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**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

9th June 2022

MEETING OF CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

As previously notified to you, I enclose a copy of the presentation for the following item to be considered at the meeting to be held at 5.15 pm on Thursday, 9th June, 2022.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN WALSH

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. **Presentation from Lisa-Dee Collery of the Shared Island Unit followed by Q&A (Pages 1 - 18)**

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Shared Island initiative

Page 1

Agenda Item 2

Shared Island initiative - overview

PfG commitment : “*working with all communities and traditions on the island to build consensus around a shared future, underpinned by the Good Friday Agreement.*”

Whole of Government approach setting out a broad, positive, practical and inclusive agenda to harness full potential of the GFA and affirming the commitments made by the Irish Government under the New Decade New Approach agreement.

Working through all-island partnerships and in cooperation with the NI Executive, UK Government, Local Authorities and others to address **shared challenges and take up opportunities on a cross-border basis.**

Shared Island unit in D/Taoiseach is a driver and coordinator for the initiative, working with line Departments and Agencies.

Shared Island initiative - three strands of work

i. Building a shared island:

- **Delivering** PfG investment commitments: Ulster Canal, Narrow Water Bridge, A5 road upgrade, N/S Research Programme.
- **Developing** new of N/S projects connected to strategic issues for the island as a whole in the decade ahead – Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme.
- **National Development Plan 2021** - Shared Island dimension: investment objectives across a range of sectors for a “*more connected, more sustainable, more prosperous island*”.

i. Dialogue and engagement:

- **Shared Island Dialogue series:** civic dialogue with Taoiseach and Government Ministers engaging with all communities and political traditions on key issues for a shared future on the island.

Shared Island initiative - three areas of work

iii. Research:

- To provide **high quality evidence and analysis** on opportunities and challenges around deepening cooperation and connection on the island.
- Focus on:
 - Promotion of all-island approaches to the strategic challenges.
 - Strengthening social, economic and political links on the island.
- Working with National Economic and Social Council; ESRI; Irish Research Council; other research partners.

Shared Island Fund

- **Budget2021:** Shared Island Fund - €500m capital fund from 2021-25, ring-fenced for collaborative North/South projects, to implement PfG commitments and objectives on Shared Island.
- **Reviewed National Development Plan, October 2021:** Shared Island Fund extended and increased to €1bn to 2030
- Key criteria for allocations from the Shared Island Fund include:
 - Capital funding;
 - Clear North/South or all-island basis to a project, with strategic impact;
 - Delivering on Shared Island commitments and objectives in PfG and NDP;
 - Collaborative approach with NI partner;

Shared Island Fund

- Allocations from SIF are made by the Government to policy lead Departments to take forward North/South projects in **collaborative, co-funding approaches** with the Northern Ireland Executive, UK Government, and cross-border Local Authority initiatives.
- ~~Proposed~~ Merits of proposed new North/South projects are assessed by the relevant policy lead Government Department in the first instance.
- In assessing a project, a Department will consider if an allocation from the Shared Island Fund should be sought.
- Specific funding calls will be opened for certain programmes in cooperation with line Departments and Agencies.

Shared Island Fund – Allocations to date

- **Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme** - €5m to support the progression of new joint cross-border or all-island investment projects by Local Authorities North and South.
- **North South Research Programme** – over €37m allocated in the first funding call supporting collaborative North/South research projects.
→
- **Narrow Water Bridge** - €3m to bring the project to tender stage.
- **Ulster Canal** - €7m to deliver Phase 2 of the project and enable feasibility to be undertaken for Phase 3.

Building a shared island:

- **Shared Island Fund enabling progress with delivery of PfG commitments:**
 - i. **Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme:** April 2022 - €5m in funding announced to support the progression of new joint cross-border or all-island investment projects by Local Authorities North and South. Allocations to be announced in the autumn.
 - ii. **North South Research Programme:** Launched July 2021 with first allocations announced March 2022 - Taoiseach and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science awarded over €37m to 62 successful projects which support the deepening of links between higher education institutions, researchers and research communities on the island. The scope and scale of the second call is under active consideration.



Building a shared island:

- iii. **Narrow Water Bridge:** June 2021 - Taoiseach joined by NI Minister for Infrastructure announced **€3m from SIF** to progress project to tender stage.
- iv. **All-Island Strategic Rail review:** April 2021 - launched jointly by the Minister for Transport and NI Minister for Infrastructure.
- v. **Ulster Canal:** April 2021 - Phase 2 restoration progressed with allocation of €6 million from SIF, €5.6m from Rural Regeneration Development Fund. SIF provided €1 million for development work on Phase 3 of the project.



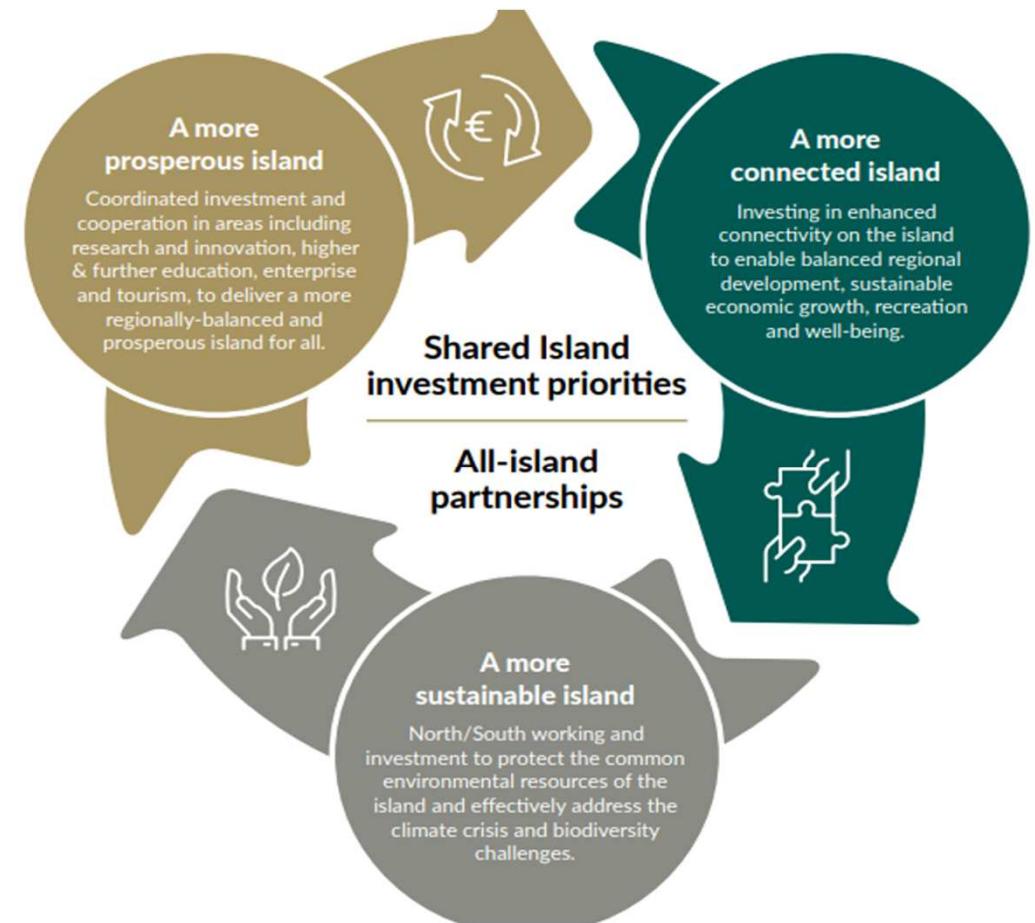
Revised National Development Plan

- Launched by Government in October 2021.
- Includes a significant Shared Island dimension setting new investment objectives across virtually all sectors.
→
- Commits €3.5bn for **collaborative cross-border investment** over the next decade.
- Shared Island Fund doubled to €1bn to 2030.
- Govt to work through all-island partnerships for a more **connected, sustainable and prosperous island**.



National Development Plan – All Island Partnerships

- Work through cross-border and all-island partnerships to **co-design, co-fund and co-deliver** projects under the investment priorities set out;
- **NDP recognises the record, capacity and future objectives of cross-border Local Authority initiatives such as** such as the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor to identify and take forward cross-border projects & harness the full potential of border regions;



A more connected island

*Connectivity of infrastructure, systems and people:
encompassing transport, tourism & recreation, public
services as well as culture, arts and heritage.*

Priorities include:

- Creating an **island-wide greenway network**, linking the Atlantic coast with the Eastern seaboard through greenway projects across the border region;
- Enhanced rail connectivity taking account of the all-island strategic rail review to be completed in 2022. An early priority is the introduction of an hourly rail service on the Dublin-Belfast line;
- Developing new cross-border built and natural **heritage initiatives**, including a focus on the culture and heritage of minority communities in the border counties;
- Completion of all Phases of the **Ulster Canal** and **Narrow Water Bridge** projects, and the **A5 upgrade**.



A more sustainable island

Well coordinated North/South approaches fundamental to effective policy and public investment actions on climate and environment.

Priorities include:

- Coordinated investment to roll-out **EV charging networks** across the island;
- Climate action funding to take up opportunities for effective **cross-border climate action partnerships** and interventions, including exploring cross-border approaches on renewable energy and **biodiversity**;
- Investing for an all-island circular economy;
- Cooperation on preservation of coastal regions, marine resources and investment in river basin management and water infrastructure.

A more prosperous island

Coordinated investment for a regionally-balanced and prosperous island.

Priorities include:

- Delivering the new €40m **North/South research programme** and the creation of new all-island research centres;
- Building on the success of the Border and Regional Enterprise Development Funds and the Regional Enterprise Plans to **promote and facilitate enterprise development on a cross-border basis**;
- Supporting cross-border approaches to **attract investment**, including through the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor initiative;
- Working with the Executive on **North-South tourism initiatives**.

Funding for NDP Programme

- National Development Plan total all-island investment commitment of more than **€3.5billion**.
- This is delivered through:
 - Extended Shared Island Fund (€1bn);
 - Government's annual funding for North/South cooperation (€1,4bn);
 - Project Ireland 2040 funds;
 - PEACE PLUS programme (€1bn+) - delivered with the EU, UK and NI Executive.

Priorities for 2022

- Awards from the Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding scheme to be allocated in Q3 2022;
- Cross-border investment in EV charging networks;
- Funding call for cross-border community climate action partnerships;
- Scheme for cross-border enterprise development;
- New funding scheme for all-island civil society engagement.

Shared Island unit

Thank you

For more information find us on:

www.gov.ie/sharedisland

email sharedisland@taoiseach.gov.ie to join our mailing list





Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland