



Subject:	10X PLACE – draft consultation response				
Date:	14th June 2023				
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development				
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Senior Manager, Economy				
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				
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update members on a call for evidence from the Department for the Economy regarding Place 10X. The call closes on 9 July 2023.				
2.0	Recommendations				
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the Place 10X call for evidence• Agree the draft response to the call, as set out in Appendix 1.				
3.0	Main Report				
3.1	Members will be aware that the Department for the Economy (DfE) launched their 10X Economic Vision in 2021. This is the Department's plan to create a pathway to transform the economy in a way that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable.				

3.2	<p>Since its publication, the Department has been working to consider how the practical implementation of overarching objectives set out in the 10X Economic Vision is to be achieved. It has issued a number of related documents such as the Skills Strategy (Skills for a 10X Economy) and has been working on appropriate metrics to track progress. While the budget situation in all departments is currently unclear, it is proposed that DfE investment will be re-profiled to align with the 10X ambition – and this will mean that all delivery supported by the Department will be directed towards activity that can support the 10X ambition.</p>
3.3	<p>One of the key considerations for the strategy is the issue of “place”. To consider how this should be reflected in departmental investment, DfE has recently launched a call for evidence relating to sub-regional economic approaches – working title “Place 10X”. The call for evidence involves six prescribed questions. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the problem we are trying to solve? 2. What geographic areas should Place 10X cover? 3. What is expected of delivery partners? 4. What interventions could or already occur? 5. What does success look like? 6. Is the Department's view of place and use of Place 10X correct?
3.4	<p>Members will be aware that the issue of place-based approaches to economic development and investment has been a recurring theme in recent policy documents. There is no clear definition – and it can mean different things in different contexts. In 2022, the 11 councils commissioned a piece of research on “A place-based approach to supporting economic development in Northern Ireland”. The high-level findings of this work were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place-based approaches are closely aligned with devolution debate. However, in practice, they can range from stronger partnership working on basis of agreed plans (e.g. community planning model) to additional devolution of responsibilities (regeneration of particular interest in this field) • Need for all regional approaches to identify sub-regional variations – but with the ability to flex depending on the issue and in line with local geographies/working areas • Opportunity to use Shared Prosperity funding to re-position role of councils in developing and delivering solutions that reflect local needs (within an overall framework) • City and Growth Deals demonstrate value of aggregating demand – are the current structures the right ones on an ongoing basis and for all economic matters?

3.5	<p>A summary of the six questions posed and draft responses to each of these have been collated and are attached in Appendix 1. Members are asked to review the draft responses and confirm their agreement that this can be submitted to DfE as the Belfast City Council response to the call or to raise any other matters that they wish to incorporate. They should note that this is a call for evidence rather than a fully-developed approach to place-based economic development – this will follow once responses to this consultation are analysed.</p>
3.6	<p>From the perspective of Belfast City Council, the fact that the regional government department with responsibility for economic growth has identified the need for flexible solutions that are reflective of local need and opportunity is welcome. As a result, the tone of the draft response is to recognise and support the need for place-based approaches. However the response also suggests that there is a more effective mechanism for achieving this, namely to utilise the data, insights and structures that already exist at local level (e.g. Community Planning Partnerships) to identify local challenges and opportunities and then either focus efforts at that level or look across the board to consider cross-area commonalities if that would make a more effective intervention.</p>
3.7	<p>What is not yet clear is how the Department will take account of these “sub-regional” geographies in their policy-making and investment – and what is in scope under this approach. For example, DfE is responsible for a range of activities ranging from skills support (including funding of further and higher education); investment and sector development support (delivered through agencies such as Invest NI and Tourism NI) and energy policy. The consultation does not clarify whether all policy areas will be covered by the proposed approach. It is also important to note that this is a departmental rather than a civil service-wide response – so it will not apply to other relevant areas impacting on economic development such as regeneration, local transport and infrastructure.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> No specific financial or resource implications.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> The Department will be required to undertake an EQIA on any proposed approach before it can be adopted.</p>
4.0	Appendices -Documents attached
	Appendix 1: Place 10X – draft Belfast City Council response to call for evidence.