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| Subject: | Final Resilience Strategy for Belfast |
| Date: | 20th November, 2020 |
| Reporting Officer: | Grainia Long, Commissioner for Resilience |
| Contact Officer: | Claire Shortt, Statistics and Research Officer |

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| 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"/> |
| Sometime in the future | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| Call-in | |
| Is the decision eligible for Call-in? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | To provide the Committee with an overview of conclusions arising from the public consultation and engagement on the draft Resilience Strategy, to outline the changes made to the document as part of the finalisation process and seek its approval for the document. |
| 2.0 | Recommendations |
| 2.1 | <p>The Committee is asked to note the changes made to the document taking account of the public consultation, and consider for approval, to enable it to proceed to full Council, in advance of a virtual launch in December.</p> <p>Members should note that as a city-wide document containing commitments from external partners, the document has already been considered and endorsed by the Resilience and Sustainability Board.</p> |

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| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | <p>The Belfast Agenda commits the city to the development of a Resilience Strategy to ‘take a targeted approach to addressing those issues which pose the greatest risk to the city and its economy’. The commitment aligned Belfast with a number of cities globally, who are invested in long-term risk management. A highly inclusive process, involving over 1000 individuals was commenced eighteen months ago, and a draft Resilience Strategy was published for formal consultation in January 2020. Importantly, the workstreams arising through the strategy process were co-designed by city partners as part of their work on the Resilience and Sustainability Board.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>An extension to the consultation was agreed due to the effect of Covid-19 on partner organisations and their staff. Between January 2020 and July 2020, a period of formal consultation was entered into, incorporating a number of elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an online survey on the Belfast City Council consultation portal, - standalone submissions forwarded to the Resilience Unit, - and a citywide and thematic engagement undertaken on our behalf by Urban Scale Interventions. This included on street engagement at a kiosk in Castle Place, workshops in local neighbourhoods, an interactive ‘resilience tree’ located in public places, and online thematic workshops with young people and older people. |
| 3.3 | <p>Over 1,300 people took part, 75 written submissions were received. The consultation was almost complete when the lockdown began, at which point all engagement activity moved online, and the completion for the online consultation was extended.</p> |
| 3.4 | <p>Following the consultation, two workshops were held with members of the Resilience and Sustainability Board, with the aim of discussing feedback, shaping the strategy and aligning with member’s programmes. Members of the R&S board met on 10th November and formally endorsed the strategy.</p> <p><u>Main Themes arising from the Public Consultation</u></p> |
| 3.5 | <p>The draft Strategy was developed through an inclusive process, whereby we spoke with over one thousand people, and was based on huge amounts of publicly available data and evidence. Unsurprisingly therefore, the public consultation found a high level of agreement with the shocks and stresses identified;</p> |

- Consultees welcomed the principle of a resilience strategy; a document that sets out long term risks for the city, and agreed it should be kept 'up to date' and refreshed every two years
- Predictably, a large number of consultees felt the final document should reflect the impact of Covid-19 on the city, and should draw conclusions on what this could mean for our future.
- It was also proposed that 'mental ill health' and 'use of prescription drugs' should be treated separately and that 'car dependency' should be included in the focus on 'carbon intensive systems'.
- There was substantial support for the principle of 'multiple problem solvers' and the suggestion that we need to find levers to solve several problems at once. Consultees agreed with the three areas of focus identified- there was particular support for the need to include children and young people more in the decisions that affect their lives.
- Generally, there was a view that we need to separate out the 'assessment' of risks, from the 'solutions' and that the document should not try to do too much. Overall, consultees agreed that the biggest long-term challenge for the city was environmental/climate related. On this basis, they agreed that the three 'multiple problems solvers' should try to achieve a single 'resilience goal' and be narrowly focused on the transition to a zero-emissions economy. That means, in practical terms, that the focus on children and young people should be directed towards their involvement in climate action. This was dealt with in detail in the workshops and there was general agreement with the approach.
- A significant number of respondents asked for the section on inequality to be drawn out further, and addressed as a 'stress' in its own right, rather than as part of 'Economic Recovery Capacity'.

Changes to the Document

- Taking into account the feedback above, the strategy now encompasses two distinct sections: (1) a Resilience Assessment, an analysis of the strategic risks to Belfast, taking account of the views of citywide stakeholders and (2) an Ambitions Document: Climate Plan for Belfast, setting out the resilience goal and priorities being delivered by the Resilience and Sustainability Board. It is the intention of the Resilience and Sustainability Board (R&SB) that the Resilience Assessment be reviewed and refreshed every two years to ensure a proactive approach to the management of strategic risks. The R&SB

will be the governors of this document along with support from the Belfast Climate Commission.

The ambitions document will also need to be refreshed as new opportunities for multiple problem solvers (leavers that can respond to several risks at once) arise. This will be the responsibility of the R&S Board to update and deliver.

- As per feedback received, we have included 'Poverty and Inequality' as a 'stress' and worked directly with Belfast Health and Social Care Board to develop a new section on 'Public Health Shocks'. We have merged 'car dependency' into the section on 'carbon intensive systems' and separated 'Mental Ill-Health' from 'Use of Prescription Drugs'.
- The document has been updated to reflect statistical returns published in this calendar year (2020) to ensure the strategy is as up to date as possible
- The 'Resilience Assessment' includes a 'next steps' section, which outlines the structure for focusing on the 'shocks' and stresses' across the Community Planning Partnership Boards
- Reference has been made in the document to digital inequality as a core issue emerging following Covid-19 and the transition to online platforms at scale, for the delivery of services (including health and education services)

3.6 It is worth noting that a number of the ambitions, as stated in the draft version, are already under way. The One Million Trees project, the development of A Belfast City Council Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plan, the establishment of the Resilience and Sustainability board are a few of the 'multiple problem solvers' that are already well on track.

Further Engagement

3.7 There will be a further short document created in response to all those who took the time to engage during the consultation. Due to the transfer away from Citizen Space to the new Engagement Hub - consideration will need to be given on how to do this in an impactful way.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.8 The strategy contains a number of significant programmes which have been included as 'ambitions' for the city. Some of these programmes are already fully funded, and others are predicated on securing long-term finance. Approval of the document does not commit Council, or members of the Resilience and Sustainability Board to funding specific projects. On this basis, there are no direct additional financial and resource implications.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

3.9

Throughout this process, the Resilience Team, and the Resilience and Sustainability Board has taken account of obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability to promote good relations between the relevant groups as set out in the legislation. The team also ensured that needs and implications for residents living in rural areas were assessed throughout.

The purpose of the Resilience Assessment and the programmes in the Ambitions Document are to reduce inequalities in the city. Evidence from a number of cities globally has demonstrated the adverse impact which widening inequalities can have on a city's resilience.

The Resilience Assessment and the Ambitions Document were screened to assess their implications for equality categories under Section 75. More than 100 official (NISRA) datasets were reviewed throughout the process to understand the impacts of relevant policy interventions for each of the categories. The screening process did not identify adverse impacts for any specific equality categories; however, we sought to test this further during comprehensive consultation with all equality categories during January – June 2020, and both the equality screening and rural needs impact were hosted on Citizen Space and comments sought during the formal consultation.

The consultation found one example where there was a *perception* that one group could be impacted differentially. Some responses suggested that a focus on children and young people could be at the expense of older people. We have addressed this issue in two ways in the document (1) by emphasising what the international evidence demonstrates, that positive urban planning for children impacts positively on the rest of the population (2) by emphasising that our focus on children and young people is to ensure their participation in decision on climate action in the city.

Importantly, we received a submission from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, which has strongly informed the final document.

In conclusion, no significant adverse implications for groups have been identified.

Furthermore, each 'Foundation Programme' in the 'Ambitions Document' will themselves be

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| | screened for their equality implications and be subject, where required, to an Equality Impact Assessment. |
| 4.0 | Documents Attached |
| | Appendix 1 - Resilience Assessment Appendix 2 - Ambitions Document: A Climate Plan for Belfast |