



Subject:	Inclusive Growth
Date:	20 March 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officers:	Christine Robinson, Strategy, Policy and Partnerships 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	In September 2019 the Council produced its “Commitment to Inclusive Growth’ in draft form. Since then the Strategy, Policy and Partnerships team have been supporting the oversight of the ongoing work across Council and completing a citywide consultation. The purpose of this paper is to provide a short summary on the findings of the consultation - highlighting implications for the commitments published and to present the final and updated strategy for your approval.
1.2	Please note that this report was completed in advance of the implications on society from Coronavirus being fully understood. It is therefore expected that that some of the plans flowing from the Council in relation to inclusive growth may require reprioritisation to support citizens in need across the city as a result of changes in their economic circumstances. Community support will become a major focus as will support for people

	trying to find work and struggling businesses. It is also vital in the longer term that we continue to plan as 'one city' using our procurement and recruitment powers to support those in greatest need – therefore our commitments in terms of progressive procurement (both social value and support for social enterprise and co-operatives), opening up our employment opportunities and developing a 'one city approach' through the city charter remain vital actions in supporting residents now and into the future.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approve the Council's 'Commitment to Inclusive Growth' attached at Appendix 1. b) Agree that we will communicate via Citizenspace – the <i>You Said, We listened</i> aspect of the consultation findings; c) Note the recruitment of the dedicated staff team will commence to support implementation of the published commitments and to shape Council's future ambitions. d) Note the creation of the officer group and the intention to report on progress at paragraphs 3.30 and 3.31 (although this may take time in the current circumstances). e) Agree that initial priorities will be proactive support for those suffering as the result of COVID 19.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware of that in 2019 they tasked officers with the production of a cross council 'strategy' to reflect their growing ambitions in relation to social policy and inclusive growth in particular. This strategy was designed to build upon the Council's Inclusive Growth Decision Making Framework produced in 2018.
3.2	<p>Since then officers have been working with members, officers and wider civic society to define the council's ambitions. With respect to members, this has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An all members workshop - resulting in the development of an Inclusive Growth Statement and initial target groups were members wanted us to initially target our efforts. - Focused individual party sessions with members to support the development of draft content. - Focused conversations with Party Group Leaders. - Final individual party sessions to secure agreement on the commitment to be published.
3.3	The result of this process was the production of the Council's 'Commitment to Inclusive Growth'. This document sets out a clearly defined list of ambitions and linked actions as to how the council in its capacity as a corporate body and as a city leader will deliver against its commitment in the next two years.

3.4	<p>The document contained commitments that BCC would progress over the next two years, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing a BCC approach to social value in procurement (note the BCC approach to social value procurement is also being developed to include sustainability). - Introduction of progressive procurement measures designed to support the local supply chain. - Enhanced support for the development of social enterprises and co-operatives. - Ring-fencing of our entry level employment to benefit people outside of work, across the City. - Introduction of a BCC apprenticeship model - both entry level and higher level apprenticeships. - Enhanced employability interventions – including measure to tackle educational underachievement and development of the Belfast Workplace. - Improved models of civic engagement. - Development of an Inclusive Growth City Charter for all employers across the city – setting a city wide standard in relation to procurement, employment and civic / neighbourhood engagement.
3.5	<p>The Councils 'Commitment to Inclusive Growth' document was endorsed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 20th September 2019, where it was agreed that the draft would be subject to a 12 week public consultation.</p>
3.6	<p>This document marks the 'first phase' of the Councils ambition in relation to inclusive growth and as we seek to refresh and refine the Belfast Agenda - the ambition and impact of the Councils work will grow.</p>
3.7	<p>The published commitments are designed to complement rather than replace the Belfast Agenda. Members will be aware that officer are working to deliver on a range of other measures through community planning to address many of the constraints to, and symptoms of, inclusive growth such as transport, job creation, health inequalities, education, childcare and housing. As we start the process of working with member, partners and citizens to refresh the Belfast Agenda it is expected that the Councils commitment to inclusive growth will grow.</p> <p>City Wide Consultation</p>
3.8	<p>The purpose of the consultation was to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather peoples' views on the councils published commitment and its key components. - Seek input from citizens and stakeholders of additional elements that should be included. - Identify any barriers for specific groups/citizens in relation to the actions identified. - Identify clear areas for reconsideration or revision to inform the final published commitment. - Raise awareness of the strategy and the council's commitment to inclusive growth with citizens and key stakeholders.
3.9	<p>The consultation set out to engage with a broad range of people including citizens, those individuals that the strategy would focus on supporting (i.e. our four target groups), anchor institutions and other employers, community and voluntary sector and other public sector partners.</p>
3.10	<p>The consultation period closed on 24th January 2020.</p>
3.11	<p>During this process, the Council has had direct engagement with over 400 people and attended 30 events/workshops. All feedback and responses have been collated and reviewed. A consultation report has been compiled – this report will be disseminated across council and the feedback within it is vital to shaping our approach going forward.</p>
3.12	<p>A summary of the engagement completed is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 78 consultation postcards returned - 34 Citizen Space questionnaires completed (76% identified themselves as being members of the public rather than affiliated to a specific group or organisation) - Business workshop in partnership with Allstate – 70 employers attended - 11 community centre drop-in sessions hosted - 5 detailed written submissions - 5 targeted cohort workshops – 40 participants attending - 5 targeted “section 75” workshops - Social enterprise workshop hosted by SENI - Engagement with the Lord Mayors Charter Group - 4 skills fairs/ employment academy roadshows - Internal staff sessions
3.13	<p>The results of the consultation has been overwhelming in favour of the approach set out by Council. The tables below present the high-level survey findings.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Space Survey Results

Priority Area	Strongly Agree/Agree
Statement of Inclusive Growth	85%
Inclusive Growth Cohorts	82%
Priority Area	Very important/important
Our role as a procurer	91%
Our role as an employer	88%
Decision making framework	82%
City charter	82%
Employability and Skills	97%
Inclusive growth through planning	88%
Strengthening civic voice	76%

3.14

Over and above the on-line consultation platform we wanted to give people the opportunity to feedback in a more focused, informal way and we chose to use postcard feedback. This also meant we were able to take these cards with us to every consultation we attended. We received 78 completed postcards in total and overwhelmingly they evidenced support for the Inclusive Growth Strategy and the priority areas for activity/action, with 97% of respondents stating they felt inclusive economic growth is important for Belfast going forward. The high level results from the postcard responses are as follows:

Table 2: Postcard Responses

Initial commitment areas	Yes - these are the right areas to focus on
Our approach to purchasing goods and supporting local businesses	98%
Promoting fair work and good quality jobs	99%
Creating more apprenticeships	96%
Employability and skills initiatives	99%
Inclusive Growth City Charter	85%
Citizen Voice	97%

You said, we listened

3.15

While the consultation exercise was supportive of the published approach - feedback gathered has suggested that we need to make a number of small changes to the published document. Key changes to the document include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A change from the term 'workless' to 'residents not in employment'. - The inclusion of the BCC definition of affordable housing. - A move from bi-annual to annual reporting.
3.16	<p>A range of other comments relate to issues associated with implementation of the actions and these will be reflected in our approach going forward e.g., the importance of including social enterprises in the development of the city charter, the need to consider childcare to support employability initiatives and the importance of working with existing structures rather than creating new ones. A copy of the summary of the consultation findings will be circulated to PGL for their information.</p>
3.17	<p>We have made these small changes to the document and included the final version in Appendix 1 for your approval.</p>
	<p>Moving forward – delivering against our published commitments</p>
3.18	<p>Members requested that resource be allocated to inclusive growth to ensure that their published commitments would be delivered and to shape and develop the Councils inclusive growth / social policy into the future.</p>
3.19	<p>As a result of this a dedicated budget will be made available from the start of the 20/21 financial year. We have been working with colleagues across council to determine how this funding could best be allocated to deliver against our published commitments and member's ambitions to continue to grow and develop our approach to inclusive growth.</p>
3.20	<p>It is vital that there is a central team in place within the Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Unit to develop and deliver the councils inclusive growth ambitions. This team must be to be able to research, advise and drive delivery as well as have the skills to monitor impact. The team will also take on a co-ordination role for the Council and across the City and manage interdependences across deliver teams.</p>
3.21	<p>The team will work across the organisation, providing support to departments and service units as required and will ensure that there is an organisational approach to inclusive growth / member's wider social ambitions.</p>
3.22	<p>The team will be recruited to ensure that it has strong expertise in the development of social policy, programme and project management, data development, evaluation and</p>

monitoring and research skill. The team will also make more efficient use of the resource allocation ensuring that there is no duplication as we deliver. Furthermore a dedicated team will minimise the requirement for a research and consultancy budget.

3.23 Table 3 details the anticipated staffing levels

Table 3 Core Team	
Post	Indicative Grade
Inclusive Growth Lead	PO9/10
Policy & Programme Officer	P06/7
Support Role / Co-ordinator	P03

3.24 Support from the centre will include:

- Bespoke research, advice and guidance to those service areas that are critical to delivery
- Ongoing strategy development to ensure that the council continues to develop and deliver against the members social ambitions
- Engagement with city stakeholders to create an inclusive City and increase impact for citizens
- Dissemination of best practice and shared learning to assist strategy and policy development and enhance service delivery e.g., the Inclusive Growth Learning Network, UK, RoI, EU and international best practice.
- Shaping and developing inclusive consultation and engagement and hosting of city wide events
- Business case development and options analysis for service areas when required
- Co-ordinated programme management of the councils inclusive growth strategy (via the oversight board) and individual project management support for workstreams where required
- Evaluation and monitoring – ensuring impact and VfM
- Councillor liaison and update including developing yearly actions plans & composite impact reporting to committee
- Lobbying and advocacy – including the development of place based outcome frameworks with central government and shaping regional interventions to meet local need (e.g., the forthcoming NI Anti-Poverty Strategy / SPF / Green Book measurements etc)
- Fundraising - working externally to secure external sources of funding

The team will be supported with a programming budget. Specifically, the team will drive and deliver a number of project deliverables specified within the strategy including:

3.25

Delivery of published commitments

- Design, development and implementation of the Councils Social Value Procurement Framework
- Development of a broader progressive procurement policy for council
- Design, developed and implementation of the City Charter with employers across the City
- Embedding the inclusive growth decision making framework within Council – including staff training and adaptation to business case approaches

Evaluating Impact and Refining Delivery

- Development of an inclusive growth dashboard and refining and shaping inclusive growth measures
- Development of a composite monitoring framework across council to ensure that we are able to assess and report on cumulative impact
- Undertake detailed data capture / analysis across the city and within neighbourhoods to better target resources and measure impact (including an enhanced and improved citizen survey in Year 2)

Strengthening Civic Voice & Inclusive Engagement

- Testing a range of innovative approaches to civic engagement
- Develop a council wide approach to civic engagement - including commissioning of innovative consultation and engagement platform to enhance public discourse, civic engagement and consultation
- Enhanced participation of the CVSE sector in action planning and problem solving

3.26

Alongside the development of the central team, discussions at the inclusive growth oversight group have indicated that additional staffing and programming resource is required to support implementation of the published commitments. Table 4 presents the staffing allocation.

Table 4 Departmental Staff	
Post	Indicative Grade
EDO x 2	PO4
HR –Apprenticeships	P04

3.27	<p>Departmental staffing and programme requests relate specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to shaping and delivering the councils support to social enterprise and co-operatives; - city wide employability efforts (by growing and meeting demand for the councils successful academy model); - the councils own approach to recruitment – in particular the development of focused entry level recruitment and apprenticeships (including the cost of recruiting and training apprenticeships). - A funding allocation to P&E to support the acceleration of efforts in relation to apprenticeships and high levels skills (note that this element of programme funding is expected to be recurring) <p>Co-operatives and Social Enterprises</p>
3.28	<p>Growing and supporting the social enterprise and co-operative sector is a key ambition of Council – and will be a significant focus of inclusive growth going forward. An update on the work of the Council in relation to social enterprise and co-operative support was brought to City Growth and Regeneration Committee in January 2020. As Members will be aware, officers have undertaken research to understand what specific support is required for co-operatives and social enterprises and to inform the support provided by the Council. Developing progressive procurement policies that support the sector and further enhancing the direct support that we offer – both financially and in terms of capacity building - will be a key feature in the forthcoming financial year for the cross council inclusive growth team. The changes that will flow from the development and implementation of social value and broader progressive procurement changes will also have a clear benefit and impact on this sector.</p> <p><i>A one-council approach – Oversight and reporting</i></p>
3.29	<p>When working with members to shape their priorities, the importance of a ‘one-council’ approach was raised. Members were clear that enhanced co-ordination would improve the councils collective impact and also reduce duplication.</p>
3.30	<p>In response to this the Strategy, Policy and Partnerships team have developed an inclusive growth oversight group. The purpose of this group is to drive delivery of the year one actions and to shape future ambitions. It is also proposed that the oversight group will be central to shaping the allocation of programme funding into year two and beyond – working through Committee and with members to develop our approach.</p>

3.31	A progress update will be brought every 6 months outlining the progress and new developments. We have also committed to produce a yearly public update on progress.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.32	Council have approved a dedicated budget for Inclusive Growth – there are no additional financial or resource implications.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
3.33	None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Updated Inclusive Growth Document