



City Growth and Regeneration

Committee Plan 2024- 2025



Belfast
City Council

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Introduction

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and growth of the city in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy.

Its specific functions, as outlined within the Belfast City Council Constitution Appendix 3 – Standing Orders, include:

- Influencing and contributing to regional regeneration and growth strategies and activities
- Developing and implementing city-wide economic strategies and policies
- Managing and maximising the impact of major physical developments in the city
- Coordinating and promoting major city-wide events
- Sourcing and providing support to attract and utilise European and other grants which contribute to the growth of the city
- Providing support for economic development initiatives
- Supporting the development of culture, heritage and the arts
- Working with other agencies to promote Belfast as a key investment and tourism opportunity
- Developing programmes and actions to support local businesses and attract inward investment
- Managing the Council's markets and maximising their benefit to the city
- Influencing and contributing to strategies and policies affecting skills, employability, transportation and energy in the City
- Overseeing the delivery of the following services:
 - Economic Development;
 - Tourism;
 - Culture and Arts;
 - European and International Relations;
 - City Markets;
 - City Events;
 - Belfast Castle;
 - Malone House;
 - Belfast Zoo;
 - City Centre Development; and
 - The transferring car parks.

Committee Members



Councillor Clíodhna Nic Bhranair (Chair)
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Matt Garrett
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Andrew McCormick
Party: DUP
DEA: Ormiston



Alderman Ron McDowell (Deputy Chair)
Party: TUV
DEA: Court



Councillor Conor McKay
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Botanic



Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown Gormley
Party: Alliance Party
Ward: Botanic



Councillor Sarah Bunting
Party: DUP
DEA: Balmoral



Alderman James Lawlor
Party: DUP
DEA: Ormiston



Councillor Ian McLaughlin
Party: DUP
DEA: Court



Councillor Claire Canavan
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Court



Councillor Donal Lyons
Party: SDLP
DEA: Balmoral



Councillor Ross McMullan
Party: Alliance Party
DEA: Ormiston



Councillor Sammy Douglas
Party: DUP
DEA: Titanic



Councillor Conor Maskey
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Castle



Councillor Micky Murray
Party: Alliance Party
DEA: Balmoral



Councillor Joe Duffy
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Fiona McAteer
Party: Alliance Party
DEA: Titanic



Councillor Séanna Walsh
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Anthony Flynn
Party: Green Party
DEA: Ormiston



Councillor Áine McCabe
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Black Mountain

Belfast City Council Priorities

Since it was launched in 2017, the [Belfast Agenda](#) has been a key city framework, coalescing partners beyond the core legislative requirements of community planning with a shared focus on addressing key city challenges. The approach adopted has enhanced the relationship between the public/statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors to drive forward real change, address inequalities and improve quality of life within and across the city

The refreshed Belfast Agenda 2024-28, maintains the same level of ambition and collective leadership commitment to deliver the long-term vision and outcomes previously agreed. It is delivery and outcome focused and is positioned as an overarching city strategy which identifies the major transformational programmes and investment opportunities for the city.

The strategy also sets out a number of specific 'calls to action' for local, regional and national partners to work together to bring forward important strategies, programmes and investment which will help deliver the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda.

The council's corporate plan is a reflection of what people in Belfast have told us they want and the type of leadership they feel the city needs. It takes the priorities of the Belfast Agenda and sets out the ways in which the council will support and deliver these to grow a sustainable, inclusive economy and equitable society and sets out the work we will do as an organisation to continually improve and develop to continue to deliver excellent services. The council's strategic themes are cascaded down from the Belfast Agenda and include:



- **Theme 1: Our people and communities** - Making life better for all our residents
- **Theme 2: Our economy** - Creating inclusive, innovative and sustainable growth, learning and opportunity
- **Theme 3: Our place** - Creating a liveable and connected, vibrant and competitive city
- **Theme 4: Our planet** - Creating a sustainable, nature-positive city
- **Theme 5: Compassionate city** - Making Belfast a welcoming, caring, fair and inclusive city – leaving no one behind

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan is aligned to both the recently refreshed Belfast Agenda 2024-28 and newly developed Corporate Plan 2024-2028. It identifies the priorities that this committee will be focussed on over the year ahead and primarily relate to the 'Our economy' and 'Our place' themes. The key areas of work have been identified and specific in-year deliverables are set out in section that follows.



Key Programmes of work

Our Economy

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will)
Support access to sustainable employment opportunities and improve skills levels for target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver employment and upskilling academies in priority sectors in line with industry demand, focusing on inclusive growth target areas. ▪ Extend the Digital Badging scheme to enhance employer engagement and provide opportunities for people to build their skills portfolio. ▪ Support management of Labour Market Partnership including delivery of key projects (Gateways to Choices, Bridges to Progression, Multiply) and working with LMP partners to identify opportunities for new interventions that deliver city priorities. ▪ Engage with relevant statutory and VCSE partners to create greater cohesiveness across the E&S ecosystem and to shape future economic inactivity support (from April 2025). ▪ Explore opportunities to use social value and developer contributions to support skills development and employment activities. ▪ Support delivery of the benefits of first phase of BRCD delivery by integration and alignment with economic development and skills programmes. ▪ Develop an updated economic proposition demonstrating the critical role of Belfast and the Belfast Region in creating good jobs, supporting innovation and driving productivity.
Support business start-up and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) to increase the number of new business-starts and to support business growth. ▪ Undertake the 'Lead Council' role on NIESS, in line with funder MoU obligations. ▪ Secure financial support for NIESS extension beyond March 2025. ▪ Support the operation of the Innovation Factory, in line with agreed Annual Service Plan obligations. ▪ Support the delivery of the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) with at least 114 businesses accessing support over two financial years. ▪ Support the development and integration of BRCD digital and challenge fund programmes with business support programmes. ▪ Develop a targeted approach to social enterprise support in order to meet the target of 10% social enterprises engaging on NIESS. ▪ Continue to work with Community Finance Ireland CFI to improve the financial management skills of new and growing social enterprises.
Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the corridor strategy to agree priority areas of focus and support the delivery of targeted economic development interventions.
Support city markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure delivery of the annual business plan for St George's Market. ▪ Support the delivery of the Christmas Continental Market. ▪ Review the markets rights policy in order to ensure that it supports the operation of independent markets across the city, to enhance animation and vibrancy. ▪ Ensure effective management of Smithfield Market.
Belfast Business Promise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend business engagement in Belfast Business Promise, supporting 50 companies to engage in the programme. ▪ Undertake interim evaluation to identify optimal approach to future resourcing and delivery.

Our Place

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
<p>Housing-Led Regeneration - Support and work with partners to address housing challenges</p>	<p>Competitive Dialogue Process to attract private sector partner / investor to take forward Housing Led Regeneration mixed use development opportunities:</p> <p>Appointment of Private Sector Development /Investor Partner (on completion of the current Competitive Dialogue Exercise) in respect of a number of BCC strategic sites that will act as a master developer to deliver residential-led, mixed-use developments in support of the city’s growth targets, delivering on key regeneration objectives, social value and economic impact.</p> <p>Strategic Site Assessments Phase 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete planning, site appraisals and feasibility studies for BCC lands identified within the city-wide Strategic Site Assessments. Progress site development and/or disposal options as appropriate following Member engagement and approvals and embedding social value and maximising the economic impact of such development. ▪ Continue to work through the Community Planning Partnership Housing-Led Regeneration Group to complete collation of all public sector land data and analysis of housing led opportunities utilising the LDP Urban Capacity Study and Housing Monitor. Progress, as appropriate, with other public sector partners opportunities for placemaking pilots and housing-led regeneration on wider public sector lands. ▪ Continue working with relevant public and private sector bodies to identify wider potential housing development opportunities and bring forward proposals that may unblock challenges to delivery. <p>Inner North-West Development Brief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage the Development Brief, alongside DfC (as joint landowner) and development process for lands in the Inner North-West (INW) Northern Cluster to bring forward a Housing-Led Regeneration scheme. <p>Funding models to deliver housing based placemaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advance the Place-Based Growth Proposition including the lobbying and advocacy work aimed at devolving and increasing regeneration funding and with a focus on Housing-Led Regeneration and placemaking purposes. ▪ Progress proposal for the reframing of the City Centre Investment Fund to support Housing Led Regeneration.
<p>Connectivity and City Infrastructure</p>	<p>A Bolder Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update and finalise A Bolder Vision (ABV) in line with the Eastern Transport Plan, including the SEA consultation. ▪ Secure Council and Ministerial approval. ▪ Align delivery with Corporate and PFG priorities including Belfast Agenda, LDP and corporate /city project prioritisation processes. ▪ Maintain public visibility and engagement with stakeholders through comms and engagement programme. ▪ Agree and commence city centre partnership projects with key stakeholders in line with ABV interventions. ▪ Work with DfC and DfI to ensure public realm projects are delivered in line with ABV, adopting an integrated placemaking and sustainable mobility approach.

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Under “Embracing the River” and through the Waterfront Taskforce progress implementation of the Waterfront Promenade Framework including progressing the agreed priority projects for delivery including the Under the Bridge and Sailortown Bridge projects as well as working with communities to realise the full potential of the Waterfront opportunities. <p>Citywide Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to create a more connected city by using existing and new greenways, urban greenways and existing and enhanced green spaces connecting the North, South, East and West of the city as well as the city centre. ▪ Agree and progress partnership projects with key stakeholders (QUB, UU, BIDs, BHC) in line with ABV interventions including Under the Bridges project and Active Travel Enablers as well as projects emerging from the Eastern Transport Plan. <p>Belfast Bikes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversee the development and delivery of the public bike hire scheme. ▪ Undertake a tender exercise to procure a new operator for scheme from Dec 2024 onwards. <p>City Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to champion the Council's preferred position for major infrastructure projects. ▪ Continue to represent Council and play a key role on city-wide boards facilitating, enabling and influencing major infrastructure development and investment including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ York Street Interchange; ○ BRT Phase 2; ○ Belfast Cycle Network; ○ Living With Water project; ○ Belfast Streets Ahead; and ○ Weaver’s Cross.
<p>Strategic regeneration and investment schemes</p>	<p>Tribeca</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress options for vesting and /or acquisition by agreement of the Tribeca site including valuation and funding options, subject to agreement on a commercial and resourcing strategy. ▪ Explore options to bring the Assembly Rooms into Council ownership and consideration of future development and use options. <p>2 Royal Avenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure the Long-term use of 2 Royal Avenue in line with council’s objectives. <p>The Sixth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress options for the future use and development of the Sixth in partnership with the council’s LLP partner. <p>Dunbar Regeneration Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress comprehensive regeneration scheme at Dunbar bringing together council and private sector assets to deliver comprehensive placemaking redevelopment co-ordinated through a joint master-planning approach.

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
	<p>Arterial Routes Regeneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop proposals to address the regeneration of arterial routes aligned to existing and proposed programmes of work (including Vibrant Business Destinations, Housing-Led Placemaking pilots, Neighbourhood Regeneration and Area-Based Community Plans) in the context of previous initiatives including Renewing the Routes, Business Cluster & Community Grants and Dereliction, in line with the emerging ambitions of the Eastern Transport Plan. <p>Regeneration Framework and Place Based Growth Proposition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress and embed the Regeneration Framework approach to prioritise city and council priorities. ▪ Progress the Advocacy and Lobbying programme of work aligned to the Place Based Growth Proposition for Belfast and ensure alignment with priorities identified by the Regeneration Framework process. <p>Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to progress (with partners) projects and interventions identified within BCCRIS. ▪ Take forward a ten-year review of BCCRIS building on the work of the recent Regeneration Trackers, to inform city and council priorities going forward. <p>Regeneration activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work collaboratively with colleagues in Planning and across Council to support regeneration plans and secure and deliver schemes aligned to Developer Contributions as appropriate. ▪ Delivery of the Vacant to Vibrant Pilot Capital Grant Scheme as a tool to address vacancy and dereliction while supporting SME's/ Independents to better utilise space aligned to council priorities. ▪ Engage with public and private sector in respect of major regeneration schemes including facilitating and leading project reference groups for specified major schemes, including Tribeca and Waterside (Sirocco). ▪ Lead the Joint Regeneration Group, Community Planning Partnership and City Development Boards with other partners to prioritise and drive key regeneration initiatives. ▪ Management of identified Regeneration Assets (including 2 Royal Avenue, Commission House, Site 10, Corporation Street) in line with the objectives of the City Centre Investment Fund and ongoing regeneration proposals.
<p>Promote and Position the City for Inclusive Investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to support a joint public private approach, including via the Belfast Place Partnership, aimed at ensuring Belfast is positioned to continue to attract inclusive investment to underpin regeneration, development and infrastructure activities in the city required to deliver our inclusive growth ambitions. ▪ Facilitating investment and development related visits aimed at positioning the city to compete and promote inclusive growth and development for the city. ▪ Maintaining and developing the Invest in Belfast website and associated promotion platforms (investment guide etc).

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Future City Centre Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversee the delivery of the Future City Centre (FCC) Programme five pillars, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regeneration and connectivity ○ Business and investment proposition ○ Animation and distinctive offering ○ Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe Vulnerability ▪ Ongoing management and development of the Programme OBA performance measures (strategic and operational indicators) in the form of a FCC Performance Measures Dashboard. ▪ Partnership working and engagement with city stakeholders across the public, private and third sectors.
Deliver year 3 of the Tourism Strategy ‘Make Yourself at Home’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch and deliver the Neighbourhood Tourism Development Programme. ▪ Development of visitor experience of Council Assets (visitor attractions). ▪ Delivery of Accessible Tourism programme. ▪ Delivery of Food Tourism programme. ▪ Delivery of Business Tourism - Conference Subvention. ▪ Position Belfast in national and international markets through Visit Belfast.
City Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver the annual programme of events including Christmas 2024, St Patrick’s Day 2025, Maritime 2025, Made in Belfast and Lord Mayors Day. ▪ Development and delivery work towards the Fleadh ▪ Development and delivery work towards the Oireachtas 2025 ▪ Development and delivery work towards the Euros 2028, including establishing and servicing governance structures for both. ▪ Development of Event Management Plans, including mobility plans (pedestrian/ traffic management) for larger events. ▪ Securing associated permissions and land rental. ▪ Continue working with partners to plan & develop future International Events bids.
Cultural Strategy	<p>'A City Imagining Plan'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing the cultural multi-annual funding programme (CMAG) and other grant streams. ▪ Deliver a programme of sectoral development and strategic partnerships. ▪ Implementation of heritage audit and roadmap for development. ▪ Progress cultural animations activities including Belfast Canvass, City as a Gallery. ▪ Design and deliver wraparound support programmes including leading sector forums for festivals, visual arts and sustainability. ▪ Deliver a range of capacity building initiatives for the sector including initiatives designed to increase accessibility and cultural participation. ▪ Complete the strategic review of artist studios and maker-spaces in Belfast and identify support to these organisations. ▪ Develop and Deliver report on the impact of culture and cultural participation. <p>Implementation of “Music Matters” Music Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver actions within the Music Strategy 4 strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theme 1: Place artists at the heart ○ Theme 2: Nurture the Sector ○ Theme 3: Ignite the IRL experience ○ Theme 4: Unlock the unifying power of UN ▪ Support 10 Artists through the creative bursary programme.

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Belfast 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Belfast 2024, the city’s biggest ever cultural and creative celebration, during the key visitor months of March to November. The celebration includes a combination of world-class activities and grassroots programmes, which will be shaped by community input. • Deliver a vibrant and diverse arts calendar. The Belfast 2024 programme includes three strands of work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over 20+ unique commissions, including ‘come and see’ activities, world-class collaborations and partnerships and locally-led projects. ○ Creative Citizens programme, forging new links with all communities to encourage them to get involved and develop our programme further. ○ Participatory budgeting scheme where residents will be able to put forward ideas for local projects they want to see in their areas.
Belfast Stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appoint Interpretive Planner and Concept Design Team. ▪ Commence recruitment of Contract Manager. ▪ RIBA Stage 1 Report. ▪ RIBA Stage 2 draft designs – experience and buildings ▪ RIBA Stage 2 Report ▪ RIBA Stage 3 commence. ▪ Members Study Visit. ▪ Ongoing Stories Network and Panels. ▪ Public Consultation and report findings. ▪ Submit Outline Business Case to TNI and DfE.
Commercial Assets	<p>Manage the delivery of Commercial Assets including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Belfast Zoo; ▪ Malone House; ▪ Belfast Castle; and ▪ Council owned Car Parks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contract management of enforcement contractor to recover the income from car parking in consideration with the emerging SSA work. ○ Continue to work with the Department for Infrastructure on taking forward the Belfast off-street Parking Order for the city.

Our Planet

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Net Zero Neighbourhoods Framework: UP2030 Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Progress the UP2030 Net Zero Neighbourhoods Framework project, to include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Stakeholder engagement and community involvement in shaping and delivery of Net Zero Neighbourhoods Framework.○ Identification of phased Net Zero interventions in UP2030 areas for Framework.○ Finalise the Net Zero Framework and opportunities to scale in other areas of Belfast.▪ Capture learning and development to support integration of Net Zero considerations across key workstream to lead our transition to an inclusive low-carbon economy.▪ Ensure alignment with and implement other department responsibilities within the council's Climate Action Plan for 2024-25.

Progress reporting

The council's corporate plan includes a commitment to develop and implement a performance management framework which supports the implementation of the corporate, departmental and service plans through regular monitoring, reporting and review. While the framework is developed, the success of this plan will be measured and monitoring via a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified below.

Our economy

- Number of individuals accessing employment and upskilling academies.
- % of those who move into a job/better job.
- Business start-up & growth – number of jobs promoted/business plans produced.
- Innovation Factory occupancy levels and jobs supported.
- Number of social enterprises and co-operatives supported.
- St George's Market Visitor Numbers.
- Number of organisations signed up to the Belfast Business Promise accreditation.

Our Place

- Number of Belfast Bikes journeys
- The total number of previously vacant city centre properties that have been awarded the Vacant to Vibrant grant and will become occupied as a result of the intervention.
- The total amount of funding (£) awarded to city centre traders to address vacancy.
- The total number of people engaged (traders, developers, business owners, landlords etc) in assisting with the completion of applications to the Vacant 2 Vibrant intervention.
- Attendance levels at City events.
- Total value (£) of cultural funding facilitated.
- Number of new works commissioned (as part of Belfast 2024).
- Number of events and activities delivered (as part of Belfast 2024).
- Number of creative organisations engaged (as part of Belfast 2024).
- Visitor Numbers to the Zoo.

Key Expenditure

The expenditure for the 2024-25 City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan is based on a total planned investment of £21.55 million, as agreed at the Strategic Policy & Resources committee meeting on 9th February 2024, as follows:

Service	Budget (£) 2024 - 25
Off-Street Car Parking	-973,719
City Regeneration	1,979,242
Place and Economy Directorate	2,389,527
Economic Development	18,155,877
Total	21,550,927



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