



January 18th, 2018

Notice Of Meeting

You are invited to attend the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 18th January 2018 at 5:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire.**

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

Chair: Councillor T Hearty

Vice Chair: Councillor A McMurray

Members: Councillor P Byrne Councillor R Burgess

Councillor M Carr Councillor S Doran

Councillor C Enright Councillor D Hyland

Councillor O McMahon Councillor B Ó'Muirí

Councillor M Ruane Councillor M Savage

Councillor G Sharvin Councillor G Stokes

Councillor W Walker


Agenda

1.0 Apologies

Adam Wilkinson

2.0 Declarations of Interest


3.0 Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 December 2017 (copy attached)

 *SPR-14122017.pdf*

Page 1

Policies

4.0 Retention & Disposal Policy - Planning (copy attached)

 *Report Retention & Disposal Policy.pdf*

Page 5

 *Appendix 1 - Current Planning section of Retention and Disposal Schedule.pdf*

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 *Appendix 2 - Planning draft Retention & Disposal Schedule.pdf*

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Corporate Planning and Policy

5.0 Section 75 Policy Screening Report - Quarterly Report for period October - December 2017 (copy attached)

 *Report on Section 75 Policy Screening Report - Quarterly Report for period October - December 2017 .pdf*

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 *Quarterly Screening Report October - December 2017.pdf*

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6.0 Every Customer Counts (copy attached)

 *Report Every Customer Counts .pdf*

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7.0 Stakeholder Surveys (copy attached)

 *SP&R - Stakeholder Surveys - 18 01 18.pdf*

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8.0 Community Planning Partnership Board Minutes (copy attached)

9.0 Proposal for Public Information Events on new Measures of Multiple Deprivation (copy attached)

SP&R - Proposal for public information events - MMD.pdf

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For Consideration and/or Decision

10.0 Request by NI Water for Council Land in Dundrum to facilitate new Waste Water Pumping Station (copy attached)

Report to SPR - January 2018 - Dundrum Waste Water Processing Centre.pdf

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Appendix 1 - Media release in relation to the works.pdf

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Appendix 2 - Technical Note 01 prepared by AECOM on behalf of NI Water.pdf

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Appendix 3 - Site Plan prepared by NI Water.pdf

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Appendix 4 - Photographs of Victoria Market.pdf

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Appendix 5 - Map of Council owned land at Main Street Dundrum.pdf

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Appendix 5B - Map of Council owned land at Main Street Dundrum.pdf

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11.0 NILGA Subscription & Work Plan 2018/19

CEO Letter Subscriptions 2018-19 (Newry Mourne Down).pdf

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NILGA Investment Work Plan 2018-19 Newry Mourne Down.pdf

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12.0 NILGA - Initial Response: Department of Finance Budgetary Outlook Briefing January 2018

Initial NILGA Piece to DoF Budget Briefing Jan 18 V2.pdf

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13.0 Lease of Office Accommodation in Downshire Civic Centre to Probation Board Northern Ireland (copy attached)

PBNI.pdf

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14.0 A1 Beech Hill to Clough - compensation assessed by LPS (copy attached)

 *Report to SPR - Jan 2018 - A1 Beech Hill to Cloughogue.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix 1 - Map showing the vested lands.pdf*

Not included

15.0 Clonallon Park - Adverse Possession Claim - Recommendation to settle (copy attached)

 *Report to SPR - Jan 2018 - Clonallon Park.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix 1 - Map showing disputed lands hatched Blue.pdf*

Not included

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

16.0 Action Sheet of the Efficiencies Working Group held on 29 September 2017 (copy attached)

 *EWG Action Sheet 29.09.2017.pdf*

Not included

17.0 Action Sheet of the Efficiencies Working Group held on 25 October 2017 (copy attached)

 *EWG Action Sheet 25.10.2017.pdf*

Not included

18.0 Action Sheet of the Efficiencies Working Group held on 15 November 2017 (copy attached)

 *EWG Action Sheet 15112017.pdf*

Not included

19.0 Action Sheet of the Efficiencies Working Group held on 18 December 2017 (copy attached)

 *EWG Action Sheet 18122017.pdf*

Not included

20.0 Action Sheet of the Strategic Projects Working Group held on 12 December 2017 (copy to follow)

Invitees

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Cllr Terry Andrews | terry.andrews@nmandd.org |
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ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2016 –

ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.

| ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015 | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|------------|--|--|
| SPR/210/2016 | Derelict Site- Daisy Hill, Newry | <p>Agreed to:</p> <p>Declare the land as surplus.</p> <p>Request LPS to provide a current market valuation and a recommendation on the most appropriate way to dispose of the land.</p> | K Scullion | Matter with Estates Department And further instructions awaited. | |

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 13 OCTOBER 2016 – ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.

| ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015 | | | | | |
|---|---|--|----------|--|--|
| SPR/236/2016 | Right of Way Proposal at Ballyedmond, Killowen, Rostrevor | <p>It was agreed to accept the officer's recommendations as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of the details of the proposed Killowen Coastal Path around the Big Moat at Ballyedmond as per the presentation at the meeting, ie. the design drawings and technical specification. A joint application for Planning Permission will be submitted by the Ballyedmond Estate and the Council for the creation of the proposed Coastal Path as per the approved details. | C Mallon | <p>On-going.</p> <p><i>Ballyedmond Estates Consultants updating the Ecological Impact Assessments and collating additional information. This matter is on-going.</i></p> | |

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER

2016 – ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.

| | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---|------------|---|--|
| SPR/257/2016 | Peace IV | Application to be submitted to Shared Spaces and Services funding call for the John Doyle Peace Centre. | J McCabe | Final assessment process underway. Anticipated applications will be presented to PEACE IV Steering Committee late Jan/early February. | |
| SPR/282/2016 | Correspondence from the Department for Communities Regeneration Bill | Council to write to the Minister for Communities asking him to reconsider the decision not to progress the Regeneration Bill. | L Hannaway | To be completed once a Minister for Communities is in place. | |

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 12 OCTOBER 2017

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------|--|---|
| SPR/181/2017 | Recruitment of RTS Director | Further report to be presented to SPR Committee in December 2017. | L Hannaway. | Discussed at Council Meeting 8.1.2018. | Y |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------|--|---|

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER 2017

| Minute Ref | Subject | Decision | Lead Officer | Actions taken/ Progress to date | Remove from Action Sheet Y/N |
|--------------|---|--|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| SPR/210/2017 | Action Sheet of the SPR Committee Meeting held on | Agreed to ensure Council's new website was improved to highlight more easily for users where to access | R Mackin | Ongoing. | Y |

| Minute Ref | Subject | Decision | Lead Officer | Actions taken/ Progress to date | Remove from Action Sheet Y/N |
|--------------|--|---|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | 16 November 2017 | audio recordings, agendas and minutes. Agreed – Action Sheet of 16 November 2017 noted and actions identified in the right hand column as completed to be removed. | Democratic Services | Completed. | Y |
| SPR/211/2017 | Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies – Paper 15: Strategic Settlement Evaluation | Agreed to retain Crossmaglen in Tier 2 – Local and Small Towns Agreed to retain Ballyholland in Tier 3 – Villages. | A McKay | Agreed. Agreed. | Y Y |
| SPR/212/2007 | Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2017-18 | Agreed – Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2017/18, including the proposals for improvement. | J McBride | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/213/2017 | NMDDC Procurement Policy and Procedures | NMDDC Procurement Policy and Procedures agreed – to include the correction referred to in respect of page 23. | K Montgomery | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/214/2017 | Minutes of Elected Member Development Working Group 4 December 2017 | Minutes of EMDWG held on 4 December 2017 agreed. | Democratic Services | Agreed. | Y |
| | | | | | |

ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015

| Minute Ref | Subject | Decision | Lead Officer | Actions taken/ Progress to date | Remove from Action Sheet |
|------------|---------|----------|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|------------|---------|----------|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|

| | | | | | Y/N |
|--------------|--|--|------------|---------|-----|
| SPR/215/2017 | CCTV - SPWG | Agreed to recommendations of the Special Meeting of the Strategic Projects Working Group of 27 November 2017 and of the official concerning authority to enter into discussions with statutory relevant stakeholders. | J McBride | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/216/2017 | Surplus Land at Forkhill | Agreed to note the content of the officers report. | A Robb | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/217/2017 | In-Year Budget Reallocation | Agreed to note the content of the officers report that an in-year reallocation of resources to other non-recurring activities was not considered necessary at this juncture. | D Carville | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/218/2017 | Estates Asset Management Policy – Procurement of Consultants | Agreed – approve recommendations contained in Paragraph 3.1 of the Officer's report that Council approve the procurement of a Consultant Building Surveyor to complete building condition surveys up to the value of the figure detailed in the Report with the cost being taken from the Corporate Services Directorate consultancy budget. | C Mallon | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/219/2017 | Fire Paint at Downpatrick | Agreed – approve recommendations contained in paragraph 3.1 of the officer's report on the contract for Downpatrick Leisure Centre relating to a change in fire paint specification. | C Mallon | Agreed. | Y |
| SPR/220/2017 | Complaints | Agreed to note the report on complaint statistics for the month of September and October 2017, Members commented on the need for more detailed, accurate, timely information. | G McBride | Agreed. | Y |

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|---------------------------|--|
| Report to: | <i>Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee</i> |
| Subject: | Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule |
| Date: | 18 January 2018 |
| Reporting Officer: | Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services |
| Contact Officer: | Marian McIlhone, Business Support Manager Patrick Green, Head of Compliance |

For Decision

Members are asked to consider the report and agree to:

- Amending the Planning section of Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule.

1.0 Purpose & Background

District councils are required to maintain a Retention and Disposal Schedule under the Disposal of Documents Order 1925.

At the Council meeting of 7 December 2015, Council approved the submission of a Retention and Disposal Schedule to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) for approval. PRONI subsequently approved the Schedule and it was laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly in May 2016.

At that time, it was recognised that with the recent transfer of functions to local government and creation of new functions there would be a need to re-visit and revise the Schedule at some point.

As some Planning matters remain the responsibility of the Department for Infrastructure, Councils' Planning Departments have been reviewing the Planning section of each Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule alongside the Department for Infrastructure's Information Management Unit. Having liaised with PRONI, the Planning Department is in a position to recommend a revision of the Planning section of the Retention and Disposal Schedule.

2.0 Key Issues

In essence, the revised schedule for planning files changes the retention period from 10 years after closure/last paper to 6 years. Enforcement files will be destroyed one year after closure/date of last paper. These changes are being recommended for agreement by all Councils in Northern Ireland. Thereafter, the Schedule will be forwarded to PRONI for Government approval.

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| | |
| 3.0 | <p><u>For Decision</u></p> <p>To agree the proposed amendments set out at Appendix 2 in respect of the Planning section of Council’s Retention and Disposal Schedule.</p> |
| 4.0 | <p><u>Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There will be a reduction in storage costs for files over 6 years old once these are destroyed.</p> |
| 5.0 | <p><u>Appendices</u></p> <p>Appendix 1 – Current Planning section of the Retention and Disposal Schedule Appendix 2 – Proposed Planning section of the Retention and Disposal Schedule</p> |
| | |

Appendix 1

| SECTION: PLANNING | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| Sub-work Area | Example of records | Statutory provisions/Authority | Retention Period | Action at end of specified retention period | |
| Development Management | <p>Planning Applications – includes outline permission, Reserved matters and full permission</p> <p>Records associated with Certificates of Alternative Development Value, lawfulness proposed Use/Development, Lawfulness existing Use/Development</p> | <p>See at end of section</p> <p>Planning Act (NI) 2011</p> <p>The Planning Regulations (Northern Ireland (2015)</p> | 10 years after closure | Retain a Public Register. Appraisal and Review by PRONI and the Council | |
| | Public Register | Planning Act (NI) 2011 | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council | |
| | EIA Assessment Register | | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council | |
| | Section 26 Register | | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council | |
| Enforcement | Records associated with the execution of Enforcement procedures in relation to Environmental Protection and Built Environment functions | <p>Planning Act (NI) 2011</p> <p>The Planning Regulations (Northern Ireland (2015)</p> | <p>1 year after closure if no enforcement or legal action taken</p> <p>Major cases of significant public interest – transfer to PRONI 5 years after closure</p> | Appraisal and Review by PRONI and the Council | |

| SECTION: PLANNING | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| Sub-work Area | Example of records | Statutory provisions/Authority | Retention Period | Action at end of specified retention period | |
| Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) Conservation Listed Buildings | Records associated with consents to fell/top a tree covered by a TPO, demolish within a Conservation Area, Hazardous substances on land, work on listed buildings and work on scheduled Monuments | The Planning (Trees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 The Planning (Conservation Area)) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 The Planning (Hazardous Substances)) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) Conservation Listed Buildings | Appraisal and Review by PRONI and the Council | |
| Enquiries | Pre Application Discussions Applications for Property Certificates Request for advice/opinion on development proposals | The Planning Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council | |
| Advertisements | Applications for consent to display an advertisement | The Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | 3 years after closure | Appraisal and Review by PRONI and the Council | |
| Statutory Charges | Records associated with requested to release a Statutory Charge | The Land Development Values (Compensation) Act NI (1965) | 7 years after closure | Appraisal and Review by PRONI and the Council | |
| Development Plan | Records associated with all aspects of the process, preparation and publication of development plans from plan initiation to plan adoption stages | The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | 10 years after closure | Appraisal and Review by PRONI and the Council | |
| *** ALL LEGACY PLANNING RECORDS INHERITED FROM DOE *** | | | | | |

PLANNING - STATUTORY PROVISIONS CONTENTS

- The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
- Explanatory Notes for The Planning Act.(Northern Ireland) 2011
- Planning (Demolition – Description of Buildings) Direction 2015
- Planning (Control of Demolition in Conservation Areas) Direction 2015
- Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2015
- Planning (Notification of Councils own Applications) Direction 2015
- The Planning (2011 Act) (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 25 (C.2))
- The Planning (2011 Act) (Commencement No. 3) and (Transitional Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 49 (C5)).
- The Planning General Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 39 – with amendment S.R. 2015 No. 176 attached to front)
- The Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 40)
- The Planning (Claims for Compensation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 58)
- The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 61)
- The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 62)
- The Planning (Statement of Community Involvement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 63)
- The Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 66)
- The Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 70)
- The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 71)
- The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 72)
- The Planning (Fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 73)
- The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 74)
- The Planning (Trees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 84)
- The Planning (Management of Waste by Extractive Industries) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 85)
- The Planning (Conservation Areas) (Demolition) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 107)
- The Planning (Listed Buildings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 108)
- The Certificates of Alternative Development Value Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 174)
- The Planning (Avian Influenza) (Special Developments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 175)
- The Planning General (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 176 – attached to S.R. 2015 No. 39)
- The Planning (Conservation Areas) (Consultation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 177)
- The Planning (Modification and Discharge of Planning Agreements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 187)
- The Planning (Simplified Planning Zones) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 188)
- The Planning (Inquiry Procedure) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 189)
- The Planning (Amount of Fixed Penalty) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (S.R. 2015 No. 280)

Appendix 2

SECTION 16.2: PLANNING - Paper and Electronic Records

| Sub-work Area – Basic Work Activities | Example of Records | Statutory provisions/Authority | Retention Period | Action at end of administrative life of record (and retention period) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Development Management | Public Register as per Section 242 | Planning Act (NI) 2011 | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council |
| | Planning Applications Files to include but not exclusive to:- (Outline/Full/Reserved Matters/Pre Application Discussion/Pre Application Enquiry/Non Material Change/Certificate of Lawful Use or Development/Proposal of Application Notice/Listed Building Consent/Advertising Consent/Discharge of Condition/Hazardous Substance Consent/TPO's) | | 6 years (after date of last paper in the file) | Destroy |
| | Public Register of Section 26 (Regionally Significant Applications) & Section 29 (Call-In Applications) | Planning Act (NI) 2011 | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council |
| | Applications for Certificate of Alternative Development Value (CADV's) | The Certificates of Alternative Development Value Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | 6 years (after date of last paper in the file) | Destroy |
| | EIA Assessment Register | The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council |
| Enforcement | Register of Enforcement Notices | Planning Act (NI) 2011 | Permanent | Permanent retention by Council |
| | Enforcement Files | Planning Act (NI) 2011 | 1 year after Case Close | Destroy |
| Development Plan | Records associated with all aspects of the process, preparation and publication of development plans from plan initiation to plan adoption stages. | The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | Background Information - 6 years after adoption of plan | Destroy |
| | | | Published Plan | Permanent Retention by Council. Transfer a copy to PRONI after 6 years |
| | Records associated with Publications (Conservation Area Design Booklets, Design Guides etc.) | The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 | Background Information - 6 years after publication. | Destroy |
| | | | Publications | Permanent Retention by Council. Transfer a copy to PRONI after 6 years |

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| Report to: | Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 18 January 2018 |
| Subject: | Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2017 |
| Reporting Officer (Including Job Title): | Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy |
| Contact Officer (Including Job Title): | Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy |

Decisions required:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration to agreement to the following:

- To note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2017.

| | |
|------------|---|
| 1.0 | Purpose and Background: |
| 1.1 | <p>In line with Council's Section 75 statutory duties and commitments within our approved Equality Scheme, policy screening reports are published quarterly.</p> <p>The Quarterly Report for the period October - December 2017, including screening reports, is available on Council's website www.newrymournedown.org. This information has also been forwarded to all equality consultees.</p> |
| 2.0 | Key issues: |
| 2.1 | <p>As per the Council's approved Equality Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies Council proposes to adopt must be equality screened, prior to implementation, to assess the likely impact of the policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. • Council must publish quarterly reports on equality screening which are available on Council's website and forwarded to equality scheme consultees. |
| 3.0 | Recommendations: |
| 3.1 | To note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2017. |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | No financial or resources implications are anticipated. |
| 5.0 | Equality and good relations implications: |
| 5.1 | <p>No equality and good relations implications are anticipated.</p> <p>Publishing quarterly reports, including screening reports, making them available on Council's website www.newrymournedown.org, and forwarding this information to all equality consultees is in accordance with the commitments contained within the Council's approved Equality Scheme.</p> |
| 6.0 | Appendices |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2017. |

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Section 75 Policy Screening Report
Quarterly Report October - December 2017

| Policy Number | Policy | Details of policy | Screening Outcome |
|----------------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| 162 | Safeguarding Policy | <p>The policy sets out the Council's framework for safeguarding and aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote zero tolerance of harm to all children and adults at risk; • Influence the way the organization thinks about harm to children and adults at risk by embedding a culture which recognizes every person's right to respect and dignity, honesty, humanity and compassion in every aspect of their life; • Establish clear procedures for reporting and responding to concerns / incidents; • Ensure safe recruitment, selection and other relevant Human Resources procedures are integral in creating safe environments for children and adults at risk; • Ensure effective and co-ordinated multi-agency responses are provided; • Promote a continuous learning approach to safeguarding. | No EQIA considered necessary |
| | Establishment of an Irish Language Bursary Scheme (24/10/17) | The purpose of the suggested Irish Language Bursary Scheme would be to assist individuals to improve Irish Language skills through providing scholarships or bursaries for accredited Irish language courses, including Gaeltacht colleges, intensive courses and third level courses. | No EQIA considered necessary |
| | Establishment of an Irish Language Bursary Scheme | The purpose of the Irish Language Bursary Scheme is to assist individuals to improve Irish Language skills through providing scholarships or bursaries for accredited Irish language courses, | No EQIA considered necessary |

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| | (updated 2/11/17) | including Gaeltacht colleges, intensive courses and third level courses. | |
| | Establishment of a Financial Assistance Scheme – re: Irish Language (24/10/17) | <p>Initially it was suggested the financial assistance scheme would have three specific themes, as follows:</p> <p>Theme 1: Irish language community renewal and development This theme would be an open call for projects / initiatives that encourage Irish language community capacity building, mentoring and volunteering. It is envisaged that this scheme will inspire better developed Irish language communities to partner with newer or developing language communities to share resources and build better networks and encourage volunteering.</p> <p>Theme 2: Positively engaging the Irish language This theme would be an open call for community engagement projects / initiatives to build positive relations, raise awareness and understanding, address perceptions and promote respect for the Irish language.</p> <p>Theme 3: Minority language scheme This would be an open call for projects / initiatives that facilitates the promotion and development of minority languages.</p> | No EQIA considered necessary |
| | Establishment of a Financial Assistance Scheme – re: Irish Language (updated 2/11/17) | <p>Following consideration of the initial suggestion, it was proposed and agreed the financial assistance scheme will have two specific themes as follows:</p> <p>Theme 1: Irish language community renewal and development This theme would be an open call for projects / initiatives that encourage Irish language community capacity building, mentoring and volunteering. It is envisaged that this scheme will inspire better developed Irish language communities to partner with newer or</p> | No EQIA considered necessary |

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| | | <p>developing language communities to share resources and build better networks and encourage volunteering.</p> <p>Theme 2: Positively engaging the Irish language This theme would be an open call for community engagement projects /initiatives to build positive relations, raise awareness and understanding, address perceptions and promote respect for the Irish language.</p> | |
| | Upgrade to Narnia Trail, Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor | The proposed upgrade is to increase dwell time on the Narnia Trail | No EQIA considered necessary |
| | Proposed phased withdrawal of the provision of public space and facilities-based CCTV | <p>The following actions are proposed:</p> <p><u>Public Space CCTV</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a phased withdrawal from the provision of public space CCTV throughout 2018-19 by not repairing faulty public space cameras (full withdrawal to be completed by 31 March 2019); <p><u>Facilities-Based CCTV</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the shutting-down of all non-General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant facilities-based systems (following a risk assessment of each facility); and the adoption of a risk-based approach to the future provision of CCTV in other Council facilities. <p><u>Additional outcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential transfer of the ownership of the Council's public space CCTV systems at no cost. | No EQIA considered necessary |

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| Report to: | Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 18 January 2018 |
| Subject: | "Every Customer Counts" commitment |
| Reporting Officer (Including Job Title): | Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy |
| Contact Officer (Including Job Title): | Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer |

Decisions required:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and agree to the Council signing up to the "Every Customer Counts" commitment.

1.0 Purpose and Background:

1.1 The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) has developed the "Every Customer Counts" initiative to support Northern Ireland traders seeking to promote accessible services. The goal is to encourage businesses to take a moment to use our free self-assessment tool and consider how open their services currently are to disabled people.

An accessible business is one that is equally open to all potential customers, including the approximately 375,000 people in Northern Ireland who have a disability.

Every business has a legal duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people can access their services but there are many other reasons why you should stop and consider how accessible your business currently is. These include:

- Enabling customers of all ages and abilities to access your services could widen your customer base.
- A disabled customer can often quickly become a loyal customer who may also bring their friends and family, meaning repeat business for you.
- We're all getting older, the market and need for accessible services and products will continue to grow in the future.

1.2 Newry and Mourne District Council's Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate is working in partnership with the Equality Commission, Autism Initiatives and local businesses to encourage the designation of Newcastle as an Autism Friendly town.

To demonstrate Council's corporate commitment to the initiative it is proposed that Council also become a signatory to the 'Every Customer Counts' Commitment statement. It is envisaged registering this commitment will also help to encourage more businesses to consider the benefits of reviewing their current accessibility standards.

The 'Every Customer Counts' Commitment will tell our customers that accessible services are important and we welcome reasonable adjustment requests.

All companies that register are sent an Every Customer Counts window sticker which can be displayed to communicate their commitment to customers. This will tell your customers that

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| | <p>we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the accessibility of our services; • make reasonable adjustments for disabled customers. |
| 1.3 | <p>The “Every Customer Counts” commitment statement is as follows:</p> <p><i>[Company name] aim to provide a service that all our customers can use and in a manner that respects dignity, independence and choice.</i></p> <p><i>Consistent with our vision of being a business accessible to everyone we will carry out regular reviews of our services to help us to identify and as far as possible remove any potential barriers for disabled customers.</i></p> <p><i>It is important that every customer experiences the same high level of service from us and we will make every effort to accommodate requests for assistance or reasonable adjustments from customers seeking to access services that we offer.</i></p> |
| 2.0 | Key issues: |
| 2.1 | <p>Further to making the “Every Customer Counts” commitment Council will investigate becoming signatory to the inclusive customer service policy, undertaking a self-assessment audit to identify any potential service gaps or possible areas for improvement, and utilise the action plan template.</p> |
| 3.0 | Recommendations: |
| 3.1 | <p>Members are asked to note the contents of the report and agree to the Council signing up to the “Every Customer Counts” commitment .</p> |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | <p>As noted in section 2.1, the self-assessment audit will identify any potential service gaps or possible areas for improvement which may lead to resource implications such as those related to training and the requirement to make reasonable adjustments within the workplace.</p> |
| 5.0 | Equality and good relations implications: |
| 5.1 | <p>The proposal would be designated as positive actions related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council’s Section 75 statutory duties and Equality Scheme commitment that Council in carrying out functions has due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and regard towards the desirability of promoting good relations. • Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 which requires the Council, in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need, to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and to encourage participation by disabled people in public life. |
| 6.0 | Appendices |
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| Report to: | Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 18 January 2018 |
| Subject: | Stakeholder Surveys |
| Reporting Officer: | Johnny McBride - Assistant Director: Community Planning & Performance |
| Contact Officer: | Alan Beggs – Head of Evidence & Research |

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| Decisions Required: | |
| Members are asked to note the contents of the report, consider and agree to: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The commissioning of a number of important stakeholder surveys in support of the development of the new Corporate Plan (2019-23) and other important Council strategies. | |
| 1.0 | <u>Purpose & Background</u> |
| 1.1 | The purpose of this report is to seek the agreement of Members to commission a number of important stakeholder surveys in support of the new Corporate Plan (2019-23) and other important Council strategies (including a statutory review of the Community Plan and the production of annual Performance Improvement Plans). It is important to note that since its inception in 2015, this Council has not extensively surveyed its key stakeholder groups. |
| 1.2 | A requirement exists to establish a qualitative evidence base of stakeholder satisfaction with current performance and emerging issues; the outcomes of which can be used to inform the identification of the Council's future priorities. It is therefore recommended that surveys be completed during 2018-20 for the following key stakeholder groups: (1) Residents; (2) Employees; and (3) Elected Members. |
| 2.0 | <u>Key Issues</u> |
| | Benefits |
| 2.1 | <p>It is expected that the results of the surveys will provide the Council with a robust and reliable qualitative evidence base of stakeholder views and attitudes in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current satisfaction levels with the Council as a whole as well as with specific Council services; ▪ The Council's effectiveness at meeting the current performance expectations of its residents, employees and Elected Members; ▪ The identification of any emerging issues and priorities that will need to be addressed by the Council in the future, given its wider civic leadership role and its responsibilities in respect of Community Planning; and ▪ Assisting the Council in identifying social and geographic variations across the District. |

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| 2.2 | The main benefit is that the outcomes of this qualitative baselining exercise can be used with other statistical sources (such as the recently published updated Measures of Multiple Deprivation) to provide a comprehensive evidence-base for the Council to inform future business planning activities, both externally and internally. |
| | Methodology |
| | <u>Residents</u> |
| 2.3 | <p>Likely to take the form of a telephone, on-line and written survey with an anticipated sample size of approximately 700-800 residents across the District to provide a statistically significant return. Quotas will also be established in relation to age, gender and rural / urban locations. It is anticipated the survey will examine three main themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Social & Geographic Background Information – information will be sought in relation to location, demography and Section 75 groupings. This will be used to ensure the sample is representative; ii. Identification of Emerging Priorities – information will be sought for example on the importance of specific Council services, as well as emerging priority service and expenditure areas; and iii. Satisfaction Levels – information will be sought on current Council performance and the performance of specific Council services. Suggested improvement areas will also be sought. |
| 2.4 | Extracts from a number of other Council resident surveys are attached at Appendix I . |
| | <u>Employees and Elected Members</u> |
| 2.5 | Similar to the proposed themes of the Residents Survey, these are likely to take the form of an on-line questionnaire which will enable both employees and Elected Members to confidentially express their views on Council performance and identify future priorities for the Council to consider in the future. |
| 3.0 | <u>Resource Implications</u> |
| 3.1 | It is estimated that the cost of completing all three surveys will be in the region of £30,000-£40,000, and has been included in the rate estimates for 2018-19. Members are asked to note that a number of other Councils have expressed an interest in jointly procuring this service with the Council, which may provide scope for cost savings in the project. An additional benefit of other Councils participating is that it will invite comparisons across Council boundaries. |
| 4.0 | <u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u> |
| 4.1 | There are no equality and good relations implications arising from this specific report, however it is likely that undertaking such a comprehensive stakeholder consultation exercise will have a positive effect on the Council's relations with the wider general public and assist with its future equality screening and rural proofing obligations. Improving how the Council consults and engages with its key stakeholders was also recently a recommendation contained within the Council's performance audit and assessment by the NIAO. |

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| 5.0 | <u>Appendices</u> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Appendix I – extracts from a number of other Council resident surveys. |

APPENDIX I

(Sources: Basildon Borough Council Tracker Survey 2014, Place Survey England 2008)

Example 1

Thinking generally, which of the following would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

Access to nature
Activities for teenagers
Affordable decent housing
Clean streets
Community activities
Cultural facilities
Education provision
Facilities for young children
Health services
Job prospects
The level of crime
The level of pollution
The level of traffic congestion
Parks and open spaces
Public transport
Race relations
Road and pavement repairs
Shopping facilities
Sports and leisure facilities
Wage levels and cost of living

Example 2

Thinking about your local area, which of those things do you think need improving most?

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Access to nature | Race relations |
| Activities for teenagers | Road and pavement repairs |
| Affordable decent housing | Shopping facilities |
| Clean streets | Sports and leisure facilities |
| Community activities | Wage levels and cost of living |
| Cultural facilities | The level of traffic congestion |
| Education provision | Parks and open spaces |
| Facilities for young children | Public transport |
| Health services | The level of pollution |
| Job prospects | |

Example 3

Thinking about the same services, which if any, do you think that the Council could spend less money on in order to reduce costs?

- Household waste collection and recycling
- Recreation and sports facilities
- Street cleaning,
- Theatres and museums
- Environmental health
- Parks and open spaces
- Planning to ensure high standards of buildings and developments
- Youth engagement and activities
- Community centres and halls
- Regeneration and economic development
- Supporting community groups and community cohesion
- Other (please specify)
- None of these
- Don't know

(Sources: LGA Residents Satisfaction Survey 2017, Belfast Resident Survey 2014)

Example 4

Overall, how well informed do you think your local Council(s) keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Very or fairly well informed | Very well informed | Fairly well informed | Not very well informed | Not well informed at all |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|

Example 5

To what extent do you agree that the Council:

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Works to attract investors to the area | | | | | |
| Works to improve the environment | | | | | |
| Works to improve local communities & support local people | | | | | |
| Works to improve the local economy | | | | | |
| Makes _____ a better place to live | | | | | |
| Shows good leadership | | | | | |
| Consults with & listens to the views of local residents | | | | | |
| Provides good value for money | | | | | |
| Is efficient and well run | | | | | |

**NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN COMMUNITY PLANNING
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**Draft Minutes of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board Meeting
of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held in the Mourne Room, South
Eastern Regional College, Downpatrick on 24 October 2017 at 2:00pm**

In attendance:

Councillor Roisin Mulgrew, Chairperson, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council (Board Chairperson)
 Adrienne Adair, Libraries NI
 Mark Bleakney, Invest NI
 Councillor W Clarke, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
 Celia Chambers, Department for Infrastructure (DfI)
 Roisin Coulter, South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (SEH&SCT)
 Nicola Creagh, Department for Communities (DfC)
 John Collings, Education Authority (EA)
 Jacqui Durkin, Department of Education (DfE)
 Councillor Harry Harvey, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
 Mike McClure, Sport NI
 Keery Irvine, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
 Colette Rogers, Public Health Agency (PHA)
 Rosemarie McDonnell, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB – Representative from Strategic Stakeholder Forum)
 Nicholas McCrickard, County Down Rural Community Network (CDRCN - Representative from Strategic Stakeholder Forum)
 Reynold Nicholson, Department for Infrastructure, Roads.
 Heather McKee, South Eastern Regional College (SERC)
 Alison Patterson, Health & Social Care Board (H&SCB)
 Amanda Ford, Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)
 Melanie McClements, Southern Health & Social Care Trust (SH&SCT)
 Louise McMahon, Health & Social Care Board (H&SCB)
 David Vint, Southern Regional College (SRC)

**Council Officials
in attendance:**

Liam Hannaway, Chief Executive
 Johnny McBride, Assistant Director, Community Planning & Performance
 Alan Beggs, Head of Evidence & Research
 David Patterson, Head of Community Planning
 Aisling Murray, PA to Chief Executive
 Sarah Taggart, Democratic Services Officer
 Caroline Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

1. Welcome, Apologies and Chairman's Remarks

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited attendees to introduce themselves.

Apologies were received from Mr J Burns, Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA), Mr E McClean, PHA and Mr H McCaughey, SEH&SCT.

The Chairperson, Mrs Mulgrew, thanked the South Eastern Regional College for hosting the meeting.

2. Agree Minutes from the previous Meeting held on the 27 June 2017

AGREED: On the proposal of Mr L Hannaway and seconded by Mr M Bleakney (INI), the Minutes of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board Meeting held on 27 June 2017 were agreed.

2.1 Matters Arising

Draft Thematic Delivery Plans for 2017 - 2019

Mr McBride said at the June Board meeting, the Chief Executive had advised a report would be brought to the next Board meeting regarding an enhanced role for Partners. He said that this had not been completed as yet and it was his intention to bring this report to the January 2018 meeting.

Summary of the Cross Cutting Issues & Next Steps

Mr McBride said draft Terms of Reference had now been prepared for the Thematic Delivery Groups and these would be tabled at the Thematic Groups meetings in November for consideration.

3. Launch Report/Engagement Update

Read: Report by D Patterson, Head of Community Planning, dated 24 October 2017, regarding the Community Plan Launch Report/Engagement update (copy circulated)

Mr McBride advised he was circulating the Partnership Agreement for signing. Anyone unable to sign the Agreement could contact him directly after the Meeting.

(Ms R Coulter, SEH&SCT joined the meeting at 2:21pm).

Mr Patterson showed a short video simplifying the Community Plan, saying he could provide the Partners' communication teams with the links to the video for use at events that could be linked to the Community Plan. He also said it could be used on social media using **#livingwelltogether**, to promote more strongly what the Community Plan was about.

Mr Patterson gave a brief synopsis of the Community Plan launch, highlighting the following:

- There were 110 attendees from a wider range of organisations in attendance.
- Speakers from Scotland and Louth spoke of the range of models of engagement in their areas.
- There was strong interest amongst participants at the launch concerning the potential future use of Participatory Budgeting to support Community Planning in the District.

A discussion then followed on the potential use of Participatory Budgeting in support of the Community Plan. Representatives from the Health & Social Trusts, as well as the PHA welcomed the discussion on Participatory Budgeting and confirmed their support for it as means of engaging local people and ensuring a better sharing of the outcomes in relation to the Community Plan.

(Ms N Creagh, DfC, joined the meeting at 2.30pm).

AGREED: On the proposal of Ms R Coulter, seconded by Ms C Rogers, that the Thematic Delivery Groups be tasked to explore the potential use of Participatory Budgeting and to scope potential projects for the Board's consideration in January 2018.

4. Update on Thematic Delivery Plans for 2017-2019

Read: Report by D Patterson, Head of Community Planning, dated 24 October 2017, regarding Thematic Delivery Plans 2017 – 2019 Update (copy circulated)

Mr Patterson provided a summary on the current status of the Thematic Delivery Plans. A discussion followed on the need to re-prioritise what could realistically be delivered within the two year period, as well as to identify early wins and assign responsibility to specific Partners for leading on specific activities. The issue of Partners ensuring the attendance of their representatives with sufficient decision-making authority was also raised.

In response to a query from Ms Durkin, DfE, Mr McBride advised a lead Partner had not yet been identified for each thematic group; however this was something he was exploring with specific Partners.

Ms Creagh, DfC, advised that a deadline of April 2018 had been set for each Partnership Board to agree delivery plans. Ms Creagh added it was important to remember there was a requirement for the Board to report back on the progress in April 2019 and this should be balanced with some actual achievements so evidence of changes in the District should be recorded.

AGREED: It was agreed to the following:

- **In advance of the scheduled November Thematic Delivery Group Meetings, Partners to ensure that their assigned representatives are suitably authorised to put their organisations forward as lead agencies.**

- **Additionally, Partners to identify which 'low cost/no cost' activities could be progressed as early wins in support of the Community Plan.**

5. Strengthening the Links between Community Planning and DEA's

Read: Report by J McBride, Assistant Director: Community Planning & Performance, dated 24 October 2017, regarding Strengthening the links between Community Planning and District Electoral Area (DEA) Fora (copy circulated)

Mr McBride advised Partners a workshop had been held in September to look at strengthening links between Community Planning and the Council's own District Electoral Area (DEA) structures. He said the DEA's had a critical role to perform in translating the outcomes of the Community Plan into action at the local level, as well as providing an important feedback mechanism concerning emerging issues and priorities.

Mr McBride advised there were a number of areas that required the Board's consideration:

- Developing a mechanism for how issues could be escalated or referred from the DEAs to the Thematic Delivery Groups for address. He confirmed Officials in the Council were currently working on a protocol for this and would bring back proposals for the Board's consideration;
- Better aligning DEA Action Plans with the Thematic Delivery Plans. He also confirmed this was something that Officials in the Council were currently addressing;
- Establishing a register of good practice so that specific initiatives and projects in specific DEAs could be deployed across the wider District;
- Assigning the Council's DEA Co-ordinators to the membership of the Thematic Delivery Groups; and
- Exploring the possibility of delegating budgets for the use of DEAs and whether Statutory Partners would be willing to make a proportionate contribution.

A discussion ensued, the highlights of which were as follows:

Mr Hannaway advised the budget for the DEA's would enable initiatives to take place and that Participatory Budgeting, as a process, could potentially assist with this.

Ms Coulter, SEH&SCT said joining up with engagement, building better relationships and partnerships with people would strengthen links around the Community Plan.

The Chairperson, Councillor Mulgrew, said it had taken a while for the Community Planning process to bed in and it was not a quick fix project, but about planning for the future. She added if there was better engagement with the agencies and a small budget to support the delivery of local initiatives, this would be beneficial.

Support and buy-in from local communities was critical for their success. The DEAs provided an opportunity to better engage with local people concerning these issues.

Partner contributions may be “in-kind” rather than monetary.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Ms McDonnell, to approve the following recommendations:

- Developing a mechanism for the determining how issues can be escalated or referred to the Thematic Delivery Groups for address.
- Developing DEA action plans in-line with the development of future Thematic Delivery Plans.
- Compiling and maintaining a register of good practice across the seven DEA's (to be used by the Thematic Delivery Groups to exploit opportunities for the wider implementation of initiatives across the District).
- Assigning (the Council's) DEA Co-ordinators to the membership of specific Thematic Delivery Groups.
- Exploring the potential for Statutory Partners to contribute to delegated budgets for each of the DEA Fora.

6. PHA Position Paper – Community Planning

Read: Public Health Agency – Opportunities for Working Together – Public Health Agency and Local Councils.

Ms Rogers provided a verbal update, advising Partners that a report from the Public Health Agency had been taken to the Chief Executive's Forum, SOLACE, detailing opportunities for collaboration with Councils on community planning.

Ms Rogers commented that after discussions which had involved the ‘health and social care family’, 4 priority themes had emerged and that these were the themes the PHA wanted to prioritise via Community Planning.

- Mental health and well-being,
- Physical activity;
- Active ageing; and
- Early years.

Discussion then followed on the clear links between the activities of specific organisations involved in the Community Planning process and that better joined-up working in this area made sense. References were made to Sport NI, the Council, as well as other organisations in the Health family. It was also noted that all Partners had an opportunity to contribute to this agenda through their own workforce practices and incentives.

Mr McBride thanked Ms Rogers for her report, and as a general principle, asked other Partners to think about their own priorities and where they could be included into the Community Plan. He recommended the PHA position paper be referred to the Health and Wellbeing Thematic Working Group for more detailed consideration and should any Partner want to table a similar report in the future, for it to be included on the agenda.

Ms Rogers said she would take on board the comments and consolidate and prioritise some of the input into the Community Plan.

7. Partner Consultation Exercises & Capital Investment Plans

Mr McBride referred to two cross-cutting issues that presented opportunities for the Board to collaborate on in the future.

Referring to the widespread public consultation exercises undertaken by Partners in the District, Mr McBride stated he wanted to establish whether the Board saw an opportunity to better co-ordinate its planning amongst Partners and also to share results (where relevant to the Community Plan's outcomes). He added there were clear benefits in terms of addressing the potential for wider public consultation fatigue, the potential for making better use of finite resources, as well as using the information obtained from consultation exercises to feed into the statutory review of the Community Plan in two-years time. He confirmed that if the Board wished, the could Council compile a list of future Partner consultation exercises in the District and bring it back to the next Board meeting to discuss the potential next steps..

Referring to Partner land and property assets, as well as their respective capital investment plans, Mr McBride advised that Community Planning presented the Board with an opportunity to challenge how, in particular public sector, land and property assets could be used to support the delivery of Community Planning outcomes. He added that if the Board wished, he could table a discussion paper at the next Board meeting to explore how this issue might be addressed.

Ms Coulter, SEH&SCT said it was critical to work in this joined up way as the capital funding was no longer available in many organisations and it may be an idea to bring some details back to the public by April 2019 showing how to maximise existing estate.

Mr McCrickard, CDRCN, asked that community projects and rural development projects coming through would have consideration, as they linked into village plans and renewal schemes.

Ms McMahon, SEHSCT endorsed the previous comments, saying this would enable other discussions and enable a greater sharing and better understanding between partners.

Referring to capital investment plans, Mr Hannaway briefed Partners on the work the Council was involved in with other Councils in relation to a potential City Deal for the wider Belfast City Region. He advised a more detailed presentation would be given at the next Partnership Board meeting in January 2018.

AGREED: The cross-cutting issues of exploring greater Partner collaboration in relation to public consultation exercises and land and property assets / capital investment plans to be considered at the next Partnership Board meeting in January 2018.

8. Schedule of Meetings

Mr McBride advised Partners of the next Partnership Board meeting dates as follows:

- 30 January 2018 - 2pm
- 19 June 2018 - 2pm
- 23 October 2018 - 2pm

Mr McBride said he welcomed the South Eastern Regional College hosting the meeting and would look to Partners to host future meetings.

Mr Vint offered to host the next meeting at the Southern Regional College in Newry and Mr McClure, Sport NI offered to host a meeting at the Tollymore National Outdoor Centre, Newcastle.

9. Date and Venue for Next Meeting

The next Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board Meeting would take place on Tuesday 30 January 2018 at 2pm in the Southern Regional College, Newry. There being no further business, the meeting finished at 3.55pm

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| Report to: | Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee |
| Date: | 18 January 2018 |
| Subject: | Proposal for Public Information Events on the updated Measures of Multiple Deprivation (MMD) |
| Reporting Officer: | Johnny McBride - Assistant Director: Community Planning & Performance |
| Contact Officers: | Alan Beggs – Head of Evidence & Research |

Decision(s) Required

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

- **Host a NISRA-facilitated public information event on the updated Measures of Multiple Deprivation (MMD) at a suitable venue in Newry City; and**
- **The organising of similar public information events in each of the Council's seven District Electoral Areas (DEAs).**

1.0 Purpose & Background

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the agreement of Members to organise a series of public information events across the District in relation to the updated Measures of Multiple Deprivation (MMD) that have recently been published by NISRA.

1.2 These new measures are strategically very significant for the District given their importance to the planning of future public services, as well as providing a robust evidence base for future business case construction and funding applications.

2.0 Key Issues

Updated Measures of Multiple Deprivation

2.1 The updated measures were published on the 23 November 2017 and replace the previous 2010 data-set as the *official* measures of deprivation for Northern Ireland. The measures cover the following domains (categories):

- i. Income Deprivation;
- ii. Employment Deprivation;
- iii. Health & Disability Deprivation;
- iv. Education, Skills & Training Deprivation;
- v. Access to Services;
- vi. Living Environment; and
- vii. Crime & Disorder.

| | |
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| | Proposal |
| 2.2 | <p>Given their relevance and significance to this District, it is recommended that Members agree to a series of public information events in order to disseminate and explain the data to interested parties. It is proposed the public information events will take the form of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A NISRA organised event in Newry City (as part of a wider roadshow by NISRA across Northern Ireland) on the updated measures. The intention would be to invite members of the general public, elected representatives, Community Planning partners, as well as local stakeholder groups (i.e. business / community / voluntary sector organisations) to consider an assessment of the new measures at a District-level. This in essence would be the main event for the District; and ▪ The organisation of a specific information event in each of the Council's seven DEAs. Similar to the District-wide event, attendees would consider an assessment of the new measures at a DEA-level. These may provide useful for the development of future DEA action plans and other local interventions. |
| 2.3 | In addition to these public information events, both Community Planning Partners and Elected Members will be provided with additional briefings. |
| 3.0 | <u>Resource Implications</u> |
| 3.1 | There are no significant resource implications attached to this proposal as the majority of the costs will be borne by existing Council resources. The Council is also currently exploring with NISRA, its own support for these events. |
| 4.0 | <u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u> |
| 4.1 | There are no equality or good relations implications arising from this report. |
| 5.0 | <u>Appendices</u> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Agenda Item: | Insert Agenda Item |
| Report to: | Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | <i>Request from NI Water for land in Dundrum to facilitate new Waste Water Pumping Station (WWPS)</i> |
| Date: | 11th January 2018 |
| Reporting Officer: | Ms Lyndsey Moore, Head of Legal Administration |
| Contact Officer: | Ms Lyndsey Moore, Head of Legal Administration |

Decisions Required

Members are asked to note the contents of the report, and agree to the recommendation at 3.0.

| | |
|------------|---|
| 1.0 | <u>Purpose & Background</u> |
| 1.1 | NI Water has approached the Council as they prepare to begin a £5.5 million pound scheme to upgrade the sewage system in Dundrum. |
| 1.2 | Four sites were assessed to determine suitability for the new Waste Water Pumping Station (WWPS) and the preferred site (Site 1) is a private car park owned by the Council. NI Water would like to buy the Site from the Council for a nominal fee and lease it back to the Council, again for a nominal fee. |
| 2.0 | <u>Key Issues</u> |
| 2.1 | Attached at Appendix 5A, Members will find a map showing Council's land ownership at this location, outlined in Red. When compared to the proposed site plan prepared by NI Water available at Appendix 3, Members will be able to see that for the period of works which is anticipated to be 6-9 months, at least 50% of the car parking on the site will be unusable. The Council does not currently charge for use of the car park so there would be no loss of income. |
| 2.2 | Highlighted in Pink on the site plan is the area which will certainly be unusable for parking during construction works with the area highlighted in Yellow potentially being affected too. However, once the works are complete, only the rectangle marked on the site plan as 'kiosk' will be visible on the site as all other infrastructure will be underground. This means that following the works the car park will still be able to be used successfully as a car park. |

| | |
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| 2.3 | NI Water has provided photographs of a similar scheme at Victoria Market both during construction and as built to illustrate this. |
| 2.4 | NI Water propose that they would purchase the car park from the Council at a nominal fee, complete the works and thereafter lease the site back to the Council for use as a car park for 25 years or longer, again at a nominal fee. During the Lease period Council would be responsible for maintenance of the car park as we are now. NI Water has historically entered into a similar agreement with Ards and North Down Borough Council. |
| 2.5 | The Council land at this location benefited from funding from Tourism NI and the Rural Development Programme. Under the Letters of Offer from both funding sources that funding can be subject to 'clawback' if the purpose for which the funding was obtained dramatically changes within the clawback period. It is not envisaged that the proposal put forward by NI Water would constitute a dramatic change but confirmation from both funders would be sought if Council was minded to accede to the request. |
| 2.6 | The land owned by the Council is NI Water's preferred site however four sites were considered for the construction of the WWPS, the scores of each of the four sites can be found on page three of Technical Note 01 attached and a map showing the top three options is found on page 2 of the same document. |
| 2.7 | NI Water has advised that although possible to construct the WWPS on Site 2, it is not as favorable because the sewer network modifications required to deliver sewage to this site would require excavation to a much larger depth than Site 1. Given the ground conditions it is considered that this would pose considerable additional health and safety concerns than if the Council owned site was utilized. |
| 2.8 | NI Water has offered to work with Transport NI to see if a site access could be agreed which would allow some car-parking to remain usable during construction works and has also offered to provide screening during the works if required by the Council. NI Water has also offered to cover the Council's valuation and legal fees should the transaction go ahead. |
| 2.9 | NI Water use LPS for valuation services as does the Council so should the project proceed, LPS would be enlisted as Honest Broker to ensure any transaction at nominal value represented best value for the Council. |
| 3.0 | <p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That the Council agrees to sell to NI Water the land identified on the Site Plan at Appendix 3 and following the construction works leases the same plot back from NI Water, subject to the following conditions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Council receives agreement from the previous funders of the site, Tourism NI and the Rural Development Programme. • Subject to a valuation by LPS • Subject to completion of legal formalities |

| | |
|-----|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to NI Water being responsible for the Council's legal and Valuation costs. • Subject to the Lease offered being at nominal value and on agreeable terms to the Council. |
| 3.1 | <u>Resource Implications</u> Officer time in liaising with LPS and completing the legal formalities |
| 4.0 | <u>Appendices</u> Appendix 1 – Media release in relation to the works Appendix 2 – Technical Note 01 prepared by AECOM on behalf of NI Water Appendix 3 – Site Plan prepared by NI Water Appendix 4 – Photographs of Victoria Market Appendix 5 – Maps of Council owned land at Main Street Dundrum |
| | |

£5m boost is unveiled for Dundrum village

5m boost is unveiled for Dundrum village

29 November 2017

DUNDRUM has received a major development boost with confirmation that £5.5m is to be invested in a significant upgrade of the village's sewerage system.

Work on a £2m scheme to upgrade the Newcastle Road treatment plant is set to start in the New Year, while an additional £3.5m has been earmarked to provide two new sewage pumping stations and upgrade a mains sewer which runs through the heart of the village.

Major new development in Dundrum has been curtailed over recent years as the current treatment plant is operating at full capacity and could not accommodate additional connections. But that is set to change with the £2m upgrade allowing for future expansion.



While there have been a series of investments at the treatment plant over recent years, NI Water has confirmed it is now ready to start work on a significant upgrade, in a scheme approved by the Environment Agency.

Confirmation of the Dundrum investment came during a meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down Council on Monday night, with NI Water officials insisting current effluent discharges from the village treatment plant are "excellent."

They say the plant has a high-tech processing system but like many of the organisation's treatment facilities, is it fully loaded and requires a major upgrade to cope with future demand.

NI Water said the treatment plant upgrade is part of a "significant network improvement" in the pipeline for Dundrum with senior project official, Lisa Hughes, confirming there are plans to provide two new pumping stations, if the land required can be secured.

"The main sewer which runs along Main Street is also in line for an upgrade and we are currently in negotiations with the Environment Agency to get an overall holistic solution for the whole Dundrum catchment area," she added.

News of the multi-million pound investment has been welcomed by Dundrum Village Committee secretary, Amanda Ferguson, and councillor Willie Clarke.

Ms Ferguson said the committee is aware of the issues in relation to the village's sewerage system and is more than grateful for the money earmarked to upgrade it.

She added: "Any investment to enhance the area and upgrade the sewerage infrastructure is welcome and any new development must be in keeping with the rural nature of the Dundrum area. The proposed investment to improve the sewerage infrastructure will be endorsed by many and help enhance the village."

Councillor Clarke said the proposed upgrade will allow for new development in the village which has been held back over recent years because the treatment plant was operating at full capacity.

"The plant cannot cope with new connections to the sewerage system but that is going to change and it is welcome news that contractors will be on site to begin work on the £2m scheme in a matter of weeks," he said.

"This investment will pave the way for Dundrum's expansion and will provide a boost for the local construction and tourism industry which in turn will provide a welcome economic stimulus for the village. Restrictions on new development were in place but hopefully these will be lifted when work on the upgrade has been completed."

Councillor Clarke added: "The proposed investment is a major boost for Dundrum and will no doubt further improve the quality of water discharged into Dundrum Bay from the treatment plant."

Technical Note 01

AECOM

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| Project: | KS902 Dundrum UID's Kieltys WwPS | Job No: | 60096019 (038) |
| Subject: | Site Selection Report – Summary for Council | | |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

History and Background

In 2012 Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) reclassified Dundrum Bay to Category C Shellfish Waters and a limitation of 10 spills/annum has been placed upon the wastewater catchment (network and treatment works).

Further to this reclassification of the receiving waters, NI Water and their consultants AECOM have completed existing sewer network investigations to determine its condition and capabilities. This report details the findings of the assessment of Kieltys Wastewater Pumping Station (WwPS) and details the necessary upgrades required to ensure an acceptable level of service and also to achieve the requirements of the reduction in permitted spills to Dundrum Bay.

1 EXISTING KIELTY'S PUMPING STATION

Location

The existing Kieltys pumping station is located on McMinn's Lane just off Main Street. The WwPS wet well and valve chamber are both located in the centre of the road. As a result, significant traffic management procedures are required in order to access the facility.

The pumping station control building is located on a very small plot of land between two privately owned properties. The nearest dwelling is approximately 15m from the control building.

Condition Summary

The following section provides a summary of the condition assessment.

- Lifting equipment for pumps did not meet NI Water specification;
- Location of wet well and access covers within the public road does not allow safe maintenance;
- Access covers do not meet NI Water specification and require manual lift;
- Access covers not fitted with fall-arrest system;
- Pump protection equipment not enabled;
- No screening facilities;
- Washwater facilities are not available on site; and
- Ingress of gasses is possible as vents within the building have been sealed.
- Storage is inadequate to meet NIEA requirements.

Proposed Kieltys Pumping Station

A new Kieltys WwPS is required in order to meet NIEAs requirements and to ensure the WwPS can handle the volume of sewage necessary to prevent catchment flooding. The new WwPS should be constructed ensuring that none of the current health and safety concerns associated with maintenance of the existing WwPS remain.

The size of the new Kieltys WwPS has been estimated based on the following main assumptions:

- All proposed Dundrum sewer network upgrades and recommendations have been implemented;
- The number of maximum spills will not exceed that required by the Shellfish Directive (10 per annum); and
- The pass forward flow from the new terminal WwPS at Flynn's to the WwTW will be equivalent to future FFT i.e. 15.5 l/s.

It is estimated that in order to satisfy the requirements of NIEAs reduction in permitted spills that substantial storm storage facilities will be required in the Dundrum sewerage network. The hydraulic network model produced for Dundrum identifies that approximately 325m³ storage below the existing overflow level is required at Kieltys School WwPS. Based on recent pumping station designs, an indicative layout has been produced in order to estimate land-take requirements. The new layout, which

Technical Note 01

incorporates a circular tank (9 meters in diameter x 8 meters deep), will require an area of approximately 620 m² for the purposes of construction, however it is anticipated that the permanent structures will be a kiosk for control and washwater equipment and a telemetry pole. Technocovers for access will also be visible at ground level. See drawing no. 60096019 Fig 10 in Appendix 1 for details.

Assessment of Suitable Site for New Kieltys WwPS

Four sites were assessed using a numerical scoring matrix, with the site receiving the lowest score deemed to be the most appropriate. This report summarises the outcome of the assessment and confirms that Site 1 is the preferred site for the new Kieltys pumping station. This site is located adjacent to Main Street within a private car park owned by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The assessment was based on a review of the following criteria for each site:

- Available Land;
- Size of Site;
- Access;
- Environmental Legislation;
- Planning NI Designations;
- Planning NI Flood Risk;
- Ground Conditions;
- Impact on Community; and
- Sewer Network Modifications.

2 OPTIONS REVIEW

Introduction

Based upon a preliminary review of the catchment-wide and site specific constraints (e.g. available land), 4 sites have been shortlisted for further consideration. Figure 1 illustrates the location of these sites.



Figure 1 - Kieltys WwPS – Shortlist of Sites for Consideration

Analysis of Scoring

Four sites have been reviewed against the criteria described in report section 1. Table 1 below summarises the output of the assessment.

Technical Note 01

AECOM

| SITE NAME | EXISTING KIELTY'S SITE | SITE 1 | SITE 2 | SITE 3 |
|---------------------------------|---|------------|------------|---|
| Available Land | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Size of Site | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Access | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Environmental Legislation | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Planning Designations | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Planning – Flood Risk | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Ground Conditions | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Impact on Community | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Sewer Network Modification | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Total Score (maximum 40) | X | 21 | 23 | X |
| Ranking | Ruled out based on score of 5 in Size of Site criteria | 1st | 2nd | Ruled out based on score of 5 in Sewer Network Modification criteria |

Table 1 - Preferred Site Scoring System

It should be noted that although possible to construct the WwPS in Site 2, it is not favourable as the sewer network modifications required to deliver sewage to this site would require excavation to a much larger depth than Site 1. Given the ground conditions it is considered that this would pose considerable additional health and safety concerns than if Site 1 was utilised for the new Keltys WwPS site.

On the basis of the assessment completed above it is considered that the preferred site for a new Keltys WwPS is Site 1. However it should be noted that a number of risks remain with land acquisition of this site including:

- It may take a considerable period of time to agree acquisition for the land owned by the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council;
- Ground conditions identified on site will require considerable design review to determine a suitable construction technique;
- Planning NI full permission will be required; and
- Liaison with the Council regarding the weekly car boot sale and access during construction will be required.

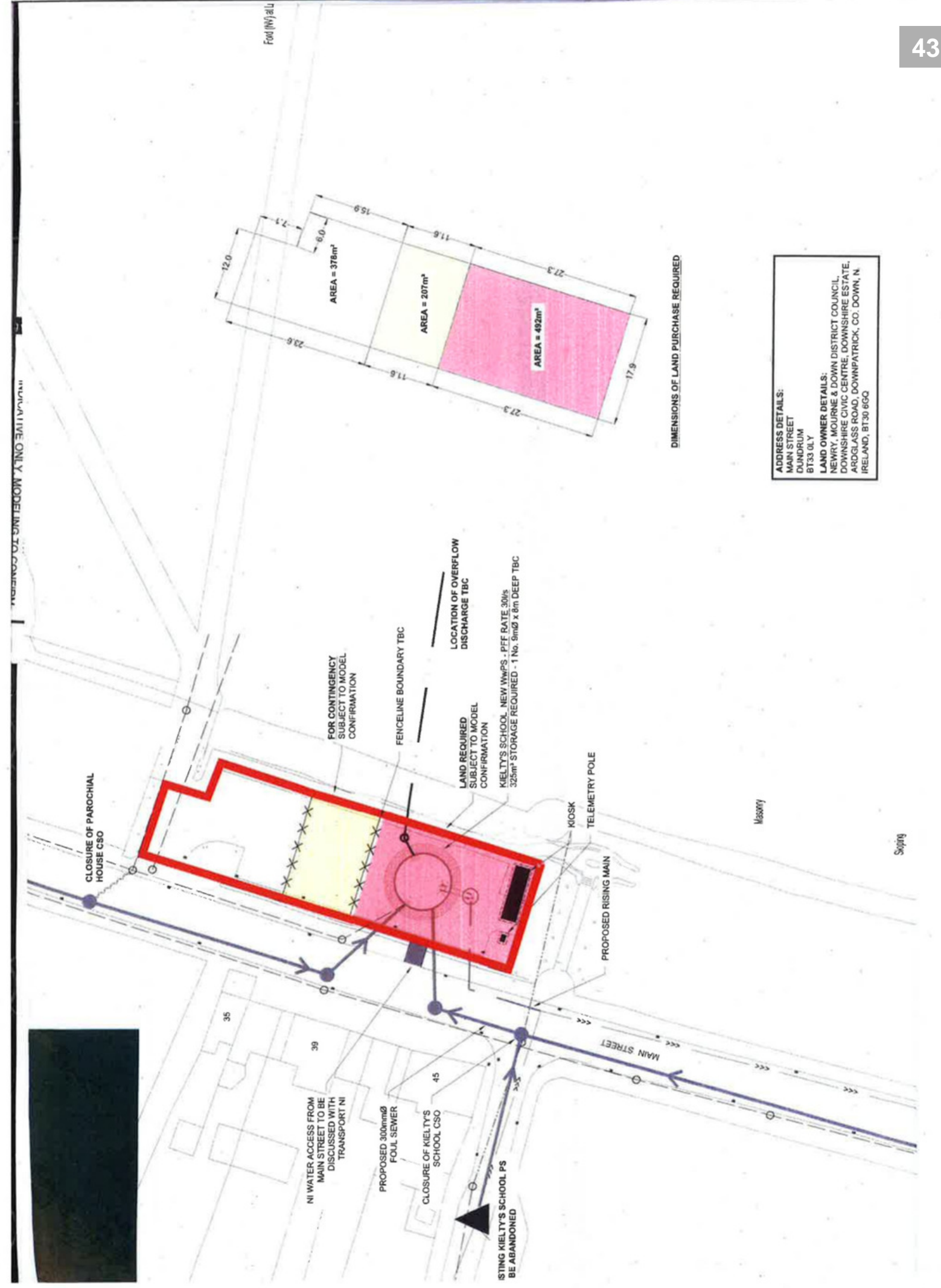
Appendices



40

Appendix 1 – Report Drawings





Victoria Market WwPS – During Construction

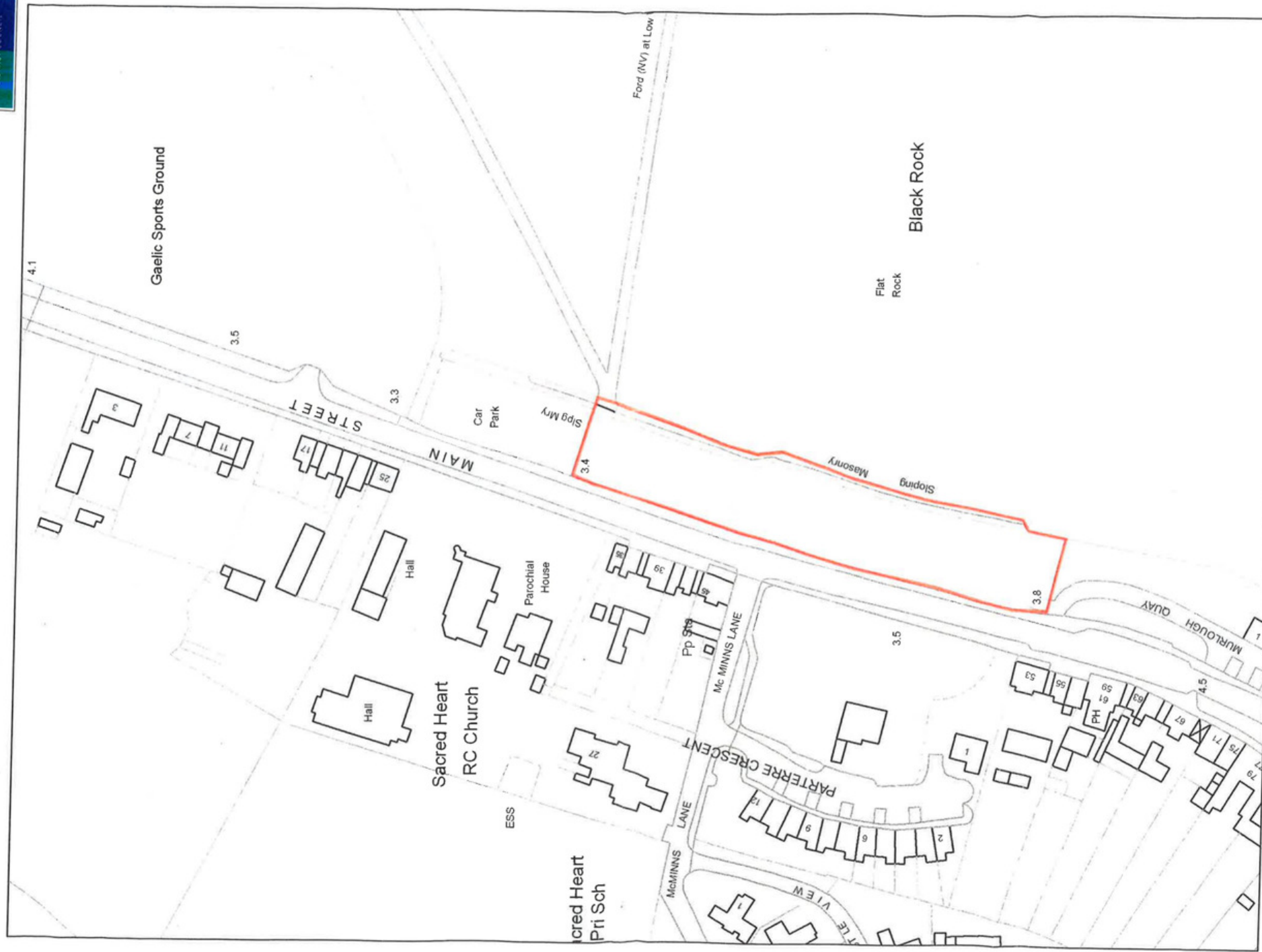
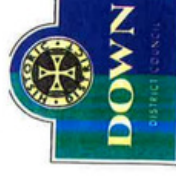


Victoria Market WwPS – As Built



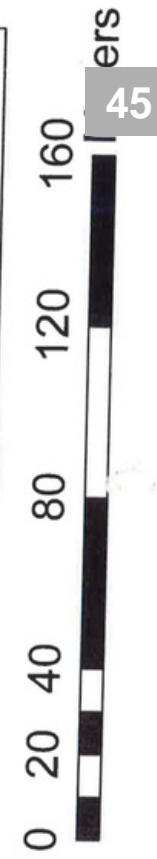


DUNDUM DISTRICT COUNCIL GIS
Dundrum Boat Park Recreation Area
TL: 1:1250, Date: 17/2/2011



Legend

 Site_Boundaries







the voice of local government

Mr L Hannaway
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
District Council Offices
Monaghan Row
NEWRY
BT35 8DJ

9th January 2018

Dear Liam

I have pleasure in enclosing NILGA's Summary Product & Work Plan for 2018/19, together with the associated investment subscription.

2018/19 will see unprecedented challenges in constitutional, fiscal, legislative, policy and performance terms, for the local government sector in Northern Ireland. Yet, such challenges come at a time when the role of local councils has never been so important.

NILGA's representative and delivery work with and for the 11 member councils will respond and meet those challenges head on.

The Work Plan for the collective councils / SOLACE regionally and specifically for your elected members and corporate team in Newry, Mourne & Down District meets the requirements of a sector delivering high quality services at affordable costs and which is adapting to the wider political and fiscal environment.

It supports a substantial forward planning programme to ensure councils are sustainable and resilient now and beyond the next elections which are scheduled as you know for May 2019. Delivery will focus on regionally co-ordinated programmes which **develop, promote and protect** councils in equal measure.

The Work Plan includes strong, evidence based representation to those at home and abroad who can politically, legislatively and fiscally improve the sustainability of local government in Newry, Mourne & Down District and throughout Northern Ireland. It prioritises elected member development, new models of investment and best practice, the sharing of very practical ideas and projects which deliver locality based planning, economic development,

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

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civic leadership, regulatory and compliance work, all of which materially assists your Corporate Plan and key support strategies.

The Work Plan was designed in accordance with the requirements of council members and senior officers from across the 11 councils, together with input from NILGA's newly appointed policy partners who include the **Strategic Investment Board, Colleges NI, Enterprise NI and the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)**. It draws on service requests and feedback from Newry, Mourne & Down members and officers, including direct support for your elected member development group.

Your elected members participate fully in the direction and work of NILGA, including NILGA Vice-President Cllr Dermot Curran together with councillors Terry Andrews, Robert Burgess, Charlie Casey, Oskana McMahon, Brian Quinn, Mickey Ruane and Billy Walker. This cross party, combined leadership is supported by excellent working relationships with you and your senior officer team.

NILGA will continue to develop its very strong relationship at corporate level with Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, including applying for the Charter award, Brexit related strategic work and taking advantage of new investment opportunities for the local economy.

We will continue to use the council's venues such as Downshire Civic Centre, Newry Leisure Centre and Bagenal's Castle for member and officer awareness events on matters as important, yet diverse, as the Code of Conduct, devolution, new economic investment opportunities, EU matters, and the emerging Programme for Government.

NILGA has and will continue to explicitly demonstrate high levels of performance and value for money, despite the modest size of the Association's resources and team, we draw on a much wider team across these islands, due to our credibility and network which has demonstrably impacted on Newry, Mourne & Down District Council this year.

I am pleased to confirm that the investment for the coming year (as per four of the past five years) reflects a 0% increase on 2017/18, despite National Pay and Inflation factors.

Acceptance of the Work Plan for 2018/19 is requested by 28th February 2018.

Yours sincerely



Derek McCallan
Chief Executive

Enc



Developing, promoting and protecting all our councils across Northern Ireland: NILGA Investment & Work Plan 2018/19



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
**Newry, Mourn
and Down**
District Council



2017 Britain in Bloom



2017 NILGA Conference

This Investment & Work Plan is the third phase of NILGA's Corporate Plan 2016 – 2019 as agreed by the 11 member councils.

Introduction

2018/19 will see unprecedented challenges in constitutional, fiscal, legislative, policy and performance terms, for the local government sector in Northern Ireland.

Such challenges come at a time when the roles of local councils have never been so important.

NILGA's representative and delivery work with and for the 11 member councils will respond to and meet those challenges head on. The Work Plan for the collective councils / SOLACE regionally and specifically for your council's elected members and corporate team meets the requirements of a sector which is not only delivering high quality services at affordable costs but which is adapting to the wider political and fiscal environment we are operating in.

It supports a **substantial forward planning programme** to ensure councils are sustainable and resilient now and beyond the next elections which are scheduled for May 2019. Delivery will focus on regionally co-ordinated programmes which **develop, promote and protect** councils in equal measure.

The Work Plan includes the delivery of strong, evidence based representation to those at home and abroad who can politically, legislatively and fiscally improve the sustainability of local government throughout Northern Ireland. It prioritises elected member development, new models of investment and best practice, the sharing of very practical ideas and projects which deliver locality based planning, economic development, civic leadership, regulatory and compliance work, all of which materially assists your Corporate Plan and key support strategies.

1. Legislation, powers, investment & transfers of functions:

NILGA in 2018/19 will enable an **All Party Parliamentary Group** on Local Government's Development & Sustainability, regionally and nationally, in order to strengthen the roles and investment requirements of councils now and in the electoral period 2019 – 2023.

NILGA will advocate the development of an **Entrepreneurial Strategy** for Northern Ireland – as part of a substantial review of existing policies which, if supported by central government and delivered by local councils, would create greater, sustainable small business and community wealth throughout all parts of NI.

NILGA will deliver key evidence to Government Departments, the NI Executive & Assembly if restored, the Northern Ireland Office, political parties and key institutions regionally, nationally and trans-nationally, on any important policy / investment matter which affects local councils in NI. This work will follow consultation with the 11 councils on matters such as Devolution to and within NI, the NI Budget 2018 – 2020, the draft Programme for Government, Domestic & Non Domestic Rates Reform, Brexit, and will include presenting the completed (2017) **New Burdens Framework** to the NI Executive, designed to adapt the Local Government Act NI (2014) and to fully resource and indemnify councils for all transfers of functions including Regeneration.

NILGA will complete and publish an independent report outlining the practical case to develop and resource councils through appropriate practical transfers of funding and functions, underpinned by local, place based, delivery of integrated public services, to better recognise the role of the local authority and its Growth Plan as the hub of a district's investment in people and infrastructure.



2. Regional communication, News Bulletins, a new media and web platform, member & officer liaison:

NILGA in 2018/19 will develop a “**Your Local Council: Delivering for All**” – monthly showcase initiative, offering member councils the opportunity to showcase across NILGA's media and partner networks, the work that the local council is doing to improve services for and celebrate the district's residents, businesses and visitors.

NILGA will produce 10 NILGA Regional Bulletins, related Press Releases, provide presentations to councils, party group leaders and SOLACE as required, attend Party Conferences, represent council's best interests in national and regional media and ensure excellent local community coverage of the Ulster in Bloom Programme throughout 2018/19. For all member councils, councillors and officers, NILGA has developed a new, interactive, modern media platform, with improved website, social media and information library links. This is a significant communication and knowledge portal for local government in NI, together with our many strategic partners.



3. Statutory representation and co-ordination

NILGA in 2018/19 will work with the 11 councils at elected member and officer level to ensure that the real needs of local councils are brought to bear on all bodies investing in and legislating for our future, whether these are within or outside of NI. NILGA supports the restoration of the NI Assembly to its full legislative capacity but will diligently seek the strengthening of - and resources for - local councils whether this important body is restored or not.

This work will include through representation on and to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee; Programme for Government Steering & Advisory Groups; Growth & Jobs, Rural Development, Peace & Reconciliation and Interreg Monitoring Committees; Strategic Planning & Waste Management bodies, Industrial Strategy roll out and review bodies; the Commonwealth Local Government Group, the Association of Irish Local Government, the UK Local Government Forum, the All Island Civic Forum and the Department for Exiting the European Union.

Despite the present impasse at the Assembly, NILGA will provide a full support service and lobbying role with and for the 11 councils to ensure an effective, productive Partnership Panel for Local Government, modernising this to suit prevailing needs, in tandem with councils, SOLACE, the Department for Communities and all NI Executive Ministers / Permanent Secretaries.

The Association will co-ordinate NI local government's input in to the Employer's side of the National Joint Council (NJC) to determine agreements on the **National Pay Spine Review**, **National Living Wage** and **National Pay** and will also provide regular briefings and consultations.

4. Regional and sub regional awareness and network events, Flagship Annual Conference:

NILGA in 2018/19 will co-ordinate 24 learning and networking events in 2018/19 on Planning, Community Planning, Devolution, the Circular Economy, the NI Budget 2018 – 2020, Brexit, Strategic Migration, Government & Departmental Key Strategies including the Industrial Strategy, new Regional & Local Rates proposals, applying the General Power of Competence, induction on existing and revised parts of the Code of Conduct, the New Burdens Framework, and other policies to better resource and protect councils in NI.

These bespoke events will be free to the 11 member councils.

NILGA will co-ordinate three Strategic Member & Officer Partnership events throughout the year, hosted across our council areas, on key matters including Broadband, Rural & Urban Development, and Community Empowerment.

These strategic partnership events will be free to the 11 member councils.

NILGA will work in partnership with SOLACE to deliver our **Annual Flagship Conference** which will take place on Thursday 11th October 2018. Conference 2018 will take forward the **"Excellence in Local Government"** Awards Evening, which will recognise across the 11 councils those members, staff, businesses and community bodies providing exemplary public service in NI.

National Events

NILGA have secured the prestigious RHS Britain in Bloom 2018 UK Awards Ceremony for Northern Ireland. Interest was expressed from a number of councils in Northern Ireland to host the event and while the RHS have opted for Belfast, NILGA would like to showcase all regions when the 500+ guests visit in October 2018.

5. Elected member development including Charter / Charter Plus:

NILGA in 2018/19 will co-ordinate and support the effective delivery and retention of the **National Charter** and **National Charter Plus Awards** for Elected Member Development by all of NI's 11 councils.

In partnership with councils and the Local Government Training Group (LGTG), together with the National Association of Councillors (NAC) and delivery partners, NILGA will continue to deliver in 2018/19 the first ever **Regional Member Development Programme for NI Councils**, as part of the 21st Century Councillor Programme, which will include accredited learning tools on planning and community leadership.

NILGA will also establish with the 11 councils, LGTG and SOLACE an **Elected Members Induction Programme**, in advance of the May 2019 elections, to ensure local council level delivery of a core, consistent, contemporary Councillors' Guide for all 462 returning members.

NILGA will retain the procurement benefits for NI councils of membership of the **National Association of Regional Employers'** (NARE) and input councils' requirements to NARE on workforce, member development and related employment law issues.



6. National and regional policy, lobbying, guidance, publications:

NILGA in 2018/19 will provide essential policy guidance and analysis to and with the 11 councils and submit consultative work to all NI Executive Departments, Westminster, Whitehall and all island bodies to **protect, advocate and sustain** local councils in Northern Ireland.

NILGA will consolidate and develop its all council strategic, regional working groups (SWRGs, see 8 below also) to draw together cross council knowledge and share this right across the sector as well as to emphasise good governance and communication.

The Association will co-ordinate NI local government's input in to the Employer's side of the National Joint Council (NJC) to determine agreements on the **National Pay Spine Review**, **National Living Wage** and **National Pay** and will also provide regular briefings and consultations.



NILGA will participate fully in other strategic work at national level including within the UK & Ireland wide Local Government Group.

NILGA will draw down additional investment and collate best practice for NI councils on matters including elected member development, entrepreneurship and economic development, broadband, community planning, infrastructure and coastal erosion.

NILGA will continue the “Making Planning Work” **series**, produce contemporary, user friendly **Planning Guidance**, and ensure that revisions to the **Councillor Code of Conduct** are (i) fully understood within all councils, (ii) fully tested through scenario training & awareness events and (iii) do not disadvantage councils or councillors in NI comparative to neighbouring jurisdictions.

NILGA will continue to support the policy, partnership and legislative work of the **NI Strategic Migration Partnership** (NISMP) and will draw on its expertise to further Community planning & resilience work and lobby for a regional migration strategy.



7. International & European policy, investment, representation:

NILGA will collaborate with other LGAs to lobby DEXEU and other relevant government departments to ensure that councils are materially resourced for **Brexit** preparations, to fully understand the **implications** of Brexit and to ensure that councils are ready to take advantage of **opportunities** arising.

NILGA will lobby for an appropriate consultation mechanism for NI councils at pre-legislative stage for all matters which are repatriated under the **EU Withdrawal Bill**.

NILGA will ensure that members are briefed through the **Economy, Investment & Rural Development Working Group** on matters such as Brexit, broadband and investment opportunities for councils and that regionally coordinated responses on matters of interest to councils are agreed.

NILGA will coordinate a **strategic group of senior economic development officers** and will cultivate relationships with strategic partners, representative bodies, government departments and statutory bodies to influence future legislation, strategy and funding frameworks

NILGA in 2018/19 will continue to seek support for our bid for Northern Ireland's councils to be showcased through hosting a 52 nation **Commonwealth Local Government Forum 2019 International Conference**.

Transnationally, NILGA will work with the 11 councils to bring local and sub regional (cross council) investment opportunities stemming from the EU Committee of the Regions, in particular through our participation in the **iEER Boost** (entrepreneurship) project with 9 other regions. NILGA's participation in this project is valued at £200,000 and 5 councils have participated to date. We will continue to collaborate with entrepreneurship stakeholders to share learning and best practice gathered in the project and to influence policy change in Northern Ireland.

NILGA will provide advice and guidance to members of the EU's Committee of the Regions and all relevant EU Monitoring Committees (e.g. Peace IV, Rural Development, Growth & Jobs and Interreg), and related bodies.

8. Strategic, regional working groups (SWRGs):

NILGA in 2018/19 will enable a minimum of 16 task and finish sessions for all councils during 2018/19 of NILGA SWRGs on Planning, Community Planning, The Local Economy / Brexit, Member Development and Audit, Risk & Sustainability. These will be convened in partnership with councils, SOLACE and government departments, including Department of Finance, Department for the Economy, Department for Communities, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Each Group has a specific work plan tailored exclusively to councils' requirements and can be further shaped to assist the emerging Programme for Government, modernisation and shared services agendas.

9. NI Councils' future sustainability - research and development:

NILGA in 2018/19 will ensure that regionally co-ordinated work on future proofing local government in Northern Ireland, led by councils and delivered by NILGA, in partnership with bodies such as SOLACE and APSE, will benefit the sector. In 2018/19, R&D work will cover Devolution, EU Withdrawal Bill, the Circular Economy, Waste Management, New Financial and Rating Models, Entrepreneurial Strategy, Coastal Erosion, Winter Maintenance Protocols, developing a Programme for Local Government, Strengthening Participative Local Democracy, Place Shaping, Commissioning and Performance Management, and **as required by councils**.

10. Corporate planning & performance management:

During 2018/19, NILGA will maintain its constitution, Annual General Meeting, financial, recruitment and other required policies, communications and structures in strict adherence to all relevant good governance, audit and procurement standards. The NILGA Office Bearers, Executive, Working Groups, staff and other representative groups apply these standards fully and an Audit, Risk and Sustainability team will meet 3-4 times proposing KPI and Balanced Scorecard reviews to the 11 council Executive of member councils. Key performance standards are in place organisationally and for all staff members, through the annual Performance Review and Development process. This is overseen by member councils with expert advice drawn from outside bodies and councils as required. NILGA will report Results v Targets in its Annual Report in June 2018 and will fully consult during 2018/19 on a new Corporate Plan for the period June 2019 – May 2023.

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Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Newry, Mourne & Down District Council's subscription for the above Investment & Work Plan in 2018/19 is £48,914 (excluding VAT), representing a 0% increase on 2017/18.

Newry, Mourne & Down District Council along with Ards & North Down, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon and Derry & Strabane is a Band B Council, which is a Council with a population between 145,000 – 300,000. An invoice will be sent to your Council on 1st April 2018 for payment by 30th June 2018.

Costs for the all council, national level subscription to the Employers Side of the NJC (c. £3,900 per council) is billed separately, an amount which will be forwarded in full to the LGA.

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Initial Response: Department of Finance Budgetary Outlook Briefing January 2018

NILGA Executive Committee
16th January 2018

On 18th December 2017 the Department of Finance issued a briefing on the broad strategic issues that will help inform decisions on a Budget for 2018-19 and 2019-2020 (and 2020/21 for Capital). The briefing was published on the Department's website and not via the NI Direct consultation process, with the Department itself stressing the unusual circumstances surrounding this publication, to which they are requesting responses by 26th January 2018.

The Department has stated the following:

"Departments are required to live within their budget every year. To do so for 2018-19 and onwards, decisions are becoming pressing. It is our assessment that, for an effective budget to be set and delivered by a new Executive, it should be agreed early in February 2018. The decisions in a Budget have the potential to impact on the delivery of public services and on the lives of every citizen.

Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Hugh Widdis said: "This is an unusual step which is being taken with great reluctance. In normal circumstances, the Minister of Finance would have presented a Draft Budget to the Executive for agreement and later approval, after debate, by the Assembly.

"This year, in the absence of Ministers, the Department of Finance is now taking the unusual step of publishing information about the broad choices available for balancing the Budget to help inform decisions to be taken by an incoming Executive."

The Briefing on the Northern Ireland Budgetary Outlook 2018-20 sets the context for this and illustrates the options that may need to be considered by Ministers using three possible but purely illustrative scenarios. This process reflects the new approach for the Programme for Government, focussing on outcomes. These are not proposed budget settlements and no decisions have yet been taken.

Mr Widdis added: 'Budgets for 2018/19 and 2019/20 will need to take account of constrained financial resources and growing departmental pressures. The briefing paper sets out the assessment of the resources available and approaches that would enable Departments to live within them. No decisions have been taken. It will be for Ministers to decide on the way forward, which will be informed by this process.'

Given the need to have an agreed Budget by the beginning of February, any feedback should be provided by 26 January 2018."

NILGA is working with SOLACE and the Local Government Finance Officers to offer a sectoral response by the requested date, but will seek subsequent formal engagement with the Department and political leadership beyond this date, including at its all council Executive meeting in February 2018.

Derek McCallan
Chief Executive

16th January 2018

1.0 Introduction

NILGA, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, is the representative body for district councils in Northern Ireland. The Association is the only current regional, constituted, policy making, all party, government body within N.I., drawing together and communicating actions and recommendations on key issues affecting local people, within a local government framework. Membership is comprised of the 11 local authorities and the organisation is supported by all the main political parties. The need for Northern Ireland to set a budget is critically important to the sustainable operation of councils. NILGA therefore welcomes the opportunity to comment on this initiative by the Department of Finance, in the absence of a working Assembly. NILGA recognises the difficulties of balancing competing priorities across the range of competing services, when valid priority approaches have been planned and embedded within business plans. The Association does however have serious concerns about some of the proposals as well as the method of publication and the timelines given for analysis and response.

NILGA believes that the need for transparency, simplicity and increased accountability is the key to any policy regarding finances. The public should be able to understand all charges levied upon them and know what they are used for.

The following comments are provided further to consideration by councils, the NILGA Executive Committee, SOLACE and the Association of Local Government Finance Officers. Given the time considerations, and the governance cycle required under councils' standing orders, it is unlikely that all the 11 councils will have been able to corporately discuss this important Briefing by 26th January 2018. Therefore, this is a "first cut" piece sought by councils through NILGA regionally, notwithstanding individual council responses – also received by NILGA - which more fully focus on local, evidence based, impacts of proposals.

NILGA therefore looks forward to the planned meeting with Mr Hugh Widdis in Antrim on 9th February 2018, which will further develop a substantive discussion on the current financial context and enable co-design of solutions by councils to minimise / remove the negative impacts of some proposals contained within the Briefing.

NILGA's Executive (drawn from the 11 councils) through the Partnership Panel (with or without Ministers), directly aligned to a fiscal policy team drawn from the Chief Executives / Permanent Secretary Group, should meet as soon as possible in 2018 to enable further co-design, co-implementation and integration of effort regarding the Budget Forecast and its delivery.

NILGA has restricted this interim response to comment on those proposals which directly affect local government service provision and which impact directly on local communities. The following response concentrates on several general comments, relating mainly to the approach to the consultation and the processes followed, and some specific comments, with reference to the Rates Support Grant and the potential impacts of reductions in funding. The Association has also supplied an appendix to detail the financial impacts which will be felt by councils, on implementation of a Rates Support Grant reduction.

We look forward to working closely with the Department as consideration of the budget develops, after 26th January 2018.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Approach to Public Expenditure Reduction

The government has prioritised the reduction of public debt and is determined to keep extra taxation to the absolute minimum, resulting in a much tighter public expenditure target being imposed than in other advanced countries. The consequence, according to the International Monetary Fund's predictions, is that while before the 2008 financial crisis, the UK's public expenditure as a percentage of GDP was in about the middle of the major capitalist economies, above the USA, Japan and Canada though below Germany, Italy, Sweden and France, the UK is heading swiftly to the bottom of this list.

NILGA asserts the view expressed by most commentators that sustained substantial reductions to public expenditure are damaging to the national interest (e.g. Taylor-Gooby, 2012). While the government is determined to shrink public spending, including Welfare, it is maintaining spending on pensions, health and education.

The consequences of these policies for those on low income have been extensively analysed. The Institute for Fiscal Studies predicts an increase in poverty (by the standard 60 per cent median income poverty line) of the order of 2.3 million by 2020. This increase will be concentrated among families with children and single people of working age (Brewer, 2011). The Resolution Foundation shows how job insecurity is increasing and wages stagnating, particularly at the bottom end (Brewer et al., 2012). Housing problems are growing steadily more pressing.

The proposals contained within the document, if implemented, will place a significant negative impact on people on the lowest incomes. NILGA recommends that the Government should implement transformative practices which removes inefficiencies and duplication at all levels of public service expenditure, emphasising the core, driving tenet that government is too unwieldy, perpetuates unproductive, structural and bureaucratic processes. Equally, NILGA asserts that Government raises new revenue streams and additional revenue through the fiscal system in the latter instance by targeting taxation increases at those who have a greater ability to pay.

2.2 Delivery of the Programme for Government (PfG) and Community Plans

Councils work closely with all government departments and are materially affected by the financial decisions made by those departments. Council Chief Executives, through the offices of SOLACE, have been meeting regularly with the Permanent Secretaries and have developed a system of nominees, corresponding to the Civil Service "Senior Responsible Officer" (SRO) model to begin to work towards delivery of the Programme for Government. Our member councils are implementing their community plans – *statutory instruments designed to ensure better targeting of all public expenditure through local,*

“place shaping” determinants married to regional strategic priorities - aligned to the outcomes of the Programme for Government. Councils in partnership are developing a measurement system to monitor delivery, also aligned to the indicators expressed in the PfG. Many of the proposals outlined in the Briefing are likely to have an adverse effect on the ability to deliver the Programme for Government and likewise, the short to medium term delivery of council-led community plans will be seriously impacted. Specific impacts are outlined in section 3.2 below. *It is noticeable that there is no reference anywhere in the document to community planning, despite the statutory duty placed on all departments by S75 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014, and the potential savings to N.I.’s income and efficiency that could be made by better central-local collaboration and joined up delivery, as evidenced by Scotland’s Single Outcome Agreements, where all public service partners at council level commit to Economic Recovery and Growth:*

<https://www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/sites/default/files/SOAs%20-%20Summary%20Guidance%20to%20Community%20Planning%20Partnerships.pdf>.

NILGA is supportive of the Department’s approach to protect and enhance spending in relation to the provision of Health and Education services, but is also acutely mindful that the burden of any proposed cuts will inevitably have a greater impact on the delivery of other services. It is important therefore that the Transformation agenda is also actively pursued, including through a substantial uplift in Community Planning investment by statutory partners of councils, to ensure that funding is spent in the most cost-effective manner to deliver optimum outcomes for all stakeholders.

2.3 Rural Proofing

NILGA and many member councils are particularly concerned to note that, whilst there is a commitment to undertake Equality Screening and EQIAs where required, there is no similar commitment to undertake the Rural Needs Impact Assessment, which is also a statutory requirement under the Rural Needs (Northern Ireland) Act 2016. NILGA asserts that these proposals will constitute an adverse impact on rural communities. The proposed reductions to the DAERA budget will inevitably impact upon the necessary grant aid and fundamental supports to the farming community and wider peripheral communities, and the reduction to the DfI budget will have an extremely negative impact on rural community transport and infrastructure.

For stakeholders to make any assessment of either the efficacy or fairness of the proposals, NILGA stresses the need for an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be undertaken to assess the potential effects of the budget proposals. This would require consideration of issues relating to community cohesion, different equality groups, well-being and health, socio-economic circumstances, the environment and the rural areas as above mentioned in order to reach fair decisions. The absence of a single, overarching Integrated Impact Assessment exercise is concerning; this practice would be much preferable to departmental level Equality and Environmental Impact Assessments which are time and finance draining.

An IIA would help decision makers to debate issues, review decisions, consider the viability of alternatives and think about potential mitigating measures to ensure that legal duties have been met and their decisions are fair. The use of all available evidence, including consultation feedback, would aid understanding of where groups or communities could be disproportionately affected, looking at how individual proposals relate to one another and considering how a series of proposed changes could impact cumulatively on groups of people and communities of interest, identity and geography.

NILGA acknowledges that in times of austerity, it is difficult to avoid all possible impacts of budgetary reductions. However, it is important that the cumulative impacts are properly understood to consider potential mitigations in the areas where impact may be most significant; *reductions should be made based on the value and impact of spending*. NILGA opposes the 'top slicing' of budgets, as it takes no account of the value and impact of different spending programmes.

2.4 Timing of Consultation

Notwithstanding the unique circumstances leading to the process itself, which NILGA and councils are very aware of, to examine how local government could and should respond to the likely financial challenge lying ahead would require a detailed study of the demands facing each service area in each council, the scope for cost-cutting and efficiencies, and the statutory obligations in place.

The restricted consultation period, which included the Christmas holiday period and the in the knock-on absence of detailed information on some key issues has resulted in an interim analysis and comment piece rather than the coordinated report which would otherwise have been provided.

Previous consultative reports have contained detailed analysis, findings and recommendations based on comprehensive evidence on strategic, cross-cutting and departmental specific issues. Greater transparency / detail around the basis for the proposals would enable NILGA to determine, for example, whether a consistent approach was taken across departments and whether the funding of particular 'central strategic pressures' warrant the resultant reduction in departmental resource budgets.

NILGA stresses the timing in relation to the council rate-setting timetable, which requires district rates to be published by the 15th February 2018. Once set, these rates cannot be changed. Councils do NOT have the facility of mid-year flexibility that is open to government Departments, and this must be borne in mind by the Department.

3.0 Specific Comments

3.1 Rates Support Grant

The Rates Support Grant (RSG) is an investment and leverage tool, a means by which district councils with lower rates bases receive a critical investment contribution towards creating growth through enterprise and achieving greater equality of service provision and facilities. *NILGA supports the*

maintenance at current levels as a minimum of the RSG. The key objective of this funding is to ensure that all councils can continue to *consistently* offer and maintain high quality, productive frontline services at affordable costs, across Northern Ireland.

While the Transferred Functions Grant and the De-Rating Grant are protected by legislation, the Rates Support Grant is not. Any reduction will have a significant impact on service delivery, will exacerbate the 2-tier Northern Ireland with most wealth consolidated in specific sub regions and will curtail the ability of those councils with a low rates base to invest in the development of their districts, taking tens of millions of pounds of investment out of 7 of NI's 11 councils. The Department must recognise the 'value added' of the £18.3m (2016-17) investment in that councils have indicated that the leverage value for the economy amounts to £183m.

At a time when councils are the only politically functioning element of government in N. Ireland, there should be no proposals to cut allocations and investments such as the Rates Support Grant by Departments. In 2018, councils are not possessed of the financial resilience of larger government institutions, mindful of their less than £1 billion expenditure within N.I.'s £20+ billion p.a. budget. They are creating wealth in the form of local investments, sustainable jobs and growth with the RSG, and lever ten times a return on such allocations within local economies, whilst also being severely challenged to meet increased expectations from departments and constituents in matters such as winter maintenance, emergency planning, community support and much more. If councils do not have the resources to meet these expectations, coming from communities in general and government bodies, the whole edifice of the Programme for Government is in jeopardy.

3.2 Cumulative Impact of Reductions to Centrally Funded Council Programmes

As noted at 2.2 above, councils are the lead partner in the development and delivery of the 11 statutory community plans, which set out clear, long term visions for the 11 districts, and are clearly linked to the delivery of those outcomes within the Programme for Government covered by the Community Planning Partnership Framework.

Council Corporate Plans incorporate improvement objectives for the remainder of the current council mandate; align each council's vision, values and corporate priorities to those set out in the Community Plan for the district; and identify the key actions to be completed in that time.

The delivery of such outcomes will be clearly affected by any changes in the levels of funding from Central Government, as shown in the examples below:

Within council **Community Services** provision, the following Programmes will be significantly constrained by any reductions in grant aid:

| Programme | Department |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Community Support Programme | DFC |
| Neighbourhood Renewal | DFC |
| Community Festivals Fund | DFC |

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Good Relations | EO |
| PCSP | DOJ |

Within council **Environmental Health** provision, the following council programmes would be significantly constrained by any reductions in funding:

| Function | Department |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Food Safety | Food Standards Agency |
| Affordable Warmth | DfC |
| Tobacco Control | PHA |
| Accident Prevention | PHA |
| Fuel Poverty | PHA |
| Animal Welfare | DAERA |
| Water Quality | NIEA |

Within **Leisure Services**, the following Programmes will be significantly constrained by any reductions in grant aid:

| Programme | Department |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Physical Activity Referral Scheme | PHA |
| Healthy Towns | PHA |
| Every Body Active | Sport NI |
| Every Body Active (small grants) | Sport NI |

Within council **Arts and Heritage** services, the following programmes would be significantly constrained by any reductions in Grant aid:

| Programme | Department |
|------------------------------|--|
| Access and Inclusion | PHA |
| Arts and Heritage Programmes | Arts Council Northern Ireland (DfC), NI Museums' Council (DfC), NIEA, DAERA |

In view of the above, the Department is requested to recognise, minimise and where feasible eliminate the disproportionate, multi-faceted cuts which councils will be unable to offset, cuts which will materially affect key, locally based services which have real, value and impact in local communities.

3.3 'Balancing the Budget'

Chapter Four of the Briefing outlines options available for balancing the budget, including raising additional revenue through a variety of sources. A number of these are outwith those proposals which directly affect local government service provision and impact directly on local communities, however, NILGA strongly recommends that the Department develops substantive engagement with councils in relation to:

- Larger than planned increase of the Regional Rate: council rate setting decisions, which are finalised on the 15th February each year, will be disproportionately and detrimentally affected by any significant proposed change to the Regional Rate, as councils attempt to minimise impacts on their local residents. Discussion with councils and an appropriate lead in time to this kind of change is required.
- New Controlled Parking Zones: Since councils are now responsible for most off-street car parks, NILGA requests that the responsible department recognises the need to engage with councils and take their views on board, well before any change to charging policy which may have an impact on town centre economies.
- Increased NIHE rents: Increases to rents may have unintended knock on consequences that could have local impacts on councils. Any proposed changes should be discussed with the NI Housing Council and NILGA.
- Concessionary Fares: NILGA asserts that change to policy in relation to concessionary fares may have the effect of increasing the isolation of older people, particularly in rural areas, and that removal of concessions is hitting one of the more vulnerable sections of society. NILGA completely understands the “living within our means requires budgets to be reduced in some regrettable cases” approach. However, any reductions, as per 2.3, page 5, that *reductions should be made based on the value and impact of spending*. NILGA opposes the ‘top slicing’ of budgets, as it takes no account of the value and impact of different spending programmes.
- Community Care Services: NILGA asserts that change to policy in relation to Community Care Services may have the effect of increasing the isolation of vulnerable sections of society, particularly in rural areas. NILGA completely understands the “living within our means requires budgets to be reduced in some regrettable cases” approach. However, any reductions, as per 2.3, page 5, that *reductions should be made based on the value and impact of spending*. NILGA opposes the ‘top slicing’ of budgets, as it takes no account of the value and impact of different spending programmes.
- Review of Rating Policies: council rate setting decisions, which are finalised on the 15th February each year, will be disproportionately and detrimentally affected by any significant proposed change to non-domestic rate, as councils attempt to minimise impacts on their local businesses. Discussions with councils and an appropriate lead in time is required for this kind of change.

There has been a laudable, strategic and long-term approach taken by bodies including NILGA, Land & Property Services and some Departments on new income, new rates and new revenue proposals. The initiatives such as new forms of local taxation, Local Asset Backed Vehicles, alterations proposed under previous consultations for Small Business Rates Relief, Industrial De-rating, new domestic and non-domestic rates charges for exempt / partially exempt bodies etc., should not be overridden by this Briefing which is altogether more random in its suppositions and requests.

3.4 'Departmental Scenarios'

Chapter Five of the Briefing provides three scenarios for balancing the budget and makes several assumptions common to all three scenarios. *NILGA recommends that the protection of the Local Government Rates Support Grant is added to this list of assumptions.*

Whilst accepting the premise that all scenarios are purely illustrative, NILGA asserts that scenario two offers the most favourable means to deal with the outcomes of this Briefing.

3.5 'Departmental Scenarios and Impacts'

NILGA welcomes the links that most departments have made to the Outcomes of the Programme for Government, in relation to their key aims and impacts. We would again request that the Department supports the importance of linking to the council led community plans, in relation to local delivery.

An overarching concern that NILGA and our member councils would highlight is the perceived protectionism of departmental payrolls, and prioritising reduction in service delivery budgets, particularly where those services are delivered by arms-length or external delivery bodies. If austerity and wider political and fiscal challenges are to prevail, then transformational rather than transitional outcomes are required. Maintaining departmental payrolls is not transformational.

3.5.1 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

In terms of EU Exit, the report recognises that DAERA will be most affected and, in this regard, in relation to waste management it is vital that DAERA maintains a close working relationship with local government, and takes full advantage of the vast experience councils and the waste management groups have to offer in the waste management sector, to ensure as smooth a transition as possible.

It is noted that DAERA is assuming that funding for dealing with costs for Northern Ireland of the UK's exit from the EU, which come from HM Treasury via the Barnett consequential. NILGA would be keen to establish if this assumption is correct, and whether the NI government departments most affected, (such as DAERA) have made any contingency plans, should HMT funding not be provided.

NILGA notes the inclusion of waste and resource management as a priority area of work for DAERA, however apart from the FTC information given on P114 there is insufficient detail provided to enable substantive comment on any other support being made available for waste management activities.

Given the pressures and deadlines on Councils to meet statutory targets we would urge DAERA to press for a high level of financial support for Councils and that the detailed figures for both Resource and

Capital are made available as a matter of urgency to facilitate proper financial planning at local government level.

Additional NILGA concerns:

- The potential for scaling back of other environmental and rural development programmes, in addition to reductions in tackling the key issue of waste crime.
- Interruption to the delivery of CAP and other programmes and the consequent potential for EU infraction fines.

3.5.2 Department for Communities (DfC)

NILGA would be keen to ensure that the DfC, which is a principal department for local government, does not treat councils as an easy target for removal of grants, as emphasised vehemently in section 3.1 above.

We would reiterate the point made above, in that any reduction to the Rates Support Grant in particular, will have a significant impact on service delivery, will exacerbate the 2-tier Northern Ireland with most wealth consolidated in specific sub regions and will curtail the ability of those councils with a low rates base to invest in the development of their districts, taking tens of millions of pounds of investment out of 7 of NI's 11 councils. The Department must recognise the 'value added' of the £18.3m (2016-17) investment in that councils have indicated that the leverage value for the economy amounts to £183m.

NILGA would also emphasise that removal of grants to e.g. the voluntary and community sector only increases pressure on councils, who are usually the next port of call for assistance.

In terms of value added, leverage investment in social economy and related initiatives, NILGA would emphasise the urgent need for DfC to pay close attention to those areas of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 that are as yet not commenced or otherwise hindered, and to work with councils to bring these to fruition – maximising the impact that councils can have locally, and their ability to deliver 'on the ground' for the citizen. Should the current political impasse continue a means will have to be sought, and prioritised, to deliver the necessary supplementary legislative change.

3.5.3 Department for the Economy (DfE)

NILGA welcomes the recognition of the importance of the Industrial Strategy. The association also welcomes the Department's recognition of the partnership role of delivery of business development, investment and job creation. Yet, the ability to invest locally in businesses and in tourism may be seriously hampered for some councils due to potential removal/diminution of the Rates Support Grant

and other funding streams. NILGA and our member councils look forward to working with DfE as it enhances air & broadband connectivity, grows the agri-food sector and improves sustainable enterprise throughout N.I.

3.5.4 Department of Education (DE)

NILGA and our member councils look forward to working with DE as collaborative working arrangements develop, such as Shared Education projects, community use of the schools' estate and local sports programmes.

3.5.6 Department of Finance (DoF)

NILGA recommends that the Department formally recognises the councils' role in delivery of the Programme for Government outcomes, through the budgeting process. NILGA is keen to work closely with the Department to enable co-design, co-implementation and integration of effort regarding the Budget Forecast.

In view of their current disproportionately low expenditure base (e.g. 4-5% of the £20 billion annual revenue budget) there is not the fiscal resilience in councils to absorb further reductions – they are not government departments but rather, 11 locally placed fiscal institutions with a complex and diverse range of community priorities as manifested in their distinct, statutory, Community Plans and Growth / Investment Strategies. As such, they need to be co-determinants of what fiscal recommendations are made to Ministers / Secretary of State. This would be the case in neighbouring jurisdictions, all of which have New Burdens legislation and frameworks to protect councils and government departments from taking on additional costs because of policy decisions made at national and regional levels.

3.5.7 Department of Health (DoH)

NILGA and our member councils share the concerns of the Department in relation to the ability of government to provide services on a cost-effective basis to an aging population. NILGA would advocate the potential savings which could be released by resourcing councils to be more actively involved in preventative health work, reducing the numbers of citizens requiring hospital treatment, over the longer term. NILGA would be keen to ensure that local government continues to have a voice and is listened to, within the transformation of the health and social care system in N.I. Councils have powers, functions and tools at their disposal that, *given the necessary resourcing*, can enable work in partnership with health care providers in the improvement of mental and physical health delivery through early intervention activity.

3.5.8 Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

NILGA has concerns in relation to the approach taken by DfI to balancing their budget and in prioritising the protection of payroll vis-à-vis maintaining delivery funding.

The proposals advocated, particularly in relation to roads (street lighting, maintenance, grass gutting, gritting, road safety campaigns etc) and for all three scenarios, would have *far reaching consequences for local communities in relation to flood prevention, safety, crime prevention and economic impacts due to dilapidation of the public realm*. Additionally, it is likely that public expectation to rectify much of this lack of delivery would fall on councils, without any resource provided to deal with local issues.

Further lack of delivery that is of serious concern, is noted in relation to provision of quality, modern and accessible public transport across Northern Ireland and rural and community transport in relevant areas.

As noted by Translink, “public transport provides a vital lifeline to those who have no other mode of transport, either through choice or necessity. The consequence of cutting or reducing funding would have a direct impact on their quality of life and access to services, to family and friends and to their communities.”

Most impacted would be commuters, young people, older people, people with a disability and those on low incomes. This could lead to increased inequalities, and impact on vulnerable groups who rely on public transport to access a range of other services. There is likely to be a disproportionate impact on services in rural areas, where public transport provides a vital lifeline for many to access local amenities including healthcare.

Further to this, the proposals contained within the budget briefing are not in keeping with the overarching policy direction as set out in the draft Programme for Government. This would not only have a detrimental impact on the objective of ‘increasing the use of public transport and active travel’ but also impact on the other outcomes and indicators which a strong public transport system underpins, undermining Northern Ireland’s potential for economic growth and sustainable development.

3.5.9 Department of Justice (DoJ)

The impact on councils of reduction to the DoJ budget is unclear and will require further consideration. Key concerns include policing and community safety (including in relation to proposed DfI cuts) and implementation of Justice 2020 as it links into council community plans.

3.5.10 The Executive Office (TEO)

NILGA and our member councils look forward to working more closely with TEO as our councils align their community plans with the Programme for Government and begin the implementation phase as well as materially assist with the implementation of the Social Investment Fund.

The Department should note that as the council role within TBUC activities is reviewed further to local government reform, cognisance must be taken of new council powers and functions e.g. development planning; and as Brexit policy and delivery crystallises. Proposed reductions in Good Relations funding should be re-considered in that they run counter to the desired outcomes of the Programme for Government.

4.0 Capital DEL

NILGA would seek clarity in relation to the 'local project promoters' identified on P111 in relation to the NI Investment Fund; do 'local project promoters' include councils?

NILGA notes the proposed figures and projections for capital DEL. We would query whether any contingency plans have been made in relation to the financial annex to the Confidence and Supply agreement, which requires agreement with HMT and an incoming Executive, and Assembly/Parliament approval if no Executive or Assembly forms.

NILGA welcomes the reference to the waste recycling scheme as a key deliverable for DAERA and notes the investment allocation of £50.5 million FTC for the arc21 project.

We also welcome the local capital schemes identified by DfC, particularly in relation to public realm works; the tourism and telecoms investment highlighted by DfE, the capital investment on schools and shared education by DE, and the prioritisation of infrastructure to support rates collection by DoF.

As departmental priorities NILGA welcomes the DoH proposal for the community safety college at Desertcreat, and the list of capital projects identified by DfI, although the Association asserts a contradiction in that DfI intends to invest £50m on conversion of streetlights to LED when they don't intend switching the lights on over the next two years. Likewise, why invest in a regional transport hub if public transport provision feeding into and out of this important initiative is being dramatically reduced?

5.0 Conclusion

NILGA recognises the budgetary difficulties outlined in the consultation briefing.

NILGA however does NOT subscribe to the philosophy that constraining public sector expenditure and top slicing "less priority" departmental level budgets mainly at service delivery levels are the most appropriate method of achieving a balanced budget. It is deeply concerned that the local impacts of many cuts as proposed will lead to the displacement to local councils of the "moral principle" of providing the service without having the funds to provide it. It seeks a dynamic timetable for the application of a New Burdens framework with a legislative base, that puts N.I. on an equitable footing to

all neighbouring jurisdictions. Inevitably, there should be a combination of local revenue raising initiatives and appropriate fiscal policies to ensure that additional financial pressures are primarily targeted at those with the ability to pay and with this in mind we urge the Department to sit down with local government, co-design new ways of raising revenue and commit to transformational changes in how our public services are administered.

In relation to local revenue raising initiatives, NILGA stresses that careful consideration is given to the net potential income to be generated e.g. in relation to any changes to Prescription Charges, the costs of setting up and administering a charging system should not outweigh the value of any income generated.

NILGA's least favoured option to achieve a balanced budget is to reduce public expenditure on a 'department by department' method. Rather than cutting budgets, there should be a firm commitment to progress and embed transformation proposals across government services, but particularly within the Health Sector, using revenue take and fiscal policies to ensure that outcomes are targeted at those with the ability to pay.

NILGA stresses that it is more important than ever to ensure that scarce resources are prioritised fairly, and that Government does everything possible to minimise the harm that cuts to services cause for individuals and communities. It is essential that Ministers maintain a broad outlook and take decisions based on a robust understanding of how cuts will impact on people and places across the region.

It is important to understand the combined impact of budget proposals on communities and on people with particular characteristics such as the youngest, oldest and most vulnerable. Beyond that, NILGA also believes that it is critical to consider the impact on socio-economically disadvantaged groups and in relation to well-being and health, the environment, community cohesion, and community safety. *The use of an effective Integrated Assessment Tool is essential in this regard.*

A further period of post deadline analysis and co-design is required to ensure that there is a fully informed platform developed to meet future budgetary challenges. Local government – because of the additional expectations and services meted upon the councils without Ministerial or legislative direction, must be afforded greater time and involvement as a partner of equals in both revenue and capital budget planning within the Programme for Government period, rather than suffer annualised and In-Year funding allocations and cuts.

NILGA looks forward to working with the Department to ensure that the considered views of democratically elected councils are further brought to bear on this process, in addition to the initial piece provided by the Association on behalf of local government.

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| Report To: | Strategic Policy & Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 18 January 2018 |
| Subject: | Lease of Office Accommodation in Downshire Civic Centre to Probation Board Northern Ireland ("PBNI") |
| Reporting Officer: | Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration) |
| Contact Officers: | Conor Mallon, Assistant Director Estates and Project Management Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration) |

Decision Required

As per recommendation at 3.0 below.

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| 1.0 | Purpose and Background: |
| | <p>Council has received a request to lease accommodation in Downshire Civic Centre from PBNI.</p> <p>The requirement is for 19.08sqm of exclusive office accommodation on the ground floor together with shared access to an interview room, meeting rooms, kitchen and wc facilities, reception services, waiting space and car parking provision.</p> |
| 2.0 | Key Issues: |
| | <p>The required accommodation can be provided within existing stock of office space.</p> <p>LPS have provided a rental valuation for a 3 year lease in the sum of £3,250 per annum.</p> <p>PBNI have agreed to cover the costs of the valuation by LPS.</p> <p>Council will provide office furniture from existing stock but PBNI will organise and meet the cost of any IT requirements they may have.</p> |
| 3.0 | Recommendation: |
| | <p>Council agree to enter into a 3 year lease for the accommodation set out at 1.0 above with PBNI at a yearly rental of £3,250.</p> |

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| 4.0 | Resource Implications: Financial – Income – £3,250 per annum. Legal/Administrative costs – minimal. |
| 5.0 | Equality and good relations implications: None identified. |