



**Development**  
**Departmental Plan 2013 – 2014**  
**Update against Key actions:**  
**End of Quarter 2 - 2013/14**



## 4.1 City Leadership

### Key actions

#### ***Investment Programme: Place-shaping and physical investment***

1. Launch the Belfast Masterplan and develop implementation mechanisms for the associated projects.
  - Although this project is delayed from its original milestone dates, the consultation document has been published and closes at the end of November. A new project plan will be developed to reflect the consultation feedback and the future programme.
2. Support the implementation of the Local Investment Fund and Belfast Investment Fund.
  - The resources available from the Local Investment Fund have been fully allocated through SP&R. More than 50% of proposals have secured due diligence approval and a number have been completed. The resources from Development and Property & Projects are being focussed on the support for the progression and final delivery of the approved projects.
3. Support the strategic development of the University of Ulster North City Campus.
  - The Council is represented on the Strategic Advisory Forum, which is designed to facilitate the development of the university. A sub-group to develop a campus regeneration plan will be established in the next quarter and the Department participates on the transportation and employability sub-groups. We have also continued to highlight the importance and impact of the University relocation for the city centre.
4. Implement a framework for marketing the city and developing International Relations.
  - We are developing a terms of reference for commissioning a City Marketing strategy and refreshing the city brand. The international Framework and action plan 2013/14 has been developed and agreed by Council and key actions to build and sustain international relations either delivered or underway for education, tourism and trade and investment and geographical areas. Promotional tools are also under development.
5. Host the Global India meeting in June 2013.
  - This has been successfully completed and a detailed report was submitted to Committee in September 2013.
6. Develop a portfolio of projects as a basis to secure EU funding for the Greater Belfast area for 2014-2020. A target figure will be developed once the new EU Programmes are open.
  - A pipeline of BCC Projects has been developed for potentially securing devolved NI EU funds. NI Government Departments will issue guidance by mid November. This will help to further filter and develop these by way of an integrated Belfast plan for EU funding to be ringfenced. DETI and DARD are very positive towards this approach but DEL remains a challenge. The Belfast pipeline has been developed with officers across



council and shared informally with external stakeholders as an indicative set of ideas.

7. Lead the NI EU Regional Forum.

- BCC continues to lead this 100 member strong platform for collaboration on EU matters along with co-chair OFMDFM. The work of the Forum is regularly cited as best practice elsewhere in Europe and is growing in membership and reporting regularly at Assembly level. Four working groups, with their own action plans, now exist to address EU funding and policy issues around Social Cohesion, Innovation & Technology, Climate change, and Energy, Competitiveness and Employment. The Forum delivered 2 seminars in Brussels during the EU Sustainable Energy week and is hosting a seminar on Brussels during the EU SME week in November.

**Planning for Local Government Reform**

8. Plan for and influence the Local Government Reform, in respect of community planning, and the transfer of function relating to planning and regeneration, enhanced local economic development, devolved EU funding and transfer of community assets.

- We are continuing to engage with InvestNI, both directly and through SOLACE/NILGA, to identify key issues related to the transfer of local economic development powers and resources. With respect to devolved EU funding, lobbying and negotiation is still ongoing with Government Departments to have devolved EU funds at 11 cluster level at the outset of the new 7 year EU NI programmes., Detailed guidance and notional budget allocations for Council integrated plans are expected mid November from DETI and discussions are still ongoing with the other departments to have the same approach. In the meantime BCC has been developing an indicative set of 5 potential Council programme areas where EU funds could be levered. These will be shared with Committee in the near future.
- The initial plan for the process to influence the regeneration element of Local Government Reform has been developed and a two strand approach proposed for the short term transition to 2015 and transformation from 2017. The plan seeks to ensure community planning, and the transfer of planning, regeneration and economic development are aligned.

9. Develop an Integrated Economic Strategy and associated action plan.

- A draft strategic framework has been produced. We are meeting with senior directors of key government departments during November to discuss this.

10. Deliver the City Development Conference and use the outputs to inform the future approach to State of the City Debates.

- Belfast: Future City Conference was held on 22 May 2013, with 176 attendees from all sectors across the city. The conference provided the opportunity to launch the review of the Belfast City Masterplan for consultation and to agree a number of city-wide outcomes around the themes of centre city, neighbourhoods, digital city and low carbon city.



This formed the start of an ongoing engagement process with city stakeholders around key issues that will inform city development and a future community plan.

11. Prepare for the transition of community development functions and plan for the implementation of the Belfast Community Investment Programme (BCIP) for the city (with DSD).

- During the summer of 2013 a much reduced council project team have worked to make the necessary arrangements for a 2015 BCIP start date (while also working to ensure that there would be interim arrangements in place for existing grants during 2014/15). In August 2013 Development Committee agreed to the new timetable. Committee also agreed that, with BCIP moving to 2015, political approval on the project needed to pass to the Voluntary Transition Committee (VTC).
- Under the new timeline BCIP planned to open for applications to its four new grant schemes in late spring 2014 which would allow time to notify groups three months in advance of the end of their contracts in 2015. To meet these dates (and to avoid the council election purdah period) BCIP would need to go to public consultation no later than October 2013.
- In order to prepare an equality impact assessment for the public consultation, we would need a number of immediate decisions about the programme. These include agreement on a grant aid budget and a method for allocating this across the city. As there is significant uncertainty around the amount of transfer of monies from DSD the council is not in a position to provide such an indicative budget. To go to public consultation in October 2013 would thus present financial and reputation risks for the council.
- As a consequence a report has been prepared for the VTC in October 2013 recommending not to proceed with the BCIP consultation at this time. Instead, it is proposed that activity on BCIP be incorporated into the wider programme of LGR work as part of its preparation for the transfer of regeneration in 2015 which allows the council to consider issues in an integrated manner.
- Under this proposal Community Services would work with the Central Grants Unit to ensure that its existing grant streams are ready for a full competitive open call across all of the new council area for the period 2015 to 2017. This would allow time for the development of an integrated approach to regeneration by council for 2017.

12. Co-ordinate responses for the Department and Council on strategic planning/ transportation policies or issues.

- Work is continuing on strategic issues and proposals including the Airport inquiry in response to external factors and project priorities. Other responses have been prepared for Planning Policy Statements, infrastructure proposals and stadia developments. This has been supplemented by ongoing participation on strategic planning /transport issues groups.



13. Co-ordinate responses to physical regeneration plans.

- Work is continuing on strategic regeneration proposals including plans in response to consultations and project priorities. Responses have been prepared for Queens Quay and ongoing work will focus on the South West Gateway and regeneration proposals associated with the stadium development. This has been supplemented by ongoing participation with established project steering groups.

## 4.2 Environment

### Key actions

#### ***Investment programme: promoting green business opportunities and environmentally friendly practices***

14. Develop an investment proposition for the Renewable and Low Carbon Technology sectors.

- The funding application for the development of the North Foreshore is now at the appraisal stage.

15. Agree a detailed implementation plan with partners and Committee to implement the Belfast public bike hire scheme in 2015.

- The Active Travel bid was successful for a Belfast Bike Scheme. Jason Freehill, Dublin bikes officer, gave a presentation about the Dublin scheme to a Special Development Committee on 23rd September. Approval has been secured from Committee to go to tender and tender documentation is being developed and will be advertised in Q3.

### ***BCC Transport Policy***

16. Support, develop and implement actions identified in the review of the BCC Transport Policy.

- Completion of the Travel Plan has been delayed pending further consideration of the proposed plan and scope. The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) activity has been delayed pending resolution of resource issues. Work has commenced on a study to consider the accessibility for the city centre and the potential for the development of indicators or future measures.

## 4.3 Economy

### Key actions

#### ***Investment Programme: Creating an economic infrastructure, supporting growth and employability***

17. Manage the development and funding of increased convention centre and exhibition centre space at the Waterfront Hall.

- The funding application is ongoing and a formal letter of offer is pending. All queries and requests for clarification have been supplied to DETI for DFP assessment. Design work has progressed to RIBA stage C and an application for planning approval will be submitted early in November. In line with the recommendation of the Economic Appraisal a soft market test



has been carried out to establish the presence of any potentially interested external operators, 4 parties expressed an interest.

18. Lead on the delivery of an innovation centre.

- The funding application is at the appraisal stage. A Design Team was appointed in September.

19. Lead on the delivery of a creative/digital hub programme.

- The funding application is at the appraisal stage; final outstanding queries in relation to the economic appraisal have been addressed and submitted. It is anticipated that a decision will be made in Q3. Demand stimulation and raising awareness is also a key aspect to this project

20. Super-connected Broadband – raise awareness of the opportunities and stimulate demand among the business community for high speed internet; and administer and promote the voucher scheme to help with connection costs.

- Market testing of the Voucher Scheme rolled out from 1st August until 30th September 2013. A target was set of 200 business sign ups. At the end of the period we had 228 businesses sign up.

21. Secure funding and deliver the community access aspects as part of the super-connected broadband project.

- While work is progressing, we have experienced some delay given the complexity of the project, limited resource and availability of technical support. Community services are working with Digital Services Belfast to progress site assessments, focusing on connectivity and networking. A preliminary schedule has been set to complete installation at the 12 sites by December 2013.
- Legal services have drafted a service level agreement contract to be issued to the independently managed centres.
- Security arrangements have been agreed for equipment at the sites as well as a maintenance budget to support a tender competition. Development Committee (October) agreed the allocation of a further £80,000 Community Support Programme in-year income to resource a 10 week pilot training and support programme (January to March 2014) focusing on: building digital confidence; offering taster training session and developing essential skills. We are drafting a specification to support procurement.

22. Commission a City Centre Regeneration Strategy in partnership with DSD.

- Work is continuing in the context of the Masterplan and Local Government Reform. The proposals for the identification of external resources to support such strategy development and the approach will be reported to Committee for approval in Q3.

23. Directly create jobs by working with local partners to deliver targeted employability initiatives across the city including HARTE and the Belfast Enterprise Academy.

- So far this year, our activities have helped to create 71 new jobs, which is significantly ahead of our target for quarter two of 54 jobs.



24. Work with partners to develop and deliver a city-wide employability and skills strategy and action plan.
  - We are continuing to engage with DEL, DSD and OFMDFM to agree the terms of reference for this work.
25. Provide targeted business support interventions through a series of workshops and 1-2-1 mentoring, to improve business competitiveness and productivity and to generate business efficiencies.
  - We have ongoing programmes for the retail sector, renewable and creative industries. We have also completed programmes on access to procurement, energy efficiencies, sales development, and export development. Attendance at our business programmes for the first six months of the year was 340 businesses.
26. Develop and implement a city wide retail support plan.
  - The overall plan has been agreed and work is underway with trader groups to develop detailed action plans. A new 'Introduction to Retail' programme is now being delivered. 20 new participants on the start up programme will take part in St George's Christmas events.
27. Support initiatives to increase awareness of Council tendering opportunities and build capacity among Belfast companies to tender for public procurement opportunities.
  - We have arranged a programme of workshops from October to April 2014. The Smarter Procurement programme is being developed with a new wave due to start in January 2014.
28. Develop a social clause policy and support implementation through council contracts.
  - The consultants are reviewing best practice and guidance to determine the most effective approach to implement clauses within future contracts. They have discussed potential approaches with key internal and external stakeholders. A report is to be presented, at the end of October, to SP&R Committee to propose the interim use of the CIFNI social clause standards; and to engage with DEL and OFMDFM to explore the potential for an employer agent model as a means of sourcing apprenticeships across government contracts.
29. Deliver Council's contribution to major events - the World Police & Fire Games 2013, Irish Dancing Championship 2013, prepare for Giro d'Italia in 2014, Tall Ships 2015 – and the annual programme of events.
  - The WPMFG event was delivered in summer 2013 with just over 7,000 participants from 60 plus countries. The estimated economic impact figures are unavailable at this stage. The All Ireland Irish Dancing Championship 2013 is on schedule for October/November 2013 with participant numbers to be confirmed. The 2014 Giro d'Italia launched on the 7 October in Milan with a Belfast element. The Tall Ships 2015 Board has been constituted with representation from the Chair and Deputy Chair of Committee. The annual events programme has been delivered to date and on budget.



30. Develop Belfast's tourism product and deliver actions within the Integrated Tourism Strategy and action plan.

- Working is ongoing on the strategy and action plan and indications are that we are on target for final delivery in March 2014. A review of the strategy will occur during November and December. The tender specification for the new Strategic framework for tourism from 2014-2020 will go out during November.

31. Market Belfast by supporting the marketing and visitor servicing activities of the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BCVB), (now Visit Belfast).

- Visit Belfast continues to deliver against key priorities for example; all indications suggest excellent levels of overnight occupancy in Belfast during 2013, with the exception at the start of the year. One concern is the current footfall in the Welcome centre. There are a number of reasons for this, in particular, with the centre moving in December stock levels have been depleted. Quarterly meetings continue with Officers to ensure compliance with the business plan.

32. Deliver on the relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre.

- The official opening of the new Welcome Centre will be on Thursday 12th December, with the DETI Minister and Lord Mayor. The keys will be handed over to BCC from the contractor on the 6th November. We are currently inputting data onto the multi-media platforms. The Budget is on target.

33. Develop culture and arts by investing approximately £2M in cultural and artistic activities including the 'City of Festivals' and Creative Legacies.

- All activity under the PEACE III-funded City of Festivals and Creative Legacies programmes were completed as planned in September 2013. Other key successes in quarter 2 include: The Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund which was launched in partnership with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Its purpose is to challenge social exclusion by encouraging participation in the arts. The total funding available is £870,000. The Unit also continued to administer its core multi-annual fund and small grants fund, which have the combined value of over £1.5m per year. In total, from 1<sup>st</sup> April to the end of September 2013 we have allocated £1.69m through 122 grants.

***Supporting local business growth and opportunities***

34. Improve and develop the city markets at St. George's and Smithfield in the context of supporting tourism and small businesses.

- We have delivered the original improvement plan developed in consultation with the Traders Committee. Ongoing consultation has identified the need for specific work to make the shopping experience more appealing. Committee have approved the use of external consultants to undertake a review and make recommendations. The consultants have been appointed and scheduled to meet Councillors on the 9th October. The final recommendations are due by December 2013.

35. Manage the new Markets Policy.





- We continue to process applications and provide advice and support as requested. Committee dealt with two significant applications in August 2013. One of these raised issues around the definition of 'charitable' and whether fees should be waived. We have sought advice from Legal Services and they are currently checking this and collating relevant information on this issue before bringing a report to Development Committee.

36. Work towards the introduction of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).

- The Development Department co-ordinated a detailed consultation response on the Regulations, which was approved by Committee on 20 August. Funding arrangements and support for BIDs has been confirmed by DSD. At this stage we are determining the level of business interest.

***Tourism development and promotion***

37. Deliver a programme of events at the Waterfront and Ulster Hall.

- BW/UH programming schedule continues to support audience development and reinforce our position as the premier location for arts, entertainment and conferencing. During April – September 2013 we were successful in programming a wide variety of sell-out entertainment shows and secured a number of high profile bookings including President Barack Obama's key note address at the Waterfront in advance of the G8 summit and the World Police and Fire Games. Venue programming overall remains on target; however, the current economic climate remains a challenge influencing product availability, touring schedules, rotation cycles and visitor numbers.

38. Implement the integrated Cultural Strategy.

- Following extensive consultation with the cultural sector, draft measures for the outcomes framework have been developed. These will be tested in quarter 3, with the final framework due to be completed by December 2013. The action plans for the four Cultural Framework themes (Distinctly Belfast; Inspiring communities; Attracting audiences; and Strengthening the sector) will be completed by March 2014.

39. Secure World Host status for Belfast, working with the hospitality and retail sectors across the city.

- An Action Plan has been developed to agree the rollout of initiatives to achieve World Host status by April 2014.

***International opportunities***

40. Increase international business opportunities by organising the Belfast Tech mission to west coast USA in October 2013...

- This takes place from 14-18 October and provides an opportunity for 20 local companies to showcase some of the new technologies and products being developed in Belfast to leading companies, investors and venture capitalists from the west coast of America.



#### 4.4 People and Communities

##### Key actions

##### ***Investment programme: Neighbourhood investment and creating strong neighbourhoods***

41. Deliver the Renewing the Routes Programme 2012-16.

- The Contractors are on-site for the Newtownards Road and Ormeau Road and Committee approval has been secured for the new contract to be progressed for the next stage of the programme. Design Teams have been appointed and consultations are progressing for Oldpark Road / Stewartstown Road. The Project Request Forms have been issued to Property and Projects for Oldpark / Stewartstown Road.

42. Develop capacity for a reactive local regeneration schemes across the city.

- The development of proposals for the reactive local regeneration has been delayed due to the work on the Local Government Reform (Regeneration) and priority on delivery of existing regeneration programmes as part of the Investment Programme.

43. Resource support for Community Development local activity (including management of an outcomes based £1.748m grant programme that covers Capacity building, Revenue, Small community development projects, Play schemes, Community chest grants and Ur City 2.

- We are continuing to support local community development activity across the city. To the end of quarter 2 we had distributed £1.72M via 200 different grants: Capacity Support organisations; Revenue support for community building; Summer Scheme and small project grants.

44. Invest approximately £860,000 in community-based advice services per annum via 5 city-wide advice consortia.

- All advice grants have been distributed (see previous for details). We have also supported the establishment of a citywide Belfast Tribunal Service which was launched in September 2013 and secured council funding for a 2 year programme. The Advice consortia group has been established and the first instalment of funds has been released to support service provision in July 2013.

45. Provide support for community engagement within Council e.g. training, skill development, raising confidence and access.

- We are continuing to offer training for both BCC officer teams and to the local community and voluntary sector using the Community Development toolkit which was developed last year and piloted with Parks & Leisure staff. We are currently delivering officer to group training for fifteen local organisations across the city. We will re-advertise this opportunity in line with our planned Community Sector Support programme, in advance of our next open grant call.

46. Manage and increase usage of community centres and other facilities.

- Usage of our centres has exceeded the target with a further increase at 69.84%. Whilst the actual numbers of users at the end of quarter 2 is slightly below target, a steady increase in throughput has been achieved



when compared to quarter 2 performance last year. Positive progress can be attributed to our ongoing marketing and communication work and the achievement of the PQASSO quality standard. We are continuing with initiatives which will increase the number of users. These include themed support events which include: Job Assist, Debt Advice and Health and Well-being.

47. Develop and introduce a new volunteering framework to support over 70,000 volunteering hours per annum in community facilities.

- We have exceeded the target in quarter 2 with 39,234 hours volunteered. Once again this is reflective of the positive impact of our marketing and community support initiatives.

### ***Supporting neighbourhoods and communities***

48. Delivery of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Hannahstown Rural Development programme application.

- Phase 1 has been completed and the development work for Phase 2 is underway. The final proposal for Phase 2 will be completed in Q3 and implementation is programmed to be completed by Sept 2014.

49. Establish the potential impact of the Welfare Reform.

- Work is ongoing to review the evidence base and research into the potential impact of the Welfare Reform. It has been noted that the full impact of the reforms is unlikely to be realised until 2018; however the ongoing review of evidence is being used to inform the work of services such as the launch of the tribunal service. Discussions are underway to ensure that any further research into the impact of the Welfare Reform adds value to the existing knowledge base and informs the work of the Council.

50. Develop a mechanism to bring together key players from across the City to raise awareness of the impact and scale of poverty and identify ways to address it.

- This will build on the current framework to tackle poverty and social inequality and recognises that poverty is a key action identified in the tackling health inequalities programme of work and ties in to the emerging Integrated Economic Strategy. Committee agreed to the organisation of a facilitated city-wide event to identify co-ordinated actions and approaches to tackle poverty related issues. This will involve those working in the poverty sector and other agencies and has therefore been scheduled for January 2014 to maximise participation. This will also inform the preparations for the development of a community plan and provide an important link to OFMDFMs Delivering Social Change agenda.

51. Deliver a coherent inter agency and inter departmental approach to working with the Traveller community.

- We are continuing to provide secretariat support and chair the Belfast Interagency Traveller Forum. The forum have agreed a terms of reference, and based on an initial evaluation/benchmarking exercise, have identified a number of work areas including a regional conference to share and inform best practice and agree priorities for 2014.



- We continue to work alongside An Monia Tober and Bryson House to develop and deliver Traveller support services in the city. This will be bolstered by our recent successful recruitment to the vacant TLO post.
52. Propose a Council wide consistent criterion based framework for managing neighbourhood assets. If agreed, implement for the service.
- Our project work is complete and a report was prepared for the Assets Board. This report included three broad strands of recommendations: management influences, outcomes and an overall framework. It was agreed that further work based on the recommendations would be progressed in line with asset transfer under LGR. The timeframe has yet to be agreed.

### ***Creating and co-ordinating opportunities for children and young people***

- 53. Implement the inter-departmental framework for children and young people.
    - This is progressing and Members, in particular Youth Champions, are regularly updated on the CYP framework through Committee papers and individual meetings.
54. Ensure Council compliance with Child Protection requirements.
- This is ongoing with a total of 281 staff hours invested in supporting internal compliance controls through policy development, response service for BCC cross council queries and related guidance and delivering staff training as part of the Learning and Development programme. We also provide training to a range of community organisations and represent council on a number of inter-agency partnerships. BCC is represented on the new Safeguarding Panel and is a member of the Local Government Child Protection Network. A policy review was completed in light of the changes in the external environment and is being refreshed at present.
55. Provide a city-wide play service targeting need and developing new approaches for delivering play.
- The play service has 6 play centres across the city and continues to review their services to develop new projects and to identify gaps in service provision. This year the project has moved into three new areas and is facilitating play opportunities in a range of venues, including parks and an underground car park.
56. Deliver a comprehensive citywide summer programme.
- This was completed through the provision of summer schemes, central events and support for the voluntary community sector with central events involving over 3500 summer scheme children through Play days, the Challenge Day and Party in the Park, 20 Come and Play Sessions, Fun days and Wide Game events.
  - Our 22 community centres ran localised summer schemes covering a wide range of activities for recreation, play development and well being. The schemes' primary focus is 5-11yrs with some additional provision for older children (depending on the area). The schemes supported 1,360 children and our community centre staff effort is extended with the valued contribution of 145 volunteers across the city.



- To extend the summer programme, we also offer an annual grant opportunity to support community sector provided schemes across the city, with 90 schemes supported to a total of £190,928 this year. Last year these schemes catered for over 7,000 children and are also supported with significant volunteer input (over 1,000 volunteers last year).

57. Build the capacity of Youth Forum members to increase the participation of children and young people in the city and neighbourhood life.

- The Youth Forum have agreed their vision, priorities and are finalising the projects for the remainder of their term; one priority project is connecting the youth forum to young people throughout the city to hear their voice. Training is being sourced at present to support forum members roll out engagement in the New Year.

58. Research and develop proposals for a Council Integrated Schools programme.

- Following an initial mapping exercise an options paper is being finalised which reflects on local practice examples and wider benchmarking from other councils in terms of schools provision.

#### 4.5 Better Services

##### Key actions

59. Ensure compliance with all corporate process requirements including, audit reports, WIRES, risk management, IIP, etc.

- We continue to monitor all requirements for audit and report them at Departmental management meetings. We have updated the department risk register. Processes for WIRES have been developed and implemented. Preparation for a new system is ongoing. 1 x Audit recommendation is currently outstanding and WIRES compliance is 93%.

60. Implement a coordinated approach to grant management through the Grant Unit.

- The transfer of administration and monitoring of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Multi-Annual Fund and the pilot corporate small grants fund has been implemented very successfully by the Central Grants Unit (CGU). It has now been agreed that all other small corporate grants will transfer to this CGU-led approach for grants distributed from 1 April 2014. The first call for the Corporate Small Grants Fund will open on 11 November 2013. Two new schemes – the Zero Waste Fund and the Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund will also be administered and monitored by the CGU. Staffing structures have been agreed and recruitment is currently in progress. Work is also ongoing with respect to sourcing and acquiring a Grant Management System.

#### 4.6 An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

##### Key actions

61. Use, promote and support evidence based planning via the use of CityStats and other local information.

- Training on the use of CityStats and Understanding Statistics was provided as part of the Members Development Programme and is provided on an ongoing basis to Council staff. CityStats contains over 140 datasets and 345 resources. It is planned to review the current system and its use to ensure its continued effectiveness and the potential to take forward the



recommendations emerging from the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge which was undertaken in September/October 2013.