



Subject:	CG&R End of Year Report (23-23) and CG&R Committee Plan (23-24)
Date:	5 th April 2023
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development Manager

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"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide an end of year progress update (Appendix 1) on the key actions contained in the 2022-23 City Growth and Regeneration (CG&R) Committee Plan, as agreed by this Committee in June 2021.
1.2	To present to Committee the draft City Growth & Regeneration Committee Plan for 2023-24 (Appendix 2).

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of the end of year report; and • Approve the City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan for 2023-24.
3.0	<u>Main Report</u>
3.1	<p>The 2022-23 Committee Plan End of Year Report (EOYR) and the draft Plan for 2023-24 were both developed in the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Belfast Agenda, and in particular taking into account the emerging work underway with the Belfast Agenda Refresh. Consequently, the new Committee Plan contains the commitments within the Corporate Delivery Plan, which fall under the remit of this Committee, plus additional deliverables that have been agreed by CG&R Committee throughout the 22/23 period and are relevant to the Standing Orders. The Plan sets out the main priorities and programmes of work that the Committee is overseeing to maximise the Council's contribution to the Belfast Agenda.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Committee Plan 2022-23 End of Year Report</u></p> <p>While the Committee receives regular updates on progress for specific programmes and initiatives, Appendix 1 sets out an overview of progress against the main commitments in the Committee Plan 2022-2023. The End of Year Report focusses on the second half of the financial year; as members have already received a six-monthly update at December 2022's committee. Committee should also note that some of the figures provided are provisional and subject to final audit.</p>
3.3	<p>Highlights from the EOYR include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We improved our Global Destination Sustainability Index rating to 8th out of 65 other cities across the world. 80% of Belfast Hotel Rooms are now Green Tourism Certified. • Belfast was named the world's best conference destination for a 2nd consecutive year. • £17m was secured for an 11-council Entrepreneurship Support Service. • We have engaged 755 individuals, supporting them to progress to start a business. • 60 Social Enterprises and Co-operatives received one-to-one mentoring, advice and guidance; four were new co-operatives; and 25 events/ workshops were delivered with over 300 attendees. • The £50,000 Social Economy Incentive Fund was launched in September 2022 to support social economy businesses business growth plans. • Belfast City Council won 'Council of the Year' at the Social Enterprise Northern Ireland Awards in October 2022.

- The Belfast-Dublin strategy and action plan have been finalised. This helped a successful joint application with Dublin City Council to the Shared Island Fund for a €250,000 award to conduct a feasibility study on circular economy facilities in both cities.
- By the end of Q3 the zoo had welcomed 184k visitors. This is 14k higher than the five-year average.
- The assembly of the two remaining properties, for Belfast Stories, has been completed. Council is in ownership of all properties at the site and the project is currently out to procurement for the Integrated Design Team.
- Since September, our GCSE support programme has engaged 281 young people. We are also supporting 170 young people through our Youth Support Programme. So far, 87 have completed accredited training and 65 are undertaking essential skills qualifications.
- Since April 2022, we have had over 700 places on Employment Academies. On average, 93% of those who started an Employment Academy successfully completed, and for those, we achieved an into-work rate of 75%.
- The Vacant-to-Vibrant Pilot Grant scheme was launched. To date, 32 applications have been supported by officers to develop their applications, with 6 of those already approved and a further two recommendations for approval at this Committee meeting.
- The emerging draft Bolder Vision Strategy was approved by the CG&R Committee in August 2022 with work ongoing to finalise the Strategy and Action Plan with DfI & DfC and bring forward.
- Our Renewed Ambition Programme of work, to promote Belfast, was completed with local partners.
- We established new City Centre Governance structures including a Members City Centre Area Working Group to help to progress priorities and address issues.
- We commenced delivery of Public Realm Catalyst projects aligned to Developer Contributions including Great Victoria St/Shafsbury Sq area and Little York Street / Little Patrick Street.
- We delivered the majority of the £4.039m of the DfC Covid Revitalisation Programme with work ongoing to deliver the final two projects.
- DfI provided the Council with a Letter of Offer to fund the “Grey to Green” programme in March 2023 (subject to capital approvals).
- The Southwest Quarter Revitalisation proposal has received a letter of offer of £250k from DfC.
- We progressed our plans to improve active travel options for the city including Active Travel Enablers / covered cycle stores; secured cycle parking at Castle Court, the Active

Travel Hub at QUB, the Cathedral Quarter Active Travel Hub, and three new Belfast Bikes stations.

- We finalised a number of PADs on our emerging Housing Led Regeneration sites, progressed MOU's with other public landowners, completed concept regeneration plans and have opened an Expression of Interest process to engage the investment and development market to bring these regeneration opportunities forward at scale.
- We have completed the City Centre Living Vision with key findings and recommendations to be brought back to Members.

Draft Committee Plan 2023-24

3.4 The draft Committee Plan for 2023-24 (Appendix 2) follows a similar structure to the Corporate Delivery Plan, plus additional deliverables that have been agreed by CG&R Committee and that are relevant to the Standing Orders of the Committee.

3.5 Highlights within the plan include:

- Further development of the Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme.
- Delivering the Music Strategy and Belfast 2024.
- Delivering a programme of City Events.
- Introducing the new Entrepreneurship Support Service (ESS) in September 2023.
- Finalising our refreshed Social Economy Action Plan and introducing a new incentive to improve the financial management skills of new and growing social enterprises.
- Undertaking a development and investment plan to support the sustainability of St George's market.
- Completing Belfast Stories Audit and commence RIBA 2 design consultation.
- Working with the Partnership Boards and the Education Inequalities sub-group to secure longer-term options to support young people.
- Delivery of Employment Academies in priority areas.
- Progressing the Belfast Labour Market Partnership including extending the Digital Badging initiative and progressing the Bridges to Progression service to support 180 young people.
- Finalising A Bolder Vision Strategy and Action Plan taking a civic lead on delivering a significant transformation of the city centre streets and places.
- Advancing Public Realm Catalyst Schemes aligned to the Developer Contributions including the 5Cs, Little York/Little Patrick St, Blackstaff Sq and Great Victoria St
- Providing input and strategic direction to major regeneration and development projects, including maximising regeneration impact of the Belfast Stories.

- Leading the Community Planning Partnership's City Development Board on the identified priorities of housing-led regeneration; connectivity, active and sustainable travel; Future City Centre; and citywide regeneration & investment.
- Working with partners to maximise residential development opportunities and jointly working to overcome obstacles to increasing residential development including city centre living.
- Producing a lobby position paper to advocate for devolution to Council of enhanced regeneration powers and associated funding.
- Taking forward a Regeneration Framework and Project Prioritisation process together with associated feasibility studies and business case development to attract the necessary investment for city-wide regeneration priorities.
- Finalise a Competitive Dialogue process to attract investment at scale for the delivery of housing-led regeneration.
- Conclude the Development Brief process for the INW Northern Cluster.
- Continue working through the City Development Board (Housing Led Regeneration Group) to analyse public sector land ownership in a city-wide context identified through the Urban Capacity Study and Housing Monitor to identify opportunities for housing together with other privately owned land.
- Progress next steps for development of identified sites under the citywide strategic sites assessment process including Member engagement; planning and site appraisals and feasibility studies.
- Continue to work through the City Development Board (and Housing Led Regeneration Group) to identify inhibitors to delivering housing opportunities progressing and to identify mechanisms to unlock these challenges.
- Working with partners to promote and develop regeneration opportunities within the Innovation District.
- Delivering remaining projects under DfC's Covid Recovery Revitalisation Programme.
- Delivering Tranche 3 of the Business Cluster and Community Grants.
- Delivering the Vacant-to-Vibrant Capital Grant scheme.
- Progressing the future-use options and attracting funding for 2 Royal Avenue; and promoting the Sixth investment & development opportunity.
- Delivering the Tactical Regeneration projects including Grey to Green, Active Travel Enablers, 5C's Revitalisation Programme, and Entries Phase 2 programme physical projects.

3.6	<p><u>Progress Reports</u></p> <p>Following agreement on the draft Committee Plan, officers will bring a six-monthly progress report against all commitments in the Committee Plan in October 2023 and a further end of year report in April 2024.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The draft Committee Plan 2023/24 and the subsequent annual programmes of work are aligned with the budget agreed by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 20 January 2023, namely a cash limit for the City Growth & Regeneration Committee of £20.45 million as set out in Appendix 2.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Strategies, programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council's Equality & Diversity Officers and subject to appropriate equality, good relations and rural needs assessment.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – CG&R Committee Plan 2022-23 – End of Year Report</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Draft CG&R Committee Plan 2023-24</p>