

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

11 December 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a special meeting of the Planning Committee of the Ards and North Down Borough Council which will be held in the **Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards** on **18 December 2018** commencing at **7.00pm**.

Tea, coffee and sandwiches will be available from 6.00pm.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Planning and Performance Management Report Quarter 2 2018/19 (Report attached)
4. Update from Metropolitan Area Working Group MASWG (Local Development Plan) (Report attached)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

5. Towards Preferred Options Paper (Report attached)
6. Planning Policy Review (Report attached)
7. Steering – verbal update
 - Update – Employment Land Review
 - DFI Transport Plans
 - Sustainability Appraisal
 - Other reports and assessments

MEMBERSHIP OF PLANNING COMMITTEE (15 MEMBERS)

Alderman Carson	Councillor Cathcart (Chairman)
Alderman Fletcher	Councillor Dunne
Alderman Gibson	Councillor Hunter
Alderman Girvan	Councillor McClean
Alderman Graham	Councillor McIlveen
Alderman Henry	Councillor Thompson
Alderman Keery	Councillor Walker
Alderman McDowell (Vice Chairman)	

ITEM 3**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting	18 December 2018
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Planning
Date of Report	30 November 2018
File Reference	
Legislation	Local Government Act 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes X
Subject	Planning and Performance Management Qtr 2 2018/19
Attachments	

Context

Members will be aware that Council is required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil this requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook. The Performance Management Handbook outlines the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (2015-2019 plan in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (2018/19 plan published 30 June 2018)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April 2018)

The Corporate Plan 2015-19 sets out 17 objectives for the plan period based on themes of People, Place, Prosperity and Performance. The Council's 16 Service Plans outline how each respective Service will contribute to the achievement of the

Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

Reporting approach

The Service Plans will be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for the first Quarter of 2018/19 is attached.

Key points to note:

- Spend against budget is currently recorded as 82.6% as a result of existing vacancies still in the process of being backfilled. The Department is also awaiting a number of invoices being submitted in relation to legal fees and arboriculturalist fees for work undertaken.
- Staff attendance figures can be accounted for by staff off on long term sick absences

Key achievements:

- Further updates have been added to the Planning webpages to assist members of the public in self-service and will continue to be developed further to provide answers to frequently asked questions. Surveys are continuing as appropriate on the review of TPOs to ensure legal coverage.

Emerging issues:

- The protocol between Building Control and Planning continues to be developed further, and a fulltime planning officer is now in place to review Building Control applications to ascertain whether planning permission was required, and if in place that it reflects the details of the permission.

Action to be taken:

- Appropriate recruitment to be undertaken to ensure backfilling of vacant posts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee notes this report.

Quarterly Performance Report - Planning

Generated on: 30 November 2018

Last Update Q2 2018/19

Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	PI Short Name	Performance Data Current Value	Performance Data Current Target
	% spend against budget	86.22%	100%
	% staff attendance	93.62%	95%
	% staff reporting regular annual Pride and Performance conversations	80%	80%
	% of Building Control applications checked against Planning approvals	30%	85%
	% of Planning pages on website updated	50%	50%
	Undertake health and condition surveys of all existing historical Tree Preservation Order (TPO) sites	30%	100%

ITEM 4**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting	18 December 2018
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Planning
Date of Report	03 December 2018
File Reference	
Legislation	The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011; The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Update from Metropolitan Area Spatial Working Group MASWG (Local Development Plan)
Attachments	Item 4a - MASWG September 2018 minutes agreed. Item 4b - Agenda December 2018 Item 4c - Terms of Reference

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Members shall be aware that the Council participates in a joint working group entitled the Metropolitan Area Spatial Working Group (MASWG) linked to the preparation of LDPs comprising the planning authorities in the Metropolitan area (Belfast City Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Ards and North Down Borough Council). Aldermen Gibson and McDowell were nominated to serve on the working group.

2.0 Update from meeting held December 2018

- 2.1 The sixth meeting of MASWG was hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey in Mossley Mill on 3 December 2018. Minutes from the previous meeting held in September were agreed (attached at Item 4a).
- 2.2 The meeting was also attended by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Strategic Planning section and Transportation and Modelling Unit; Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), Translink and Invest NI.
- 2.3 The agenda for 3 December 2018 meeting is attached at Item 4b. Agenda items set out below were fully discussed.

- **Update from Councils – stages of progression**

Councils gave round table updates and noted slippage in timetables and revisions which were forthcoming.

Belfast City Council made reference to consultation complete on its Draft Plan Strategy.

- **Update from consultees – Housing**

NIHE hopes to publish affordable housing policies in conjunction with DfC in near future. NIHE has also commissioned research on housing market areas (based on travel to work areas rather than council boundaries). Greater Belfast housing market data about to be tendered – hope to have next summer in time for Local Policies Plans.

- NIHE referred to expected practice note and intention to have draft finalised before the end of this year.

- **Update from consultees – Transportation**

DFI Transportation Planning and Modelling Unit provided update on the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Strategy (BMTS). The first board meeting was held in August and signed off methodology for modelling work. Detailed modelling which was expected to complete by end of year has been delayed. First draft of BMTS now expected in Quarter 2 of 2019/20 (rather than Quarter 1), with around 6 months to finalise, taking account of the public consultation.

Preliminary Programme

Transport Strategy	Delivery date
BMTS Modelling Report	Q2 2019 ⁱ
Draft BMTS	Q3 2019 ⁱⁱ
NWTS Modelling Report	Q1 2019
Draft NWTS	Q3 2019
Draft RSTNTP	Q1 2019
Draft Fermanagh & Omagh LTS	Q3 2018
Draft Mid & East Antrim LTS	Q4 2018
Draft Antrim & Newtownabbey LTS	Q4 2018
Draft Lisburn & Castlereagh LTS	Q1 2019
Draft Ards and North Down LTS	Q1 2019
Draft Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon LTS	Q3 2019 ⁱⁱⁱ
Draft Causeway Coast & Glens LTS	Q3 2019 ^{iv}
Draft Mid Ulster LTS	Q4 2019 ^v
Draft Newry, Mourne & Down LTS	Q4 2019 ^{vi}

ⁱ Subject to the resolution of technical issues

ⁱⁱ Subject to the resolution of technical issues

ⁱⁱⁱ To be commissioned Q1 2019

^{iv} To be commissioned Q1 2019

^v To be commissioned Q2 2019

^{vi} To be commissioned Q2 2019

- **Update from consultees – Transportation**

Local Transportation Studies – Initial draft for Ards and North Down Borough Council expected end November 2018. Detailed modelling which was expected by end of December 2018 is now expected 2019 (April). Engagement with Councils to follow.

- Translink referred to need for park and ride sites to complement the Belfast Rapid Transit in adjacent areas – cross boundaries.

- **Role of Group**

The role of the group was discussed in round-table fashion. Terms of reference (attached at Item 4c) may be re-visited at another date. The lack of ability of the group to make decisions was raised by some in relation to how the group would seek to achieve consensus as outlined in the ToR. DFI has questioned the ‘working together’ aspect of the group in relation to LPD development. Councils expressed view that going beyond would give rise to governance arrangements. Councils acknowledged there was no formal duty to co-operate, however, the working group provided for discussion. Issue to be re-visited.

- **Affordable Housing**

Issues discussed around section 76 agreements (legal agreements) on

transferring land. Simple criteria for Affordable Housing will not cut it. Requires back up.

- **Distribution of Housing Growth**

Belfast City Council outlined that its growth strategy as published was ambitious. Referred to issues which may need resolved at Local Policies Plan stage. Various councils referred to levels of commitments as baseline position – having skewing effect on Housing Growth Indicators.

- **Timetables**

Councils present indicated various revisions required to timetables. DFI asked to be copied in on any working revisions, similarly consultees INI and NIHE requested same.

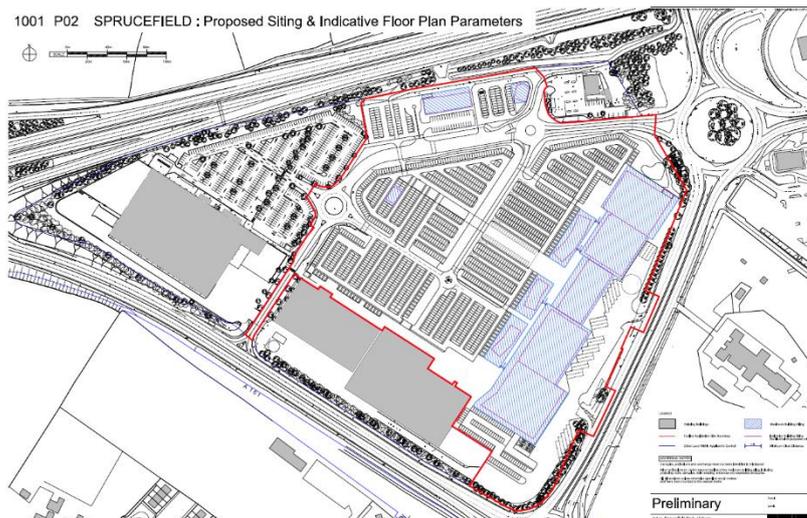
- **Employment Land Reviews**

Councils outlined work which had been commissioned in this matter.

- **Sprucefield Shopping Centre**

Belfast City Council drew attention to a planning application which had recently been submitted to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. LCCC representatives responded that representations for this planning application are being received in normal way.

- For Members' information the application is being dealt with under planning reference: LA05/2018/1061/O
- The proposal is for: Erection of new buildings for retail use (Class A1) and restaurant and hotel uses (both Sui Generis). Alteration of existing vehicular access and egress arrangements. Reconfiguration of existing, and provision of new internal vehicle, pedestrian and cycle routes, Landscaping and Public Realm. Reconfiguration of public and staff car parking area, servicing arrangements and other ancillary works and operations.



Proposed Siting and Indicative Floor Plan Parameters from application

2.4 Main outcomes of the meeting

- DfI Transport Modelling Unit indicated delay to programme of Transport Plans. The governance group would receive correspondence shortly to that effect;
- Revision of timetables by Councils discussed;
- Affordable housing guidance to be issued by NIHE;
- Terms of reference - to be discussed again/revisited;
- BCC concerned with Sprucefield application.

2.5 A copy of the meeting minutes will be presented to Members once agreed.

3.0 Next meeting

3.1 A further meeting is arranged for 4 March 2019, to be hosted by Belfast City Council.

Recommendation:

That Members note the content of this report and attachments.

Metropolitan Area Spatial Working Group

17 September 2018

The Braid, Ballymena

MINUTES

Present		Apologies
Cllr Paul Reid (MEABC)	Sharon Mossman (ANBC)	Ann McCullough (ANDBC)
Michael Francey (MEABC)	Simon Thompson (ANBC)	Georgina Thurgate (NIEA, NED)
Paul Duffy (MEABC)	Conor Hughes (LCCC)	Cllr Fraser Agnew (ANBC)
Alderman Robert Gibson (Ards&NDBC)	Lois Jackson (LCCC)	Cllr Henry Cushinan (ANBC)
Alderman Alan McDowell (Ards&NDBC)	Susan Wilkin (DfI)	Cllr Matt Garrett (BCC)
Leona Maginn (Ards&NDBC)	Suzanne Bagnall (DfI)	Linda Williams (MEABC)
Deirdre Watson (Translink)	Tony Rafferty (DfI TPMU)	
Keith Sutherland (BCC)	Maire Clarke (MEABC)	
Dermot O'Kane (BCC)	Keith Irwin (MEABC)	
Graham Cardwell (INVEST NI)	Ronan Mullan (MEABC)	
Catherine Blease (NIHE)		
Sophie Matthews (SES)		

Item	Minutes	Actions
1.0	<p><u>Introductions / Apologies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair, Cllr Paul Reid welcomed everyone, noted apologies and around the table introductions took place. The Chair thanked Belfast City Council for their anticipated presentations and congratulated them on their publication. He highlighted the impact this Plan Strategy would have on the neighbouring councils in attendance. An overview of the meeting's agenda was then provided. 	
2.0	<p><u>Minutes / Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of the previous meeting on the 13 April 2018 were noted and agreed. 	

3.0 Updates on LDP progress from Councils

- MF updated the group on MEABC timeframes of plan preparation. He highlighted current studies such as Strategic Housing Study including Urban Capacity (UCS); Retail Study; Employment and Economic Development Studies – including a demand for employment space report by UUEPC and a supply of economic land report by CBRE; and a Landscape Character Area (LCA) Assessment. In addition, MF outlined the ongoing Policy development, and working with a Programme Management Team made of key stakeholders and consultees in developing policy before bringing to Councillor Workshops later in the year.
- SM outlined that ANBC had spent the summer developing their policy with Councillors with a first draft now completed and hoped to run past Consultees late October. Their Retail, Employment and LCA studies are all now finalised.
- LM stated that Ards&NDBC hoped to publish their POP in early New Year.
- CH updated the group that LCCC had commissioned their Employment Study jointly with a Housing Growth Study and had commenced their LCA Assessment. Policies are currently being drafted with the intention of publishing draft Plan Strategy by end of Q1 2019 (TBC).
- Ald AMcD highlighted the problem in Ards&NDBC of losing employment land to housing over the years with the remaining sites requiring infrastructure improvements to be viable to develop. Some landowners were also not making land available for industry as they were holding out for higher land values for housing. This was forcing business elsewhere outside the Council area, usually towards BCC. Asked if other Councils had the same issue. He also added he would like to see employment zonings in smaller settlements.
- MF and PD commented on the employment land situation in MEA, stating that there were issues with over supply / slow rates of uptake of land. Also some issues of decontamination etc meaning developers often wanted housing to justify the cost of developing site.
- PD commented that under the new Plan Led System, more weight should be given to what land is zoned for in the existing Plan, however this may

be difficult to defend when zoned land remains undeveloped after 20+ years. LDP teams need to check why these lands aren't coming forward even though zoned.

- SM stated employment land in ANBC wasn't under pressure for housing so they are proposing to protect these industrial lands as Strategic Employment Lands (SELS).
- LM informed the group that Ards&NDBC's employment land review was underway to ensure that land zoned is deliverable.
- LJ added that LCCC had sent letters of intent to landowners asking why no development on zoned sites, as part of developing the evidence base.
- DOK said this showed the importance of bringing forward LDPs with appropriate zonings. BCC Urban Capacity Study (UCS) had shown they had twice as much employment land than was needed.
- KS added that BCC's redraft of PPS 4 policies had made it more flexible to free up some of this land for housing, and advised that an up to date LDP should try to address the type of market failures that Ald AMcD referred to. In addition BBC have set up a database to monitor and review market trends to ensure LDP remains relevant.
- GC stated that the default position of Invest NI is that economic land should be retained for that use and protected from other development to ensure future demands are met.

4.0 Updates from Consultees

- Dfl Planning
SW updated the group re Dfl Planning work programme including having responded to 9 POPs to date, and currently looking at BCC draft PS (congratulated BCC on reaching publication). Continue to consult with other Dfl sections, and sit on the Transport Plan Project Board.
- Welcomed the engagement between councils and PAC.
- Highlighted draft LDP checklist (still to be finalised at next Development Plan Working Group (DPWG) meeting. Stated that this should be used along with existing Practice Note on Soundness and that the checklist will not change the latter in any way.
- Welcomed involvement in MASWG and discussions amongst the group.

- Several members of the group requested clarification from DfI on the publication of LDP checklist, and whether there is a need to publish as formal guidance. Some expressed concern re potential risk of pitfalls including opening up potential to challenge a Plan. Also PAC may hold Councils to account over this so need to get this issue resolved at next DPPWG.

DfI responded that publication arrangements still to be decided on. The intention is not to cause any confusion with the DPPN – rather to supplement it.

- NIHE

CB welcome the BCC 4 week period pre-consultation as it helped with resource issues.

- Welcomed the Belfast PS stance on Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes.
- Informed group that NIHE hope to publish affordable housing policies in conjunction with DfC in near future.
- NIHE have also commissioned research on housing market areas (based on travel to work areas rather than council boundaries). Also, greater Belfast housing market data about to be tendered – hope to have next summer in time for LPPs.
- Discussion took place around timeframe and status of affordable housing guidance. NIHE confirmed unlikely to be formal guidance and intention to have draft finalised before the end of this year.
- Ald RG highlighted commuter to work issues for Councils in greater Belfast area. NIHE responded re importance of LDPs ensuring appropriate employment land and housing.

DfI TPMU

5.0

- TR updated the group on Belfast Metropolitan Transport Strategy (BMTS). The first board meeting was held in August and signed off methodology for modelling work. Detailed modelling expected to complete by end of year, followed by engagement with councils. First draft of BMTS expected Q1 2019, with around 6 months to finalise, taking account of the public consultation.
- Transport evidence base to inform Local Transport Strategies (LTS) now

gathered for all 5 Council areas in MASWG in their entirety. ANBC and MEABC initial draft expected end Oct, with LCCC and Ards&NDBC expected end November (tender out w/c 17 September). Detailed modelling by end of Dec then engagement with Councils.

Presentation on BCC Plan Strategy

- KS presentation on LDP process included publication and consultation arrangements and highlighted that the 4 week pre-consultation period and 8 week formal consultation period was to fit in with BCCs policy of a 12 week period for all of Council's public consultations. Awareness events held during initial 4 week period, plus use of digital and media (data obtained from BCC website re downloads, views etc).
- KS highlighted the PS had changed from initially a high level PS to a much larger document containing all operational policies. Referred to engagement with members post POP before writing policies and going to consultees. Highlighted the amount of work involved including 6month+ engagement with Members though Planning Committee and Steering Group re policy formulation; gaining consultee and key stakeholder commitment to the process; updating evidence base of 19 preparatory papers (combined some of these); ensure linkages to Community Plan; and carrying out SA (SEA).
- KS outlined some of the learning experiences thus far, including unrealistic timeframes (particularly given that this is a new Plan process); ensuring adequate resources (that transferring from former DOE now shown to be grossly inadequate); starting SA early in process; critical importance of new relationships and sustaining engagement with stakeholders.
- BCC next steps included Independent Examination (IE) estimated Q2/Q3 2019, then adoption of Plan Strategy. Suggested PS process of adoption anticipated to take 12 months (draft PS submitted to Dfl – PAC – Dfl and report back to Council) with draft LPP likely in 2020. BCC hope to develop supplementary planning guidance (SPG) in early 2019, along with prioritising some targeted master-planning for specific areas (to be part of the LPP).
- DOK presentation of Plan Strategy included an outline of what BCC PS is. Highlighted the enormous challenge of reviewing, re-drafting and

incorporating into PS all the Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), which represent some 30 years of planning policy in NI.

- DOK outlined specific aspects of the PS such as sustainable development themes; key blue/green infrastructure grid (as in other key cities around the world); spatial articulation of community plan; strategic aims and objectives; strategic policies; spatial development strategy; topic based policies (based on SPPS with parts of relevant PPS to supplement).
- DOK highlighted the need for 20+ SPG documents to be produced rather than including all in the PS which would have made it a huge document.
- DOK finished by highlighting the importance of getting the message of Soundness out to the public, and explaining the Tests whilst letting the public know this is not a done deal and they can still input into the LDP.
- Discussion followed on the role of neighbouring councils as statutory consultees and the use of online consultation platforms.
- Ald A.McD asked if Belfast CC regarded neighbouring councils as key stakeholders and if Belfast planners would be prepared to deliver their presentation to Ards&NDBC and to speak about housing and jobs figures in more detail.
 - DOK said that neighbouring councils are statutory consultees and as such, BCC would be content to present and engage, if invited.
- Ald RG specifically asked BCC what % of their proposed housing was anticipated to be brownfield/greenfield?
 - KS confirmed that their UCS had indicated sufficient capacity, however detailed work was still required on this for LPP stage.
- SM asked if BCC were using Citizen Space for carrying out their public consultation.
 - DOK indicated that they are using Citizen Space but found the need to have fewer questions and also more succinct questions, so as to make the consultation process more manageable.
 - KS added that amendments have also been made to the platform so as to allow for GDPR
- MF asked if UCS showed any likely potential for housing overspill into neighbouring / nearby councils.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOK responded that the housing market would influence this over the Plan period, but housing growth targets can be accommodated in BCC in theory. • PD asked about the risk of publishing the draft PS in the absence of LTS. • KS responded that Dfl hadn't said not to, and DOK added the transport policies and overarching principles in the PS had changed from PPS 3 and PPS 13 to reduce potential for conflict with LTS. • SB confirmed that publication of PS in advance was at a Council's risk. • MF asked if the PS had departed from any POP Preferred options. • DOK stated POP options had been purposely kept high level, but some hadn't been taken forward into the POP for operational reasons. 	
6.0	<p><u>Action Points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dfl Planning to finalise LDP Checklist and bring forward for discussion with Council planners at next LDP Working Group meeting on 28 September. • NIHE to continue to engage with Councils on emerging work on Affordable Housing and Housing Market Areas. • Dfl TMPU to continue to engage with Councils on emerging BMTS and LTS. • LM and KS / DOK to liaise in regard to the delivery of the presentation to Ards&NDBC <p><i>NOTE: Since the meeting LM has suggested that it would be useful if the presentation could be circulated to all WG members so as to facilitate briefing of Council Committees by LDP leads. KS / DOK to consider</i></p>	
7.0	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS highlighted the PAC information seminars currently taking place and encouraged Councils to spread the word to the public to attend and see how they can understand Soundness and get involved in the process. • Suggestions were made to invite PAC to take the information seminars to Councils and generally to stakeholders across NI. • LJ raised difficulties of interrogating the planning portal for social housing figures and asked Dfl that any upgrade or replacement of the portal should enable this to be done. 	

Next Meeting

- Next meeting will take place on Monday 3rd December at 10am and will be hosted by ANBC in Mossley Mill. Further details to follow in due course.
- The Chair, Cllr Paul Reid closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Metropolitan Area Spatial Working Group Meeting

**Monday 3 December 2018
10am – 12:30pm**

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Yarn Suite, Mossley Mill Newtownabbey

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes**
- 3. Update from Councils**
- 4. Update from Consultees**
- 5. Role of Group**
- 6. Transport Plans**
- 7. Affordable Housing Policy**
- 8. Distribution of Housing Growth**
- 9. Timetables**
- 10. Employment Land Review**
- 11. Sprucefield Regional Centre Update**
- 12. AOB**

DRAFT METROPOLITAN AREA SPATIAL WORKING GROUP**Terms of Reference****Aim and Objectives**

- To provide a liaison forum on spatial planning including cross boundary aspects of economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure issues arising at regional and sub regional level.
- To lead and co-ordinate the activity to support the 2011 Planning Act and SPPS suggestions that the LDP process should include a joined up approach to addressing issues that consider to cross administrative boundaries
- To advise strategic consultees and partners on matters of collective interest in the fields of activity listed above.
- To seek agreement on local cross boundary priorities in the fields of activity set out above.
- To ensure that regional policy development, local transport plans and joint working is appropriately linked to the decision making role of the Local Planning Authorities on Local Development Plan documents and related Community Planning.
- To assist in the establishment of detailed arrangements for integration between spatial, infrastructure and public service planning activity in appropriately defined localities, where appropriate linked to the Programme for Government.

Purpose

Specifically the Partnership will:

- share information and analysis on spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure issues at regional and sub regional level;
- share information and analysis on cross administrative boundary spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure issues;
- review progress against any Timetables, Implementation Plans or monitoring agreements—including relevant national and local targets;
- develop and communicate consensus views that seek to inform, assist and influence Government, Government agency and Regional institutions / bodies in their policy formulation and decision making roles;
- inform consideration of economic development, housing, transport, general infrastructure funding requirements by providing partners with advice and support to ensure they have the capacity to engage in the LDP process;
- make links with the DfC /NIHE and inform the commissioning of delivery work that assists partnership working on housing and a shared evidence base;
- make links with the other sub-regional structures that inform the plan development and other process relevant to the spatial development of the region.

Accountability and Working Methods

The Metropolitan Area Spatial Working Group can only operate by consensus or reference to the parent organisations of the participants. Through consensus it is accountable to the constituent District Councils and any other organisations that are agreed to form part of the working group.

The Working Group will report to the respective Councils on its progress in delivery of any agreed objectives.

The Working Group will should be assisted in achieving agreed objectives by the existing delivery bodies / agencies or structures including:

- **Economic and broader development issues**
District Councils and through the other sub-regional partnerships, including where appropriate existing Community Planning structures.
- **Spatial and Infrastructure Planning**
District Councils and District Community Planning Partnerships, supported by the Heads of Planning and Strategic Planning groups to pick up common and cross boundary issues.
- **Housing**
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Organisations
- **Transport/ Accessibility**
DfI through its officer level joint working arrangements on transport. The Working Group should receive reports on and provide input to the Local Transport Plans. There will need to be a strong reporting and delivery link to transport planning studies and projects developed for specific localities to feed into District led work on LDPs.

Working Group Principles

The Working Group is formed as a thematic partnership and committed to working to the general principles and procedures established for Community Planning and other structures:

- Visible commitment and 'ownership' by the various member organisations and individual representatives
- Mutual trust and respect
- Openness and transparency
- Effective communication and accountability
- Removal of barriers to equality of access and opportunity
- Effective decision making
- The working group is a forum for liaison and information sharing and the development of consensus views on matters of mutual interest.
- Consensus views will be used to advise and influence the relevant decision making bodies including:
 - Government and its agencies (including specific Departments)

- Regional agencies particularly Northern Ireland Housing Executive and NIEA
- The Department for Infrastructure as the Transport Authority
- The District CPPs (as the broader locality based co-ordinating partnership)

Other infrastructure and service providing bodies and partnerships that are affected by, and can influence, local economic development, housing, transport, general infrastructure and spatial planning activity

The working group should work closely with other partnerships where there are cross over issues. It will work with CPPs and other locality based partnerships where it is appropriate that a more detailed level of partnership working is undertaken on areas covered by the terms of reference.

Membership/ Chairman and Deputy Chairman

An elected member, or officer if there is no elected member present, from the host authority will chair the meetings to reflect the cyclic nature of the Working Group.

