



Subject:	Lobbying/Advocacy Paper and Regeneration Framework
Date:	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2023
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
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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"/>
Some time 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"/>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on work underway in relation to a Funding Lobby & Advocacy Paper and a Regeneration Framework.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to note that:  I. To note the work underway in relation to the commissioning of a Lobby & Advocacy Paper for Place Based Regeneration Funding and the development of a Regeneration Framework and Project Prioritisation Process  II. To note the scheduled engagement with Party Group Leaders and Permanent Secretaries as part of a wider engagement plan.  III. To note alignment with ongoing work via City & Organisational Services to develop a project pipeline for Council aligned to funding opportunities and city priorities.

3.0	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p>It is recognised that NI/Belfast does not benefit from the same regeneration and place based funding abilities as other UK Cities, e.g. Stronger Towns Fund; Future High Streets Fund; Homes England funding etc. which arguably places Belfast at a disadvantage from a regeneration and economic growth perspective. Work is currently underway with Avison Young (strategic regeneration, finance and business consultancy) to consider this in more detail and explore the case for advocating that Belfast receives the equivalent investment and funding powers available elsewhere.</p>
3.2	<p>In addition, in order to help bring forward regeneration schemes at scale and given the number of potential opportunities across the city it was agreed that there was a need to develop a Regeneration Framework and Prioritisation Process aligned to regeneration, economic, social and environmental outcomes. Other UK cities deploy similar Regeneration Frameworks to help inform city priorities aligned to growth propositions and to prioritise funding bids.</p>
3.3	<p>Members will recall the following Committee report in relation to this work:</p> <p><b>CG&amp;R Committee May 22:</b> <i>Develop a Regeneration Programme Framework for key regeneration projects including partnership projects at a citywide level; to include preparation of feasibility studies and business cases as appropriate. To include regeneration projects to support development and investment for Bolder Vision and housing / mixed uses and wider city regeneration projects.</i></p>
3.4	<p><b>SP&amp;R 17 June '23:</b> <i>As part of the agreed non recurrent proposals, agreed to allocation of funding to: Develop a Regeneration Framework; Regeneration Process &amp; Regeneration Programme.</i></p>
3.5	<p><b>Party Group Leaders Forum 23 February 2023:</b> <i>Update on work underway in relation to the Lobby Paper and Regeneration Framework as set out in this report.</i></p>
3.6	<p>Avison Young (AY) have been commissioned to develop both areas of work, high level details of which are provided below.</p>

3.7

**Lobby & Advocacy Paper:**

This centres around the case for devolving aspects of place based regeneration and funding to Belfast City Council. To include exploring the case for ensuring Belfast receives the equivalent investment, funding powers and freedoms that are available in England. The focus should be on place based regeneration and include measures that may promote housing led regeneration (inc city centre living), city centre and wider city regeneration & development and alignment with other strategic priorities. To include the socio and economic impact /outputs from such investment and regeneration aligned to our growth ambitions.

3.8

Subject to further engagement with officers, Members and other stakeholders it is envisaged the work will have three main outputs:

1. An outward facing proposition for the NI executive focusing on the strategic, economic and financial case for amended place-based and regeneration funding abilities for Belfast
2. An inward facing brief for Belfast stakeholders focusing on the specific benefits to wider communities and geographies derived from programmes and structures designed to regenerate the city.
3. A wider public facing document providing the case for Place Based Regeneration in Belfast and the economic impact and social value of potential initiatives.

3.9

**Regeneration Framework:**

- The development of a '**Regeneration Framework**' – A decision-making framework designed to be used in the prioritisation of place-based regeneration initiatives across Belfast. The framework should also allow the Council to identify and develop regeneration schemes into fundable propositions.
- A '**Regeneration Scheme Prioritisation and Audit Exercise**' – The exercise will consider the potential pipeline of regeneration schemes across the city and assess them against the Regeneration Framework. This exercise will provide a clear, objective assessment of various proposals and enable consideration of a sequencing of activities.
- A '**Regeneration Scheme / Programme Level Business Case**' – A business case will be prepared for a Regeneration Programme to establish the overarching context for intervention and the programme level governance and assurance processes underpinning the intervention. This will also include a number of individual project schemes /site assessments (to be agreed in due course).

<p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p> <p>3.12</p> <p>3.13</p> <p>3.14</p>	<p>Part of the Lobby &amp; Advocacy work involves strategic consultation and engagement with relevant public and private sector stakeholders. A programme of engagement is to be progressed, with initial engagement to include the following, but noting that there will be further engagement with a number of other stakeholders:</p> <p><b>21st March – Meeting Permanent Secretaries of DfI, DoF, DfC, DfE</b> Proposed that Avison Young attend a pre-scheduled meeting that the Chief Executive had arranged with Permanent Secretaries in relation to city strategic priorities. Avison Young are being invited to join part of this meeting and use as an opportunity to commence senior level engagement.</p> <p><b>30th March – Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum</b> It is proposed that political representatives are engaged in the upcoming Party Group Consultative Forum. The consultation will discuss the draft proposition paper and potential for a proposed improved approach to delivering funding aligned to the city’s strategic priorities.</p> <p><b>Project Pipeline &amp; Funding Opportunities</b> Work is underway via the City &amp; Organisational Services Dept to collate a Project Pipeline and Funding Opportunities across Council for Members consideration and it will be important to consider how this will align to the Regeneration Framework and Project Prioritisation Process.</p> <p><b>Future Reports</b> Future reports will be brought back to both CGR and SP&amp;R Committees as this work progresses.</p>
<p>3.15</p>	<p><b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b> None associated with this report.</p>
<p>3.16</p>	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></b> None associated with this report.</p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b><u>Appendices – Documents attached</u></b> None associated with this report.</p>