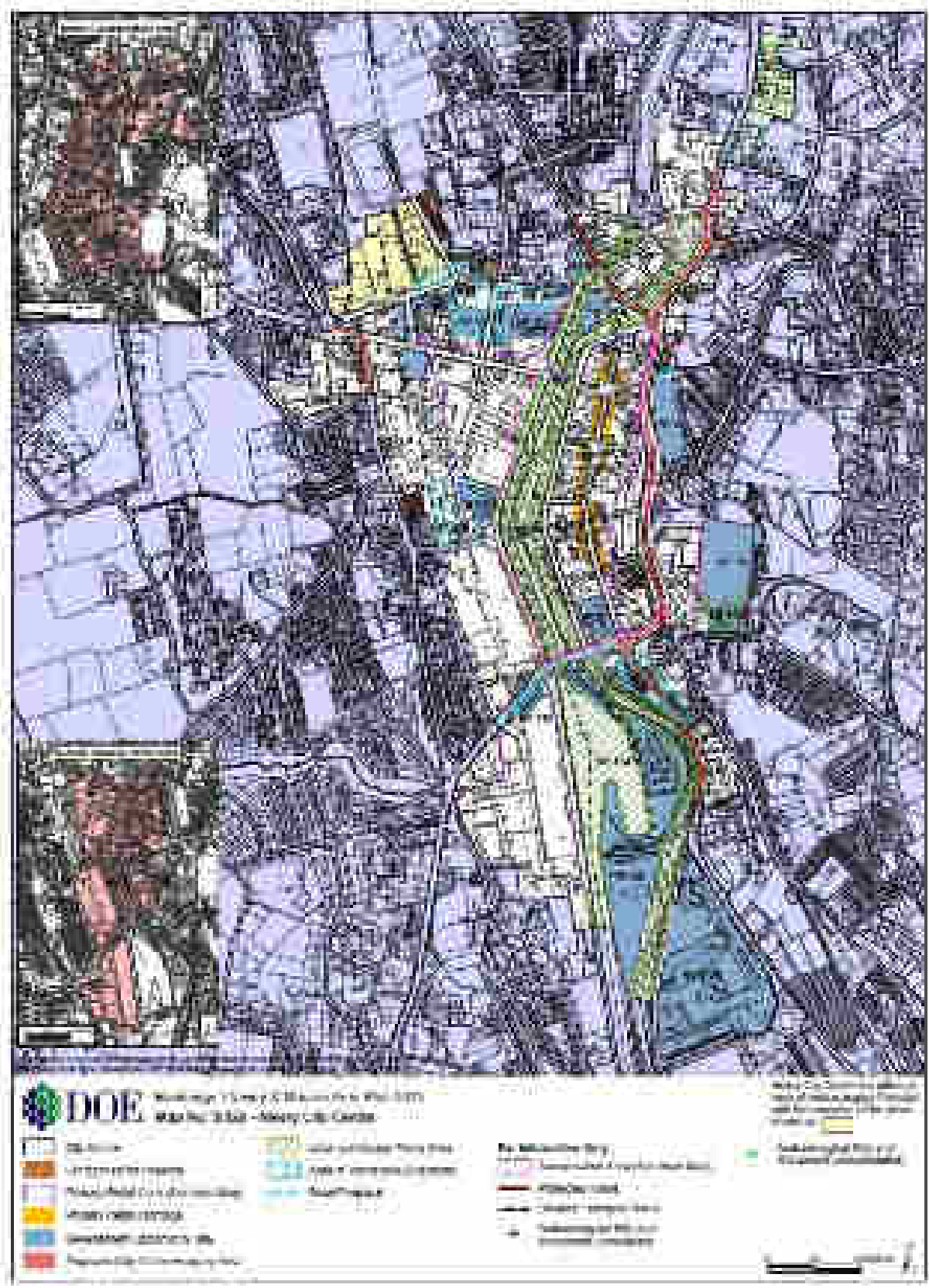
**Viability of a Town Centre:** Viability is a measure of its capacity to attract ongoing investment for maintenance, improvement and adaptation to changing needs.

### Appendix 3: City/Town Centre Boundaries & Opportunity Sites

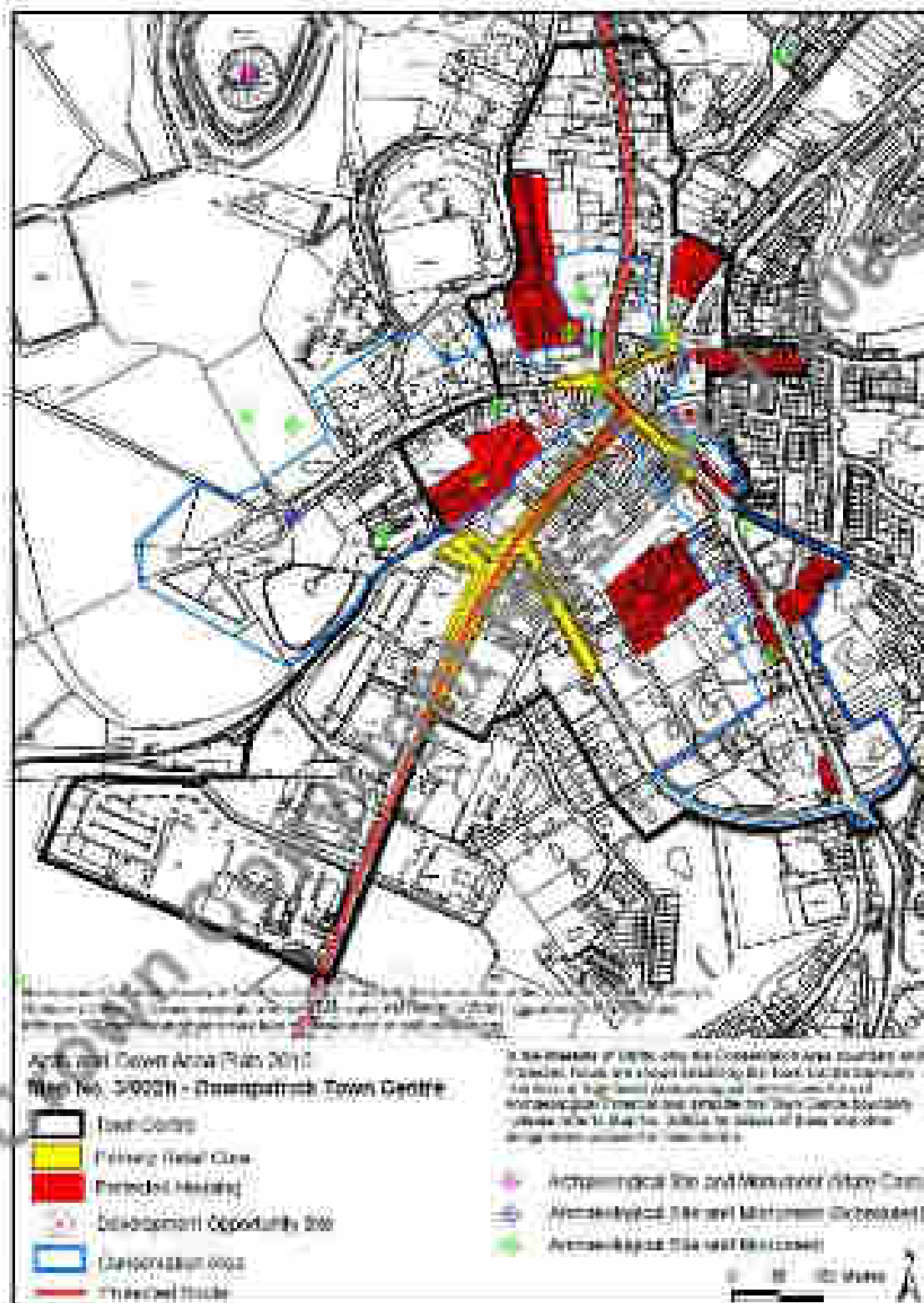
The following maps are extracts from the existing adopted plans for the Newry, Mourne and Down District. These designations will be reviewed as part of the new Local Development Plan process and members input will be sought prior to them being finalised.



### Part 1: Newry City Centre & Opportunity Sites

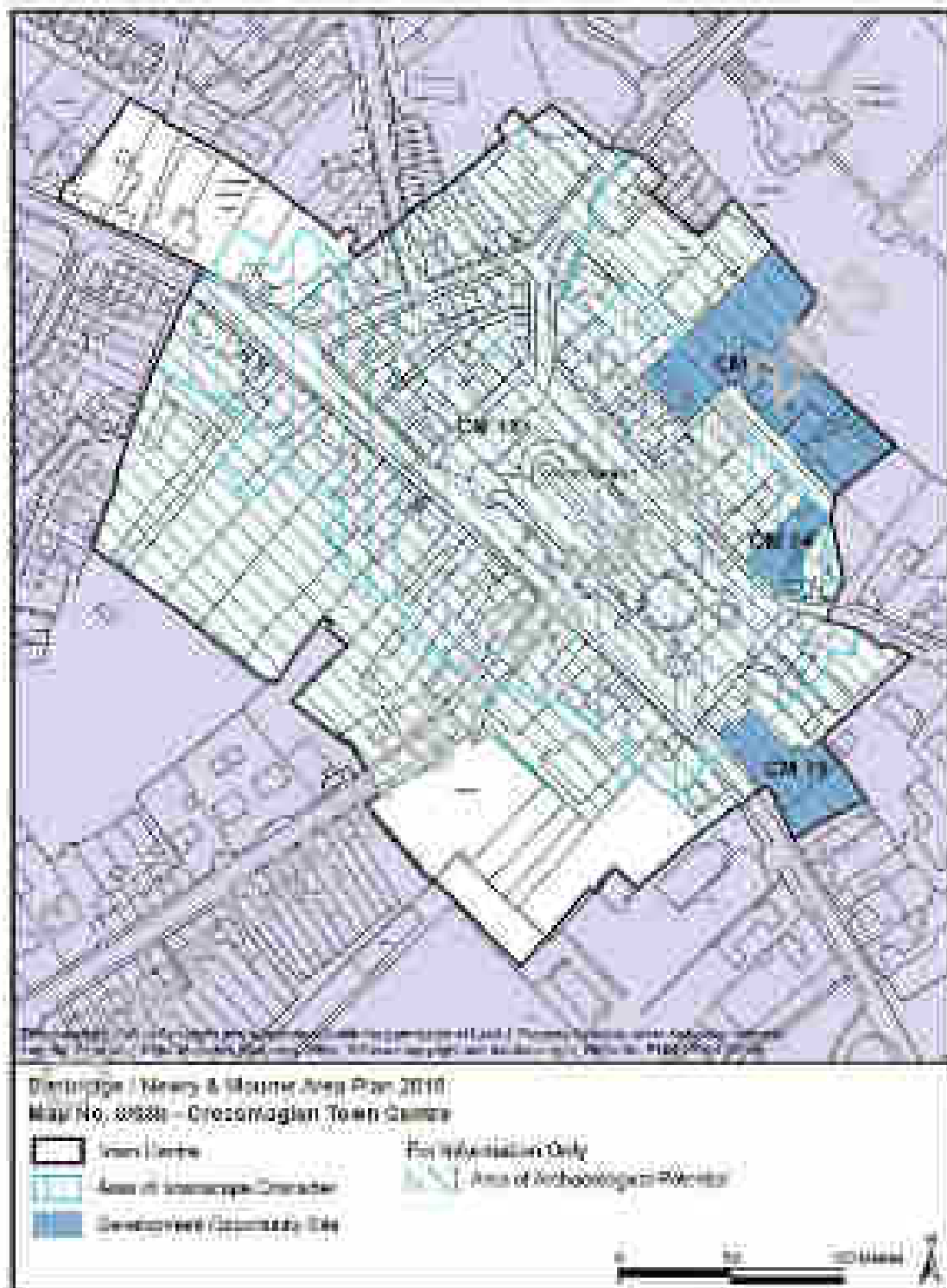


**Part 2: Downpatrick Town Centre & Opportunity Sites**

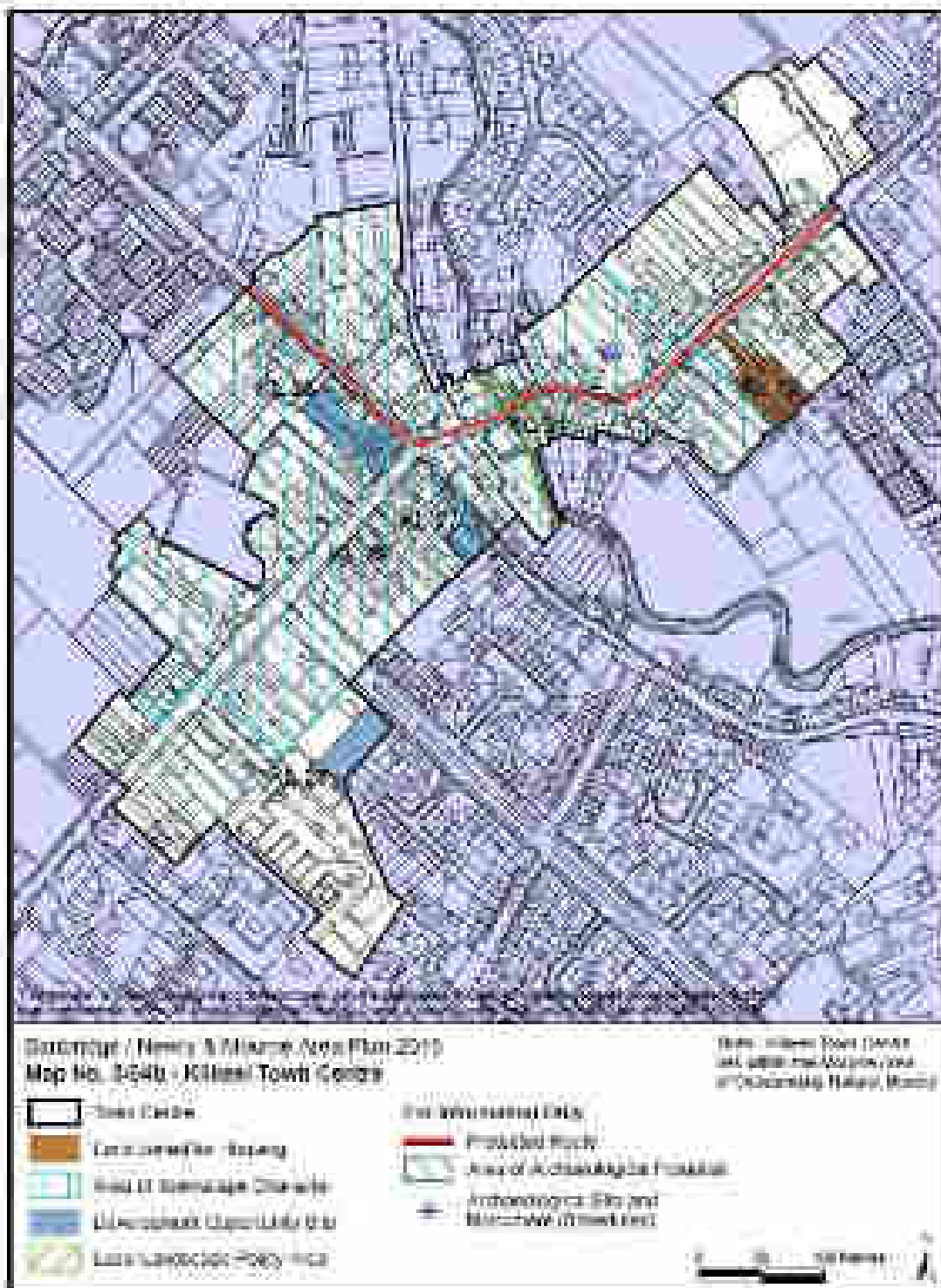




### Part 4: Crossmaglen Town Centre & Opportunity Sites



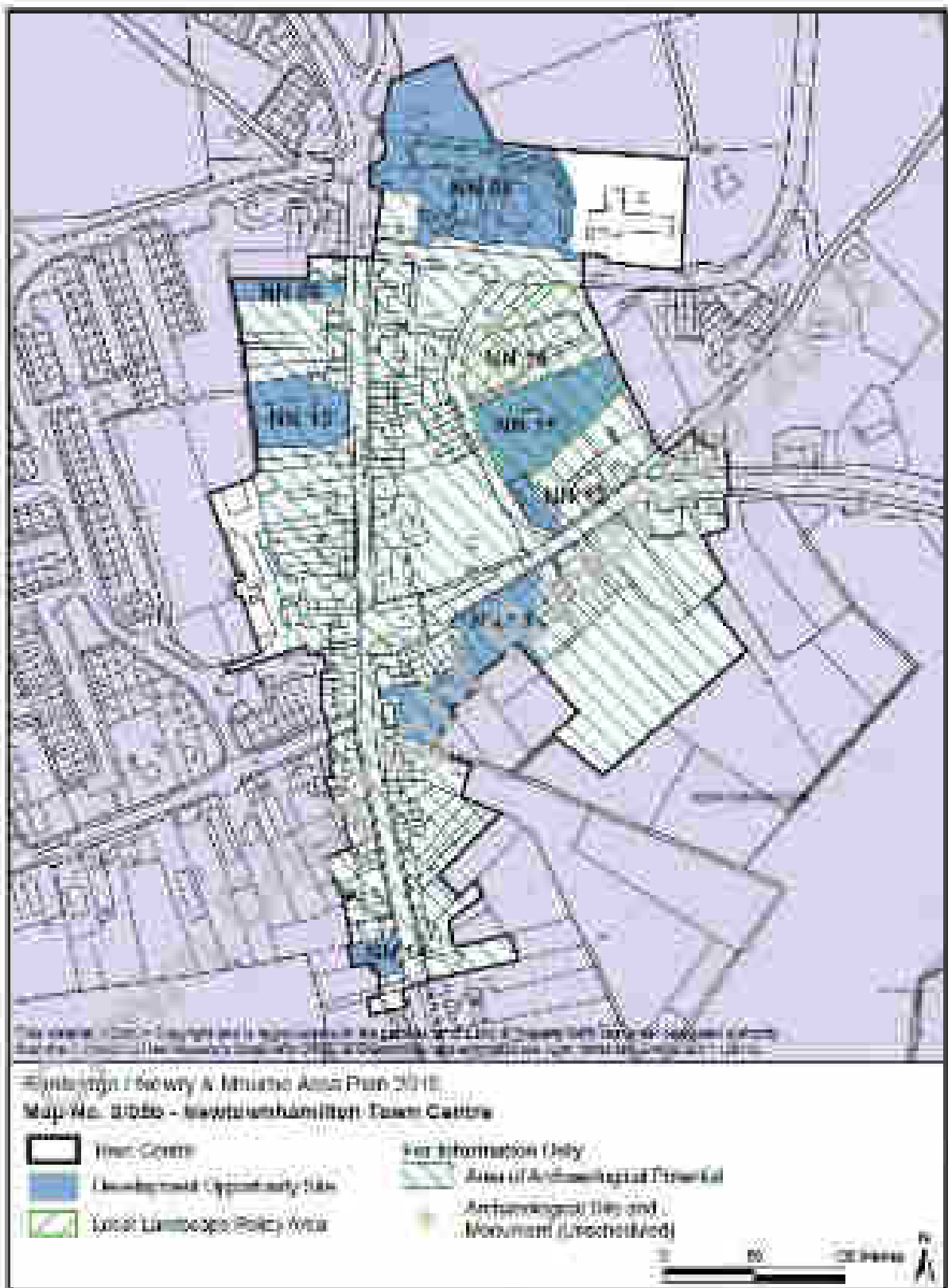
### Part 5: Killeel Town Centre & Opportunity Sites



Part 6: Newcastle Town Centre & Opportunity Sites



Part 7: Newtownhamilton Town Centre & Opportunity Sites







<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>Capital Projects - Progress Report</b>
<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategy, Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Progress Report on Capital Projects</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>12 November 2015</b>
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	<b>Eddie Curtis, Director Strategic Planning and Performance</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Eamon McManus – Capital Projects</b>

### Decisions Required

- Members are asked to note the contents of the Report and to agree further details on to promotion events/additional costs for Victoria Lock Refurbishment Scheme.

#### 10. Purpose & Background

The purpose of the Report is to inform Members on progress to date and key issues on the following Capital Projects:

- (1) Victoria Lock – Refurbishment Scheme
- (2) Newry Canal Greenway Scheme – Phase 1
- (3) Down Leisure Centre
- (4) (a) Newry Leisure Centre Phase 2 including St John Bosco Clubrooms  
(b) Extension of Newry Swimming Pool

#### 10. Key Issues

##### 1.1 Victoria Lock - Refurbishment Scheme - Capital Budget 2015/2016 - £500,000

It is expected that the Budget will be fully spent by end of March 2016 and that additional costs, which could be in the order of £100,000 will arise - to be paid in the financial year Contract No 1, Dredging of Lock Chamber and lowering of Service Pipe. Contract Amount £135,875.

Commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015. Dredging of the Lock Chamber and area around the Sea-lanes was carried out with work substantially completed by Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2015. A 2 week delay with associated extra costs has been claimed by the Contractor. A total of 2,168 tonnes of Draged material has been removed and transported to Aghnagilly for reuse.

Inspection by Divers established that the 150 mm dia Steel Service pipe which carries electrical cables across the lower section of the lock chamber was broken in two places. The damaged pipe has been lifted out of the lock chamber for repair.

It is anticipated that extra costs will arise due to the damage and consequent removal/repair and re-installation of the service pipe.

**Contract No 2: Refurbishment of Sea Gates.** - Contract amount - £243,705.

Commenced on 27th August 2015. The two Sea gates were lifted out for inspection and repair on Sun 23/10/15 & 24 August 2015.

Extra Crane capacity, i.e. a 750 Tonne crane was needed to safely lift out the gates due to substantial additional weight of the gates.

The seaward faces of the sea pipes have been cleaned, shot blasted, inspected, repaired with steel plating where required and painted.

The damaged timbers / joists of both gates were removed and have now been completely replaced with new Greenheart timber.

The gates were lifted and turned on Friday 30 October 2015 in order to carry out similar repairs and to replace the 4 Dowstocks on the canal side faces.

Delays to the Contract have arisen mainly due to unforeseen issues with the Sea Gates and the base pivot pins. The projected completion date is now Friday 11 December 2015.

**Additional costs** - substantial extra costs will arise due to the sea gates being much heavier than expected and extra crane capacity required and removal of mud from within the gates as well as structural. Broken pivot pin at base of the gate and poor condition of nearside pivot pin - requires extensive work by Divers to assist in design and installation of replacement anchor systems. Extra costs still to be fully quantified and agreed but the Contractor has given notice that extra costs for the 2 Contracts could be in the region of £100,000.

The Consultant has also given notice of his intention to claim extra fees due to the extra unforeseen work and delays associated with the Contracts.

Costs will be reported back when further details become available.

**(2) Newry Canal Greenway Scheme -Phase 1.** Capital Budget £78,000 plus £140,000 funding from Community Landfill Tax plus £7,500 grant from NIEA.

It is reported that the Council's Capital Budget of £78,000 will be spent by the end of March 2015 with other funding to be spent during 2015. The grant of £7500 from NIEA has now been received towards fees paid to date.

The Design for Phase 1 is nearly complete, the required Flood Risk Assessment has been completed and submitted to the Planners. Awaiting Planning Permission before seeking tenders for the scheme.

**Tenders for Repairs to the Canal Banks.** Estimated cost £100,000 included in budget above. This scheme has been delayed due to recent staff changes in the Consultant's team but Tender Documents have now been completed and tenders shall be sought in November 2015.

**(3) Down Leisure Centre.**

The re-allocated scheme went out to tender to five firms on the select - stage 17th September 2015. Tender date on Friday 30th November 2015. Work to start on site in January 2016 - subject to successful tender process.

**(4) (a) Newry Leisure Centre -Phase 2 including St John Basin Clubrooms.**

The scheme went out to tender to five firms on the select list on 20th October 2015 with tenders planned to close after 48 days on Monday 30th November 2015.

Work due to start on site in Feb/Feb/Mar 2016 subject to a successful tender process.  
An Application was submitted to O50 by 25/09 September 2015 for £440,000 funding for the St John Bosco Clubrooms and a decision is awaited.

A Planning Application for the St John Bosco Clubrooms and additional offices was submitted on 30th September 2015 and a decision is awaited.

(b) Demolition of Newry Swimming Pool. Budget cost £120,000 inc above.

Tender documents for the demolition of the Swimming Pool by separate contract are being prepared at present by CA.

#### 3.4 Resource Implications

3.4.1 Subject to additional costs will arise in relation to Victoria Lock - Refurbishment Scheme - to be paid in this financial year.

#### 4. Appendices

- 4.1.1 Notes

Chief Executive, County Mayo

19 October 2015

Mr Michael Lisset  
 Director of Active Healthy Communities  
 Newry, Mourne & Down District Council  
 Downshire Park Garra  
 Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road  
 Downpatrick  
 BT30 620

Dear Michael,

Proposed Community Project, Kindle

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the Council's proposed community project on the site of the former Kindle Integrated PS, Ballyvaughan.

The Education Authority has consistently advised that a shared community project in Ballyvaughan is not its highest priority. When considering future investment, officers must prioritise the Authority's very limited capital allocation based on assessed need across the province and in doing so have confirmed that there will be no resource to invest in Kindle for the foreseeable future. However, the Authority's Youth Service remains fully committed to the wider area and still have an Arts Youth Worker employed in Locale.

The Authority is shortly going to commence the process of disposing the asset in line with current CAU guidance. With that in mind, I request that Council considers its intention to purchase the whole site and buildings 'as is' and at a price to be agreed with Land and Property Services as the highest bidder. A response is required by Friday 4 December 2015, after which the asset will be formally disposed via auction.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Sexton  
 Assistant Senior Education Officer  
 Head of Property, Planning and PPP

cc: Mr Gregory Butler, Regional Managing Director  
 NYS Area 4, ASCO Head of Youth Service



100 St John's Street  
 1st Floor, County Wick

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<b>Report to:</b>	Senior Management Team
<b>Date:</b>	20 October 2019
<b>File Ref:</b>	R571524
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Aileen Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Aileen Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)

### Decision Required

Authority to accept a deed of gift of land for a play area and mobile building at Oriel Drive, Tullymore, Downpatrick, in accordance with the terms of R571524.

### 1.0 Purpose and Background

Approximately 12 years ago Jersey Down District Council agreed to a transfer of land from the Housing Executive for the construction of a play area at Oriel Drive, Downpatrick.

The Council subsequently applied for planning permission on behalf of the local Community Forum for the positioning of a mobile building for use as a community facility, located beside the play area.

The Housing Executive contacted in 2011 to advise Local Housing Authority Engineering Staff: documents with what actually lay on the ground.

Upon investigation it appears that the Executive had agreed to make a public area of land to the Council for the play area. When it came to build the play area apparently the topography of the site was not suitable and it was necessary to find an alternative position. Further undertakings that local people had not been happy with the proposed original play area position which was to be situated close to their premises and the land added to pressure to relocate it.

A discussion was held at a local level between Council and Housing Executive representatives and it was agreed to relocate the play area.

While the intention to do the mobile building at this location was not taken by the Council, but was not prohibited, the Council did make the planning application on behalf of the Community Forum which was funded by the local Strategic Partnership.

As both the Council's and Housing Executive's title did not accurately reflect the transaction which existed on the ground, the Housing Executive asked the Council to surrender its current lease for the play area and enter into a new lease which accurately reflected its position.

The Housing Executive also requested that in respect of the mobile building that the Council lease the land on which it was located and sub-lease it directly to the Community Forum.

The Eglry Down District Council agreed in this course of work in order to ensure (a) that any planning conditions etc.

Planning Applications Items obtained for the Community mobile building.

It was subsequently agreed at a meeting of Eglry Down District Council's Strategic Management Team Meeting on 10 September 2013 to proceed by way of a freehold acquisition of the relevant lands which would give the Council greater control over any future use/development.

A map showing the play area and mobile building is attached as Appendix 1.

The refer a lease to be entered into with the Community Forum in relation to the mobile building.

## 2.0 Key Issues

- The resolution requires the Council to do:
- The acquisition of a freehold interest will yield greater control over any future use/development of the lands.

## 3.0 Recommendation

Council to acquire the freehold transfer of lands for the play area and mobile building at Oriel Drive, Flynn Home, Downpatrick in order to regularise title.

## 4.0 Resource Implications

Acquisition of land - £6,000 plus legal costs.

## 5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Map showing the play area and mobile building.

Appendix 3 – Map showing the play area and mobile building







<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Planning and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	21 year Lease of Changing Rooms at Orior Park, Bessbrook to Bessbrook United FC
<b>Date:</b>	12 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Eddy Curtis

**Contact Officer:** Eddy Curtis/B Magill

### Decisions Required

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and decide if Council are in agreement to the granting of a 21 year lease of the Council owned changing rooms at Orior Park/Ambrose Gardens, Bessbrook to Bessbrook United Football Club, subject to NIHE approval, DCE approval and legal agreement being drawn up.

### Purpose & Background

Request from Bessbrook United FC to lease Council owned changing rooms and access paths at Orior Park, Bessbrook for a period of 21 years at a peppercorn rent.

Bessbrook United FC are the only club which use the playing field at this location and have asked for exclusive use of the new Council owned changing rooms.

Council has a 10,000 year lease of this area from NIHE.

Council has now received NIHE approval to sub-lease to Bessbrook United for 21 years.

Application will have to be made to DCE to approve peppercorn rent.

### Key Issues

Regular turnover for NIHE to maintain - Club to meet

Approval required from DCE for peppercorn rent

Legal agreement to be drawn up

### Resource Implications

Cost of preparing lease

No rental income but Club to maintain building and pay for utilities

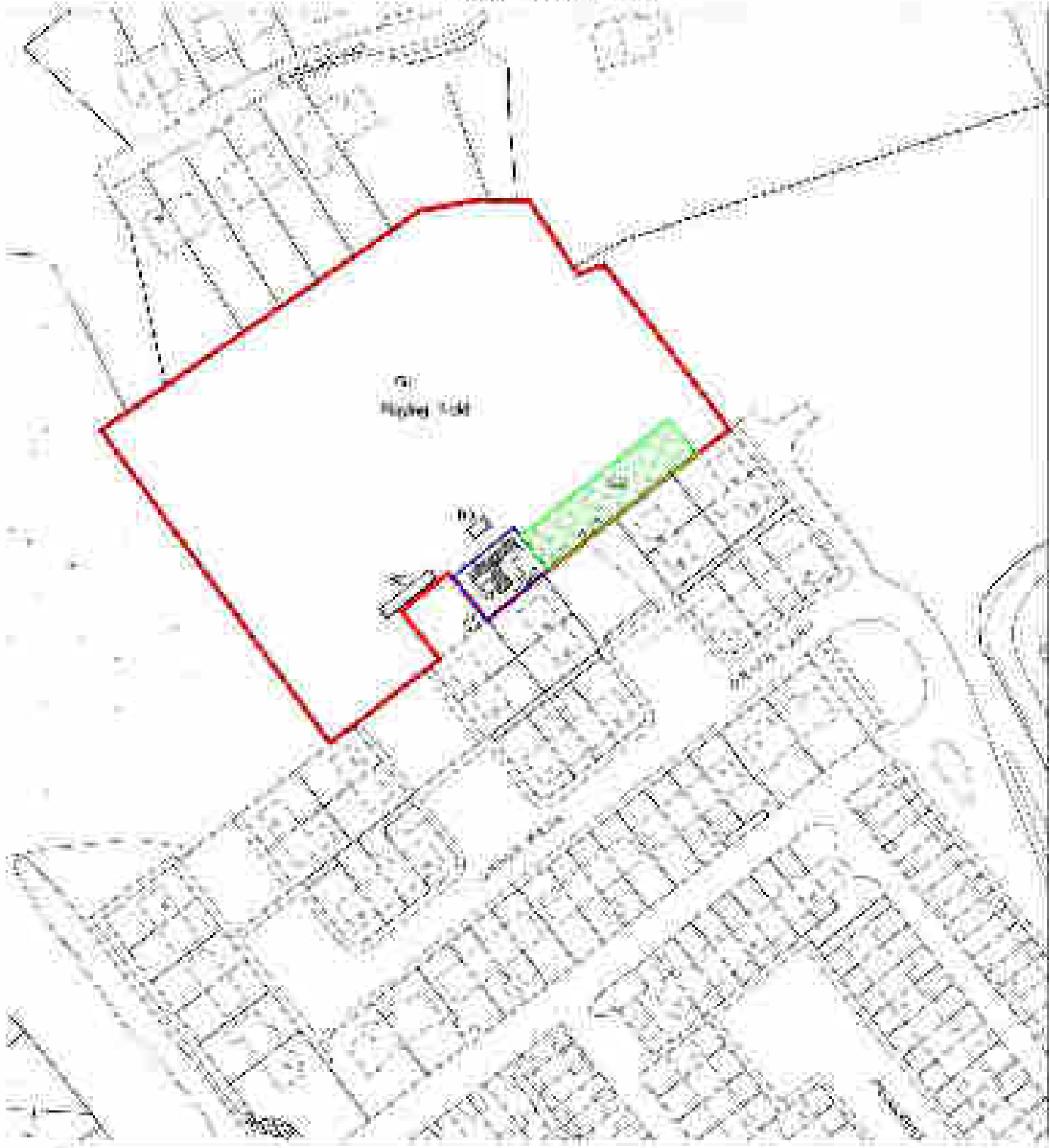
### Appendices


- Appendix 1

Map of area

**LEGEND:**

- BOUNDARY OF PARCEL
- BOUNDARY OF LAND TO BE ACQUIRED TO BE USED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE ORIOR FOOTBALL PITCH
- FOOTBALL PITCH



 NORTH DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL	Site: Orior Football Pitch Basbrook	Drawing Title: Siteplan	Scale: 1:1250
	Council reference: 15/1515	Drawing no.1: NM032-G 1-00	Drawn by: GM/V

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Strategic Policy and Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Request to purchase land at Station Road, Castlewella</b>
<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>AD/GA/8</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>17 November 2015</b>
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	<b>Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services</b>

### Decision Required:

Authority to proceed on the basis of the recommendation below.

#### 1.0 Purpose & Background

The Council has received a request from an adjacent landowner to purchase the amenity area at Station Road, Castlewella as delineated in red on the attached map.

The site was formerly a play park but the equipment was removed some years ago and the site is currently unused.

In a Review of Land Holdings undertaken by the legacy Down District Council, a report on which was issued in February 2008, the site was reviewed to have limited development potential.

The site is owned in freehold by the Council and therefore there would be no restrictions on a disposal.

#### 2.0 Key Issues

**2.1** The Council has received an expression of interest in the site but given the size and nature of the site it would be required to open the matter up to other potentially interested parties.

**2.2** In order to maximise the potential return to the Council it would be advisable for the Council to apply for residential planning permission for the site.

**2.3** When the benefit of a change in the planning status of the site, the Council could then seek to maximise its return by offering the site on the open market.

#### 3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council note the expression of interest in the site from an adjacent landowner, make a planning application for residential development for the site at Station Road, Castlewella and, thereafter, seek to dispose of the site on the open market in order to maximise the return for the Council.

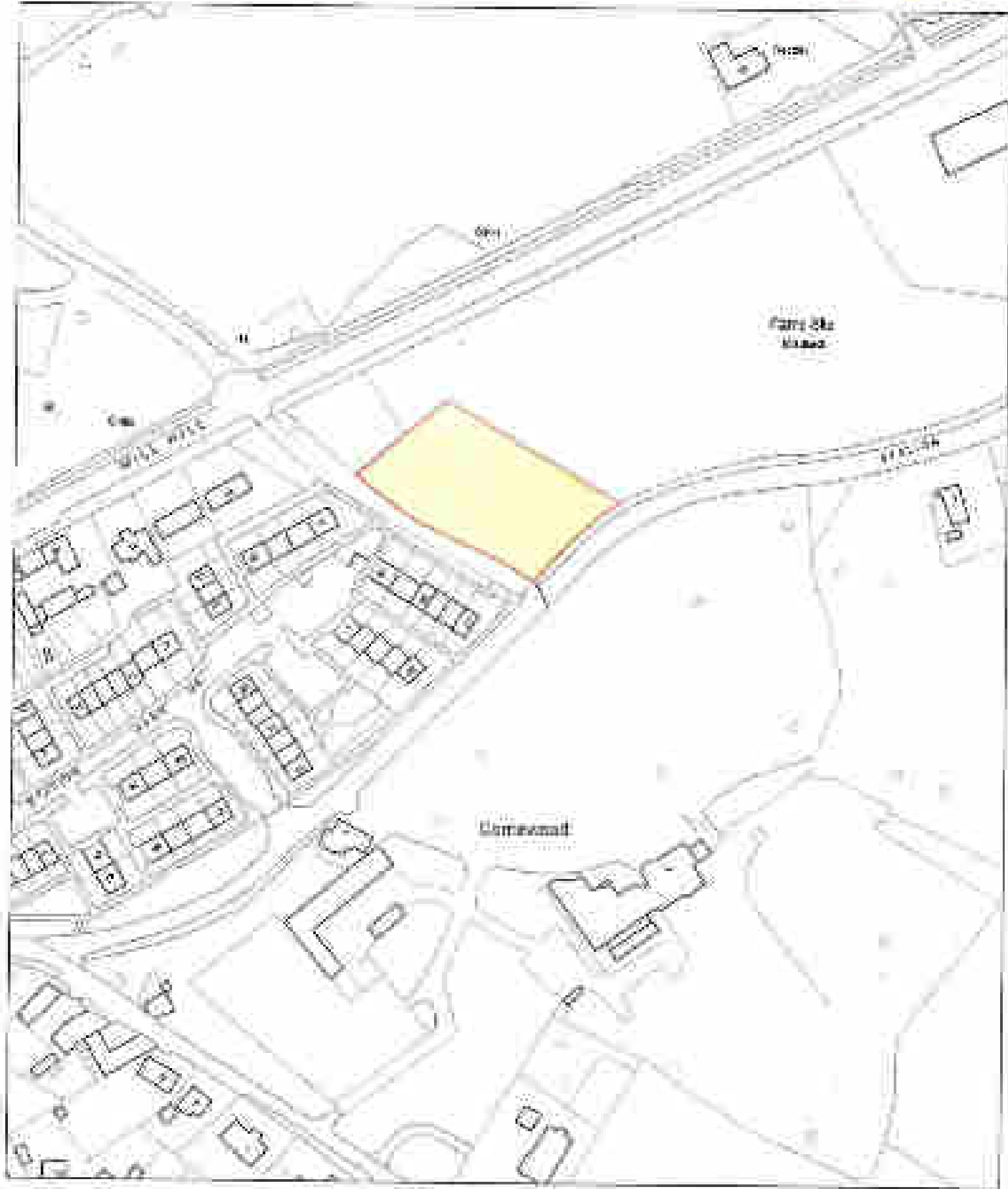
4.0	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	Minerals – logs, planting and equatorial fees.
5.0	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix 1 – Map of amenity areas at Station Road, Castlewella.



**APPENDIX 1**

Map of amenity area at Station Road, Castlewella

Station Road Playground Castlewella  
TL 082, Scale: 1:1250, Date: 27/9/07



**Legend**

 Site Boundary

0 40 80 24 32  
1:1250 Scale

Report to:	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	AD/LEG/20 – Expression of Interest in Lisburn Street off-street car park (south), Ballynahinch
Date:	12 November 2015
Reporting Officer:	Patrick Green, Legal Advisor

## Decisions Required

Recommendation required in relation to request to acquire all of or a portion of Lisburn Street off-street car park (south), Ballynahinch. Map provided by Transport NI attached at Appendix 1.

### 1.1 Purpose & Background

At SP&R Committee of 11 May 2015 it was agreed to let/lease parking spaces at Lisburn Street car park (south) to the developer/owner of the former SuperVal supermarket to facilitate planning permission previously granted to demolish the store and build a new modern supermarket. Area developer seeks is outlined in blue and hatched in blue on Appendix 2. The acquisition would result in the loss of car parking spaces but 10 additional parking spaces would be facilitated in the new retail store's undercroft area.

Mr Green advised developer's agent, One 2 One Planning, of Council's decision and sought further clarification on the documents on the Planning Portal website suggesting a complete redesign of the entirety of the car park layout at Appendix 3.

Council has not been notified of who the developer is and a tenant has not yet been confirmed. The agents are currently in the process of approaching potential tenants.

The total number of car parking spaces is 165. Net income in 2013/14 was £2,110 (during this period the SuperVal store was open for business, but closed in early 2014).

There are a number of easements to access properties which abut the car park.

### 1.2 Key Issues

C Jackson, P Green and J O'Keefe met with One 2 One Planning on 14 September 2015 en route to hear their proposals for the car park and they confirmed that should a new supermarket be constructed they would require all of the south car park to be free to use. They see a free car park as integral to the supermarket. In this event, the supermarket would have free parking within its undercroft which would adversely impact on Council's revenue from the pay and display car park.

Following a discussion with the agents it was apparent they would be keen to purchase Lisburn Street car park even in its entirety.

The options open to Council are as follows:

1. Sale of entirety of the Lisburn Street south car park (would require expression of interest exercise to be carried out).
2. Sale of the portion the developer requires to build the rear of the store on (hatched and outlined in blue on Appendix 2) and already approved by Council with lease of remainder of car park area for 20 years (would require expression of interest exercise).

to be carried out)

2. Sale of the portion the developer requires to build the rear of the store on (previously approved by Council) a Licensed Agreement to permit the developer to carry out the works of the car park necessary to meet conditions of planning permission and Council to then operate same as a car park.

Option 2 may be the most practical. Council would be facilitating economic regeneration, would receive purchase monies for portion of site (to be confirmed by valuer), would receive annual rental income (to be confirmed by valuer), and would be free of its maintenance and liability obligations in respect of the car park. However, it would be subject to an expression of interest should a being carried out, with no guarantee the interested party would submit the most advantageous expression of interest.

#### **Possible Future Issues for Consideration**

Requirement to seek expression of interest if minded to dispose of entirety of car park or split into a long-term lease

Council's future usage of the car park

Views of the community on future uses of the car park

Potential benefits to the local economy of development of this car park

### **3.0 Resource Implications**

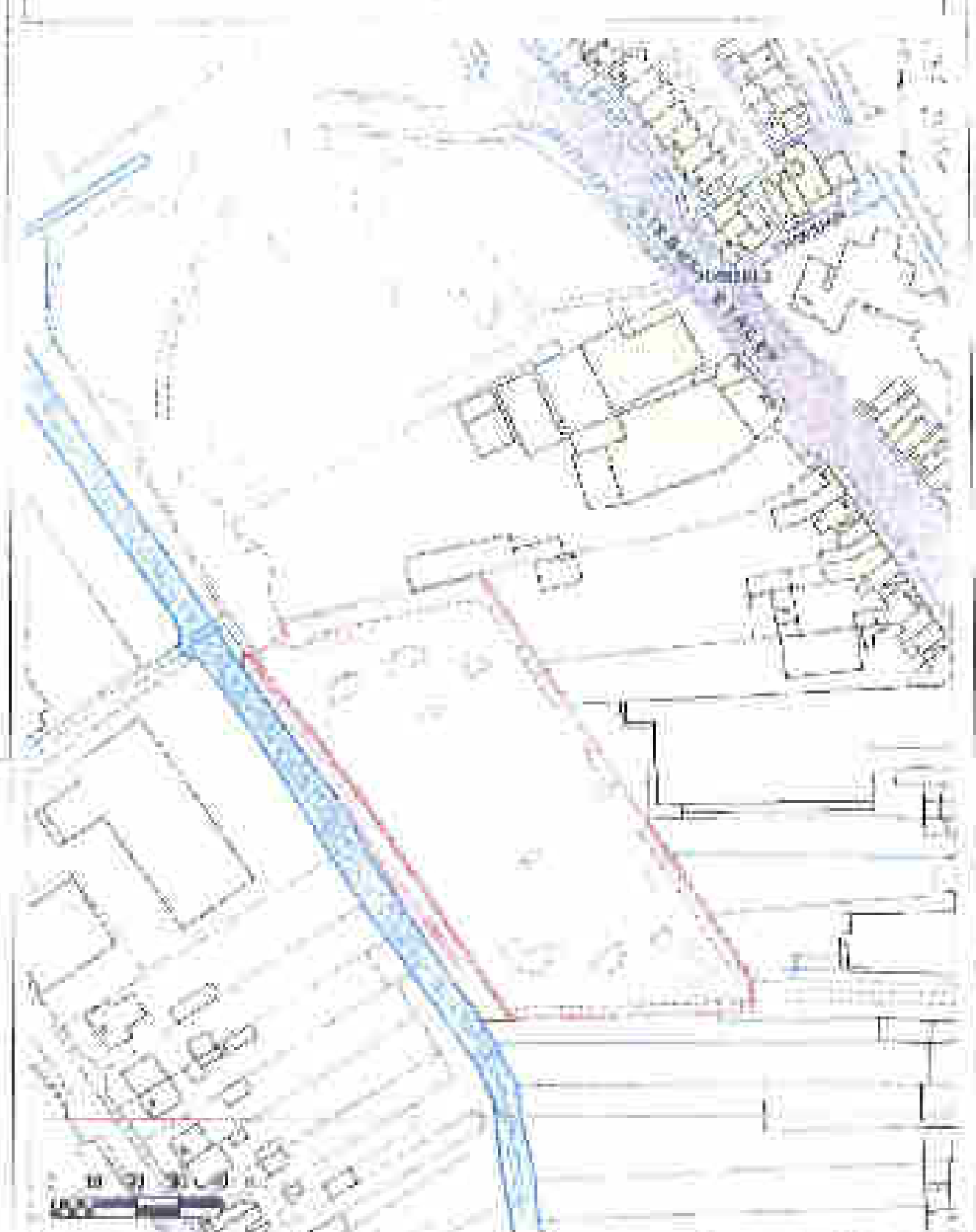
Gross associated with transfer would be sought to be recouped from the interested party

### **3.1 Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Transport NI map of station Street car park (so 117)
- Appendix 2 – Proposed acquisition by developer
- Appendix 3 – Proposed layout of supermarket and car park
- Appendix 4 – Perspective drawing of rear of proposed supermarket



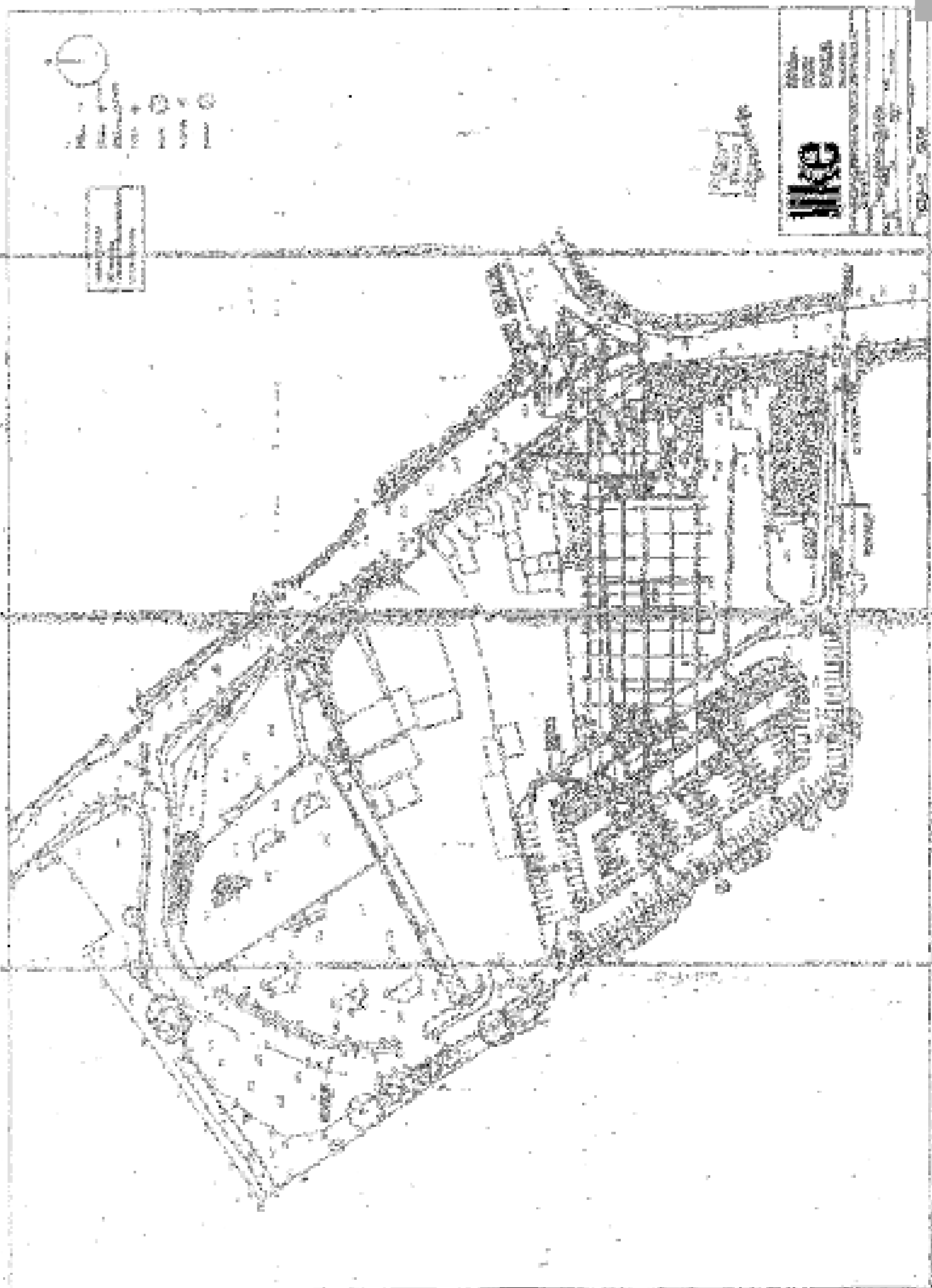
### Lisburn Street South Car Park Ballynahinch - Schedule 1 Ref No: 47



Date: 1/10/07  
 Date: 12/11/2008

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WINDFLOW

| Perspective 3D006 - View from Street  
 | 3D perspective drawing of the building facade



141

141

like



141



WYOMING

WYOMING STATE UNIVERSITY  
CAMPUS SECURITY PLAN

Project: Security  
Drawing:  
Date:  
Scale:





**Land &  
Property  
Services**

**Land & Property Services**  
Warborough Road  
Central Wing  
CRAIBVAUGHN  
BT64 1AD

☎ 028 4329117

E-mail: [Customer@landps.com](mailto:Customer@landps.com)

F.A.O. Alison Esbe  
Assistant Director Corporate Services:  
Newry, Mourne and Down District  
Council  
Downpatrick Civic Centre:  
Downshire Estate  
Angles Road  
Downpatrick  
BT50 6GQ

25<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Your reference: AML15059

Our reference: 1522756

Dear Madam

**Re: Valuation of land at Greenbank Industrial Estate, Newry**

I refer to your instructing letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 in respect of the above and would comment as follows.

I would confirm your instructions that you wish Land & Property Services to provide Newry, Mourne and Down District Council with a rental valuation of an area of land located at Greenbank Industrial Estate, Newry that the Council proposes to use as additional car parking in connection with its adjacent offices.

The current LPS Terms of Engagement are applicable to this report with no amendments. The Standard Terms of Engagement may be viewed on our website at this address: <http://www.dfnl.gov.uk/ps/ps-terms-of-engagement-2015.pdf>

I trust the enclosed information meets your requirements but should you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Faithfully

Calie White MFICS



Valuation Office Agency  
**Finance and Personnel**

**VALUATION REPORT**

**Property:** Land at Greenbank Industrial Estate, Newry

**Prepared by:** Claire White BSc (Hons) MRICS  
Craigavon District Office  
Mathborough House  
Central Way  
Craigavon  
BT84 1AD

**Client:** Alison Robb  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
Downshire Civic Centre  
Downshire Estate  
Ardglass Road  
Downpatrick  
BT30 6GQ

**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015

**LPS Case Ref:** 7022792

**Client Ref:** AD-LEG/43



## 1.0 Instructions and identity of the client

Instructions have been received from Allison Robb of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council by way of written correspondence dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015.

## 2.0 Privacy/ Limitation on Disclosure

This report is provided for the purposes and use of the Client. It is confidential to the Client and the Client's representatives. Land & Property Services accepts responsibility to the Client that the report has been prepared with the skill, care and diligence reasonably expected of a competent Chartered Surveyor but accepts no responsibility whatsoever to any party other than the client. Any other party who relies on the report does so at their own risk.

Neither the whole, nor any part of this report or valuation, nor any reference thereto may be included in any published document, circular or statement, nor published in any way, nor disclosed to any third party without the prior written consent of Land & Property Services.

## 3.0 Inspection

The land was inspected on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015.

## 4.0 Extent of investigation

Site inspection notes and photographs have been referred upon.

## 5.0 Nature and source of information relied on

Information has been provided by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and internal Land & Property Services records.

## 6.0 Compliance with appraisal and valuation standards

I confirm that the valuation has been prepared with the appropriate sections of the Practice Statements and United Kingdom Practice Statements contained within the RICS Valuation – Professional Standards 2014.

## 7.0 Purpose of the valuation:

Newry, Midvale and Down District Council require a rental valuation of an area of land located at Greenbank Industrial Estate, Newry that they propose to use as additional car parking in connection their adjacent offices.

The figures provided within this report should not be used for any purpose, other than that which has been stated above, without prior written approval of Land & Property Services.

## 8.0 Property Description

The subject land is located within the grounds of Southern Group Enterprises Ltd and comprises a terraced area located to the side and front of the building enclosed by metal fencing and gates to the front. The land will provide approximately 30 parking spaces.

## 9.0 Basis of Valuation

The valuation has been carried out in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Professional Standards 2014 on the basis of Market Rent.

**Market Rent:** The estimated amount for which an interest in real property should be leased on the valuation date between a willing lessor and willing lessee on appropriate lease terms in an arm's length transaction, after proper marketing and where the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.

## 10.0 Assumptions

An assumption is stated in the Glossary to the Red Book to be a 'supposition taken to be true'. Assumptions are facts, conditions or situations affecting the subject of, or approach to, a valuation that, by agreement, need not be verified by a valuer as part of the valuation process. In undertaking our valuation I have made a number of assumptions and have relied on certain sources of information. In the event that any of these assumptions prove to be incorrect then our valuations should be reviewed. The assumptions I have made for the purposes of my valuation are referred to below.

**Condition of the land:**

It is assumed the land remains in the same condition it was in at the date of inspection.

**Environmental Matters:**

In the absence of any information to the contrary I have assumed that the land is not contaminated and is not adversely affected by any existing or proposed environmental law.

**Repair and Condition:**

In the absence of any information to the contrary, and unless otherwise stated, I have assumed that there are no abnormal ground conditions, nor archaeological remains present which may adversely affect the current or future occupation, development or value of the land.

**Titles, Tenures and Lettings:**

Unless otherwise stated within this report, and in the absence of any information to the contrary, I have assumed that:-

- i) The land possesses a good and marketable title, free from any onerous restrictions or conditions;
- ii) The land benefits from vacant possession at the Valuation Date;
- iii) The land is held under a freehold or long leasehold title;
- iv) Title includes proper and appropriate means of access and there are no rights of way or wayleaves in favour of a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

**Boundaries:**

The boundaries of the site are as indicated in your instructions and no action has been taken to verify the accuracy of the areas.

**Planning permission and existing use:**

No approach has been made directly to Planning. A search of Planning Online Website has not revealed any relevant planning applications. It is assumed the land would be suitable for use as car parking without any additional planning consent.

**11.0 Date of Valuation**

The date of valuation is 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

The valuation reflects opinion of value as at this date. Property values are subject to fluctuation over time as market conditions may change and a valuation given on the above date may not be valid on an earlier or later date.

### 12.0 Valuation approach and reasoning

Comparable valuations of a similar nature within the locality have been considered when determining value.

### 13.0 Valuation

I consider the market rate of the land to be \$410 (Four hundred and ten pounds stg) per calendar month.

The valuation has been based on the assumptions as detailed above. Should any be found later to be incorrect or requiring amendment, the valuation will require review.

### 14.0 Status of the valuer

This report has been prepared by Claire White BSc (Hons) MRICS, a registered external valuer as defined by RICS, who has the relevant skills, experience, knowledge and understanding to undertake the valuation competently.

### 15.0 Conflict of Interest

The undersigned has not previously had professional involvement in connection with the subject and has not previously provided valuation advice for the same client in respect of the subject land.



Claire White BSc (Hons) MRICS  
Prepared on behalf of Land & Property Services

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<i>Report on request by Killowen Contracts for a wayleave to lay a storm sewer to serve a new private housing development through Council land at Burren Village Green</i>
<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee – 27 November 2015
<b>Subject:</b>	<i>Report on request by Killowen Contracts for a wayleave to lay a storm sewer to serve a new private housing development through Council land at Burren Village Green</i>
<b>Date:</b>	27 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Paul Brannigan – Estates Officer
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Paul Brannigan – Estates Officer

### Decisions Required

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and consider and agree to:

- request by Killowen Contracts for a wayleave to lay a storm sewer to serve a new private housing development through Council land at Burren Village Green

### 1. Purpose & Background

A request was received by Comm 2/07/15 from Killowen Contracts for permission to lay a new storm sewer across / through Burren Village Green to connect the new housing development they are currently constructing at Corrags Road to the nearest available Wf Water main storm sewer in Bridge Road (at the junction of Bridge Road / Hollydesland Road).

A copy of correspondence between the developer, their consulting civil engineer and Wf Water is attached in Appendix E. The correspondence includes a comment from the Wf Water Engineer that there are "a number of viable options available to discharge storm water" in the vicinity including connecting to the existing main storm in Bridge Road, although he notes "the discharge would have to be restricted to green fields". The developers proposed drawing indicates a pipe/culvert to be installed to restrict discharge flow to 10 / second.

The developer will enter into an Article 162 agreement with Wf Water; therefore the sewer will be adopted by Wf Water (if installed to their satisfaction). 12 months after installation, Killowen contracts will be liable for all maintenance of the sewer during the first 12 months after installation, and Wf Water will be liable for all future maintenance thereafter.

The developer (and the Wf Water) require the Council's approval as a condition to progress the Article 162 application.

The developers civil engineer's drawing is included as Appendix D. This indicates the proposed route for the new sewer traversing approximately through the middle of Burren Village

The main access-east direction for a distance of 25m approx. The west majority of the track is contained within grass areas.

## 2.3 Key Issues

### 4.4 Issue of Article 161

If Council goes ahead with this request, it will require the Article 161 to be processed by NI Water.

#### Disruption of activities in the Green:

The route for the sewer is through the middle of the green taking an east-west route. The intake of the sewer is a large pipe area used as an informal playground area, and the sewer route also crosses two footpaths that give north to south access through the green. It is anticipated the sewer laying should be carried out very quickly as the majority of the day is through grass, so disruption to park activities should be minimized.

#### NI Water 6m wayleave:

A variation of the Article 161 will be to require a 6m wayleave reserved on the dirt sewer line. This would require the Council to apply to NI Water for approval to carry out any future excavation / development if it was proposed to be located within the 6m easement zone. However as this park is likely to remain as a park for the foreseeable future, it is unlikely this wayleave would have a negative / restrictive impact for future Council development here.

## 11.6 Resource Implications

### 11.7 Council officer's time is taken to draw up a wayleave and get a legal agreement prepared for the wayleave, if approved. All legal and valuation costs are normally payable by the developer.

Council officer's time involved to ensure the contractor covers out the works in a timely and safe manner and to re-install the grass and future grass areas disturbed by the works.

## 4.5 Appendices

- **Appendix 1 – Correspondence between Sullavan Contracts and NI Water**
- **Appendix 2 – Proposed Drawing E-02/28 by Sheehy Consulting Engineers for Sullavan Contracts**







[info@wateragency.co.uk](mailto:info@wateragency.co.uk)  
[www.wateragency.co.uk](http://www.wateragency.co.uk)  
 01273 821111  
 01273 821111

T: 01273 821111  
 M: 07773 001177  
[www.wateragency.co.uk](http://www.wateragency.co.uk)

From: Martin [Martin.Merrett@new-wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Merrett@new-wandsworth.gov.uk)  
 Sent: 18 September 2015 12:28  
 To: [info@wateragency.co.uk](mailto:info@wateragency.co.uk)  
 Subject: Pw: Canning's Road Bore

Re: Pw:

Use comments from Paul Danniger, NRM Council  
 Re: Pw:  
 NRM Council  
 Wiltshire Contracts Ltd

From: [Paul.Danniger@new-wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.Danniger@new-wandsworth.gov.uk)  
[Paul.Danniger@new-wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.Danniger@new-wandsworth.gov.uk)  
 Sent: 8 September 2015 11:00  
 To: Martin <[Martin@new-wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Martin@new-wandsworth.gov.uk)>  
 Subject: Re: Pw: Canning's Road Bore

From:

If you can't reply, if your consultant would prefer, as the equipment is intentional may be okay!  
 From: W Water agency to this proposal

Re: Pw:

Paul Danniger  
 Estates Officer

Sotham's Director at Ltd. Murrinus of D&P  
 Newry, Farnham and Down District Council  
 Greenbank Office  
 Greenbank Industrial Estate  
 Newry  
 BT 84 2GU

Office: 0300 011 8726  
 Fax: 0300 011 7350  
 Direct Line: 015 3247

[www.newrycouncil.co.uk](http://www.newrycouncil.co.uk)  
[www.banbridge.com/nmccouncil](http://www.banbridge.com/nmccouncil)



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✉ [chaps@dc.gov.uk](mailto:chaps@dc.gov.uk)  
 — Message from Murray, Jay: City of London Corporation, 25 May 2018, 08:58  
 > [1] <

The Council <[chaps@dc.gov.uk](mailto:chaps@dc.gov.uk)>  
 DSCC Correspondence  
 <[chaps@dc.gov.uk](mailto:chaps@dc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** 601475874 Garage Road, Buxton

From:

*(The following text has been automatically generated from a message sent to the Council's email system. It may be subject to monitoring arrangements under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.)*

*(This is an outgoing email. It should be deleted if you do not wish to receive it. It may be subject to monitoring arrangements under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.)*

*(This is a reply to a message sent to the Council's email system. It may be subject to monitoring arrangements under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.)*

to the Board of the Water Authority, which is a matter of public interest and it is in the public interest that the information should be made available to the public.

All the information that is provided in the above document is the property of the Water Authority and it is in the public interest that the information should be made available to the public.

19/01/19

For Water Authority, Michael McParland, Director of Operations, 100, Water Street, Dublin 1, D01 R088, Ireland. Tel: 01 454 4444. Fax: 01 454 4445. Email: [Michael.McParland@water.ie](mailto:Michael.McParland@water.ie)

19/01/19

19/01/19

19/01/19

19/01/19

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19/01/19

19/01/19

The Water Authority has a duty to provide information to the public in relation to the water supply and it is in the public interest that the information should be made available to the public.

19/01/19

19/01/19

19/01/19

SECRETARY GENERAL  
 UNITED NATIONS  
 NEW YORK

TO: DIRECTOR GENERAL  
 WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
 GENEVA

FROM: DIRECTOR GENERAL  
 WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
 GENEVA

RE: [Illegible]

DATE: [Illegible]

[Illegible]

**Report to:** Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting

**Subject:** Transfer of Murphy Trust Property

**Date:** 22 November 2025

**Reporting Officer:** Brian Magill

**Contact Officer:** Council Info/Kenzi

### Decisions Required

- Agree to to Manage, control and maximise Property Portfolio of Murphy Trust

#### 1.1 Purpose & Background

- Murphy Trust is a charity located in Newry City. They control a number of strategic sites/buildings in Newry City and Crossmaglen.
- The charity approached the legacy Newry & Mourne District Council to ascertain if the Council would consider managing their property portfolio.
- Any Finance raised by the trust can only be spent on projects in Newry Arts Centre.
- This request has been checked legally and the trust has authority to transfer the property to the Council.

#### 1.2 Key Issues

- Murphy Trust Property will have to be managed by the Council's Estate/Asset Management.
- Council will take responsibility for Infrastructure Management etc.

#### 1.3 Possible Future Issues for consideration

- Possible capital development opportunities to maximise income.
- Possible sale of assets in future.
- Legal agreement between Murphy Trust and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to be finalised.

#### 1.4 Resource Implications

- The annual fee for this service is expected to be less than £10,000. However until the transfer Property will have to be managed by Estates department.

#### 1.5 Appendices

- None

Report To:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Date:	12 November 2016
File Reference:	SPR/169
Reporting Officer:	Allison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Contact Officers:	Allison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)

### Decision Required

Committee is asked to approve use of Council land at The Green, Strangford, by the Contractors for DRD Transport NI to construct a temporary slipway during upgrading works to the existing Strangford Slipway from January 2016 for a period of up to 10 months

#### 1.0 Purpose and Background

DRD have been commissioned by DRD Transport NI to procure a Design and Build contract to upgrade and extend the existing Strangford Slipway. It is hoped that works will commence in early January 2016.

It is a condition of the contract that the existing ferry service remains operational (i.e. requiring the need for a temporary stone slipway construction and use of part of the Council's lands at The Green, Strangford) (as shown delineated in red on the attached map drawing number 43).

The Contractor will require access over the lands hatched in blue on the attached map together with a small compound as marked in green on the attached map.

The Contractor will provide a temporary slipway as shown on the attached drawing (2016/11/16/DRD) which will be on the foreshore and part of lands not under the ownership of Council.

The works may require the temporary relocation of a birch and beech on the Council's lands.

At the Council's Senior Management Team Meeting on 3 November 2016 it was agreed that there was no issue in approving the request.

#### 2.0 Key Issues

- The greater public benefit of facilitating an upgrading and extension of the existing Strangford Slipway
- The need to avoid disruption to the current ferry service and the benefits it brings to those living, working and visiting the District
- The need to notify the Lessor of The Green, the de Ros Estate, of the works to be undertaken utilising a part of the lands it leases to the Council

- The need to ensure the Contractor provides adequate or public liability insurance method statements and risk assessments for the works and to confirm that all necessary statutory and other approvals are in place prior to commencing works on site.
- The need to ensure that the Contractor agrees to fully reinstate the Council's grass to the satisfaction of the Estates Department at the end of its period of impact.

### 3.0 Recommendation

Committee approval of Council and of The Green, Grange Ltd, by its Directors for D&J Transport Ltd to construct a temporary slipway during upgrading works to the existing Strangford Slipway from January 2016 for a period of up to 12 months.

### 4.0 Resource Implications

None

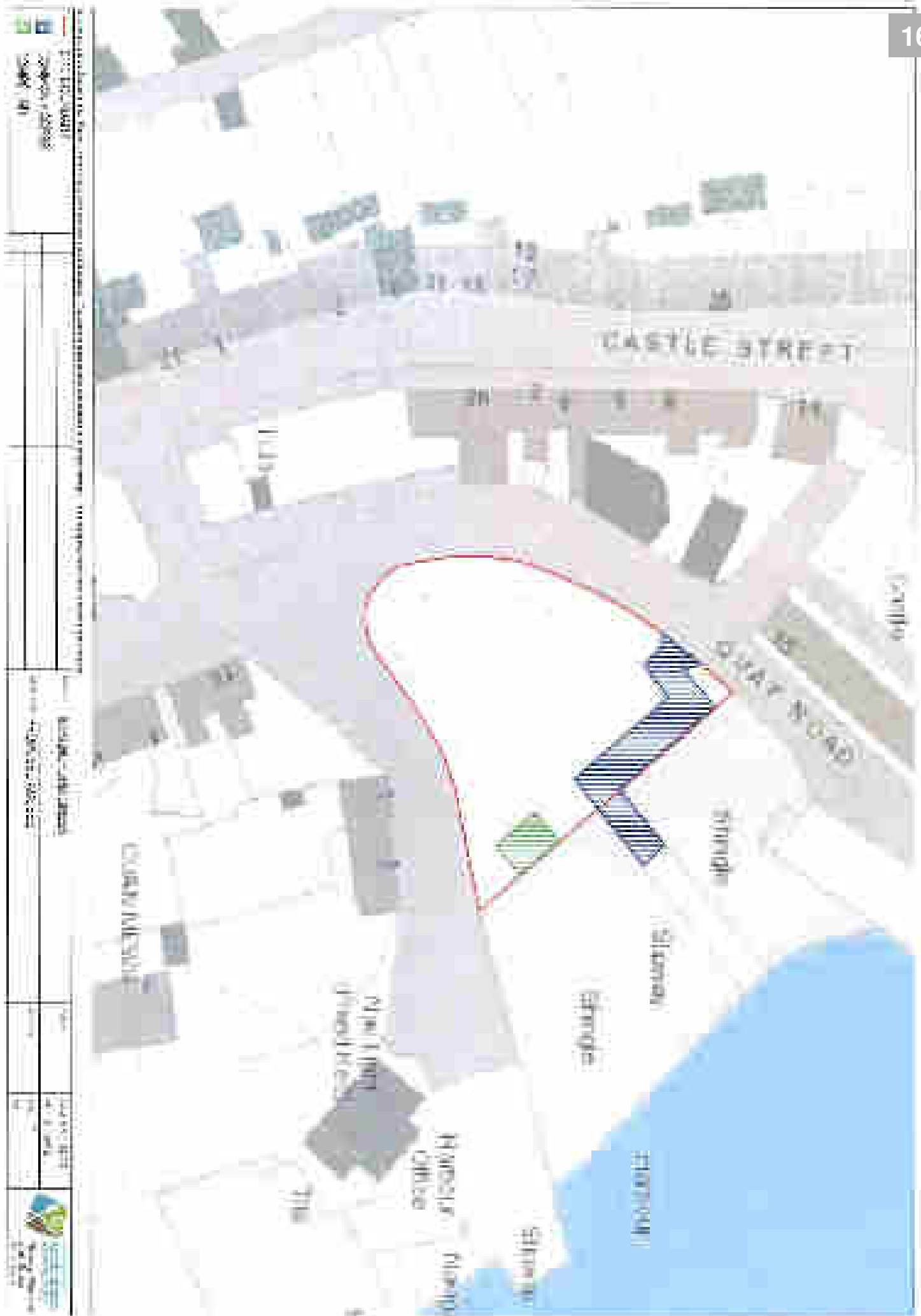
### 5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Map showing the area to be used by the Contractor

Appendix 2 – Drawing showing the temporary slipway to be constructed by the Contractor



Appendix 1 – Map showing the area to be used by the Contractor



Map information and metadata:

- Scale: 1:50,000
- Projection: UTM
- Zone: 29N
- Datum: ED50
- Units: Metres
- Author: Ordnance Survey
- Year: 2010
- Version: 1.0
- Copyright: Ordnance Survey

Appendix I – Drawing showing the temporary slipway to be constructed by the Contractor



**Report To:** Senior Management Team

**Date:** 8 November 2015

**Item:** Proposed Additional car parking at Greenbank Industrial Estate for Council Staff

**File Reference:** AD/EG/43

**Reporting Officer:** Kevin Scullion, Assistant Director Facilities Management & Maintenance

**Contact Officers:** Liam Dinmore, Management Services Officer  
Carle Webster, Business Support Officer (Commercial)

### Decision Required

Approval to enter into negotiation with Spubieri Group Enterprises with the aim of setting up a rental agreement to avail of 38 car parking spaces at their premises located within the Greenbank Industrial Estate Newry (See attached Greenbank Industrial Estate Site Plan).

Cost of annual rental expected to be circa £410 per calendar month plus maintenance costs. Rental of site is available initially up to end of June 2016 with possibility of extension.

### 1.0 Background

Parking spaces within the Greenbank Depot is limited and parking outside of the premises has been impacted by the increase in competition from neighbouring premises. Furthermore, PSNI has approached the Council in relation to complaints regarding traffic issues caused by parking on roadsides.

The "Commercial Area", as shown in attached Greenbank Council Offices Site Plan has traditionally been used as a "set down" area between the hours of 9.30am to 12.30pm, for private cars to park until a free space becomes available.

However, a serious Health & Safety concern arose after a staff member was knocked down by a vehicle within the Commercial Vehicle parking area (no injury sustained). The Risk Assessment which followed recommended that this area becomes a "Yellow Vest" area and parking of private cars be prohibited to prevent the mix of private and commercial vehicles.

## 2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1 64 car parking spaces available for private use on the Council site.
- 2.2 Approximately 110 staff employed at Council Offices, Greenbank. However, we are aware that not all staff avails of car parking facilities.
- 2.3 A survey of traffic at 8am over a number of days has shown the car park to already contain anywhere between 25-35 staff vehicles.
- 2.4 A survey of Commercial Area between the hours of 8am to 12pm has shown between 15 to 25 private cars parked within this area.

## 3.0 Solutions

- 3.1 Do nothing. This is not a realistic option due to the Health & Safety issues associated with mix of private & commercial vehicles.
- 3.2 Direct Staff to park on roadside. This is also not a realistic option due to the recent pressures from RSNL and increase in competition from surrounding businesses.
- 3.3 Seek to utilise additional parking from neighbouring premises, Southern Group Enterprises.
  - 3.3.1 A survey carried out of premises estimated that approximately 38 additional spaces could be utilised (see attached Site Plan showing proposed land for consideration for additional car parking at Southern Group Enterprises).
  - 3.3.2 A Valuation Report has been obtained from the Land & Property Services with a proposed rental of £410 per calendar month for this parking area.
  - 3.3.3 Initial discussions with Southern Group Enterprises have been positive. The car park is in good condition, fenced off with a 6 foot high palisade fence and has a lockable gate. Southern Group Enterprises is agreeable in principle to enter into a rental agreement with Council up to end of June 2016 with possibility of further extension.

## 4.0 Proposed Utilisation of Additional Parking Area

- 4.1 Heavy private vehicle access to Council site up to E10:8.15am, directing staff to park in the additional parking area at Southern Group Enterprises in the first instance.
- 4.2 Main Council car park becomes the overflow car park.

4.2.1 This would therefore provide parking for Officers that have requirement to travel between Council facilities for meetings.

4.2.2 Provides parking availability for Visitors.

4.2.3 Staff commencing work at 7.30/8.00am usually finishes work at the latest 4.00/4.30pm therefore additional car park area at Southern Group Enterprises could be closed at an earlier time.

## 5.0 Recommendations

4.1 Council to enter into negotiation with Southern Group Enterprises with the aim of setting up a rental agreement to avail of 36 car parking spaces at their premises located within the Greenbank Industrial Estate Newry.

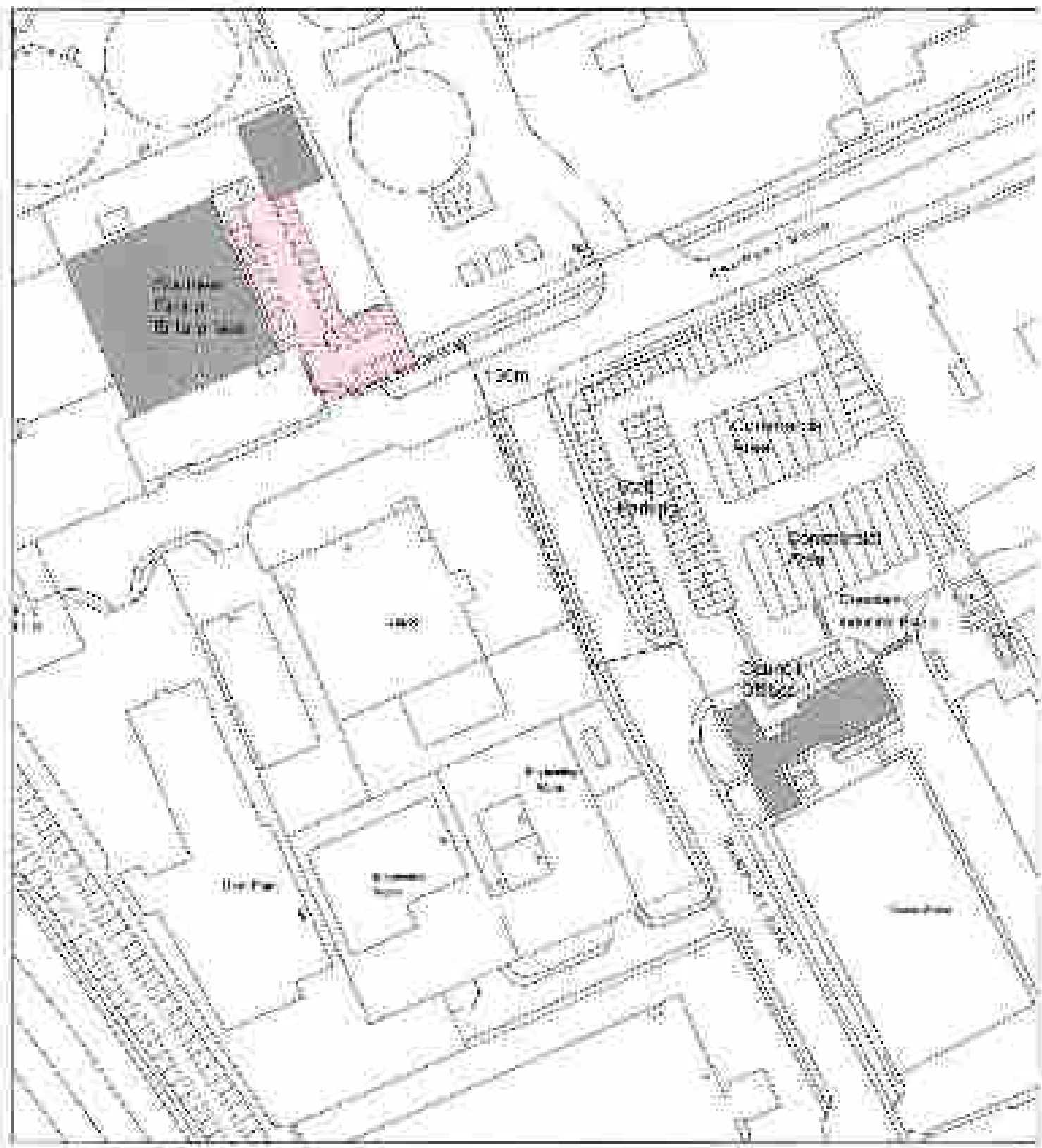
## 6.0 Appendices


Greenbank Industrial Estate Site Plan

Greenbank Council Office Site Plan

Siteplan showing proposed land for consideration for additional carparking

AREA OF HATCHED BOUNDARY - P13 sq. m

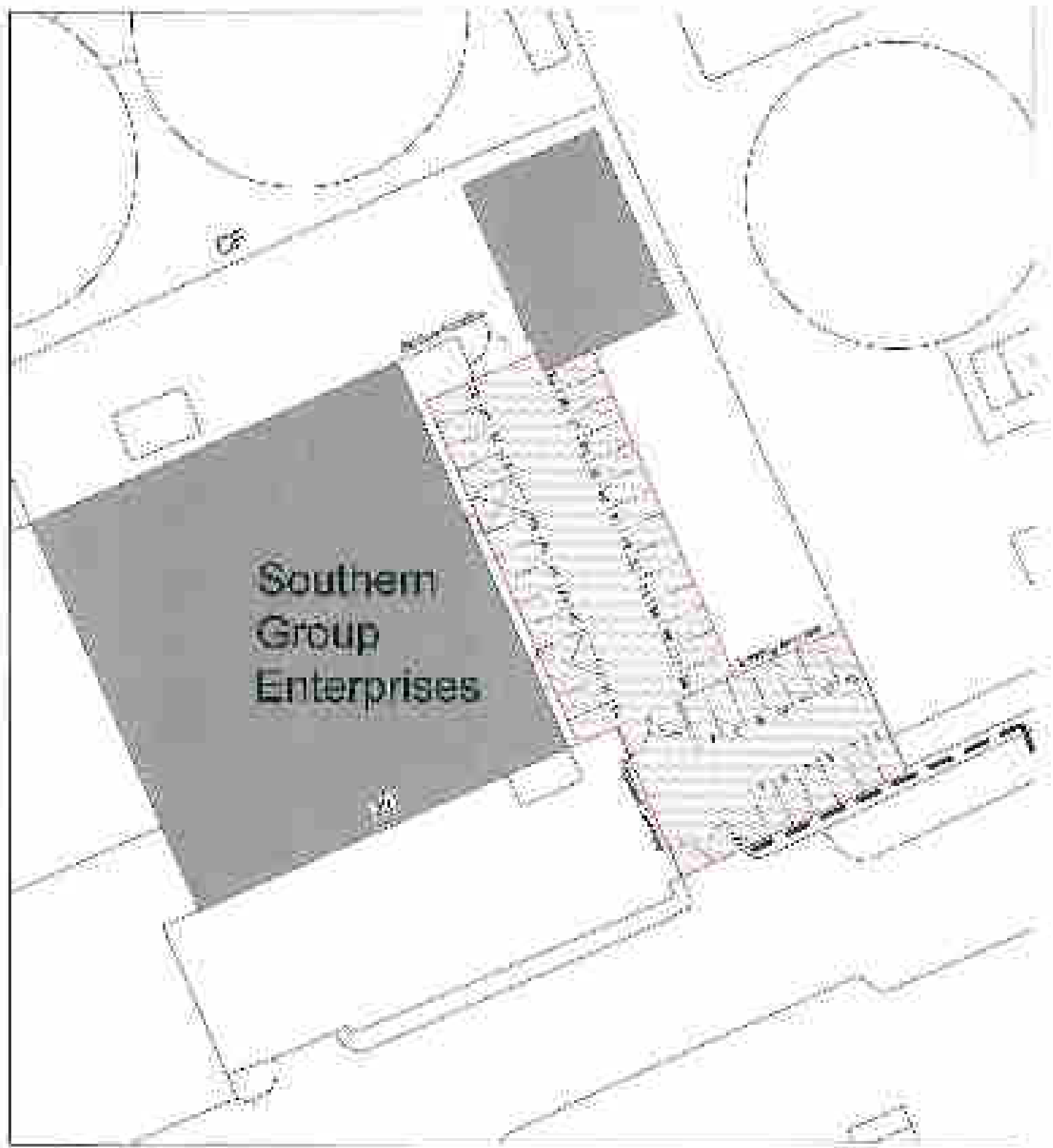



 <p>COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH</p>	<p>Site: SGE Ltd/ Greenbank Depot</p>	<p>Drawing Title: Greenbank Industrial Estate Siteplan</p>		
	<p>Scale: 1/1250</p>	<p>Drawing no.: SGE 02</p>	<p>Drawn by: GMacV</p>	<p>Date: 09.11.15</p>





AREA OF HATCHED  
BOUNDARY - 513 sq. m



 <p>HEMEL HEMPSTEAD DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>Site: Southern Group Enterprises Ltd</p>	<p>Drawing Title: Siteplan showing proposed land for consideration for additional carparking</p>		
	<p>Scale: 1/500</p>	<p>Drawing no. : SGE 01</p>	<p>Drawn by GMEV</p>	<p>Date 11.02.15</p>

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	Financial Assistance
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Seneca Juma, Programmes Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Seneca Juma, Programmes Manager

### Decisions Required

Report is to consider the following recommendations:

- A Financial Assistance call for the period 2015-2016.
- Allocation within the rates budget for grant allocations, advertising and capacity building programmes and for resourcing the management and delivery of the programme.
- Inclusion of logistical support (chairs, tables, chairs etc.), request form in the application and 10 minutes of offer of financial assistance to major (minor events) to include provision of support where deemed essential.
- Capacity building for the Community/Voluntary sector and resourcing of same.
- Advances to groups for up to 10% of the grant aid if the need can be demonstrated and an Advance Agreement signed off.
- Thresholds for each theme to be set by Officers in line with rates.

### 2.0 Purpose & Background

The Council will complete three calls for Financial Assistance in the period 2015-2016. There have been a number of learning's from the first call and 28 capacity building workshops have been hosted across each of the DPA's. These were designed to address the capacity issues with groups that were apparent from the first call to also to provide them with an opportunity to engage with other potential leaders outside of the Council's Financial Assistance programme.

It is proposed to have three calls for assistance as follows:

**Call 1 Open January and close February 2016:**

- Major/Minor Events including Local and Community Festivals, Budgets to DCA Funding
- Summer Schemes
- Community Capital Schemes

**Call 2 Open March and close April 2016:**

- Active and Healthy Communities
- Minor Environmental Schemes
- Arts and Culture

**Call 3 Open May and close June 2016:**

- Good Relations (Subject to OFMDHM Funding)
- Christmas Illuminations

### Logistical Support:

Applicants will have to provide all additional logistical support for events in their application either through payment for Council resources (if they are available) or from an independent supplier. This will provide an actual cost for the applicants for the delivery of their project. The amount awarded will be inclusive of the logistical support and will not exceed the overall amount of funding to be allocated.

#### Thresholds:

The funding thresholds amount against each of the themes will be determined by Officers through the budget allocations set within the rates process. It is proposed that the maximum for any scheme will be £1,200 however where there are budget constraints or there is no requirement for this amount it will be reduced.

#### Advertising:

There will be extensive advertising campaign in the lead in and throughout the duration of the programme. This will include social media, printed press and through the DEA for a Capacity Building.

As part of the ongoing capacity building programme we are collecting feedback on the future training needs of the community. When analysed, a new capacity building programme will be presented for approval.

#### Advance:

It is recommended that advance payments of up to 50% of grant aid be provided to groups when they can demonstrate the requirement and upon signing an Advance Agreement. For larger sums over £5,000 this will have to be reviewed with Finance.

### 4.1 Key Issues:

4.1.1 There are potentially a number of issues:

- The current demand out weighs the allocated budget and therefore signposting groups to other potential funding sources is vital.
- Cost of low for groups is an issue for which they will require assistance.
- Managing expectations of the process and managing expectations of groups in terms of what is available.

### 4.2 Financial & Resource Implications:

4.2.1 Resources: Additional staffing resources are required to manage the grants process from the moment all groups have received the final payment to be included in the rates estimates.

Grants will be awarded within the rates for grant allocations, advertising and capacity building. To be included in the rates estimates.

### 4.3 Equality & Good Relations Implications:

4.3.1 There is an inclusion of equality and good relations questions within the applications. This is an open and transparent call for all eligible groups to apply for project funding.

### 4.4 Appendices:

- None:

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategy, Policy and Resources</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Christmas Events Funding</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>12 November 2015</b>
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	<b>Eddy Curtis, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy</b>
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	<b>Eddy Curtis, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy</b>

### **Decisions Required**

Report is in new update for Christmas Events Funding throughout the District. Links and refer to attached spreadsheet.

<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>Purpose &amp; Background</u></b>
1.1	To update Councilors on Christmas Events Funding throughout the Newry, Mourne and Down District.
<b>2.0</b>	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
2.1	Attached report details revised position.
<b>3.0</b>	<b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b>
3.1	As detailed in Appendix A
<b>4.0</b>	<b><u>Appendices</u></b>
4.1	Appendix A

## Council Strategic Tourism Events

Area	Amount	Budget Provision	Notes
Scenic Park	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	Includes stage, table, general entertainment, refreshments and general support
Other Festivals			
Leam	£5,450.00	£5,450.00	Includes stage, table, general entertainment, refreshments and general support
Hampton	£2,000.00	£0.00	Refreshments and general support
Hill	£2,000.00	£0.00	Refreshments and general support
Cromwell	£2,000.00	£0.00	Refreshments and general support
Tadworth	£1,500.00	£0.00	Refreshments and general support
Blunham	£2,000.00	£0.00	Refreshments and general support
<b>Total</b>	<b>£29,950.00</b>	<b>£10,450.00</b>	

Budget Differential

£19,500.00

**Areas Receiving Financial Contribution to run community events in lieu of any other Council Support**  
*This money is to erect trees lights and run event*

Area	Amount	Budget Provision	Notes
Blunham Project Association	£1,500.00	VC Budget	Refreshments and Tree
Beaconsfield and District Community Association	£2,000.00	VC Budget	
Clare Community Association	£300.00	VC Budget	
Cotton Hill Village Association	£1,000.00	VC Budget	
Amersham Community Forum	£2,000.00	VC Budget	
Angloze Festival Association	£1,000.00	VC Budget	
Eastwellon Regeneration Ltd	£2,000.00	VC Budget	
Erpingham Area Community Association	£2,000.00	VC Budget	Group refreshment tables for 15000 old (A) and 15000 new (A)
Clare Community Association	£300.00	VC Budget	
Beaconsfield and District Community Association	£2,000.00	VC Budget	

Allocated Item			Incorporated budget in committee report Difference (€000) or (€) where budget is less for Council vote (lighting, electrical, bar, more than committed to by group)
€100,000 Development Association	75,000.00	70 Budget	
Castletellar Rejuvenation (€)	11,500.00	70 Budget	
Castletellar Community Partnership	7,000.00	70 Budget	
Annaclogh Community Forum	12,500.00	70 Budget	
Ardfuil Regeneration Trust	12,500.00	70 Budget	
€100,000 Development Association	12,500.00	70 Budget 70 Budget	Quote submitted for €12500 = 70%. Have agreed to in place for borrowing lights from dellacostello. Have now agreed to work with local council on a single system for the area and elected 70%.
<b>Warrington</b>	<b>13,000.00</b>		<b>00.00 To support Valentinus Fair</b>
<b>Beaumont</b>	<b>12,000.00</b>		<b>70.00</b>
	<b>138,285.00</b>		<b>138,285.00</b>
<b>Additional Financial Request**</b>	<b>18,000.00</b>		<b>20.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>240,285.00</b>		<b>138,285.00</b>

Budget Differential:

€12,000.00

**\*\* Additional Money Requested from Saintfield, Killybegh and Crossgar to erect lights as they were only successful in obtaining money for switch on event**

**Areas Receiving Financial contribution via the rates**

Area	Amount	Budget Provision	Notes
Downy Community Association	€350.00	€350.00	
Ardfuil Community Association	€700.00	€700.00	
Inishowen Community Association	€300.00	€300.00	
Forhill Community Association	€400.00	€400.00	
Ballyva Community Rejuvenation Group	€400.00	€400.00	

Allocated through total	Jarvis Community Association Ltd	£49000	£49000
	Jacobson Development Society	£25000	£25000
	Levenshulme Residents Committee	£10000	£10000
	Millingwood Community Association	£10000	£10000
	Minning Community Development Association Ltd	£10000	£10000
	Manoridge Development Committee	£70000	£70000
	Edley Community Assoc. Ltd	£80000	£80000
	Seaton Community Association	£80000	£80000
	Seaton Family Community Centre	£1,80000	£1,80000
	Whitecross Community Association	£30000	£30000
	Ellandale Community Association	£30000	£30000
	Five Charities	£20000	£20000
	Calderdale Community Association	£40000	£40000
	Jellyfold Park SFC	£40000	£40000
	Calthwaite Community Association	£10000	£10000
Wetherby Community Association	£10000	£10000	
Wigh and Ross Community Association	£10000	£10000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£21,20000</b>	<b>£21,20000</b>	

**Budget Differential**

£0.00

Area	Amount	Budget Provision	Notes
Council arrange the provision of trees for Levenshulme & Mill Lane and Manoridge area	£14,000.00	£14,000.00	may have slight over/under as result of tree/prune addition
Council arrange the provision and erection of lighting for Levenshulme & Mill Lane and Manoridge area	£26,000.00	£26,000.00	
Council arrange the provision and erection of lighting for Cowthorpe, Edlythorpe and Rowcliffe area	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	
Weathering Cores for major trees (Cowthorpe, Levenshulme, Crossmaglen, Gilders, Edlythorpe and Rowcliffe)	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£70,000.00</b>	<b>£70,000.00</b>	



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Elected Member Application to undertake Accredited Training
<b>Date:</b>	17 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Carina Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Human Resources)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Awen Magorian, Learning and Development Manager

### **Decisions Required**

Members are asked to consider an application for financial assistance for a Councillor to undertake a part-time Honours Degree in Irish Language and Literature at the University of Ulster which commenced September 2015.

### **1.0 Purpose & Background**

- 1.1 The Elected Member Development Policy adopted by Council on 02.12.14 encourages Members to identify their own development needs and Section 10 of the Policy makes provision for Elected Members to avail of 'accredited training' through the agreed Procedure.
- 1.2 Individual requests for learning and development should be considered for approval based on the following criteria:
  1. *What is/are the learning objective(s)?*
  2. *What Corporate Objective(s) does it relate to?*
  3. *What's the benefit to the Elected Member?*
  4. *What's the benefit to the Council?*
  5. *What's the benefit to the Community?*
- 1.3 Applications for financial assistance to attend Accredited Training must be approved by Council and is entirely at the discretion of the Council and availability of funds.

### **2.0 Key Issues**

2.1 Committee Members are asked to consider the application from a Councillor to undertake a Honours Degree in Irish Language and Literature at the University of Ulster and recommend whether approval should be granted to this request (course details at Appendix 1).

### **3.0 Resource Implications**

3.1 The Councillor's application is to undertake two modules, of year-two, of the part-time degree in Irish Language and Literature at a cost of £552.20. Included in this application also is two optional, week-long Gaeltacht courses, one each semester, costing £125.00 each. The total financial support requested is therefore £802.20. For courses which last more than one academic year, applications must be made for each further year of the course.

3.2 Upon successful completion of the course the fees will be reimbursed to the member by Council.

### **4.0 Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Training Application

# Bachelor of Arts Hons | 2015/16 Irish Language and Literature

Part-time

[Apply Online \(http://www.ulster.ac.uk/applyonline\)](http://www.ulster.ac.uk/applyonline)

## Overview

The University offers a comprehensive range of programmes in Irish in both part-time and full-time mode at a number of venues which serve a diverse constituency of students. The breadth of Irish language provision at Ulster and the practice amongst staff and students of the School of Irish Language and Literature of using Irish as a primary medium of communication reflects the University's strong commitment to cultural and linguistic diversity within Northern Ireland. The University's Irish programmes play a vital role in preserving, sustaining and celebrating Ireland's Gaelic literary and linguistic heritage as well as serving the demands of the Irish language sector within the local and international job market. At a personal level our programmes also fulfil the needs of individuals who wish to acquire the necessary competence to fully participate in the Irish language community as confident and independent users of the language. The BA programme has been designed to reflect the University's vision of leading in the provision of professional education for professional life. The commitment to support graduates in gaining stimulating and fulfilling employment is one of the School's primary concerns.

**100%**

Students agreed staff made the subject interesting.



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BA (Hons) Irish Language and Literature  
 Part-time

## Entry requirements

You must satisfy the General Entrance Requirements for admission to a first degree course and hold a GCSE pass in English Language at grade C or above (or equivalent).

A level requirement is:

A minimum of 260 UCAS Tariff Points to include grades BCC (in Irish).

Irish Leaving Certificate

A minimum of 260 UCAS Tariff Points to include grades BBCCC (B in Irish).

Other qualifications

Students who successfully complete the Diploma in Irish Language are also eligible to apply to this course.

The University will consider applications on the basis of a wide range of qualifications, plus experiential learning for those who do not hold the normal entry qualifications. Those applicants seeking entry with advanced standing (eg. transfer from another institution) will be considered on an individual basis.

English language requirements for international students

General English language entry requirement for most programmes of study require you to have a minimum of IELTS equivalent 6.0 (with no contributing band of less than 5.5).

Our Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT) is a specialised unit providing English language teaching and support for registered students who have English as an additional language.

Individual courses may require a higher level of attainment. Please check course entry requirements individually.



Irish Language and Literature - 4831 - Department of Arts Home - Ulster University

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Irish Grammar, Phonetics & Style 2

Survival and Revival

18th & 19th Century Irish Literature

Year 3:

Irish Literature 2

Irish Folklore & Literary Tradition

Irish Language & Culture 2

Irish Translation Studies

Year 4:

Irish Language & Culture 3

Irish Dialects

Irish Literature 3

Scottish Gaelic

Year 5:

Early Modern & Classical Irish

Research Dissertation/Project

Advanced Structure & Style in Irish

Attendance:

Five years part-time (Successful completion of Diploma in Irish Language permits entry at Year 2).



Louise Moran, CCA  
 Local Government Auditor

## Northern Ireland Audit Office

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William Harrington  
 Chief Executive  
 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
 Mangham Road  
 Newry  
 BT94 8AD

30 October 2014

Dear Sir,

### AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT OF NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 2015-16

1. As the Local Government Auditor, I am required to report to you on whether, in my opinion, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (the Council) has established arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions in the introductory year of the commencement of Part 12 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 Act (the Act).
2. The responsibilities of councils and the Local Government Auditor for the introductory year are set out in the Department of the Environment (the Department) 'Guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement' (the Guidance), which was published in July 2014.
3. In this introductory year, the Council was required to carry out the following arrangements in order to meet its statutory responsibilities:
  - identify (at least) one performance improvement objective by 31 May 2015. This could form part of the Council's corporate plan, but must have been recorded in the correct position in the Act and duly identifiable as a performance improvement objective;





6. In my letter to Newry, Molloy and Down District Council I have established areas of risk to be able to secure continuous improvement to 70%+ in the exercise of its functions for the first accounting year of the commencement of Part 12 of the Act.

Yours sincerely,



**LOUISE MASON**  
Local Government Auditor





Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee	12 November 2018
Subject:	Appointment of Members to the Board of Carlingford Lough Commissioners	
Date:	12 November 2018	
Reporting Officer:	Fady Carter, Director, Strategic Planning and Performance	
Contact Officer:	Líleán McFarland, Democratic Services Manager	

### 1.0 Purpose and Background

The purpose of this report is to advise members on the status for the appointment of members to the Board of Carlingford Lough Commissioners.

### 2.0 Key Issues:

- 2.1 The Civil Front Water Wastewater HS Local Authority has contacted the Council to advise they would now be willing to permit the Council to use 14 representatives on the Interim Carlingford Lough Commissioners.
- 2.2 A total of 7 positions are available for the term of Council.
- 2.3 Meetings will meet 8 times per year and there are no remunerated positions.
- 2.4 Members are asked to consider this updated advice and be in a position to make nominations for these positions at Council meeting on Monday 7 December 2018.

### 3.0 Resource Implications:

None

### 3.0 Association:

None

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	Sister City/ Twinning Issues
<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Grozny, Russia
<b>Date:</b>	12 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Eddy Curia, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Eddy Curia, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance

### Decisions Required

- Agreement to continue discussions with Local Recycling Company in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council re: Provision of recycling facilities in the city of Grozny, Southern Russia.
- To host a small deputation from Grozny in December 2015

### 1.0 Purpose & Background

1.1

Newry Mourne and Down District Council have been approached by the Head of the City of Grozny to develop linkages on a number of issues:

- Development of a Recycling Plant in Grozny
- Development of student exchanges as part of Peace IV Programme
- To send students from Grozny to attend Summer Camps in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

### 1.0 Resource Implications

1.1

- To host a reception for Grozny visitors in December 2015
- Officer time in dealing with local recycling providers re Development of Recycling Plant in Grozny

### 1.0 Appendices

1.1

None

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	Social Investment Fund
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Serena Burt, Programmes Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Serena Burt, Programmes Manager

### Decisions Required

- Report to for value and utility

### 2.0 Purpose & Background

- The Council is covered by two Social Investment Zones – Southern (Legacy Newry and Mourne) and South Easton (Legacy Down). The projects which are being delivered by the Council are split as follows:

#### Southern Zone Revenue Project – Work 1

This project targets 160 participants from Super Output Areas (Newry, Lurgan, Portadown and Coalisland) to engage in a 42 week work placement. Simultaneously the participants complete training and 500 community projects. The delivery agent is Network Personnel and they are managed by the Strategic Programmes section. The group have been provided with an advance of £50,020 which is 50% of the participants wages for 6 months delivery. A Project Board meets monthly to review the progress of the project against set targets.

#### South Easton Zone Capital Projects

There were 3 capital projects clustered by the Zone for submission (Downpatrick Race Club, Ballyhoran and Kilcree) for 3g pitches and facilities. At present this is at Priority 10, they have not been signed off and there is no certainty that there will be sufficient funding available to enable this cluster of projects to proceed.

### 2.1 Key Issues

- There are potentially a number of issues:
  - The amount of funding available from OI MCFM is not sufficient for all projects to proceed as per their submissions. Community expectation will have to be managed.
  - The finance section of OI MCFM, is not efficient in payment of claims.

### 2.2 Financial & Resource Implications

- Revenue projects – all eligible expenditure is claimable from OI MCFM
- Capital projects – the following commitments have been made by Council if these projects are approved:
  - Downpatrick Race Club - £150,000
  - Ballyhoran - £25,000

### 2.3 Equality & Good Relations Implications

- There is an provision of equality and good relations within the submission and Economic

	Appraisals.
50	<u>Appendices</u>
	▪ None.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources
Subject:	PEACE IV Programme
Date:	12 November 2013
Reporting Officer:	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager
Contact Officer(s):	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager

### Decisions Required

Report is for noting to update members on the progress of the PEACE IV programme.

#### 1.0 Purpose & Background

This report will provide an update on the PEACE IV Programme 2014 – 2021. The plan was consulted on by SCJPD through 2 public consultation processes in 2012 and 2013. The eligible area will be Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. The LRO programme value is €229m and up to 85% intervention rate. This new programme will have an alternative focus, as follows:

- Programmes will be more 'concentrated' and focused
- They will be results orientated with clear measurable outputs
- Non delivery could result in a financial penalty or non payment
- There will be an enhanced focus on cross border value
- PEACs can operate on a single jurisdiction basis where contribution to programme purpose and results can be demonstrated

There have been 4 key themes agreed within the PEACE IV plan:

1. Shared education
2. Children and young people
3. Shared space
4. Building positive relations

Council will have to procure and submit a PEACE IV Action Plan which should be designed to:

- Build on the positive experiences of the current programme
- Adopt a strong partnership approach
- Complement other local government initiatives such as Community Planning

The Action Plan will be 3 – 5 years in duration (2015-2021). The allocation will be based on Per Capita and Dependent based on 50% funding (ERDF 85%). Of the four themes outlined above Council will have to produce results and outcomes across the following 3 themes:

1. Building positive relations at a local level
2. Shared space



## 1. Children and young people

The application process will be in two stages totalling approximately 40 weeks combined however the overall process will be longer given the gap between stage 1 and stage 2. Therefore given there will be no approval from the Commission until December 2015 approximately, and then it could be assumed that the PEACE IV programme will not be ready for delivery until 2017.

### 2.2 Key Issues

2.2.1 Directly the following issues are identified:

- No guidance provided yet on the dates for application submission
- Awaiting final terms and budgets

### 2.3 Financial & Resource Implications

2.3.1 Awaiting further data on the submission and resources to complete same.

### 2.4 Equality & Good Relations Implications

2.4.1 There will be an assessment undertaken at the stage of submission.

### 2.5 Appendices

- None

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Statutory Guidance for the Operation of Community Planning
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 12 November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Heather McKee, Assistant Director, Community Planning
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Heather McKee, Assistant Director, Community Planning

### Decisions Required

#### Notes

### 1. Purpose & Background

Community Planning is the key over-arching partnership framework helping to coordinate other initiatives and partnerships

### 2. Key Issues

The guidance is intended as a means for assisting Councils and partners develop their community planning process.

Following feedback from Local Government on the draft guidance a additional paragraph at section 3.18 has been included outlining the Partnership Panel's intention to develop an engagement protocol to strengthen the relationship between central and local government.

### 3. Resource Implications

### 4. Appendices

- The Statutory Guidance for the Operation of Community Planning



Local Government Policy Division

Chief Executive of each council

Work in  
 Councils including  
 LUV District Council  
 Town Parks  
 BELFAST  
 BT2 7EG

Circular LG 28/2015

Telephone

0300 062 1000

Email

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For details

see Circular LG 28/15

Dear Chief Executive

### STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR OPERATION OF COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Department has prepared the attached guidance to assist with the practical operation of the provisions of part 10 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act), in relation to arrangements for community planning.

This guidance is issued under section 11<sup>3</sup> of the Act.

Yours sincerely

**Nicola Creagh**

Enc



**Statutory Guidance**  
**For The Operation of Community Planning**  
**Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014**

October 2015

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## Foreword



Mark H Durkan

Local government in Northern Ireland is undergoing the biggest changes seen in over 100 years. The eleven new councils are now in place and they will be at the forefront of delivering a modernised local government. This will mean bringing decision-making closer to communities and citizens, creating a stronger and more effective local democracy, and improving service delivery. Councils now have some powerful tools with which to shape their areas and communities. Integrating functions such as planning, urban regeneration, local economic development and social housing with council's existing functions will allow for a more proactive, joined-up approach which makes the best use of opportunities and available assets.

The economic challenges, both locally and globally, highlight the need for renewed local government to emerge from a period where they face budget cuts and, increasingly, have to bring the same messaging direct to communities and citizens. Existing structures and arrangements are not fit for purpose and a new way of thinking, organising and delivering services is required. The effective use of a range of community planning tools and instruments – some of which is not just about doing things differently – is what is making things better. Reformed local government will progress new models and approaches. The new councils will be stronger, but also more united, as a region progresses forward. They will work better together, best practice, including special planning, regeneration and community planning, and they will operate within a new governance framework. In moving forward, there will be more challenges and opportunities to make us increasingly self-sufficient and financially self-sustainable and, making new financial, cross-council links which can deliver against the following vision for local government as agreed by the 11 Executive: “... a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core...”

Local government regeneration provides a real opportunity to reaffirm the role of councils and the services they provide, further enhancing the ability of councils to shape local areas and meet local needs and priorities. Community planning aims to improve the connection between regional, local and neighbourhood level through demonstrable working and better use of available resources, with a focus on collaboration between organisations for the benefit of all citizens accessing services. To do that successfully, councils will first need to establish community partnerships for their districts. I expect that through consideration of the guidance contained in this document, Northern Ireland's new councils will be able to tackle their new challenges and become stronger, more efficient, delivering more effective services. They will be citizen focused, responding to the needs, aspirations and concerns of their communities. In partnership with central government and others, they will guide the future development of their areas.

Mark H Durkan MLA  
Minister of the Environment

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1: Community Planning came into operation on 1st April 2015 as part of the full implementation of local government reform.
- 1.2: The new duty of community planning will require councils as the lead partner to be responsible for making arrangements for community planning in their areas. They will work with statutory bodies and their communities to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of an area, community cohesion and improving the quality of life of its citizens.
- 1.3: The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 provides the high level framework for the operation of community planning, and this guidance provides further detail on the implementation of the legislation.
- 1.4: Irrespective of the specific requirements set out in this guidance all organisations involved in community planning must have regard to their legal obligations and the potential impact on the community planning process.

## 2. Background

- 2.1: Underpinning the reform of local government is the Executive's vision of: "...a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core."
- 2.2: Central to the Executive's vision for the local government sector is the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and continuously improve over time. Critical to the delivery of this objective will be an effective, statute-based community planning process led and facilitated by the new councils.
- 2.3: The objectives of local government reform include bringing decision-making closer to communities and citizens, creating a stronger and more effective local democracy, and improving service delivery by influencing place shaping and facilitating greater integration. It will provide for more effective service delivery, by transferring functions from central to local government and giving councils some powerful tools with which to shape their areas and communities.
- 2.4: The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 provides the legislative framework for a modernised, strengthened and streamlined system of local government administered by 11 councils, and includes provisions for effective governance arrangements, an ethical standards framework, a modernised performance management framework, the introduction of community planning and a general power of competence.

- 2.5. The new councils will bring together a number of key functions such as planning, urban regeneration and community development, local economic development, and local taxation, along with their existing responsibilities of providing services and facilities in relation to leisure, recreation, waste management, maintenance, business and community projects and facilities, the regulation and licensing of activities relating to environmental health, consumer protection, building regulations and public safety, supporting the Policing and Community Safety Partnership, and promotion of culture, the arts, sports and tourism.
- 2.6. Linking service delivery, long term objectives of an area, and physical planning and regeneration will change the way areas are planned and will bring sustainable development into sharper focus. Social, economic and environmental issues, and the well-being of citizens, can all be considered together within the framework provided by the collaborative approach of community planning.

### An Evolving Process

- 2.7. Community planning is an evolving process. As can be seen from Fig. 1 community planning is the key over-arching partnership framework helping to co-ordinate other initiatives and partnerships and where necessary acting to rationalise and simplify a cluttered landscape. It has the ability to improve the connection between national priorities and those at regional, local and neighbourhood levels.
- 2.8. Community planning should act as the key over-arching framework for other partnerships and initiatives at the regional, local and neighbourhood level rather than be seen as an additional or parallel process to the various strategies or partnership structures already in place. Existing networks and partnerships should be built upon where they are working well. Where they are not working well, community planning provides an opportunity for all agencies to consider how they can be improved.
- 2.9. Community planning partnerships bring together key participants, and can act as a 'bridge' to link regional and local priorities and resources more effectively. This should be a three-way process whereby local community planning partnerships can influence regional direction, but also can help to co-ordinate the delivery of regional priorities, as set out in the Executive's Programme for Government, in a way that is sensitive to local needs and circumstances. Local or neighbourhood priorities should be considered when setting the priorities at the community planning partnership level.

Fig. 1





## A Long Term Process

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- 2.10 Community planning is not envisaged as a new mechanism or new initiative to deliver public services in its own right. As a process, it is a "means" to the "end" of delivering more responsive public services and improved outcomes. However, the process should not dominate the outcomes. The legislative basis for community planning will provide a solid platform but in many ways it represents the beginning of the real challenge for community planning – for the participants themselves and the bodies and agencies that compose these partnerships. The necessary cultural changes will have a longer timescale. This guidance is intended to assist this process.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1. Community planning aims to improve the connection between regional, local and neighbourhood levels through partnership working and more integrated use of resources, with a focus on collaboration between organisations for the benefit of citizens.
- 3.2. Community planning places duties on councils, departments and community planning partners. The process provides a platform for the integration and planning of public sector services and investment. It is vital that the Community Planning Partnership shows strong and sustained shared leadership and commitment to delivering the vision set out in the community plan.

#### Duty on Councils

- 3.3. The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the council to initiate, maintain, facilitate and participate in community planning for its district. The council is the lead partner and is required to put in place a process where it works with bodies to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of its area, community cohesion and improving the quality of life of its citizens. As lead partner the council is responsible for making arrangements for community planning in its area.
- 3.4. The council as lead partner is responsible for:
- Facilitating and managing the process, including putting in place appropriate governance and management structures;
  - Ensuring that the commitments set out in the council equality scheme are applied in the development, implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the community plan;
  - Working collaboratively with its community planning partners and identified support partners to reach consensus on the content of the community plan, and publishing the plan;
  - Working with community planning partners and identified support partners to monitor and review the plan; and
  - Ensuring that community involvement is an integral part of the full community planning process.
- 3.5. Management of the community planning process is the responsibility of the council. The council manages the production of the community plan,

sets up a strategic community planning partnership in collaboration with their partners which will provide leadership in the process, and may set up other supporting structures such as thematic or local area partnerships that focus on addressing more specific detailed issues.

- 3.6. The production of a community plan depends on the council and its partners reaching consensus on the objectives and actions, and the responsibility of the council as lead partner is to work to build consensus among the partners, and produce the plan when the consensus has been reached. The council will have to make a judgement as to when this point has been reached. As lead partner the council must also put in place systems to monitor progress on the community plan and report to the public on progress.
- 3.7. It is the responsibility of the council to ensure that the needs of citizens are understood and are considered during the formulation and review of the community plan. The council should actively encourage local people and organisations to become involved in the community planning process, demonstrate the benefits of community planning, how it assists with delivering better outcomes for citizens and more efficient and effective service delivery, and report to them on progress. The council and its community planning partners should work to ensure that effective public consultations are carried out where possible to reduce confusion and consultation overload.
- 3.8. As the lead partner, the council should champion the process within their own organisation and work to integrate as fully as possible the functions and systems within their remit. They should work to build knowledge and capacity with all groups involved in their community planning process.

### Duty on Community Planning Partners

- 3.9. The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires community planning partners to participate in community planning, to the extent that it is connected to their functions, and the partners must assist the council in carrying out its community planning duties.
- 3.10. The Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order 2015 will name the organisations that are required to participate in community planning.
- 3.11. Bringing together the key public sector organisations is a necessary part of an effective community planning process. Community planning partners will be involved at all stages of the process. They will work with councils to reach consensus on the long term objectives of the community plan and key objectives to be delivered upon, assist with monitoring and review of the plan, and seek participation of the community in carrying out their community planning duties.

- 3.12 Community planning partners work in partnership with the council on the following aspects:
- Development of the community plan;
  - Delivery of assigned tasks identified in the community plan;
  - Monitoring and review of the community plan; and,
  - Seeking community participation in the community planning process, including production and review of the community plan.
- 3.15 While the council has responsibility for facilitating and managing the community planning process, the development of and delivery of the community plan is a shared task between all partners and the council. Community planning partners will be members of the council's community planning partnership and will attend the partnership meetings. Those attending the meetings will be expected to speak authoritatively for their organisations and commit them to agreed courses of action.
- 3.14 Partners will work collectively to identify the vision and long-term objectives for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. The further development of key themes, identification and delivery of actions is envisaged to be a shared task. It is expected that partners will take a lead role on delivering actions where they are appropriate to the responsibilities of their organisation. It is the responsibility of community planning partners and the council to reach consensus on the objectives and actions contained in the plan.
- 3.15 Community planning partners see effectively "champions" for the process. They are responsible for demonstrating the benefits of collaborative approaches to community planning, and how it assists with delivering better outcomes for citizens and more efficient and effective service delivery. Partners should also encourage local people and organisations to become involved in the community planning process, which will influence decisions on the direction and policy of local service providers with which they interact.
- 3.16 Partners can use their learning through their role in community planning to gain a better understanding of local issues. This will enable them to consider the needs identified by various councils when developing policy and planning services at the regional level. They should actively seek to integrate community planning into their corporate and business planning regimes.

### Duty on Departments

- 3.17 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires that in exercising any function which might affect community planning, every Northern Ireland

departments must promote and encourage community planning, and have regard to any implications of a community plan for the exercise of a department's functions.

- 3.18. To provide clarity to these requirements and to strengthen the links between central and local government, the Partnership Panel for Northern Ireland has agreed to develop a generic engagement protocol that clearly establishes the nature of the relationship between central and local government. The precise terms of the protocol will be drafted collaboratively by central and local government and will aim to underpin the existing commitment from both sides to work together constructively to deliver improved outcomes for local people. The protocol is currently under development and is subject to Executive approval.
- 3.19. With councils now having a wider remit and greater role in delivering on commitments in the Programme for Government, departments will be working more closely with councils on the delivery of central government strategies and programmes.
- 3.20. The community planning process provides a platform for the integration and planning of public sector services and investment, with the focus being on tackling cross-cutting issues that require a collaborative approach for the benefit of citizens. Therefore, departments should engage with councils when developing their strategies and delivery structures on the relationship with community plans and community planning structures at the local level.
- 3.21. Departments should seek to integrate community planning outcomes into their corporate and business planning. They should learn from the local service providers for which they are responsible about how community planning assists with delivering better outcomes for citizens and more efficient and effective service delivery. Gaining a better understanding of local issues will positively influence their forward planning processes. It will enable them to consider the needs identified by various councils when developing policy and planning services at the regional level.
- 3.22. Within the context of the changing working environment between local and central government, more integrated working will be taking place on a number of fronts including the creation of the Partnership Panel. It is possible that departments which directly deliver services locally may be invited to participate in community planning at the local level, and it is for each department to consider the implications of this in consultation with local government. It is anticipated that departments will make every effort to respond positively to such requests. At the same time, councils should recognise that departments have responsibilities to their Ministers and that that is their first priority. However, taking into account Ministerial responsibilities, departments should ensure that community planning is included in corporate and business planning documents and reflected in their strategic planning structures.

## The Community

3.23 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the council and its community planning partners to seek the views of the community, encourage them to express their views, and take their views into account in the community planning process including those matters relevant to the statutory equality and good relations duties (i.e. presenting the equality and good relations screening/assessment with the proposals). The Community Planning Partnership should ensure they make full use, where possible and appropriate, of the statement of community involvement prepared for the local development plan process. The community planning process includes the production and review of the community plan.

3.24 The legislation reflects the Department's understanding of "community" in its widest sense. It states that the council must seek participation and views from:

- Residents in the district;
- Persons who are not resident but receive services in the district from the council or its community planning partners;
- Representatives of auxiliary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the district;
- Representatives of businesses in the district;
- Other persons interested in the social, economic or environmental well-being of the area.

3.25 The wider community: The community has the opportunity to provide input on their views of the area and their needs, which will assist the council and its community planning partners with formulating the evidence base upon which decisions on the content of the community plan and its review can be based.

3.26 Through the community planning process the community can expect to be consulted and engaged on the social, environmental and economic issues of the planning and development of their area, and on the planning and delivery of services.

3.27 Community and voluntary sector: Community and voluntary organisations have a crucial role to play in improving the quality of life for local communities through their expertise in effectively engaging citizens, services users and potential users through service design, commissioning, procurement and evaluation, through joint delivery partnerships, through contributing to a mixed economy of service provision and through engagement in scrutiny and review of services.

- 3.28 The sector is often best placed to reason and involve those sections of the community that the mainstream public sector may find hard to reach, and to access funding that is not available to public bodies. Specific efforts should be made to involve representatives from under-represented groups in the wider community planning structures, so that all section 75 groups have a voice in the process.
- 3.29 Community and voluntary organisations speaking on behalf of others in the community planning process should ensure that they have a fully representative and accountable structure that mandates them to do so.
- 3.30 Business: The private sector should be fully involved in the community planning process, as it is a significant user and supplier of local services, as well as a key provider of local employment. Business activity contributes both directly and indirectly to community prosperity and quality of life.
- 3.31 Councils and their partners should build on approaches to business involvement that have already been shown to work and should ensure that local businesses, economic development agencies, local chambers of commerce, trade union councils and other representative organisations are properly engaged in community planning.

### Support Partners

- 3.32 It is recognised that there are a wide range of businesses including representatives of people carrying on businesses in the district, voluntary organisations, community and other groups which make vital contributions to promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area and which may be involved in the process. These partners may have an interest and level of influence that is more locally or theme based, or have a particular skill that can assist with certain aspects of the community planning process.
- 3.33 Partnerships can invite other support partners to join their community planning process according to the priorities and needs of their particular area. These support partners may be organisations that can assist with the development and/or delivery of the community plan.
- 3.34 Partnerships should ensure that private sector interests are properly represented and should aim to include local business organisations as support partners.
- 3.35 Their role is on a voluntary basis, and the support partners should agree their role and extent to which they participate in the community planning process with the partnership. Their role will be similar to the statutory community planning partner's role, and they may be invited to join the strategic community planning partnership or a sub-group in relation to a particular theme or area, or to input at certain stages of the process due to their particular expertise, for example facilitation or community

engagement. A representative will be expected to attend the relevant meetings, speak authoritatively for their organisation and commit the organisation to agreed courses of action.

- 3.36 In determining support partners to participate in the community planning process partnerships should ensure they use a clear selection that is reflective of the organisations role in the delivery of community planning outcomes. Partnerships may wish to consider drawing up an assessment tool to assist in such an assessment.



## 4. Partnership Structure and Governance

### The Community Planning Partnership

- 4.1. It is for each council to decide upon an appropriate governance structure for its area. This could involve the re-establishment of a strategic partnership board. There are a variety of possible operating models for a strategic partnership, for example, it may take a broader membership with a consultative remit or it may have fewer partners with a narrower focus on delivering key outcomes. Membership of the strategic partnership is likely to include elected members, council officials, statutory community planning partners and other key community stakeholders. It is likely the partnership board will consist of representation at a senior level within an organisation able to set the strategic direction for the local area.
- 4.2. The process will be led by this strategic Partnership, the purpose of which is to provide strategic direction and drive of the process, support, encourage and pursue joint working where it will reap better outcomes for citizens, based on ambitious joint planning and delivery of services.
- 4.3. Below the strategic Partnership there is the option of setting up other supporting structures such as thematic or local area partnerships that will focus on addressing more specific detailed and local issues. The support partners are likely to feature prominently at this level, where their interest and level of influence is more locally or theme based, or relevant to a particular stage of the community planning process.
- 4.4. There are some key issues that the council and its community planning partners may wish to consider when setting up the Partnership structure and its operation:
- **Ensure effective participation of all groups.** The council and its community planning partners will need to ensure opportunities for the full participation of all section 75 groups.
  - **Optimise information and expertise from existing partnership structures to inform the Partnership:** There will already be many existing partnership structures in operation in the council district. Where groups are operating well it would be beneficial to establish links between existing structures and the community planning structure. There could be opportunities to integrate the new structure into the community planning situation, model to seek officials or elected representatives that provide dual representation in existing structures and within the community planning structure to optimise their expertise and bring existing information to inform the evidence base for community planning. Existing Policing and Community Safety Partnerships are an obvious example of an already established partnership that could be incorporated within community planning, utilising key personnel and evidence base information.

- **Utilise existing partnerships to deliver on the community plan:** Existing partnerships that are already delivering successfully can be incorporated within the delivery structures and asked to deliver/lead on actions contained in the community plan. For example: there may be a health partnership that is already established and successfully delivering on health outcomes for the district. Actions contained within the community plan could be taken forward by the same partnership and added to their existing commitments.
- **Maintain an agreed and effective Partnership:** To ensure the Partnership achieves optimum impact it is necessary to keep the strategic Partnership and any supporting structure under review and to allow the structure to evolve and be refined. Review of the structure could be undertaken at key stages of the process reflecting the Partnership's priorities, whether it is formulating the plan, delivering on actions, monitoring and evaluating performance, or conducting a review of the plan. Any changes should be agreed between the statutory partners. Over the longer term the Partnership can review the roles and responsibilities of existing partnerships that sit within the overall structure, and consider how rationalisation of existing partnerships can be achieved where they are not operating effectively.
- **Nominated personnel from participating organisations:** Those attending the meetings will be expected to speak authoritatively for their organisations and commit them to agreed courses of action. It is the responsibility of the statutory body or other organisation participating in the process to ensure it has appropriate representation at meetings. Representation can also change during the course of the process, depending on whether the focus of activity is to formulate the plan and agree to actions, or to deliver on actions where managerial responsibility for service delivery is important. The important issue is that the person attending meetings should have an influential senior role, be able to agree to targets and actions and ensure they are implemented.
- **The Partnership should also take into consideration other cross-cutting regional policies.** Partner organisations that are developing and delivering strategies that tackle particular themes will likely benefit from the platform that community planning provides. It can provide an opportunity to share information to inform the evidence base and policy development, gain a shared understanding of local issues, reduce duplication of effort, and identify opportunities to join up service delivery and planning. The Partnership Panel will also provide a forum for Ministers to highlight and discuss any new strategies likely to be of interest to community planning partnerships.

4.6: **Managing and co-ordinating the process:** The strategic Partnership should ensure that the development and implementation of community plans becomes firmly embedded into partners' managerial cultures, corporate resource and business planning, and budgetary decisions. It should ensure that engagement is co-ordinated across the authority:

and, where appropriate, between organisations involved. A co-ordinated process for evidence collection should be established to underpin the development of clear and fit analysis of this evidence in shared areas and between organisations. Also, the experience of citizens accessing services should be sought with a view to solving problems and removing barriers to integrating delivery across sectors. Effective performance management arrangements should be put in place, including arrangements for scrutiny.

## 5. The Partnership Panel

- 5.1: The Partnership Panel was established by the Executive under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, as part of the local government reform programme. Its aim is to improve co-ordination between Departments and the 11 new councils thereby helping to deliver better outcomes for local communities. It is a strategic forum, where key decision makers from central and local government can come together to develop joined up solutions on tactical issues aimed at improving the delivery of local services. It is the Executive's view that joint policy development and better operational collaboration between both tiers of government, will help tackle the issues that really matter to local people. Working collectively, the Panel will be focused on harnessing the new challenges and new opportunities provided by the reform programme that will support local government in delivering results, particularly through programmes such as community planning.
- 5.2: The duties of the Panel may involve giving advice to any Northern Ireland department about matters affecting the exercise of any of its functions, making representations to any Northern Ireland department about any matters affecting, or of concern to, those involved in local government, and giving advice to those involved in local government. Whilst it will provide a forum for political discussion on matters of mutual interest and concern, its role will be advisory. Nevertheless, the Minister intends that the Panel will be productive in supporting the delivery of improved outcomes resulting from RPA, particularly in supporting delivery of the Programme for Government and the local government agenda.

## 6. The Community Planning Process

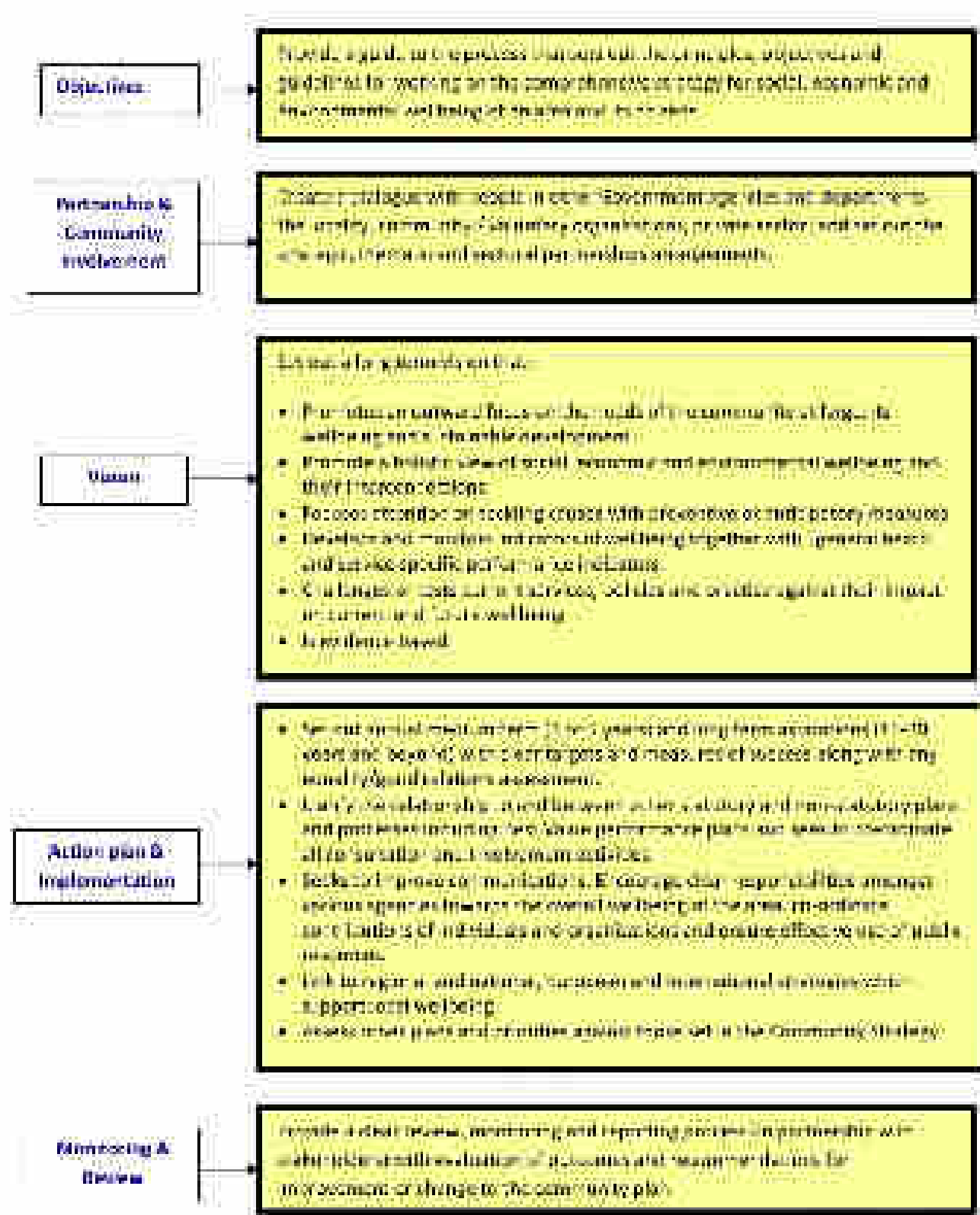
212

6.1. The purpose of community planning is to develop a long term strategy for the area and its citizens based on a thorough analysis of needs and priorities, and opportunities for addressing them. This should generate a 10 to 15 year vision for improving social, economic and environmental wellbeing, and contributing to sustainable development.

6.2. The community planning process should achieve (see Figure 2):

- Development of a baseline of the existing conditions in the council area which includes an equality/need relations analysis or enables the Council to fulfil its equality scheme commitments to future monitoring requirements
- An integrated view of the social, economic and environmental needs of the area in the context of regional, national and European policies and strategies, and taking into account communities and issues that extend into neighbouring council areas and jurisdictions
- A long term vision for the future
- A set of outcomes against which progress can be monitored and evaluated, and
- A clear focus on delivering in the short to medium term to achieve the long term vision.

Figure 2: The Process of Community Planning



## Community Involvement

- 6.3: The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the council and its community planning partners to seek the views of the community, encourage them to express their views, and take their views into account in the community planning process. The community planning process includes the production and review of the community plan.
- 6.4: The legislation reflects the Department's understanding of "community" in its widest sense. It states that the council must seek participation and views from:
- Residents in the district
  - Persons who are not resident but receive services in the district from the council or its community planning partners,
  - Representatives of voluntary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the district,
  - Representatives of businesses in the district,
  - Other persons interested in the social, economic or environmental well-being of the area.
- 6.5: **Transparency:** The partnership structures needs to be clear about the purpose of engagement, and the purpose of the community plan. The main aim of community engagement should be to improve the planning and delivery of services by making them more responsive to the needs and aspirations of communities. However, it is important to be realistic and honest with the community in that the community plan is not a tool to address all of the community's local issues. This will assist in keeping expectations about the process realistic and involves ongoing capacity building at the community level.
- 6.6: The partnership should operate in an open, democratic and accountable manner. Transparency in decision making will be assisted by feedback from the partnership after consultations, consulting the community that they have been listened to and their views taken into account. Community bodies should also operate in an open and transparent and accountable manner. Organisations should be clear about how what communities of interest they represent, and those that they do not represent.
- 6.7: **Inclusiveness:** The community planning partnership should work to ensure that all section 75 groups have the opportunity to participate from the early stages of the process and have their needs and views taken into account. In seeking to engage with all sectors of the community, attention should be paid to engaging seldom heard groups that may not necessarily have their needs identified through the evidence base which provides information on a broad basis. In order to ensure equal opportunities, good relations and improvement of quality of life for all

citizens, views should be sought from all Section 75 groups. Facilitators such as venue accessibility (timing, transportation, methods of communication including the obligation to take account of the needs of speakers of other languages) will be important considerations as will ensuring the obligation to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities is met. The voluntary and community sector will have information on the nature of the local community and in particular information on end routes to reaching seldom seen groups.

- 6.8. Although it is vital that the partnership engage fully with all groups in society and that they meet their commitments in relation to consultation and engagement set out in the Council Equality Scheme as regards all section 75 groups they have, in light of specific government commitments, a particular responsibility to encourage and promote the role that can be played by children and young people in community planning. The Community Planning Partnership should seek to do this through reference to the structure set out in the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People's (NICCY) proposal for a Northern Ireland regional model of engagement.<sup>1</sup> The Partnership should also consider an appropriate method of engagement to involve children and young people and should use a mechanism such as youth forums or other similar arrangements. NICCY can provide partnerships with valuable advice and guidance in this area.
- 6.9. Partnerships should also have due regard to the need to promote the participation of people with disabilities in public life as part of their statutory equality duties.
- 6.10. **Range of views:** The Partnership should consider preparing an engagement strategy to ensure that they engage with a wide range of interests across all sectors of society from development to evaluation of the community plan. There is an often untapped pool of ideas, knowledge, skills, experience, energy and enthusiasm among individuals, groups and communities as a whole which, if realised, can be a real driver for change. A variety of methods should be employed to garner views from communities of place and interest to ensure the full range of perspectives and contributions can be accessed and included. Existing mechanisms, developed by the council and its community planning partners that have already been proved to be effective can be a starting point. A range of methods should be employed such as public meetings, workshops and focus groups, discussion forums and citizen's panels, web based engagement, future search 'visioning' process, interactive displays and community questionnaires. The Partnership should consider the appropriateness of the method to the stage of the community planning process, the strengths and weaknesses of the method, and which sectors of society to which it will appeal. The Community Planning Toolkit provides information on a wide range of methods that can be employed

<sup>1</sup> See further information on NICCY's 8 regional models of engagement and benefits for participation plans <http://cc.ni.gov.uk/Pages/04/04communityplanning.aspx>

and how to ensure the range of views are captured.  
<http://www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/>

### Identifying the Vision, Outcomes and Actions

- 6.11 A vision is a statement of purpose or intent that sets the overall direction for the area over the long term, and will drive the actions of the partnership in the short to medium term. The vision and outcomes identified should be high level, informed by a shared evidence base, and should set the context for local priorities and not be driven by them.
- 6.12 The community plan is a strategic planning tool that should be used to focus on long term districtwide issues where partners can collaboratively add value over the longer term. A community plan, due to its strategic nature, cannot realistically cover every issue that may be relevant to a local community. More localized issues should be addressed through other relevant thematic or area-based strategies that sit within the framework of community planning. Also, there may be issues of critical importance locally that are either short term in nature or are wholly the remit of one particular organisation and are not appropriate to be contained in the community plan. Rather, the emphasis should be on identifying within the plan the broad priorities and themes that require a long term solution and collaborative working across a number of organisations?
- 6.13 The general move in both local and central government is to use an outcomes based approach. The community plan should use such an approach.
- 6.14 As partners will be expected to take all reasonable steps to deliver on the actions assigned to them, it is important that the actions identified are practically deliverable by the organisations concerned. Therefore, it is of benefit to the representatives of councils, statutory partners and support partners to gain an understanding of the various roles, limits and responsibilities of the respective organisations including their legal duties, resource limitations and accountability to other parts of government as early as possible in the process. Partner organisations should also raise possible concerns about deliverability at an early stage. This will assist in formulating actions with those constraints in mind.

### Creating a Baseline

- 6.15 The evidence base will provide a baseline year which decisions can be made and against which progress can be monitored. Qualitative and quantitative information gathered should include:



- Census information and statistics from NISRA on population patterns, housing, economy, health and well-being, crime etc and existing survey information.
- Sourcing relevant central government and service provider strategies and priorities for the area, progress reports on these existing strategies and service delivery improvements.
- An assessment of the key characteristics and assets unique to the area eg. environmental and natural resources, heritage and tourism destinations, retail and leisure, industry and IT, transportation, health and sport, education campuses etc.

6.16 The evidence base should be pooled and shared by all those involved in the community planning process including the Council, its community planning partners, support partners, service providers in the area, key community stakeholders and central government departments. A shared, solid and reliable evidence base based on objective need will assist the organisations and people involved reach a common understanding of issues affecting the area and assist, with transparency in the decision-making process.

6.17 The aim is to provide a baseline upon which decisions can be made and against which progress can be monitored. A solid, reliable evidence base that community planning partners and the Council can agree upon will assist with reaching consensus on the vision and outcomes for the area.

## 7. Key Issues to be Addressed

- 7.1 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires that the community planning process identifies:
- The long term objectives for improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the district.
  - The reference to social well-being includes promoting equality of opportunity (in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998) and without prejudice to this having regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.
  - The reference to economic well-being includes tackling poverty, social exclusion and patterns of deprivation.
  - The long term objectives for contributing to the achievement of sustainable development; and
  - The actions to be performed and functions to be exercised by the Council and its community planning partners (including actions and functions related to the planning, provision and improvement of public services) for the purpose of meeting the objectives.

- 7.2. Social, economic and environmental well-being, sustainability, equality and good relations, and tackling poverty, social exclusion and deprivation are themes that permeate across central and local government, policy and service provision, and therefore should be embedded in the community planning process. The following strategies, which provide guidance on these cross-cutting issues and are relevant to all sectors of society, represent fundamental considerations that should be tackled in an integrated way and reflected in the community plan appropriate to the circumstances of the individual local context.

### Equality, Good Relations and Social Inclusion

- 7.3. Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988 all public authorities have a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and without prejudice to this regard to the desirability of promoting good relations. The Local Government (NI) Act 2014 explicitly makes reference to this duty in relation to community planning. Equality of opportunity and social inclusion should be embedded into all stages of the process along with the desirability of promoting good relations. The partners should consider how the promotion of good relations can be applied to all section 75 groups as community planning should reflect and respect the diversity in a particular area. Tackling longer term issues and problem areas will be assisted by the community planning process, which focuses on a long-term view. It provides an opportunity to consider how equality and good relations can be addressed more cohesively through linking existing equality and good relations programmes with physical planning projects, economic development, tourism and leisure, within the framework of community planning.
- 7.4. The Community Planning Partnership should actively engage with the policies and strategies set out in Together: Building a United Community and consider how these might be enhanced and integrated into both the final Community Plan and the community planning process. As part of their commitment to promote equality and good relations Partnerships should actively consult with both the Equality Commission and the Community Relations Council throughout the development of the plan. Partnerships should also consider the inequalities identified in their audit of inequalities which will have been undertaken in order to inform section 75 action plans.
- 7.5. Community planning will also make a clear contribution to the development and delivery of social policy and partnerships should ensure they fully engage with the policies set out in the delivering social change agenda.

## 8. Sustainable Development

- 8.1. The Partnership should set out sustainable development and integration of social, economic and environmental priorities as a key principle of their community plans and should have regard to the Executive's sustainable development strategy in the development of their community plan.

## 9. Rural Proofing

- 9.1. The Partnership is encouraged to consider and take account of the needs of rural dwellers within the district in the development of its community plan. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has published guidance on rural proofing, which sets out the process. Partnerships should also be aware that DARD is progressing proposals for primary legislation within the 2011-2015 Assembly mandate, subject to Executive agreement, which would place a statutory duty on councils to consider the needs of people living in rural areas when developing, revising or implementing strategies, policies or plans.

## 10. Spatial Planning

- 10.1. The Executive's spatial strategy is prepared under the Strategic Planning (NI) Order 1999 which states that the Department for Regional Development (DRD) is responsible for formulating a Regional Development Strategy 2000 for the long term development of Northern Ireland. Departments must have regard to the Regional Development Strategy in exercising any functions in relation to development.

### Statutory Link between the Community Plan & the Local Development Plan

- 10.2. The local development plan system aims to move away from a narrow land use focus towards a 'place shaping' approach which incorporates a spatial analysis and visioning process. It provides a unique opportunity for the council to shape places for local communities which can be used by all and enable them to adopt a joined up approach, incorporating linkages to other functions such as regeneration, local economic development and local tourism, within the framework of community planning. Therefore, it provides the spatial strategy for the community plan, flowing from the vision for the council area and its communities, and linking public and private sector investment through the land use planning system. In preparing their local development plans councils are required to take account of both the Regional Development Strategy 2005 policy and advice contained in the guidance issued by the department (which will

include the Strategic Planning Policy Statement when published, in final form) and their own current community plan. However there is no requirement to prepare a community plan in advance of the local development plan. If a community plan is prepared after a local development plan has been adopted, then councils should review and amend the local development plan as appropriate, to take account of the community plan.

10.3 The local development plan should fulfil the following functions:

- provide a 15-year framework to support the economic and social needs of the district in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development;
- facilitate sustainable growth by coordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the wellbeing of the community;
- allocate all Tier 1 land to meet society's needs;
- provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within their local area should take place;
- provide a planned framework for rational and consistent decision-making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals; and
- define the spatial aspects of the council's current community plan.

10.4 Common to both the local development plan and community planning processes is that they aim to provide a long term vision/framework to support the social, economic and environmental needs of the area, require an evidence-based approach to decision making, and seek the engagement of the community throughout the process. Councils are reminded that they have duties in relation to consultation as a result of equality scheme commitments. The following aspects of the local development plan process could assist in co-ordinating with the preparation of the community plan:

- Community involvement and statutory consultees - the council must prepare a statement of community involvement<sup>2</sup> containing the strategy for how and when the community are to be involved in the local development plan process.
- The Statement of Community Involvement is a statement of the council's policies for actively involving the community from the outset in the making of the local development plan and in carrying out its development management functions. The Statement is a key tool in increasing awareness of the scope for community participation and involvement.

<sup>2</sup> All 2011 NCSAs - The Planning (Statement of Community Involvement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

Effectively **is** the how, where, when and by what means the council will engage / involve the community

- In preparing this, the council can consider how this will align with community involvement in the community planning process, such as the early stages of shaping the vision and high level outcomes. The council is also required to engage early with a number of statutory consultees in the preparation of their local development plan in order to generate alternative strategies and options for the future development in the council district. The council must take account of any representations from statutory consultees in preparing the plan. This approach will provide councils with information for the evidence base and ensure appropriate environmental considerations are taken into account throughout the plan preparation process. This information and expertise can feed into the evidence base, identification of the vision and outcomes and environmental considerations of the community plan. The council may wish to consider if representatives of these bodies should be included in the of the community plan.
- Sustainability appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – the purpose of the sustainability appraisal is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of plans and programmes such as the local development plan. It must be carried out from the outset and throughout the process, and will help to ensure that decisions are made that contribute to the objective of furthering sustainable development. The SEA process flows from the SEA Directive which aims to integrate environmental considerations into strategic decision making. The sustainability appraisal will assist with ensuring the spatial plan for the area is prepared, taking to account its wider context. It will use baseline data to inform the appraisal of the likely significant social, economic and environmental effects of implementing the local development plan, including reasonable alternatives, taking into account the evidence base. This information can also underpin the decisions on the vision and high level outcomes for the community planning process. The SA process extends to monitoring the implementation of the local development plan.
- Monitoring and review of the local development plan – after adoption, the plan must be monitored annually and reviewed every five years, or sooner if circumstances require it. The indicators by which the local development plan will be monitored should align with the high level vision, outcomes and actions contained in the community plan. Review of the community plan will assist in determining whether the local development plan also needs to be reviewed.

## 11 Collaborative Working Across Boundaries

- 11.1 While the council must produce a community plan for its area, it should take into consideration issues outside its boundaries, where they contribute to the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the area and quality of life of its citizens. There may be services located

outside its boundary that are accessed by its citizens, or conversely there may be communities that lie outside a council boundary including the Republic of Ireland, that access council services. Community planning partners and neighbouring councils should assist each other in providing relevant information to inform the community planning process. Neighbouring councils can also choose to work together to share resources and where relevant establish protocols for working together e.g. Memorandums of Understanding.

- 11.2 Councils are already working together on issues such as health, energy, IT, and environmental resources, which can be considered within the broader framework of community planning. The Framework for Co-operation – Spatial Strategies of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland identifies priority areas for co-operation on spatial planning issues, and states that a key factor in facilitating better joint working is more detailed and consistent information at the local level. It states that co-operation should take place at the regional level in the development and implementation of the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland and National Spatial Strategy for the Republic of Ireland, and at local authority level through incorporation of regional guidance into development plans, community plans and regeneration schemes, and cross border projects.
- 11.3 Reforms in the Republic of Ireland include the introduction of a similar process to community planning called 'local and community planning'. While there are differences in the structures being set up and mechanisms for their implementation, both systems being introduced position local government as the democratically accountable lead partner who will collaborate and co-ordinate with other public service providers to provide for economic, social and environmental well-being at the local level. Since both processes are in the early stages of development there is an opportunity for border councils to consider how they can achieve some alignment and establish mutually beneficial working structures and processes.

## 12. Production and Publication

- 12.1 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the council to produce a community plan, once a degree of consensus has been reached between it and the community planning partners on the objectives of the district and the actions to be taken to achieve the objectives. The community plan must contain a description of the objectives and actions, and be produced and published as soon as reasonably practicable after a degree of consensus has been reached.
- 12.2 Reaching consensus: It is at this stage that the council will be required to make a judgement as to when a degree of consensus has been reached between the partners. The objective should be to develop a shared understanding of local issues, based firmly on the available evidence and the views and aspirations of the community. The objective is not to

accommodate the separate operational outputs of individual partner organisations which should be captured in their own strategies, and it is not to reach agreement by negotiation. It is understood that consensus may take time to be reached, and that it not be possible or expected that complete consensus between all partners will be possible on every aspect. However, there should at least be consensus on the vision, outcomes and key actions as the document is the key strategic long term plan for the local area.

- 12.3. The primary intention should be to building relationships and developing understanding between partners over the long term, and where agreement cannot be reached initially, then there is an opportunity to revisit an issue later when the community plan is reviewed.
- 12.4. Prior to publication, the council should ensure that the community planning partners agree to the content and format of the plan, and the council should publish the community plan as soon as possible after the plan has been agreed.
- 12.5. Content and publication. It is recommended that the first community plan for an area should be published within a maximum of two years of commencement of the community planning duty. The first community plan should be considered as an interim plan, as it is understood that it will take some time for councils' new powers and functions under local government reform to fully bed in to their operational and governance structures and organisational culture. However, it is also important that the community planning process gains some traction within a reasonably short timeframe to ensure its strategic significance influences decisions on the operational and governance structures of the council. The council can use the monitoring and review procedures to amend the plan within a recommended two year timeframe after first publication (more information on monitoring and review in section 13 below).
- 12.6. The title page of the plan should clearly state what it contains, and that it is the duty of the council to publish a community plan for the area under Section 69 of the Local Government Act (NL) 2014. It should contain clear information on the evidence base and how the vision, outcomes and actions are derived from it, who is responsible for delivering on actions and when actions will be delivered to achieve the outcomes. The council may wish to consider publishing separate documents for different parts of their area/communities, but the strategy for the overall area should still remain clear.
- 12.7. The plan should be published in both paper and electronic forms, and made available in other formats when requested. The council should consider at the time of publication if the plan could usefully be published in other formats (such as Braille, large print, audio or summary form) or in other languages.

- 12.6 The plan should be widely accessible and the council should use a variety of means to publicise the plan. The council and its community planning partners should consider how to promote broad awareness of the plan to encourage community ownership and interest in its delivery and progress.

### 13. Monitoring, Review and Reporting

- 13.1 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the council and its community planning partners to make arrangements to monitor progress against meeting the plan objectives, and the effectiveness of the actions taken for the purpose of meeting those objectives. The council must publish a statement every two years on outcomes achieved and actions taken, and community planning partners must provide the council with relevant information to enable the council to do so. The first statement must be produced within six years of the community plan being published.
- 13.2 The Act also requires the council and its community planning partners, before the fourth anniversary of the publication of the community plan, to carry out a review of the plan.
- 13.3 The Partnership will need to agree what indicators they will use to measure progress on the outcomes, and what targets they will set themselves for improvement. They should also consider what information they need to collect for the purposes of monitoring their section 75 commitments.
- 13.4 The council must ensure that, along with its community planning partners, it monitors performance against the agreed objectives and actions contained in the plan. Where agreed actions are not being progressed, reasons for this should be reviewed with the partners and appropriate action taken to assist progress or amend the plan. The council is responsible for accountability to the public by publishing a statement on progress every 2 years.
- 13.5 In more detail, and as required by the Act, this means that:

- a community plan should include a set of actions which district councils and their partners publicly commit to carrying out over the short to medium term
- those actions should be grounded in a full understanding both of priorities and actions that can be taken within a 10-15 year period and of the scope for local partners to realise them. These priorities and actions may be taken with a view to protecting or enhancing well-being over even longer timescales. That may involve difficult choices: all public bodies are subject to legal, policy and resource constraints on their freedom to act.



- district councils should develop appropriate performance objectives accordingly. These will clearly contribute to the "strategic effectiveness" improvement aspect, but other aspects, in particular fairness and sustainability, may be particularly relevant.
- other public bodies should also integrate community planning actions into their business planning processes, by formulating appropriate objectives in line with their existing (and continuing) different roles and accountabilitys.
- delivery of these objectives should inform the continuing development of community planning. All partners should, individually and collectively, consider the delivery and relevance of community planning actions, as part of the process of monitoring implementation. If it becomes clear that one or more partners are unable to carry out community planning actions, or that those actions or the objectives to which they relate have become irrelevant or less important, partners should consider amending them.

### Performance Improvement

- 13.6. Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the council to make arrangements to ensure continuous improvement in carrying out its functions. The council must have regard to the need to improve its performance in relation to strategic effectiveness, service quality, service availability, fairness, sustainability, efficiency and innovation.
- 13.7. There is a clear link between the community planning process and the council's performance improvement regime. Community planning focuses on achieving better outcomes for citizens accessing services, through the collaborative working of organisations to improve service delivery for the benefit of citizens. A successful community plan will consist of a long term vision for the area, underpinned by a set of outcomes identified for key themes, with clear accountability and interim performance measures. The community planning process should achieve better integration of public sector services and investment resulting in performance improvements for organisations involved.
- 13.8. The council is required to prepare an improvement plan containing improvement objectives, which includes the strategic objectives for 10 to 15 years ahead set out in the community plan. The community plan identifies long term outcomes using a solid, reliable evidence base as a baseline upon which decisions can be made and against which progress can be monitored. The council must annually monitor its performance and publish the information, in order to measure performance against its strategic objectives, the council can consider setting short to medium term objectives through action plans or their existing corporate and business plans.
- 13.9. Community planning partners should also build into their corporate and business planning regimes their commitments contained in community plans.

13.10) Performance improvement and community planning should inform, and be informed by, each other. It is expected that that:

- improvement should take full and proper account of the strategic vision as set out in the community plan. This provides the frame within which many short-term improvement priorities should sit. Although there will be other such priorities which do not, either because they are too short-term or too confined to one organisation, they should at least not conflict with the community plan;
- community planning should be based both on an understanding of what appears reasonably deliverable by a district council and/or its partners, and on continual monitoring of how effective that delivery is. If and when it becomes clear, from shorter-term information, that community planning objectives are not deliverable or no longer relevant, those objectives should change; and
- the use of the new flexibilities and freedoms offered by the general power of competence should be influenced significantly by issues identified through the community planning process. Similarly, performance improvement considerations should influence a council's choices in using the general power of competence and how it engages with its community planning partners.

## GLOSSARY

## In this Guidance:

'the 1972 Act' means the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972;

'the 2014 Act' means the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014;

'Councillor' for the purposes of this Code means—

- (a) any person who is elected to office within a council;
- (b) any person chosen under section 11(4b) of the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1982 to fill a casual vacancy;
- (c) any person treated as a non-voting member by section 23 of the 2014 Act; and
- (d) any person who is not an elected representative as mentioned in section 32(4) of the 2014 Act.

'council' means the council of a local government district established in accordance with the Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009<sup>4</sup>

'Chief Executive' means a person appointed as clerk of a council; and

'meeting' means any meeting—

- (a) of the relevant council or of a committee or sub-committee of the relevant council;
- (b) of the executive of the relevant council or of a committee or sub-committee of the executive of the relevant council;
- (c) of a joint committee or sub-committee or a joint committee which includes the relevant council; or
- (d) where members or officers of the relevant council are present, including circumstances where a member or an executive or officer of the council, acting alone exercises a function of the council.