

Derry City & Strabane District's
Inclusive
Strategic Growth Plan
2017-2032

Our Community Plan

UPDATED 2025



Introduction and Welcome

It is hard to believe that we are nearly at the mid-point of the implementation of the inclusive, Strategic Growth Plan for Derry City and Strabane District. When we first published this ambitious plan back in 2017 we were aware of the key challenges but not what was about to unfold. Back then, coronavirus was an unknown threat. Brexit was a hypothetical scenario and the sheer scale and urgency of the climate challenge was only becoming apparent. Yet, in the context of these unprecedented events and ongoing, entrenched challenges we are proud of what we have achieved and delivered to enhance wellbeing in our City and District.

In September 2024 we celebrated the signing of the Financial Deal for the largest ever central government investment into this region with the £250m City Growth Deal and Inclusive Future Fund. Our City Deal partners have also contributed to this investment bringing the overall portfolio of investment to approximately £300m. This is an exciting and historic intervention which will help deliver and implement this Strategic Growth Plan. We have published Statements of Progress every two years since launching this plan which have demonstrated clear and early progress in the delivery of the plan. We embarked on

the 'Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland' project with the Carnegie UK Trust which enabled us to deliver a wide range of innovative projects on co-production and shared leadership.

Never before has the concept of wellbeing been more important. Despite the challenges of the pandemic we remain committed to addressing inequalities and improving our City and region's global competitiveness. We want to enhance our skills, retain our talent base, address poverty, social exclusion, patterns of deprivation and improve access to services in our rural areas. We are passionate about our built and natural heritage and sustainably enhancing our environment to develop a connected and vibrant City and District.

This newly reviewed Strategic Growth Plan is presented as a result of an ongoing period of engagement with citizens, partner organisations and businesses. It is based on a robust evidence base and we routinely monitor its performance, economic impacts, interdependencies and risks. We also have reviewed and prioritised our actions which direct how the plan is to be delivered, ensuring that what we do is achievable, measurable, defined and costed.

We want to harness the opportunities and address the deep challenges that face us, some unique to our situation and others generated by drivers beyond our direct control. There is a real sense that this is our time, a time of progress.

We convene around an agreed vision:

A thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and District with equality of opportunity for all.

Producing a refreshed plan is the easy part – keeping our focus on delivering the plan and 'making it happen' with real progress is the ongoing challenge. We will constantly keep this plan under review, adding new collaborative actions as they emerge from our new ways of working.

*Derry City & Strabane District's
Strategic Growth Partnership
(Community Planning Partnership)
April 2022*



Our Partners

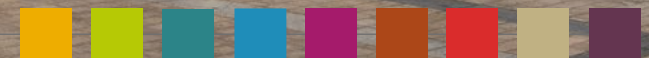
Statutory Partners



Support Partners



Outcomes and Impacts Summary



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This document is available in a range of formats on request. See page 68 for contact details.



1. This is our place

Derry City and Strabane District Council area comprises the second largest city in Northern Ireland / fourth largest city on the Island of Ireland. Derry-Londonderry is the 'Capital of the North West' and is at the core of the only functional economic city region of its scale which straddles the border into the Republic of Ireland.

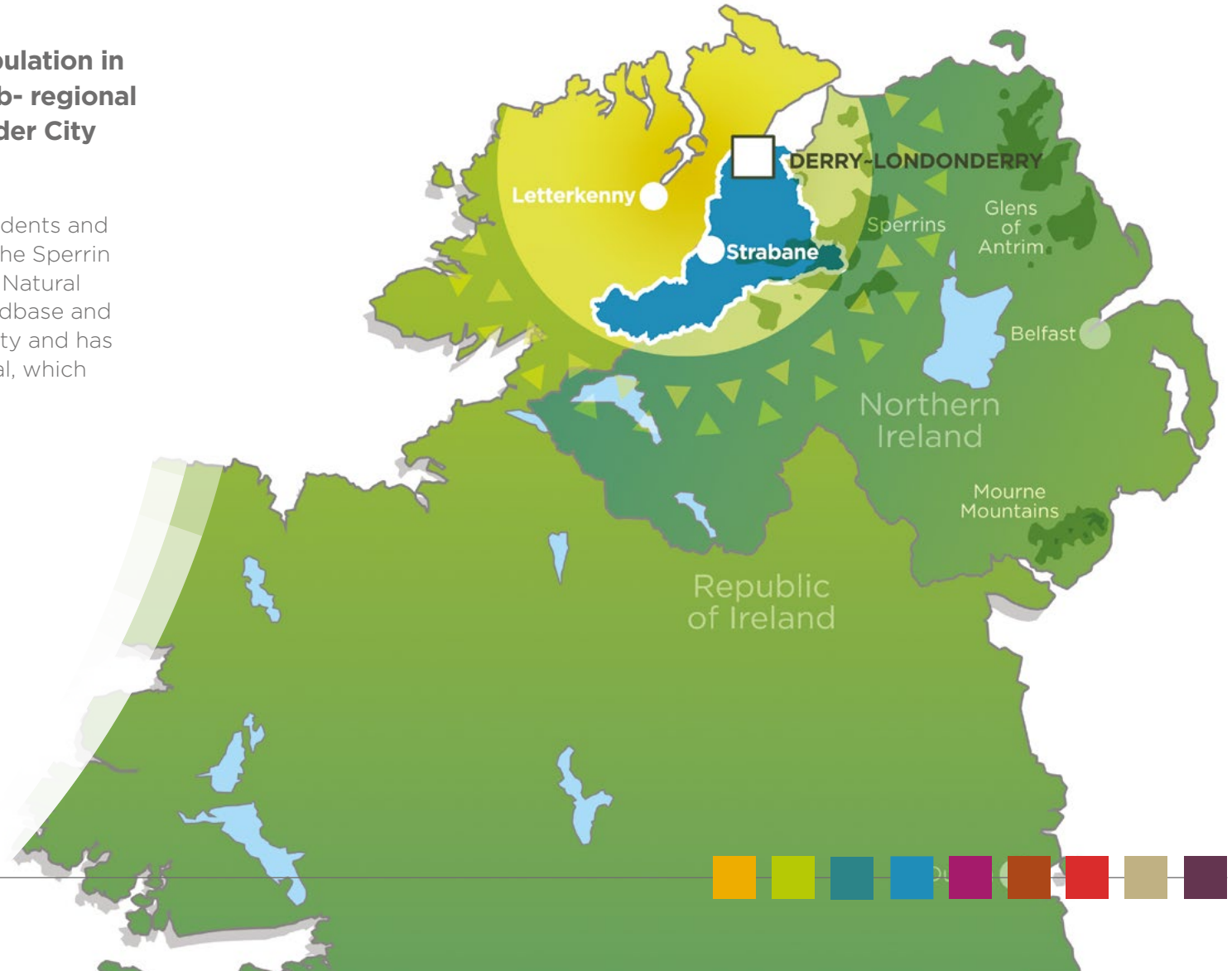
Derry~Londonderry has an urban population in excess of 100,000, is the principal sub- regional economic driver of a wider cross border City Region of over 350,000 people.

Our wider Council area is home to 150,800 residents and covers 1245km². It is set within the foothills of the Sperrin Mountains - a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has a contrasting urban and rural landbase and population. Our Regional City is a University City and has Northern Ireland's second largest acute hospital, which includes the only cross-border Cancer Centre on this island.

Derry-Londonderry is a regional city and is connected to a number of vibrant towns including **Strabane, Letterkenny** and **Coleraine**. The District also is home to many thriving towns and villages such as **Castledearg, Eglinton, Sion Mills, Donemana, Claudy, Plumbridge** and **Newtownstewart**.

A City Region
serving over
350,000 people

A City with an urban
population in excess
of **150,800**



1. This is our place

We have a remarkable and rich history, culture and heritage packaged together in a stunning landscape which is interlaced with some of the best fishing rivers in Europe. The District Council area includes the Rivers Foyle, Finn and Mourne, accentuated with elegant bridges, attractive riverside parks, cycle paths and greenways. Derry City also links the Wild Atlantic Way with the Causeway Coastal Route.

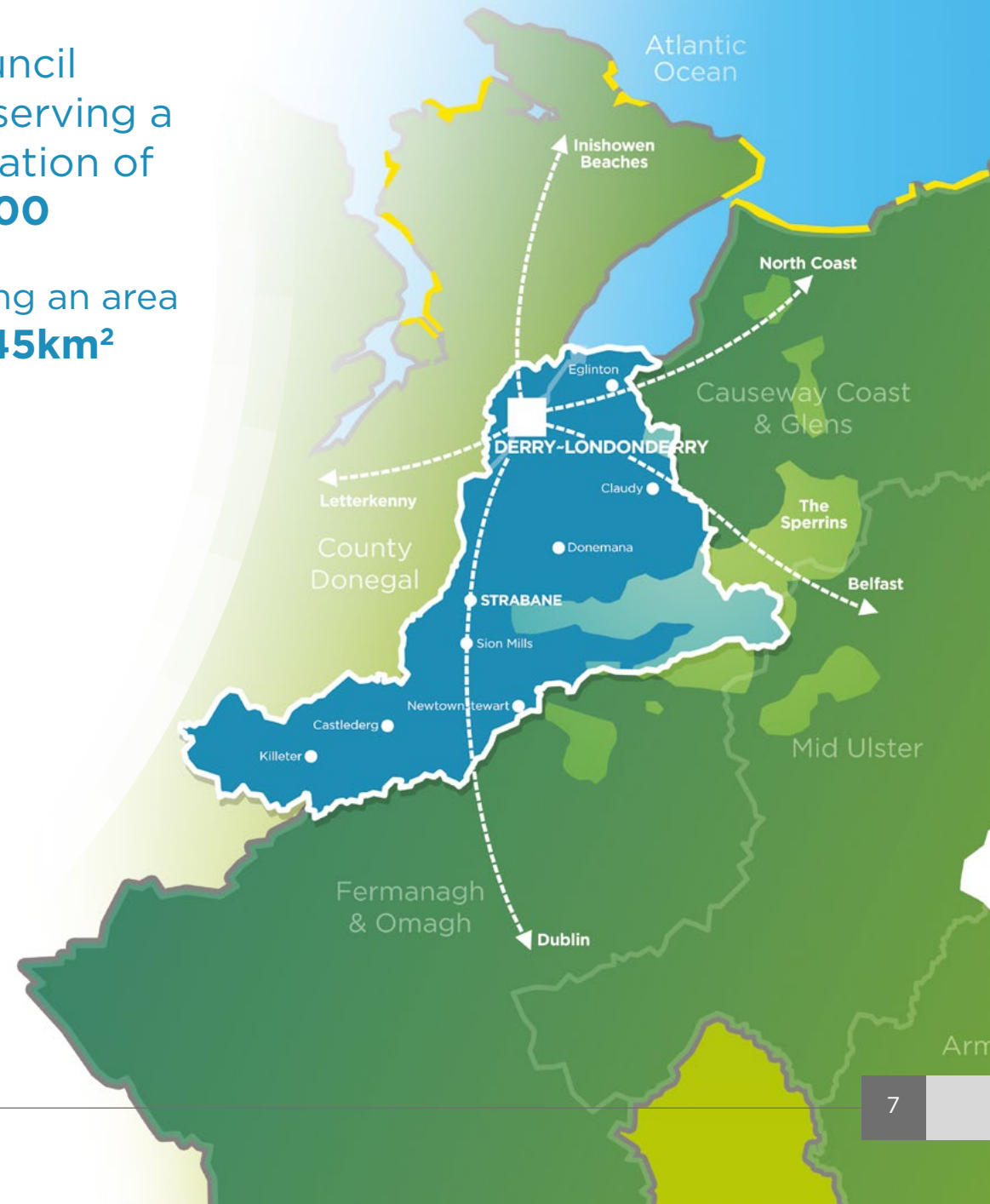
Derry-Londonderry has the most complete circuit of City walls of any settlement in Ireland. The walled City is a special cultural and historic city quarter, featuring many historic buildings and supported by museums, arts venues and speciality retail and hospitality premises. The City hosts two cathedrals, one of which is also the city's oldest surviving building. The City also has a rich monastic history founded in the 6th century by Colmcille.

The City and District once led the world in the textile industry. The region has since repositioned itself as one of the most innovative, creative and cultural areas on this island and is now a strong global competitor in health and life sciences, digital, tourism and creative industries.

Our City Region and towns and villages have many quality of life advantages – such as an excellent education system, relatively short commuting times, a vibrant cultural scene and stunning landscapes. There is a palpable sense of belonging and local people have close neighbourly and family ties.

A Council Area serving a population of **150,800**

covering an area of **1,245km²**



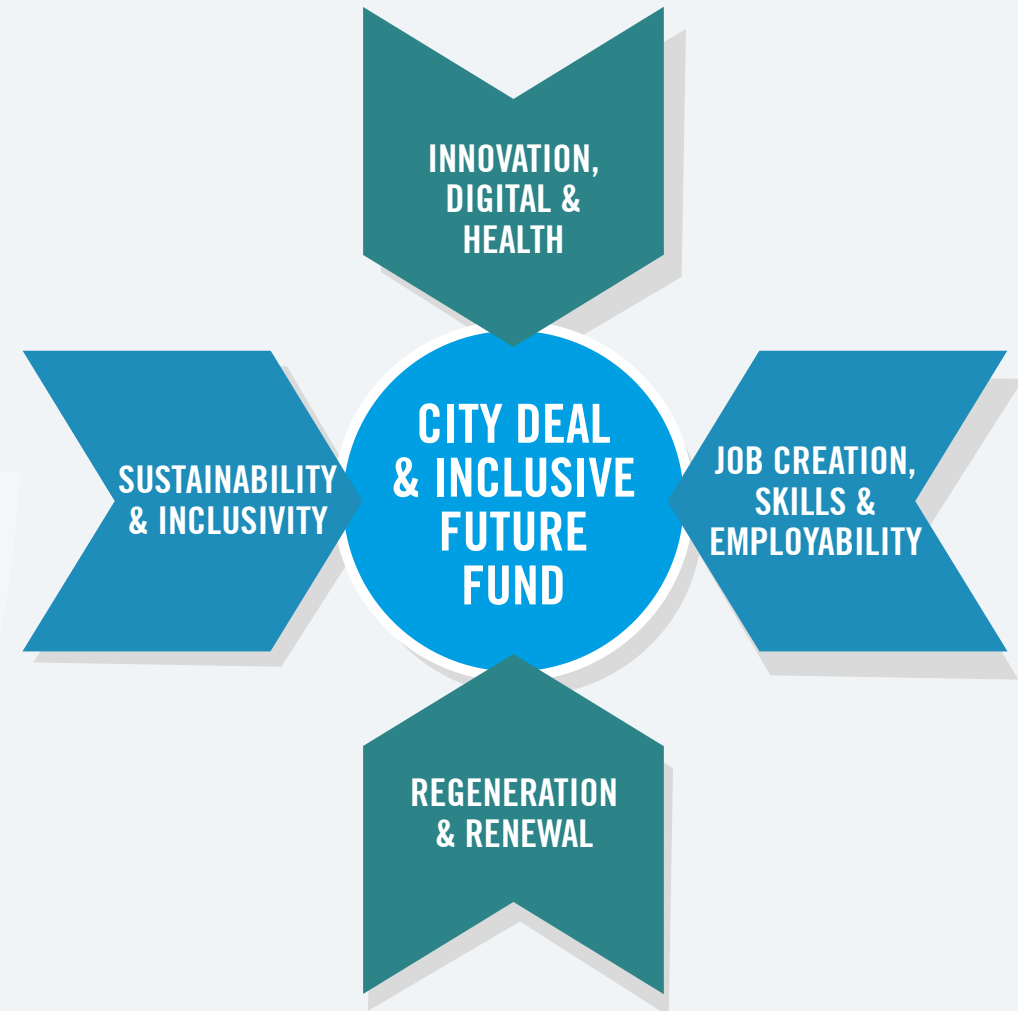
2. This is our time. A time of progress

There is clear evidence of delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan and work is ongoing to deliver considerable social, economic and environmental transformation.

City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund – delivering inclusive and sustainable growth for the Derry~Londonderry and Strabane City Region

The signing of the financial deal of the City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund in September 2024 heralded the most significant central government investment in the region in its history. The City Deal will assist in delivering key projects in the Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan, acting as a catalyst for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. It will contribute to building a stronger, more competitive, resilient and inclusive economy which will result in higher paid jobs and help create a more regionally balanced economy.

The funding will significantly expand three world class centres of innovation excellence currently operating in the City, enhance and maximise digital connectivity, deliver two major transformational City and Town Centre regeneration schemes and provide skills and employability programmes. **The investment will catalyse delivery of a number of projects featured within the Strategic Growth Plan.**



2. This is our time. A time of progress

We are innovating

Innovation sits at the very heart of the Derry-Londonderry and Strabane City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund. We have an established number of research and innovation centres that build on Ulster University's strong track record of research excellence in data, health and life sciences and advanced manufacturing. We are establishing an innovation corridor from the existing campus and down onto the City's Riverfront which will be home to a fast-growing cluster of Ulster University research centres of excellence that will include researchers, business and the local community.

- ▶ The Cognitive Analytics and Digital Robotics Innovation Centre will drive the multi-disciplinary innovation necessary to translate the benefits of Ulster University's leading-edge research in data driven disciplines such as bio-inspired Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cognitive robotics, into economic, environmental and social benefits for Northern Ireland.”
- ▶ Northern Ireland's first **Graduate Entry Medical School** opened in September 2021 as part of our new **School of Medicine** which will help meet the region's need for increased medical students and will address the wider issue of a shortage of doctors.
- ▶ A digital Enabling Infrastructure Programme will create a step change in the digital infrastructure within the City Region by focusing on next generation technologies including digital connectivity and rural connectivity in areas with poor broadband connectivity.
- ▶ The **Smart City** proposals will place the Derry-Londonderry and Strabane City Region at the leading edge of urban innovation supporting the development, deployment at scale and commercialisation of smart specialisms across a range of sectors and public service delivery.
- ▶ **The Central Riverfront** will be a dynamic and re-invigorated urban waterfront that positions the City as a vibrant destination. The project area extends from Whittaker Street to Queens Quay Roundabout and will include a potential new University Square.
- ▶ **The Walled City Regeneration Project** will re-imagine the City Centre via high quality place-making, iconic lighting and repurpose buildings in the City Centre.
- ▶ **The Derry-Londonderry on the North Atlantic (DNA) Museum** will create an interactive visitor attraction showcasing the heritage of the region at Ebrington.
- ▶ **The Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Programme** will revitalise Strabane Town Centre by delivering a new further and higher education campus, a new health hub, leisure centre and footbridge



2. This is our time. A time of continued challenge

Derry City and Strabane District Council area has historically faced a complex range of interrelated and geo-political circumstances which have led to economic decline and stagnation. These circumstances include:

- ▶ The location of the City on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland resulting in the fragmentation of its functional economic area, fluctuating currency levels and differing regulatory and statutory controls and environment.
- ▶ Its peripherality as the most westerly City within the UK and situated on an EU border.
- ▶ A legacy of underinvestment in infrastructure with poor local and sub-regional connectivity, inadequate intercity road, rail and transport connections to Belfast, Dublin and other cities/regions and to/from the Island's ports and airports.
- ▶ Inadequate third level education places proportionate to the size and ambition of the City Region.
- ▶ A disproportionately low number of regional and sub-regional public and government offices, services, economic assets, anchors and headquarters for a city of its regional scale, significance and location.
- ▶ The weak breadth and diversity of its retail, manufacturing and industrial base.
- ▶ The 'Troubles', their historic impact, generational trauma and their ongoing legacy.
- ▶ The impact of the UK's departure from the EU has created uncertainty economically and socially.

These interrelated challenges have historically prevented the City and District in fulfilling its maximum potential. Derry City and Strabane District currently has the lowest labour productivity (output per filled job in 2022) and sub-regional employment rate (including students 16-64) in Northern Ireland.



2. This is our time. A time of continued challenge

Environmental challenges:

- ▶ **The location** of the City and District on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland presents challenges due to the fragmentation of its Functional Economic Area (FEA), fluctuating currency levels and differing regulatory and statutory controls and environment.
- ▶ **Its peripherality** - as the most westerly City within the UK and situated on an EU border.
- ▶ **A legacy of underinvestment in infrastructure** with poor local and sub-regional connectivity, including to/from Foyle Port and City of Derry Airport.
- ▶ **The delays on the A5 Dublin-Derry road and the absence of a direct rail link to Dublin and Donegal** continue to accentuate the peripherality of the City and District.
- ▶ The uptake of public transport is lower than average.
- ▶ There is heavy reliance on the car as the primary mode of transport - contributing to 40% of our carbon output compared to the 20% on average elsewhere.
- ▶ 30% of households in the City and District have been recorded as living in Fuel Poverty compared to a Northern Ireland average of 22%.



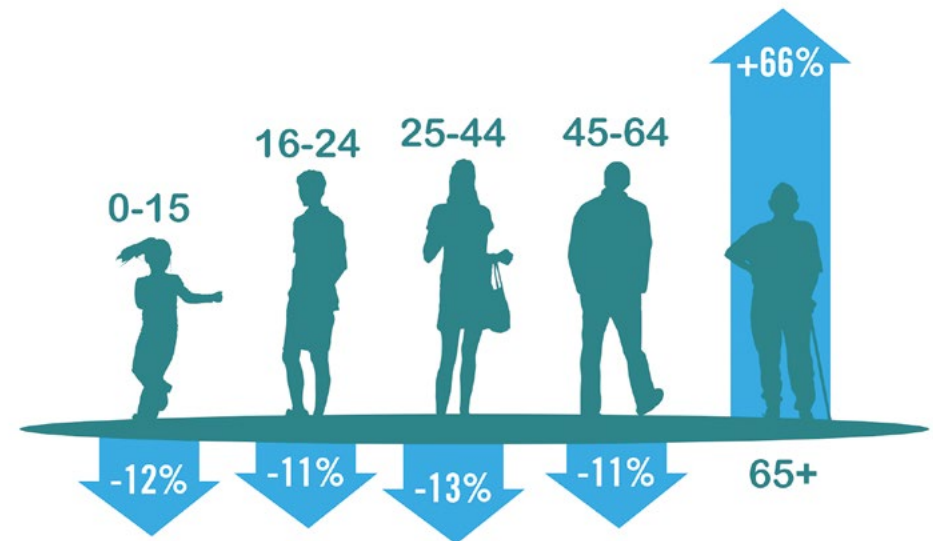
2. This is our time. A time of continued challenge

Social challenges:

- ▶ The troubles, their historic impact and their ongoing legacy has had an intergenerational trauma impact on local communities.
- ▶ Since 2017, our standardised prescription rate for mood and anxiety prescriptions per 1,000 of population has increased by 13.9 points on the baseline compared to a 5.6 increase across Northern Ireland.
- ▶ Our residents suffer from higher levels of health inequalities compared to the rest of Northern Ireland (with the exception of Belfast). This is a situation that is further exacerbated for those living in our most deprived areas - both within our high density urban areas and our rural areas.
- ▶ One fifth of our residents live in areas that have higher Claimant Count rates than the NI average.
- ▶ 1 in 3 Children living in the City and District are living in poverty.
- ▶ Young people are the most likely age group to be working in sectors hardest hit by COVID-19. We have a higher proportion of young people long term unemployed.
- ▶ We have a higher percentage of people who are economically inactive due to a disability or long term illness.
- ▶ In terms of housing tenure, our council area has one of the highest proportions of social housing and has the second highest number of applicants on the social rented sector waiting list.
- ▶ Recorded crime has increased in the City and District since 2017

Over the next 20 years the City and District will experience a significant shift in the age profile of the population. By the end of this period, our region is projected to have nearly 4,000 fewer children aged under 16 with an increase in those of retirement age of around 14,000.

Projected population change within age bands 2016 - 2039



We can address these social, economic and environmental challenges and deliver wellbeing outcomes through the delivery of the actions within this Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan.



2. This is our time. A time of recovery

What matters now is how we build on recent progress and respond to current and ongoing challenges. Official forecasts are based on past trends and we know that if we choose to do things differently, the future does not need to be a repetition of the past. Our recovery strategy is strongly based on a green recovery - within the UN Sustainable Development Goals, climate resilience and transitioning to a just, low carbon economy.

Reducing inequalities matters

The pandemic has strongly reinforced the correlation between inequality, poor wellbeing, poverty and disadvantage. Inequality harms those directly suffering but it also harms us all economically and socially regardless of how well off we are. We are deeply aware of the ongoing consequences of social deprivation across our City and District and whilst change unfortunately cannot be instant we are committed to ensuring that the promise of inclusive growth and equality is achieved. Our future is one where inequalities of all kinds are eradicated or substantially reduced.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



2. This is our time. A time of recovery

The planet matters

We have declared a climate emergency and have pledged to address and mitigate against climate change. We need to live sustainably: to produce and consume within planetary boundaries. We have been pioneering new approaches to both reduce our contribution to climate change and build our resilience to the impacts of it now and in the future.

We are the first Council area in Northern Ireland to have developed a Climate Change Adaption Plan and are committed that all future developments are climate ready. We believe we can have a circular economy and a low carbon society. We need to promote more renewable energy, develop an integrated, sustainable transport system and connect our rich waterways and greenways.

Our Strategic Growth Plan outcomes have been matched to the **UN Sustainable Development Goals** which encapsulate the principles of place making, smart growth and healthy places.

Being a driver for economic prosperity North and South matters

We have a strong sense of our role as part of the wider global economy and society. Given our location in the North West of Ireland and Europe, our aspiration is to be a positive contributor to the Northern Irish, UK and European economies. With a more successful economy with lower levels of worklessness and higher levels of personal income we will be less dependent on external subsidies.

Our economy means so much more to us than something that can simply be measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product or Gross Value Added. We certainly want our economy to grow, but we specifically want it to grow in a way that reduces inequality and protects the environment.

People and Places matter

Our sense of belonging and identity, of being rooted within our families, neighbourhoods, communities and our relationships and connections within them matter. This is affected by the physical places that we live in: our streets, our schools and our shops, our places of work, our heritage assets and our places of leisure and play. We are strongly connected to our place within nature and the connection we feel with the green open spaces where we live.

Our communities are also those built on shared interests such as arts and sport which foster rich connections right across our City and district. Our future is one where we nurture our sense of belonging and our relationships with both our people and our place.

The legacy of conflict matters

We are aware, many of us painfully so, of the legacy of decades of conflict. That legacy manifests itself in the trauma of individuals and families on whom the violence of the past has left deep scars both physically and mentally. We recognise this trauma and we are committed to helping those affected to enjoy full lives once more. We also recognise the even greater challenge of healing our community. We are intensely proud of how far we have come in overcoming division and mistrust. We are committed to continuing this important work and of being a beacon of hope and reconciliation.

Governance matters

Civic engagement in decision making where there is active and valued citizen engagement is vitally important in the delivery of this Strategic Growth Plan. We shall build on our dynamic leadership, strong urban and rural relationships, streamlined collaboration between local and central government and integrated cross border planning and delivery structures.



2. This is our time. A time of recovery

Wellbeing matters

Following an application to Phase VII of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network, Derry City and Strabane has once again been awarded WHO Healthy City and District designation.

The WHO describes Healthy Cities as places that deliver for people and the planet. They engage the whole of society, encouraging the participation of all communities in the pursuit of peace and prosperity. Healthy cities lead by example in order to achieve change for the better, tackling inequalities and promoting good governance and leadership for health and well-being. Innovation, knowledge sharing and health diplomacy are valued and nurtured in healthy cities.

People

As a healthy city, we will take a human approach to development, prioritizing investment in people and ensuring access for all to common goods and services.

Participation

We will lead by example ensuring community participation in decisions that affect where and how people live.

Prosperity

We will strive for enhanced community prosperity and strengthened assets through values-based governance.

Planet

We will ensure that the health and well-being of both the people and the planet are at the heart of everything we do.

Place

We will create an accessible social, physical and cultural environment that facilitates the pursuit of health and well-being.

Peace

We will create an accessible social, physical and cultural environment that facilitates the pursuit of health and well-being.



3. Our ambition and approach

There is a clear vision and direction within the City and District with political and civic consensus on our key social, economic and environmental challenges and opportunities. We have mature and developed partnership working and dynamic political and civic leadership.

Our partnership is clear on its vision, its mission and its cross cutting themes.

Our Vision

A thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and District with equality of opportunity for all.

Our Mission

To improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the city and district and to do so in a sustainable way.

Cross cutting themes

Equality and Inclusive Growth. Sustainability. Rural Development. Good Relations.



3. Our ambition and approach

Cross cutting themes

Equality and Inclusive Growth

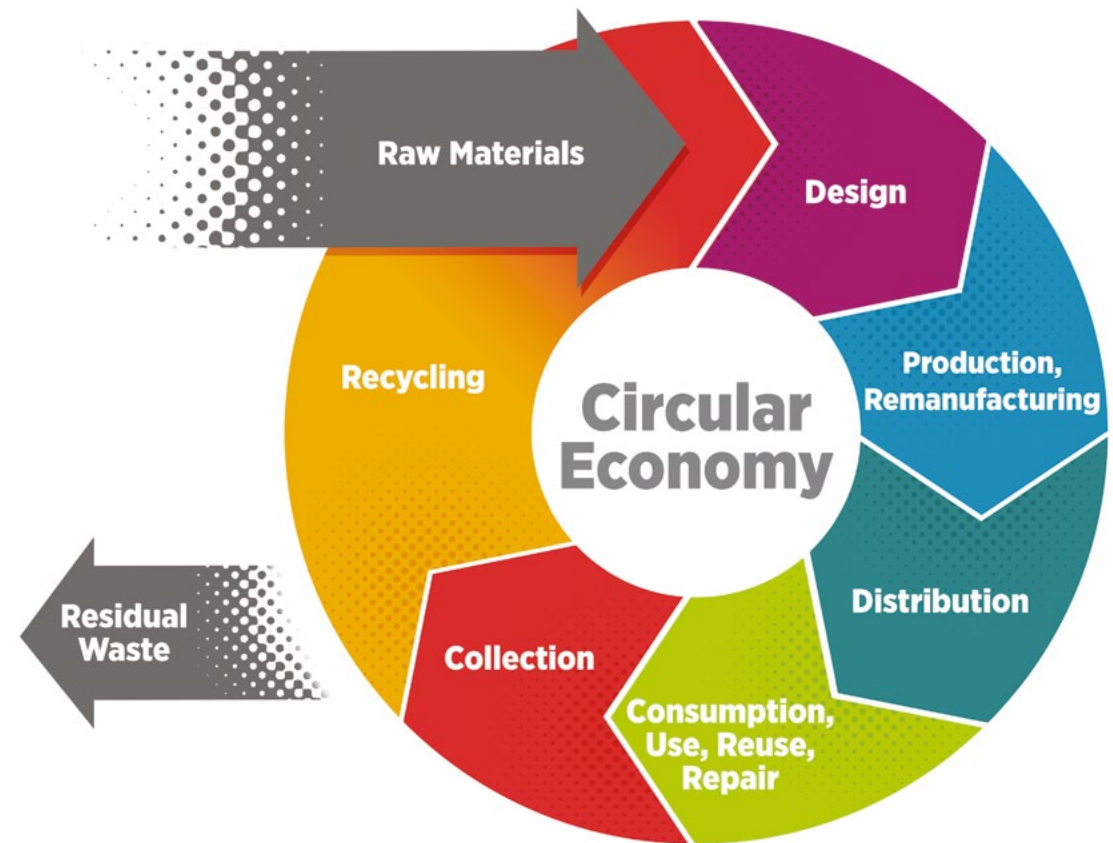
There is a growing body of published literature which demonstrates that income inequality is damaging to economic growth. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines inclusive growth as 'economic growth that creates opportunity for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity, both in monetary and non-monetary terms, fairly across society'.

Research by Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the recommendation from the Northern Ireland Expert Panel convened to support the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy have demonstrated that work is the best route out of poverty for some people. This means creating more and better jobs in the private, public and social economy sectors through investment in infrastructure and service provision. Inclusive growth is essential to reducing inequalities. We want to ensure that as many as people as possible have access to a good job.

Sustainability

The legislation on Community Planning requires us to improve social, economic and environmental wellbeing and to identify **'long-term objectives in relation to the district for contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in Northern Ireland'**.

Our approach is to focus on a number of key areas. These include promoting sustainable communities, the development of a circular economy approach, a modal shift from the reliance on the private car to walking, cycling and public transport, reducing carbon emissions through energy efficiency and renewable energy, and protecting our own local ecosystems as the source of clean air, clean water and fertile topsoil.



3. Our ambition and approach

Cross cutting themes

Rural Development

This plan, and the three rural local growth plans of Sperrin, Derg and Faughan are committed to supporting both our City as a generator of economic growth and our main town, local towns, villages, small settlements and rural areas which provide a rich source of natural resources, heritage, biodiversity, labour, space, natural assets, agriculture and tourist attractions. There is a commitment within the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland (2022) to arrest the decline of our towns and villages, adapting to the changing function of town centres and to investing in the development of the rural economies and rural-based enterprise. The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 places a duty on central government and public authorities, including District Councils, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services. This plan has been screened in accordance with the legislation and Council has established a rural issues group to ensure that wellbeing is realised and integrated within our rural communities.

Good Relations

Good Relations impacts significantly on societal wellbeing. It is important in relation to people's access to education, training and employment, the mobility of the workforce and in attracting investment – as investment depends, amongst other drivers, on having a settled and stable community. It is also important that we develop our City and Regional assets in ways that provide public spaces which are more accessible and welcoming to the whole community. So we wish to continue to build a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.



3. Our ambition and approach

Our co-design approach

The strength of feeling and the love that local people have for our City and District is clearly evident in every co-design meeting, conversation and community planning workshop that helped shape this plan. From Castlederg to Caw and from Claudy to the Creggan, we all identify in different ways with different places but we have a strong sense of community and a commitment to making the most of the present and building a better future.

Back in 2017, over 5,000 people were engaged in the co-design of our outcomes, indicators and actions. A robust, evidence-based approach was also used to inform the work of eight thematic groups and the eight local growth plans. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency data, a citizen survey to 1,400 households, engagement with children and young people, focus group research with groups identified as experiencing inequalities in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, provided us with an evidence base to develop and agree the key actions required to address inequalities and grow our City and District over the next 15 years.

During 2021 in the review of the plan, consultation and engagement was undertaken with approximately 300+ stakeholders with a responsibility for delivering the plan and also with citizens and local people. A detailed survey was issued seeking quantitative data on the topics of 'governance/partnership working, actions and data'. Further consultation was then carried out through our Citizen Space platform to allow local people to review our actions, prioritise them in order of importance and to suggest any gaps. This quantitative feedback has allowed the partnership to prioritise the actions, as requested, amend the plan and complete the review.



4. Outcomes and actions

This framework was co-designed and agreed as the foundation of our Strategic Growth Plan. It facilitated the establishment of thematic working groups to develop our outcomes, indicators and actions.



4. Outcomes and actions

As a result of our extensive co-design process the following outcomes were agreed and aligned to the three statutory pillars of wellbeing.



4. Outcomes and actions: Economy

EDUCATION & SKILLS OUTCOME

WE ARE BETTER SKILLED AND EDUCATED



Our young people have improved attainment levels

We have a better skilled and educated workforce

As a UNESCO Learning City and Region we have increased training and learning opportunities

Prioritised actions are as follows:

- ▶ Increase third level student numbers through the significant expansion of the Ulster University at Magee to 10,000 students.
- ▶ Implement Vocational Educational Programmes for young people aged 14-18 at risk of disengaging.
- ▶ Develop local and sub-regional responses to skill needs and implement, review and monitor the Skills Action Plan as part of the Labour Market Partnership.

Key actions include:

- ▶ As part of our UNESCO Learning City and Region global membership status, promote and accelerate the practice of life-long learning, develop an active and inclusive learning culture from early education in families, the workplace and communities.
- ▶ Embed entrepreneurialism within all learning opportunities in collaboration with appropriate agencies.
- ▶ Deliver Pilot projects to include work experience and upskilling opportunities to embed core employability skills in growth sectors (including green transformation) for those entering the labour market, the long term unemployed and economically inactive.
- ▶ Increase industry engagement in careers advice and guidance.
- ▶ Implement a STEM action plan. Develop and promote STEM programmes in primary and post primary schools and deliver pilot projects focusing of STEM Career/Industry Engagement.
- ▶ Promote the importance of educational pathways and promote the apprenticeship framework.
- ▶ Develop a collaborative and partnership model of working across the education sector with businesses to ensure smarter use of existing estate assets and funding.
- ▶ Support community and parental engagement projects focusing on numeracy and literacy.
- ▶ Increase the level of continuous professional development and support available for teachers across a range of areas - particularly STEM.
- ▶ Reinforce and grow Derry-Londonderry's role as a vibrant University City.



4. Outcomes and actions: Economy

The Strategic Growth Partnership is committed to continuing to advocate for the catalytic expansion of third level education within Ulster University at Magee and North West Regional College with the primary objectives of reinforcing and growing Derry's reputation as a vibrant University City and provider of higher level apprenticeships. The New Decade New Approach political agreement in 2019 outlines a pledge to expand the student numbers at Ulster University at Magee Campus to 10,000 students. This can only be achieved through a determined, funded and committed collaborative effort between the Northern Ireland Executive, The Irish Government and Ulster University working in close partnership with city and regional stakeholders.



Pathway

Joseph Rowntree Foundation



4. Outcomes and actions: Economy

ENTERPRISE & THE ECONOMY OUTCOME ►

WE PROSPER THROUGH A STRONG, SUSTAINABLE & COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

Meaningful and rewarding employment is available to everyone

Our economy is better connected and more prosperous

We are more entrepreneurial, creative and business ready and have grown our economic base

We are more specialised and innovative and have competitive advantage



Prioritised actions are as follows:

- Maximise job creation and investment opportunities in our City and Town Centres, regionally significant regeneration sites and rural areas.
- Develop a pilot Rural Community Broadband Scheme and roll out in multiple locations.
- Develop a vibrant social economy, co-operative, creative and cultural sector through targeted support programmes.

Key actions include:

- Provide intensive mentoring support for Entrepreneurs from under-represented groups.
- Deliver business start-up programmes and development support focused on areas of high economic inactivity and rural community hubs. Develop compelling business cases and support packages for Foreign Direct Investment and develop our international connections to drive growth an investment.
- Establish a Development Zone Pilot to mitigate the challenges and explore the opportunities arising from the UK's Exit from the EU.
- Develop more Grade A office accommodation.
- Build and Strengthen clusters of Industry specialism in Advanced Manufacturing, Life and Health Sciences, Digital and Creative Industries and Tourism.
- Secure investment into Strabane Business Park and ensure its full utilisation.
- Develop incubation space and opportunities for collaborative public sector shared office space.



4. Outcomes and actions: Economy

Derry/North West City Region Regeneration

The Regional Development Strategy recognises the importance of cities as drivers of economic growth, and that Belfast and Derry-Londonderry are key population and economic centres and as such will be catalysts for growth across Northern Ireland. Ireland's National Development Plan also outlines that we need to enhance performance of North West City Region which is key to both the Northern Ireland Executive's and the Irish Government's ambitions to realise the economic potential of the region. Moreover, the Industrial Strategy for Northern Ireland outlines the intention to move towards a rebalancing focus and to invest in infrastructure to support the growth of Derry-Londonderry as the driver of the North West.

Indeed, over the past 25 years successful cities have become the main source of both national and global economic productivity. The international evidence from successful world cities, including those that have completely reversed their cycle of decline – such as Bilbao, Malmo and Pittsburgh – suggests that cities perform better in those countries that are less centralised.

The evidence from Europe and internationally also indicates that small and medium-sized cities, like Derry-Londonderry, are becoming more important to future economic growth, especially when linked together in mutually supportive networks across wider spatial areas.

This would support the arguments for greater connectivity between all cities in Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Within Great Britain and England in particular, cities have attempted to tackle low growth by joining together with neighbouring councils to form city-region 'combined authorities' based on the functions of their local economic geography. Subsequently, **in 2015 a strong North West focus was established. Derry-Londonderry's role has become pivotal to the health and success of the wider North West regional economy and as a net contributor to the wider economies in North and South of Ireland. A successful Derry-Londonderry/North West City Region is critical to the future wellbeing of everyone** living within Northern Ireland and the North West of the island of Ireland.

Our approach to economic growth focuses not only on stimulating growth and creating jobs through investment in infrastructure and service provision, but also in ensuring **inclusive growth** and that as many people as possible have access to those jobs and understand the relationship between prosperity and poverty. This investment is premised on the effects of a dividend that will spread growth and reform to all the District's surrounding areas and to Northern Ireland as a whole.



4. Drivers for Economic Growth

The integrated Economic Strategy for Derry City and Strabane District has identified priority sectors which provide the 'step-change' required for economic development and growth.*

1 Life Sciences & Health Sciences

The North West City Region has focused on developing capability across the four key enabling technologies and processes required to capitalise on the opportunities arising from the demands across the Life and Health Sciences sector. Derry City and Strabane District is home to the **Cognitive Analytics Research Lab (CARL)** at Ulster University. CARL is at the forefront of helping business, academia and clinicians in developing solutions to a multitude of problems through the use of big data. Our pioneering research efforts have created a significant opportunity to further develop industry and economic growth partnership with Ulster University's world-leading academic research.

Secondly, **The Clinical Translational Research and Innovation Centre (C-TRIC)** based at Altnagelvin Hospital Campus has been a pioneer in Precision Medicine and Clinical Trials. It is Northern Ireland's only Health Innovation Centre combining world-class clinical research with leading Life and Health

Sciences entrepreneurs and businesses. This approach has been at the forefront of driving innovation and the development of innovative health technologies, medical devices and therapeutics.

Thirdly, **The Northern Ireland Centre for Stratified Medicine** aims to capture the opportunities that will be realised through point of care diagnostics through a shift towards personalised care. Its world class researchers are undertaking cutting edge research that can better identify drugs or treatments that meet the specific needs of the individual patients. It has the largest single critical mass of researchers solely focused on stratified medicine in Ireland, putting Derry and Strabane at the frontier of pioneering medical research into chronic degenerative diseases.

Another key asset is **The Intelligent Systems Research Centre (ISRC)** at the Ulster University, Magee. This centre is dedicated to the creation of intelligent computational systems, with a focus on biology and neuroscience. It is a major contributor to international research in the areas of computational intelligence, virtual worlds, computer gaming, neuro engineering and bio-inspired computing. It has developed the first, and only functional brain mapping facility on the island of Ireland and is one of only a few in the UK to use brain imaging to measure brain activity. The Centre attracts

scientists of international calibre, positioning this area as a world leader in intelligent systems.

Derry City and Strabane's base at the forefront of setting the agenda in the Life and Health Sciences Sector through investment in excess of £140m in Altnagelvin's Acute Area Hospital and the establishment of the NW Cancer Centre is further underlined by the establishment of Ulster University's Graduate Entry Medical School in the heart of its campus in Derry. It will place the North West at the forefront of addressing the recruitment and retention of medical staff in Northern Ireland's healthcare sector.

**The Integrated Economic Strategy also outlines a number of other subsidiary sectors which will assist the sustainability and growth of the area. To view the strategy please visit www.derrystrabane.com*



4. Drivers for Economic Growth

2 Digital Industries including Business, Professional & Financial Services

Derry and Strabane has a growing, creative and dynamic Digital cluster. The area already has an established presence of large FDIs including Fujitsu, Allstate and Seagate Technologies and there is an established market in the Software and IT Services areas. Supporting the large multi-nationals is a wealth of small and medium sized enterprises with over 50 creative, digital content companies covering everything from specialist software development to e-learning and mobile apps. Both Further and Higher Education providers provide a wide range of digitally related courses.

The area has demonstrated its capability to provide financial systems and technology to the Financial Services Industry with links to London, Dublin and the US.

The Cognitive Analytics Research (CARL) will accelerate the growth of the digital cluster over the next 5 to 10 years by setting the data analytics agenda and enhancing international competitiveness. Catalyst Inc. based at the Innovation Centre provides 50,000 square feet of flexible workspace housing specialists in software, telecoms, digital media, health and bioscience, clean tech and television production.

The City and District also benefits from **Project Kelvin** which has created the fastest, high capacity city to city international telecommunications link to the east coast of the USA. It provides world class telecommunications connectivity and research capability and significantly enhances the region's capacity to create and grow high value 'Smart Economy' enterprises.



4. Drivers for Economic Growth

3 Creative Industries

Derry and Strabane has a cluster of companies focusing on broadcast production, digital publishing, music, games development and animation/film. Supporting this business base are Ulster University's School of Creating Arts and Technologies, the North West Regional College 's third level qualifications in creative Media Production and NORIBIC's Digital Media Works incubator - Northern Ireland's first multimedia (DMM) sector-specific incubator, with a particular focus on the computer games industry. Research is also taken by ISRC at Magee on serious games and virtual worlds focussing on the effective use of games and virtual worlds for STEM related education, and designing engaging games underpinned by the effective use of analytics and metrics.

The City and District has a strong reputation for creativity in areas such as music and literature and the City was the inaugural UK City of Culture in 2013. Recent developments in the creative industries include investment in Custom House to provide **incubation space** for textile design and the announcement of film and television legal specialists opening a new European office in the North West Regional Science Park. Ulster University, Magee also offers a Master-level course in 'Law and Business of Film and Television'.

4 Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering

Derry City and Strabane has a diverse and growing advanced manufacturing and engineering sector. The North West region has experience in aerospace, automotive, construction, agri-engineering and materials handling. Within these sectors the region is developing a world-class reputation for its strengths I polymers and plastics, manufacturing, precision manufacturing, aircraft seating and interiors. This is supported through the establishment of the £8m North West **Centre for Advanced Manufacturing (CAM)**.

Cam will support a super cluster within Life and Health Sciences and will significantly increase the number of businesses in commercially focused research enhancing innovation and competitiveness. The Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering sector is a significant employer across the region with the long established International Companies such as Dupont and Bemis, complemented by indigenous companies such as E&I Engineering, O'Neills, Agri Fleming and AE Global.



4. Drivers for Economic Growth

5 Culture & Tourism

Derry and Strabane District is renowned as a world class tourism destination with high quality tourism products that incorporate our landscapes, heritage and culture that enable visitors to have a personal, authentic and quality experience. We are a standout heritage destination, the only Walled City on the island of Ireland, built heritage, a year round programme of international scale festivals and events and a truly vibrant arts and culture sector enabling new innovative content allowing visitors and residents alike to engage with the authenticity of the place. A special location where the Wild Atlantic Way meets the Causeway Coastal Route, the Walled City is the perfect hub for exploring the dramatic coastlines and Irelands North West.

Tourism is one of the most resilient and successful parts of the local economy surpassing returns on investment made in other industrial sectors and outpacing the average in job creation. Estimated overnight trips to the Derry City & Strabane District Council are in 2019 was 308,000 which equates to £71mn in direct spend to the local economy (NISRA 2019).

6 Strategic National & International Relationships

Derry City and Strabane District has a number of strategic relationships with Belfast, Dublin, London, Europe and the North East of USA and China. It also has a history of strong collaboration with neighbouring Councils and other border counties. These important connections help develop trade relationships, access investment and venture capital, develop local skills and experience in our growth sectors.

Derry City and Strabane District Council has an historic and strong relationship with the City of London through the development of a unique and innovative economic partnership. Derry and Strabane is proactively positioning to benefit from future growth through a focussed and sustained effort to build relationships with key economic and commercial stakeholders in the City of London.

Further afield, the North West partnership of Derry City and Strabane District and Donegal County Council has developed deep and mutually beneficial relationships with business, government and cultural organisations in Boston, Philadelphia and New York. Through annual trade missions, inward as well as outward, the Region has raised awareness of its reputation as a place to do business, live and play. Our companies have benefited through developing export opportunities, collaborations in Research and Development and Joint Ventures.



4. Outcomes & Actions Economy

TOURISM, ARTS & CULTURE OUTCOME ▶

WE LIVE IN THE CULTURAL DESTINATION OF CHOICE



We live in the cultural destination of choice and offer world-class visitor experiences

Prioritised actions are as follows:

- ▶ In conjunction with the Tourism and Arts & Culture strategies, deliver an ambitious festival and events strategy Building on the success of UK City of Culture 2013 to promote the city and region as a Festival City, profiling our vibrant art scene and placing real value on our Cultural capital which will contribute to the economic impact through a yearlong festival programme.
- ▶ Develop and promote the use of the District's waterways and in particular the River Foyle as a tourism attraction.
- ▶ Develop a strategic investment strategy for the arts and culture sector supported by ongoing impact analysis and focused on leveraging collaboration between key cultural institutions.
- ▶ Support the development of key tourism, arts and cultural capital projects, that will have a significant impact on the delivery of the Tourism and Arts & Culture strategies including delivering the DNA Museum at Ebrington, focusing on the Walled City Development and scoping the feasibility of further attraction development.

Key actions include:

- ▶ Implementation of our comprehensive Tourism strategy and action plan and Arts and Culture strategy and action plan including key actions 'to develop a 5-10-year Investment Action Plan for the Arts and Culture strategy to secure innovative and alternative sources of investment and to research and agree a social, economic and cultural impact assessment model for the arts and culture sector... in line with the Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan and in partnership with other outcome partners. Set indicators, outcomes and baselines and build local capacity to use them.'
- ▶ Develop and promote our heritage assets - in particular managing the Walled City and built heritage assets to realise their full potential to the standard of a world heritage site - through capital investment, regeneration, preservation, sustained animation and a marketing programme.
- ▶ Develop a regionally significant family friendly all weather attraction as part of Councils new leisure estate.
- ▶ Support the core cultural sector to become sustainable through new revenue opportunities including the securing of additional investment, exploiting collaborative efficiencies and leveraging commercial opportunities as well as developing programme content and support event delivery to enhance the City and District's visitor experience, including a focus on the evening economy in key visitor spaces.
- ▶ Ongoing delivery of Access and Inclusion Programmes in partnership with key strategic partners to encourage participation; and engagement, and wellbeing in accessible cultural experiences.
- ▶ Drive capital investment in visitor orientation and infrastructure via securing new visitor destination premises with state-of-the-art digital visitor services, improve accessibility and the development of community tourism initiatives.
- ▶ Implement the Food and Drink Strategy and Action Plan to further develop the region as a leading food destination.
- ▶ Create and support local, national and international cultural exchanges and collaboration.



4. Outcomes & Actions: Economy

The success of 2013, hosting the international Clipper Round the World race at our Maritime Festival and the great international success of our events in particular Halloween together with our year-round cultural offering has created a wonderful cultural renaissance that has taken place in the City and District in the last decade. The Walled City has become synonymous with hosting one of the world's richest Halloween Festivals that has made its way on to "bucket lists" across the globe and been voted "Number One Halloween Destination in the World" by USA Today" and highlighted by the New York Times as one of the world's "Top 6 Halloween Destinations".

We also have a vibrant arts scene widely supported by a population who place great value on creativity. This is against a backdrop of a remarkable built heritage - of which the historic City Walls are the most striking feature adding up to a thrilling experience with all the economic benefits that tourism can bring.

But culture and the arts are much more than an economic opportunity, important as they are. Our creative skills and instincts manifest themselves in a myriad of ways throughout our district - in our homes, schools, businesses, creative and community venues and in the streets. Making music, singing, story-telling, poetry, dancing and making all manner of things: these are what help define who we are and bring meaning and vibrancy to our lives.



4. Outcomes and actions: Environment and Regeneration

PHYSICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL REGENERATION OUTCOME

WE PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT

We connect our people and opportunities through our infrastructure

We live sustainably contributing to climate action

Our Local Development Plan contributes to the development of sustainable communities and to meeting housing need

We will benefit from well-designed and managed green and blue spaces

We have stronger environmental stewardship, value and enhance our environment



Prioritised actions are as follows:

- ▶ Progress the development of regionally significant regeneration sites in Ebrington, Fort George, Derry Central Riverfront and Walled City and Strabane town Centre in collaboration with government and private sector partners.
- ▶ Deliver major local area-based regeneration projects and initiatives.
- ▶ Develop community led regeneration initiatives to promote environmental stewardship and the responsible use and protection of the environment.

Key actions include:

- ▶ Deliver a new Local Development Plan and local planning policies to progress a framework to support sustainable social, economic and environmental growth and development of the City and District.
- ▶ Prepare a development and conservation spatial framework and masterplan for both Derry City Centre and Riverfront and Strabane Town Centre to provide high quality design and regeneration and investment.
- ▶ Deliver heritage/conservation-led masterplans for Sion Mills and develop ongoing renewal action plans for other settlements.
- ▶ Protect and promote our natural and built heritage assets through the establishment of multi-sectoral heritage partnerships, heritage education programmes and skills specialisms development.
- ▶ Support the implementation of the Urban Villages Programme in the Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street areas to foster positive community identities, build community capacity and improve the physical environment of the area.
- ▶ Provide quality social and private housing in sustainable urban and rural neighbourhoods to meet the needs of our growing population providing attractive places to live within easy access to local services and amenities.
- ▶ To design and deliver high quality public realm schemes in our urban centres.
- ▶ Enhancement of the natural environment through biodiversity action planning and landscape scale conservation projects to protect and enhance natural environmental assets.
- ▶ Develop and promote the use of our parks and green spaces including major regeneration and enhancement schemes in Castledearg Castle and gardens, Boom Hall, Riverine and St. Columb's Park.
- ▶ Promote neighbourhood and village enhancement through the development of local environmental improvement schemes and Community facilities.



4. Outcomes and actions: Environment and Regeneration



Our actions within this theme focus on the environmental and physical regeneration of our urban and rural places, on our built and natural environment, on how they interact, and on how we live as part of both in a sustainable way. The actions are aligned to the commitment to manage the walled city to the standard of world heritage site status. Sustainability is an important cross-cutting theme for the plan and we want to create the physical conditions and the behavioural change required to enable sustainable living. The focus is on affordable housing providing high quality living environments making up diverse and sustainable communities.

It is also about improving the public realm, our build heritage and green infrastructure and spaces to make our City, town and rural areas vibrant and attractive places to live, work and visit. Our green spaces and our natural environment contribute positively to our emotional health and wellbeing. Everyone needs access to the healing qualities of nature and everyone has a role to play in being stewards of our environment for current and future generations.



4. Outcomes and actions: Environment and Regeneration

INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT, ENERGY, WASTE & WATER OUTCOME

WE CONNECT OUR PEOPLE & OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

We have a secure and affordable greener energy supply

We have moved towards a circular economy with zero waste

We have integrated, sustainable and accessible transport

Our water is clean and effectively managed

Prioritised actions are as follows:

- ▶ Delivery of necessary strategic road infrastructure whilst also enhancing opportunities for modal shift, active travel and including:
- ▶ The A5 Western Transport Corridor from Derry to Aghnacloy and N2 improvements beyond enhancing critical and safe connectivity to Dublin.
- ▶ Provision of enhanced rail services and facilities including more frequent connectivity to Belfast and Dublin and integrated connectivity to local city and regional public transport services and the greenway network.
- ▶ Improved connectivity and frequency of flights from City of Derry Airport to major business hubs and the development and sustainability of the Airport.

Key actions include:

- ▶ Implement new regional energy strategy, analyse the region's energy consumption and develop a strategy to reduce energy use through the establishment of an energy sustainability forum, promote energy efficiency, gas availability.
- ▶ improve air quality, appropriate planning and siting of renewable energy development and implement a smart grid pilot project.
- ▶ Development and delivery of the North West transport plan for the City and District.
- ▶ Complete remaining section of the A6 dualling project from Derry to Drumahoe and initiate scheme design for the scheme between Castledawson to Dungiven, integrating Park & Ride and active travel infrastructure.
- ▶ The upgrade of the A2 Buncrana Road cross border economic corridor to release the potential of Fort George and other development opportunities along its route.
- ▶ Enhanced City regional, cross-border and inter-city bus services, timetabling and frequency, rapid bus transport network for Derry City and provision of enhanced rural transport services.
- ▶ Promote a modal shift away from the use of the private car towards sustainable travel including the use of public transport, cycling and walking through the development of our greenways and promotion of active travel initiatives to encourage behavior change.- including extension of Waterside greenway to Strathfoyle, development of the greenway network in Strabane Town and incorporating a new footbridge and the provision of 46km of off-road greenway connections from Lifford to Strabane, Buncrana to Derry and Muff to Derry.
- ▶ Further development of facilities at Foyle Port.
- ▶ Ensure an integrated approach to waste management and developing a circular economy approach to meet landfill diversion targets, invest further in high quality waste management facilities and infrastructure.
- ▶ Prioritise investment in water infrastructure, the promotion of urban sustainable drainage systems to protect from the risk of flooding.



4. Outcomes and actions: Environment and Regeneration

The development of our infrastructure is vital to the regeneration that this Strategic Growth Plan aims to achieve. Sustainable use of energy, waste reduction, transport sustainable and water use make multiple contributions to our economic, environmental and social wellbeing. Our approach to energy use determines how successful we are at combating fuel poverty; its availability at the right price is vital for the economy; and the amount of carbon dioxide we produce as a result has an impact on the future of our planet. Waste is now understood as a resource so that the question is not how do we get rid of it but how do we produce as little as possible and use what is produced to provide new business opportunities.

A highly effective sustainable transport infrastructure is vital for the economy and for tourism but it is also about how we enable everyone to access essential services and, more than that, give everyone the capability to participate fully in the life of society. And of course climate change confronts us with the big challenge of shifting from over-dependence on the private car to walking, cycling and public transport.



4. Outcomes and actions: Community and Social

HEALTH AND WELLBEING OUTCOME ► WE LIVE LONG, HEALTHY AND FULFILLING LIVES



Health inequalities are reduced

We have improved physical and mental health

We are more physically active

Prioritised actions are as follows:

- ▶ A strong focus on mental health and wellbeing across the lifetime of our people, based on models of prevention, pathways to recovery and in line with the Mental Health Strategy and Suicide Prevention work already in place locally with partners including HSC, C&V and other key agencies.
- ▶ In line with the outcomes identified within the 'Preventing Harm, Empowering Recovery Strategic Framework' develop alcohol and drug awareness interventions focused on safe drinking levels and working with the police to address illegal alcohol and drugs supply.
- ▶ Promote greater collaboration and co-operation across key stakeholders to address the actions relevant to Derry City and Strabane within the new Obesity Prevention Strategy currently in development.

Key actions include:

- ▶ Deliver a health literacy programme focused on developing the capabilities of individuals to take control of their own health.
- ▶ Develop new regional sport and leisure facilities at Templemore in Derry City and in Strabane.
- ▶ Deliver a programme of sports pitch development, to include an Melvin Sports Area.
- ▶ Deliver programmes which recognise that end of life care is a social as well as medical issue, build capacity within communities to support those with a life limiting illness to remain living independently in their own homes and enable all of our citizens to age well.
- ▶ Deliver further phased expansion of Altnagelvin Hospital and two new primary health care centres - one in Strabane and one in the westbank of Derry-Londonderry.
- ▶ Build the capacity of our local sporting and recreational clubs to become more sustainable and encourage higher levels of participation and proficiency in sport and recreational activities.
- ▶ Deliver a sports and physical activities programme to promote greater activity for people with a disability, women, girls, older people and those living in areas of high social need.
- ▶ Derry City and Strabane to become an early adopter site for a Whole System Approach to obesity prevention.



4. Outcomes and actions: Community and Social

Our City has a strategic role in the administration of primary public health provision within the North West Region.

Circa £350m is being invested in the ongoing extension of Altnagelvin Hospital and its development as a centre of excellence in medical innovation in science, treatment and care.

Long, healthy and fulfilling lives depend much more on the capabilities that individuals have to live well than on a healthcare system that, no matter how good it is, can only help once things have gone wrong. First class healthcare is important, particularly for those in poor health and our focus will be on empowering people to lead healthy lives, on preventing physical and mental illness, on intervening in those crucial early years and helping people to age actively. We will focus on the high personal and social cost of misuse of alcohol and drugs, recognising the traumatic legacy of conflict and the dependency this has led to for so many people.

We will tackle health inequalities experienced by our people by working closely with the community and voluntary sector to build healthy and sustainable communities which create the conditions to overcome those inequalities: to reduce defeat and despair where it exists and replace it with hope and confidence and therefore improved physical and mental health.

We shall develop a funding strategy to plan and deliver circa £75million on our strategic leisure projects ~

with the development of two, new regional sporting and leisure facilities, one in Templemore in Derry to replace the existing facility and one in Strabane town centre to replace the existing facility at Riversdale Leisure Centre. We will continue with our investment in high quality parks and play areas and expand our City, regional and cross border greenway network. This plan will help our citizens to become more active and reap the many health benefits that exercise brings.



4. Outcomes and actions: Community and Social

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

WE LIVE IN A SHARED, EQUAL AND SAFE COMMUNITY

We are actively engaged and can influence decisions which affect us

We have safer communities

We have access to quality facilities and services

Our Community and Voluntary sector is more resilient and sustainable



Prioritised actions are as follows:

- ▶ Reduce crime, disorder and intercommunity tensions by addressing interface and contested spaces issues and improve safety.
- ▶ Empower communities to make the most of their assets through developing a community asset strategy.
- ▶ Design and deliver a programme of improved community centres and facilities.
- ▶ Promote greater integration and inclusion within and between communities through shared spaces, services and facilities and the development of rural community clusters.

Key actions include:

- ▶ Continue to support the delivery of the Local Growth Partnerships to deliver action plans and secure funding which enable people to become actively involved in the planning and delivery of community services and facilities.
- ▶ Foster positive community identities, creativity and build community capacity and resilience through a range of interventions.
- ▶ Complete redesign and development of the iconic shared space projects in Strabane/Lifford (Riverine), Waterside and Top of the Hill areas.
- ▶ Increase and sustain the current levels of volunteering within the community and expand on opportunities to recognise volunteers' contribution to society.
- ▶ Develop co-design and co-production ways of working to deliver improved outcomes for our people.
- ▶ Support vulnerable individuals to prevent pathways into criminality and/or paramilitaries.
- ▶ Implement targeted initiatives to address food, fuel and other poverty related issues affecting people in local communities in line with the Department for Communities (DfC) Anti-Poverty Strategy currently being developed.



4. Outcomes and actions: Community and Social

The wellbeing of people and communities depends on our ability to be involved in the things that matter to us. If we feel we have some influence over those things, some control over our own destiny, then we feel better about our lives and our communities are strengthened as a result of our voices being heard. A crucial component in all of this is our active community and voluntary sector which is closely engaged with the lives of local people.

When it works effectively in partnership with government there can be a significant impact on the quality of those lives. This approach of involving people and working with the community and voluntary sector is central to tackling poverty, disadvantage and inequality, linking local people to jobs or assisting them to move closer to the labour market.



4. Outcomes and actions: Children & Young People

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OUTCOME ►

OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE BEST START IN LIFE

Our children and young people are safer, healthier, more respected and included



Our children and young people are better able to fully realise their potential and become active, responsible citizens

Prioritised actions are as follows:

- Increased access to community activities for children and young people to raise awareness of and improve physical and emotional wellbeing (through play, music, art, drama, physical activity and sport).
- Improve and promote family support hubs with an emphasis on early intervention and prevention.
- Child Poverty Advocacy as a key focus of the Anti-Poverty work, to reduce the number of children living in poverty alongside initiatives to reduce the impact that food and fuel poverty has on children and their families (behaviour, mental health, physical health and life chances).

Key actions include:

- Greater collaboration and cooperation between organisations working with children and young people through the implementation of the Children and Young Peoples Strategy (2020-2030).
- Support for children whose wellbeing is affected by disruption to their schooling e.g. Covid Restrictions, Digital Divide, Reduced Timetables.
- Embed a Child Rights Based Approach in the design, delivery and review of policy, strategy and services through the delivery of the Unicef Child Friendly Cities and Communities action plan by 2025.
- Establish cross-organisational support for the 'Youth Voice' (NW Ministry of Youth) including the development of a pathway of support for seldom heard voices enabling all young people to have their voices heard in local and regional decision-making.
- Increase awareness of strong emotional attachment for children and parents through the delivery of MACE and trauma informed practice awareness training.
- Children, young people and their parents/ carers are aware of how to protect their mental health, with wider promotion, awareness and access to services through the promotion of online tools/ resources and the Family Support NI directory.



4. Outcomes and actions: Children & Young People

Our approach to providing our children and young people with the best start in life is based on a five-part strategy. First is UNICEF's rights-based approach where children and young people know and understand their rights, are treated with dignity and feel nurtured. They have a say in decisions that affect them and experience services that are built around them. Secondly, families and communities are key to ensuring children become happy, healthy, confident individuals and they must be supported in this.

Thirdly there are strong links between social deprivation and low educational outcomes and this requires a whole community approach in which schools, families, communities and statutory services work together. Fourthly, growing up involves often difficult and sometimes unexpected transitions. The support offered at these times of change will build the coping skills that can inform a young person's values, emotional resilience, social and spiritual development.

Finally, children and young people growing up in poverty and disadvantage have poorer outcomes and are less likely to do well in later life. The COVID-19 pandemic has widened the gap and complexities of issues faced by children living in poverty. Initiatives to reduce the impact of poverty on the most vulnerable are essential while longer term initiatives aimed at reducing poverty are implemented. These interventions are essential to giving children and young people the best start in life.



4. Outcomes and actions: Older People

OLDER PEOPLE OUTCOME ►

WE HAVE A CARING SOCIETY THAT SUPPORTS PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES

We address the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to participate fully in society



We enable everyone to live their life in a fulfilling way as valued members of an inclusive society

We provide access to the places, services, housing, information and support people, when needed

Prioritised actions are as follows:

- Be an age friendly City and Region through an integrated programme of action, based on a rights-based approach, the eight World Health Organisation's key themes and implementation of the City and District's Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan.
- Promote positive mental, physical health and wellbeing and address social issues, risk factors and environmental impacts, such as social isolation and loneliness amongst urban and rural residents.
- Ensure that housing and built environment solutions take account of an ageing population, delivering accessible homes and safe, outdoor spaces which take account of all levels of mobility needs.

Key actions include:

- Encourage the voice of older people through active participation to reflect an all-inclusive society.
- Implement targeted initiatives to address food, fuel and housing poverty amongst older people.
- Provide access to appropriate and supportive services and promote early intervention, including established community amenities close to home.
- Enhance the digital inclusion of older people in rural and urban areas by improving broadband connectivity and increasing IT literacy skills.
- Improve public transportation services, routes and accessibility of services in dispersed rural areas.
- Provide more opportunities for intergenerational practice
- Provide amenities for community wellbeing, participation and support including community resource and healthy living centres.



4. Key Strategic Capital Projects

Since 2017 the City and District has witnessed the delivery and completion of a range of capital development commitments within the Strategic Growth Plan:

- ✓ **40.5km of the A6 dualling project from Derry to the M22**
- ✓ **Grade A office accommodation and the hotel at Ebrington**
- ✓ **The Ryan McBride Stadium and Sports Centre**
- ✓ **Melvin Sports Complex Strabane**
- ✓ **Brooke Park**
- ✓ **The expansion of Ulster University and introduction of a graduate entry Medical School**
- ✓ **The remediation of Fort George**
- ✓ **The development of North West Regional College at Springtown**
- ✓ **The extension of greenways**
- ✓ **The Waterside shared village**
- ✓ **The North West multimodal Transport Hub**
- ✓ **The North Wing at Altnagelvin Hospital and its redevelopment programme**
- ✓ **Major private and social housing developments**

Projects which are progressing at a slower rate than originally planned are the Walled City Lighting Project Phase 2, the Regional Gallery and an iconic global tourist attraction due to funding difficulties. The A5 Western Transport Corridor has been delayed due to environmental issues and the commitment to have substantially progressed design and development of a 3rd road bridge orbital route by 2025 now seems unlikely. It is being considered as part of the North West Transport Plan and a revised date for completion shall be set on its publication.



4. Key Strategic Capital Projects cited in the original plan to be delivered/completed by 2025



Ebrington Phase 1

Grade A office accommodation.
Maritime Museum.
Hotel & Tourism Development



Multimodal
transport hub
Waterside



Randalstown to
Castledawson &
Dungiven to Derry



Strabane
Town Centre
Public Realm



Ulster University
expansion
including graduate entry
Medical College

Major Private Sector
Commercial & Retail
Developments



Brandywell Stadium
& Sports Centre
Development



Walled City Lighting
Project Phase 2



Villages enhancement
& Rural Development
Programme

NWRC
Development of
North West Regional College
at Springtown & Strand Road



Major Private & Social
Housing Developments



North Wing
Altnagelvin
Hospital



Primary Health
Centre, Derry



Melvin Pitches
Strabane



Derry to Strabane

Fort George site
remediation &
development



Parks & Play
Projects

Expansion of
greenway network
including Riverfront,
Town Centre
& Strathfoyle



Waterside
Shared Village



New Leisure Centres
in Strabane &
Templemore



Riverine Project
Strabane



Urban & Rural
Heritage
Conservation



Local waste
management
facilities



Public Transport
Improvements



4. Key Strategic Capital Projects cited in the original plan to be substantially progressed by 2025



Strabane Town Centre Footbridge



Feasibility Design Development
Dungiven to Castledawson



Primary Health Care Centre,
Strabane



Sion Mills & Newtown Stewart
conservation projects



Development of Fort George & major regeneration sites in Derry City Centre & Strabane



Iconic global tourist attraction



Further expansion of Ulster University at Magee



Major regional parks projects



Port Development



Design development 3rd Road Bridge & orbital route



Strabane to Ballygawley



Buncrana Road upgrade



Ebrington phase 2
Mixed use commercial & residential development

Regional Gallery Proposal

NWRC
Development of North West Regional College at Strabane



Schools Development



Student housing developments



Development of Strabane Enterprise Park



Urban Villages Initiative



Cross border greenways development & delivery of Strabane/Lifford & Derry/Buncrana/Muff



5. Impacts

We estimated the expenditure and direct employment impacts of the capital projects set out in this plan - and in partnership with the Ulster University's Economic Policy Centre, an economic modelling system was developed to measure the likely economic potential for the Council area. The model produced sectoral employment, Gross Value Added (GVA), skills, commuting, fiscal impacts and CO2 emission forecasts, encompassing the direct impacts, the indirect (supply chain) impacts and the induced effect (spending) impacts of the projects. The result of the analysis indicates the potential of the projects in the plan to transform the economic landscape of the City and Region.

With a projected £3.4bn of capital expenditure during the plan period (which includes significant private sector development driven by public sector stimulus and intervention), the model forecasts an increase of approximately 10,000 additional people living within the City and District and the creation of almost 15,100 new jobs if all of the projects are included and delivered in full and within the plan timeframes (figures which exceed current baseline non-growth plan projections by over 100%).

One of the most widely used economic indicators, Gross Value Added (GVA), is considered in simple terms as the value of all wages and profits is also forecast to increase by approximately £1.1m GVA, generating an additional £203m of additional wages into the local economy every year. The projected increase in employment - and decrease in inactivity levels within the working age population, will have a significant impact upon the level of unemployment within the Council area. It will decrease the unemployment rate, if the ambition is realised to 2.6% - slightly below the Northern Ireland average for the first time in the recent history of the City and Region.

While the below 'baseline scenario' takes into account current forecasting in relation to the potential impacts of Brexit, given present economic forecasting volatility in respect of such impacts, it is proposed to update and re-run the economic model on at least an initial six-monthly basis in the early years of the plan period.



* The economic modelling by Ulster University Economic Policy Centre relating to the impact of the Strategic Growth Plan upon population numbers projects an increase in the DCSDC district of 6,800 over the period 2015 to 2032. This comprises 2,600 from within the steady state growth forecast (business as usual) and an additional 4,200 deriving from the impact of the Strategic Growth Plan upon population numbers within the city.

An ongoing review by DCSDC on the specific impact of significant University expansion on cities, including Lincoln in the UK and Limerick in the Republic of Ireland has indicated that this UUEPC forecast could be conservative. Population growth rates in Lincoln, post University expansion, were of the order of triple the forecast DCSDC 0.3% rate per year with an average annual increase of 12,100 or 1% per year over a 14 year period 2002 - 2016 equating to 12,100 in total in Lincoln. While the work continues by DCSDC on refining this analysis, DCSDC is content to forecast a population increase of in excess of 10,000 over the 17 year period of the Strategic Growth Plan. This is based on DCSDC achieving 40% of the average annual growth rate of that experienced in Lincoln between 2002-2016. Over 17 years this is a small increase from an average increase of approximately 0.27% per year to 0.41% per year which we believe is realistic in the context of Lincoln's experience.



6. Interdependencies & Risks

The scale of the ambition is of course challenging requiring a rate of growth comparable to that experienced by some of the world's most dynamic and successful cities. It is critically dependent on the urgent and rapid progress of a number of key catalyst projects including:

- ▶ The expansion of the Ulster University Magee Campus
- ▶ The completion of the A5 Western Transport Corridor
- ▶ The delivery of the A6 Derry to Belfast road
- ▶ The upgrade of the A2 Buncrana Road including its junction with Strand Road.

One of the principal risks in the successful delivery of the plan is if one or more of the above key catalyst projects does not progress or proceed on time with the potential to negatively and significantly impact on the other projects and the achievement of outcomes within this plan. To quantify this risk, these projects were omitted from the model, which

between them account for over £1bn of capital expenditure and 3,500 direct jobs.

Modelling these impacts suggested that Gross Value Added could be £300m lower than the full delivery scenario and employment would be approximately 50% lower. Unemployment and economic inactivity would remain above Northern Ireland averages if the key catalyst projects are not completed.

The success of many of the projects in the plan is dependent on the delivery of the key catalyst projects. For example, the delivery of significant road improvements will impact on the region's ability to develop key economic regeneration sites in Ebrington, Fort George, Derry City Centre and Strabane Town centre.

In particular, the university expansion is fundamentally critical in improving the economic attractiveness of the City and Region - given its positive impact upon the labour market and skills, through the provision of skilled graduates and the increased availability of training opportunities.



6. Interdependencies & Risks

The process of building the economic model, analysing the impacts and resources that are required reveals a number of key risks to delivery for the modelled outputs to be achieved. These are set out below with suggested mitigations:

Investment & funding

RISK

The City and District has the lowest rates base, is dependent on a rates support grant and is faced with reducing national and international funding streams. Private sector confidence is not as strong as required. The capital expenditure programme within this plan is ambitious, totalling over £3.8billion. This long term plan includes private sector expenditure as well as public.

MITIGATION

The Council and its Partners have been successful in securing a Heads of Terms with central government which will secure £250m of a City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund for the key innovation and regeneration projects within the Strategic Growth Plan. This funding should incentivise and lever significant private sector investment. Many of the large scale public sector capital projects identified in the plan are currently referred to within the draft Programme for Government and/ or within Statutory Community Planning Partners' capital plans.

Skills Supply

RISK

In the profile of the skills requirements within the forecast, additional employment does not match with the skills of those who are currently out of work within the Council area.

MITIGATION

A new Labour Market Partnership and Action Plan has been introduced to assist in upskilling of the local population to avail of the jobs created as a result of this plan and the City Deal. This risk will be controlled and mitigated through implementation of the key actions set out in the Education and Skills section of this plan. There is also a need for more people to move into the Council area to take up employment opportunities. Delivery of the plan in itself will ensure that the area becomes a more attractive place to live and work.

The UK's Exit from the EU

RISK

Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council published innovative research in February 2017 which outlines that while the results of the UK's exit from the EU will have a differential geographical impact across these islands, the effects on the North West Region may be significant and sustained unless coherent, decisive, mitigating actions are in place.

MITIGATION

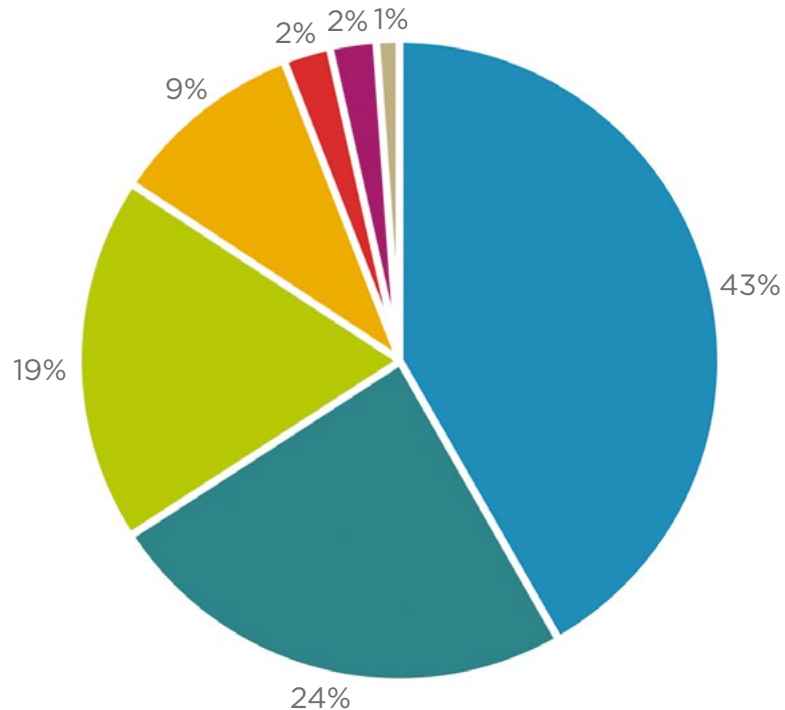
Derry City and Strabane District Council with Donegal County Council have strong collaboration and partnership working with governments both North/South and on an East/West Axis. The North West Strategic Growth Partnership - a partnership between both Councils and Governments - provides a strong model through which to build practical responses to the UK's exit from the EU. The free movement of goods, people and services across the border is essential and will provide opportunities. The border can draw on its commuting labour pool, become a bridge to EU funding, provide seamless access both to the UK and the EU markets and act as a link to Foreign Direct Investment.



6. Interdependencies & Risks

Additional jobs require high skills

CP ambition, net additional jobs by skill level, 2025



- NQF LEVEL 4 PLUS
- NQF LEVEL 2
- NQF LEVEL 3
- BELOW NQF 2
- NO QUALIFICATIONS
- OTHER QUALIFICATIONS
- TRADE APPRENTICESHIPS

Source: UUEPC modelled estimates of the Capital Projects within Community Plan inputs, as provided by Derry City & Strabane District Council Community Planning Team

Inclusive Growth

RISK

Many of the employment opportunities are at level two and above, which means that those who have no qualifications are likely to face significant challenges in securing employment unless they are upskilled.

MITIGATION

To mitigate against this risk and promote inclusiveness and equality of employment opportunities, measures through the skills development actions and additional policy interactions shall be directed and targeted to include the most deprived and correspondingly low-skilled wards.

Consumption Expenditure

RISK

The plan is heavily reliant on consumer expenditure and will rely to a large degree on cross border trade tourism and expenditure from those living in other council areas to deliver upon plans for the retail and accommodation sections.

MITIGATION

Closer cross border collaborative working; development of the City Region and a compelling tourism and investment proposition.

7. Making it happen

Programme for Government

This Plan starts with the 'outcomes' we want to achieve. Focusing on outcomes helps us establish and maintain effective partnerships and shifts attention to the bigger picture and end results. This approach has also been adopted by central government with the Northern Ireland Executive's Draft Programme for Government and regional policies and strategies. Our Community Planning Outcomes have been mapped and aligned to the Programme for Government Outcomes.

North West Cross Border Partnership Arrangements

Many of the key strategic priorities for the Derry City and Strabane District Council area are also those for the wider North West City Region. It is therefore imperative that key actions to deliver on the economic, environmental and social regeneration and well-being of the area are advanced on a cross-border collaborative basis. The North West Regional Development Group is a joint committee of both councils driving forward a collaborative work programme across the 3 pillars of well-being while the North West Strategic Growth Partnership brings together senior representatives from both Governments, North and South to improve collaboration on delivery of key strategic projects and initiative and reduce 'back to back' planning.



7. Making it happen

Local Growth Partnerships

Whilst this plan takes a strategic view of the whole District, it is also important to connect to needs and aspirations at a more local level within our neighbourhoods and communities. Eight local growth plans have been developed to deliver on the outcomes of the Strategic Growth Plan at a local level with neighbourhood and community based programmes and actions.

Our Local Development Plan

Our Local Development Plan – or land use plan – will secure the orderly and consistent development of land with the objective of furthering sustainable development and improving wellbeing. There is a formal link in legislation between the Development Plan and this Strategic Growth Plan. The two plans work in tandem towards the same vision.



8 Local Growth Plans

7. Making it happen: Partnership Working

Strategic Growth Partnership

A Strategic Growth Partnership (Community Planning Partnership) has been formed to provide overall governance and oversight of the Community Planning Process. This partnership is facilitated by the Council. The statutory partners named in the legislation are joined with political representatives, Central Government Departments and other key regional support partners.

Delivery Partnerships

A comprehensive range of Delivery Partnerships are actively working to deliver and report on the actions in the Strategic Growth Plan in a way that contributes to their relevant outcomes. Examples of these partnerships are the City Deal Delivery structures and programme boards, the Education and Skills Partnership/Labour Market Partnership, the Tourism Partnership, the Arts and Culture Partnership, the Climate Adaption Working Group, the Green Infrastructure Stakeholder Group, Sustainable Food Partnership, the North West Transport Programme Board, the Integrated Care Partnerships, the PCSP, Developing Healthy Communities, The Local Growth Partnerships, The Youth Participation Board and the Age Friendly Alliance.

These partnerships are often led by the Statutory Partners and report periodically to the Strategic Growth Partnership. They also are responsible for targeting programmes at particular areas and sections of the community who are experiencing inequalities.



7. Making it happen: Partnership Working

Rural Issues Group

A dedicated Rural Issues Group has also been established to specifically focus on the needs within our rural areas and to engage with many partners across the District on key issues affecting rural communities. This group hosts regular meetings and rural symposiums to consider issues such as digital connectivity, capacity building, poverty, housing, safety and rural support. Whilst there has been some great progress in areas such as rural tourism, the environment and health, capacity building is essential to continue the positive momentum behind projects in rural areas. Groups are under significant pressure and need trained staff in place to deliver vital services, with retention posing a major problem in rural areas. Partners have given a commitment to fill this rural capacity gap as part of the implementation of this plan.

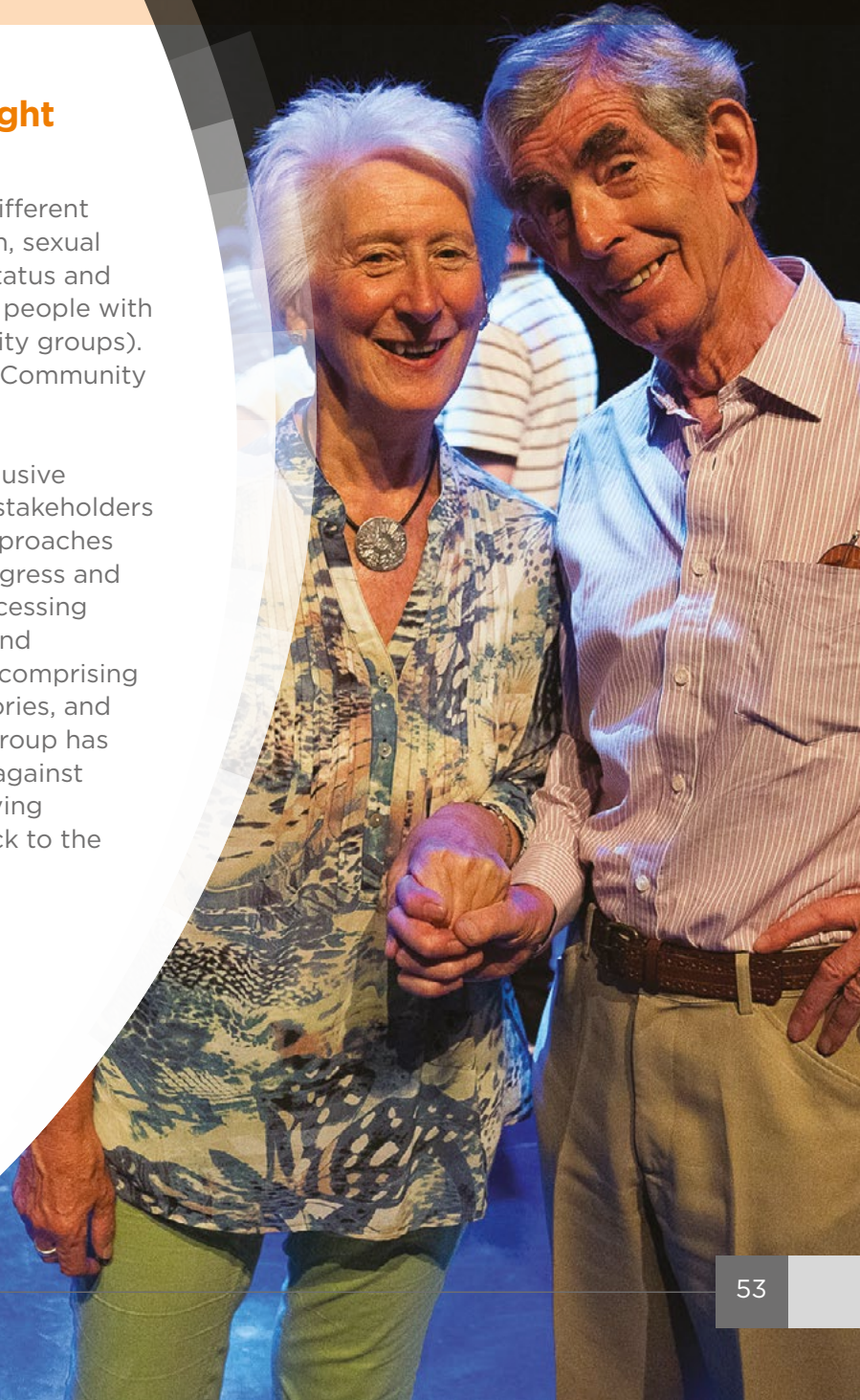
Anti-Poverty Working Group

A dedicated Anti-Poverty Working Group has been established to develop an Anti-Poverty Action Plan which will seek to address the issues of social inequalities, deprivation and poverty in our City and District. This group has proactively commissioned research, engaged with the Department for Communities Poverty Policy Team, offered hardship funding and worked to ensure that the City and District is selected as a pilot for a Universal Basic Income scheme.

Equality Assurance & Oversight Group

We recognise the needs of people of different gender, religious belief, political opinion, sexual orientation, age, racial group, marital status and people with / without dependents and people with / without a disability (Section 75 equality groups). An Equality Impact Assessment of our Community Plan has been completed.

Embedding equality and delivering inclusive outcomes requires the involvement of stakeholders in the ongoing development of new approaches to monitoring impacts, challenging progress and contributing to finding new ways of accessing opportunities. An Equality Assurance and Oversight Group has been established comprising representatives from Section 75 categories, and rural and deprived communities. This group has responsibility for monitoring progress against equality indicators and targets, identifying emerging issues and providing feedback to the Strategic Growth Partnership.



7. Making it happen

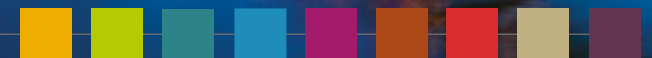
Cost, Financing and Investment

A detailed and costed analysis of the capital projects underpinning this plan have identified an overall capital investment requirement of £3.4bn by 2032. The key signature projects include regionally significant infrastructural investment – such as roads, development of our strategic sites and assets, the expansion of Ulster University at Magee, continued development of public health facilities, housing development, Council's strategic leisure investment, parks, greenways and community facilities.

The plan includes £2.3bn, (£2bn of which is additional), of required public sector spend across both Central and Local Government. Whilst all of this funding has not been secured, the projects are completely aligned to the draft Programme for Government and feature within the existing statutory agencies capital development programmes.

The £250m City/Growth Deal and inclusive future fund for the City and Region, will be critical to the successful delivery of the plan and realising the social and economic outcomes.

Over the coming years Council anticipates leading and delivering upon over £200m of this investment plan. As a result of its' efficiency programme, loan financing through the public works loan board, and successful leverage of external grant funding, Council has already identified funding to drive over £70m of these projects. Further success will require medium term rates investment, facilitated by rates-base growth and identification of further operational efficiencies. To ensure maximum leverage of Council investment, Council will continue to explore all possible financing and delivery options, and to maximise Central Government and private sector funding.



7. Making it happen

The plan also represents a significant opportunity for private sector investment of up to £1.5bn, mainly through residential development and commercial development of key strategic sites. To assist this, Council is working towards a compelling and collaborative investment proposition for public sector assets in Derry City Centre and Strabane Town Centre. This will identify sites with commercial investment potential which can directly contribute to the growth and economic wellbeing of the city and region into the future, and outline a range of financial tools and structures available which the Council will consider utilising in welcoming partners to invest.

The Ulster University Economic Policy Centre have forecast that if this plan is implemented in full it has the potential to generate nearly £95m in tax revenues, £9m through rates, part of which is district rates and are retained within the Council area.

If the essence of community planning is working collaboratively across the different parts of government and with other partners, then a collaborative approach to budgeting for this joined up working is essential. This is difficult to achieve when budgets are actually held by different organisations but we intend to make progress in this direction by costing the actions in this plan and working as a Strategic Growth Partnership towards aligning budgets to the agreed outcomes. In this way accountability remains with the budget holder but the actions we are taking will be funded in a coordinated way.

For many of the actions in this plan it will be desirable to go further and organise pooled budgets. This is when two or more partners make financial contributions to a single fund to achieve specified and mutually agreed aims. It is a single budget, managed by a single host with a formal partnership or joint funding agreement that sets out aims, accountabilities and responsibilities.



7. Making it happen

Monitoring, Communicating & Review

Residents will be able to hold us accountable for the progress we are making towards the outcomes set out in the plan. We have developed a suite of indicators to monitor performance against the outcomes. A high level dashboard of our indicators – aligned to the pillars of wellbeing is detailed below.

Social wellbeing	Economic wellbeing	Environmental wellbeing
Levels of recorded crime	16 - 64 economic inactivity levels	Public transport use
Extent to which people agree DCSDC is a place where people from different backgrounds get on	Claimant count levels	Levels of household waste sent for reuse, dry recycling and composting
Extent to which people agree or disagree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area	Employment level / rates	Total number of heritage assets in DCSDC Council areas
Proportion of children having a low birth weight	Number of employee jobs	
The level of standardised rates for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventable deaths Admission rates – alcohol Admission rates – self harm Admission rates – drugs These are issues that are particularly applicable to DCSDC 'deprived areas'	Levels of GCSE attainment (incl. Eng & Maths)	
	Value of overnight tourism (expenditure) - out of state	
	Population wide indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated trips Estimated nights Estimated expenditure 	
Levels of GCSE attainment (incl. English & Maths)		
Population wide indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of children living in low income families the proportion of babies born with a low birth weight 		

Performance management - attribution or contribution?

While a comprehensive set of indicators can give us useful information on progress, or otherwise, towards our outcomes, their most valuable role is in prompting us to ask the question 'why?' The answer to why the indicator has moved then helps us to assess and prioritise future actions.

In much of the work of this plan, however, the relationship between the actions we take and the changes that occur over time are extremely complex and it can be very expensive, time consuming and ultimately futile to try to prove attribution – that a particular activity or programme resulted in the movement of a particular indicator. Rather we should look at ways of inferring causality rather than trying to prove it, **'not definitive proof, but rather provides evidence and a line of reasoning from which we can draw a plausible conclusion that, within some level of confidence, the program has made an important contribution to the documented results.'**

For more information on how we are performing and view our Statement of Progress and our performance management dashboard please log on to:

www.growderrystrabane



7. Making it happen

Communicating openly

The Strategic Growth Partnership will communicate openly and regularly with residents and organisations in the City and District, building on the extensive programme of engagement that preceded the publication of this draft Plan. We intend to sustain that engagement through:

We have developed a Communications and Engagement Strategy and it can be viewed on our **dedicated website:** www.growderrystrabane.com

In addition to this we will ensure that:

- ▶ **All meetings of the Strategic Growth Partnership are held in public/open business**
- ▶ **Meetings can be viewed via YouTube**
- ▶ **Regular outreach/workshop sessions**
- ▶ **Social media**
- ▶ **Updated published versions of the Plan**

To ensure that the promise of Community Planning is achieved, we will constantly keep this plan under review, adding new collaborative actions as they emerge from our new ways of working.

In accordance with the legislation a new community plan for Derry City and Strabane District will be published in 2026 which will have a long term vision to lead us up to 2041.

Our Planning & Monitoring Cycle



Feedback

We have endeavoured to take into account the views of all the people we have consulted in preparing this Plan.

The Community Planning Team

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