



Subject:	Response to Consultation on Department of Education's Draft Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 – Every Child
Date:	18th November, 2022
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make the Committee aware of the consultation on Department of Education's Draft Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 – Every Child (Appendix 1) and to seek approval of the Council's draft response.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the draft response and approve its submission, subject to any comments or amendment provided.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	Members are advised that 'Department of Education's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 – Every Child was published in September 2022 for consultation and the closing date for responses was 15 th November 2022. Members should note that the Department of Education was unable to extend the deadline for the Council to enable it to be brought to the SP and R

	<p>Committee in advance of submitting. Officers have, therefore, submitted a response on behalf of the Council, stating that it is subject to ratification by the SP and R Committee and the Council.</p>
<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>Within the draft corporate plan, the vision is that “Every child and young person is happy, learning and ready to succeed”.</p> <p>It proposes five Strategic Priorities that will help guide the Department towards achieving this Vision. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Championing all our children and young people and the positive impact of education on all aspects of life • Helping all our children and young people where they need support for their learning and well-being • Inspiring all our children and young people to make a positive contribution to society. • Meeting the learning needs of our children and young people and developing their knowledge and skills, enabling them to fulfil their potential. • Delivering an effective, child-focused, collaborative, high-quality education system. <p>It provides a framework for how the Department proposes to achieve its strategic aims and outlines underpinning enablers. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating – Partnering with our stakeholders to support co-production and achievement of shared outcomes. • Optimising – Prioritising, modernising and making most efficient use of our resources to achieve the greatest impact, including stopping or changing activities that don’t make the difference we want. • Responding – Addressing the long term impacts of the pandemic and other emerging challenges and needs faced by our children and young people and the education workforce. • Engaging – Communicating and consulting with our stakeholders to help shape our future services.

3.5	Officers have collated a draft response to the consultation at Appendix 2. Whilst the response covers a number of issues that the Council has a position on, Members are asked to note the following specific comments that have been made:
3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a key partner within the Community Planning Partnership the council welcomes the fact that the proposed corporate vision and values align closely with community planning principles and values. It will be important to reflect the work that the Department of Education does regionally with delivery at a Belfast level, ideally being considered and shaped via existing community planning structures/ infrastructure to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources.
3.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring participation recognises the participatory role in decision making of children in their schools, in addition to the participation in the broader educational system. We strongly support work around encouraging and supporting all young people to identify their strengths and provide them with the opportunities to develop as individuals and contributors to society.
3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of using the education setting as a way to develop good emotional health and well-being is something we would like to see brought out more clearly and would encourage this element to be strongly reinforced in the final plan and subsequent programmes of work. In addition, supporting children with special educational needs we see as key as this is something that has come out strongly in our initial citizen/partner engagement workshops as part of our phase 2 engagement of the Belfast Agenda.
3.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We welcome the focus on the promotion of active lifestyles and healthy eating and we would encourage the Department of Education to specifically consider incorporating a focus/actions on the following areas of; developing a more Sustainable Food System throughout schools and the wider education system; adaptation of their physical estate to invest in more green space and running programmes and making changes to their physical estate/infrastructure that enable/support the shift away from car use during the school run.
3.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are committed to improving the education and social outcomes of all children and welcome the focus on providing additional support for families and children who need it. Putting in place measures to address this is vital to ensure those children who need it can still benefit from the education setting and develop and progress. We

<p>3.11</p> <p>3.12</p> <p>3.13</p>	<p>would encourage the Department of Education to meet with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sectoral Advisory (VCSE) Panel, who are a key member of our wider Community Planning Partnership infrastructure, to discuss any proposed plans in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We welcome the reference to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy and Council officers are committed to engaging with Departments and inputting into this process and advocate the need to accelerate the finalisation and implementation of the regional strategy. • We welcome the focus on alternative pathways to employment and readiness for employment support and suggest there may be an opportunity to add in a focus on ensuring that there is a greater need to address the barriers some children and young people may face to ensure that the opportunities for education provided are as equitably accessible as possible. This should take account of the fact that children have various learning styles and creating/linking young people to many different types of environments/settings is important when traditional education may not be entirely suited to them/their aspirations. We suggest this may include an increased focus on apprenticeships, Careers Service provision and more opportunities/interventions for young people to develop their confidence and softer skills which are transferable, to prepare them for the increasingly dynamic labour market. • Within the Community and Neighbourhood Regeneration theme of the Belfast Agenda, there may be opportunities to work collaboratively and enable us to take a joined up approach towards physical investment and asset transfer opportunities should they emerge.
<p>3.14</p> <p>3.15</p>	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no implications associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no implications associated with this report.</p> <p>Members are advised that an equality screening and rural needs assessment have been undertaken on the draft corporate plan and this is available on the Department of Education’s website.</p>

4.0	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Department of Education’s Draft Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 – Every Child Appendix 2 - Draft BCC consultation response