

Screening Form

1. Is this a	Plan
2. Name of Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service	The Ards and North Down Local Economic Partnership Action Plan
3. Reference	361
4. Category of Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service	New

5. Please provide a description of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

In November 2024, the DfE Minister wrote to local Councils regarding the launch of the Department of the Economy (DfE)'s Sub-Regional Economic Plan. In his correspondence this sets out the strands of delivery for his economic vision:

- a. Creation of new Local Economic Partnerships with dedicated funding;
- b. Enhancing the role of Invest NI at a regional level; and
- c. Realignment of Departmental policies and programmes to help drive local growth

One of the key proposals was the establishment of Local Economic Partnerships within each Council area. Local Economic Partnerships are designed to:

- Bring together local economic stakeholders to reflect local needs and strengths, promoting collaborative working, and drive greater integration between local and central government economic initiatives.
- Identify actions and develop projects that align with the Sub-Regional Economic Plan, Council Economic Development Strategies and Invest NI Business Strategy.
- The LEP is tasked with co-designing an tailored plan which identifies actions and develop projects that align with the Sub-Regional Economic Plan, Invest NI Business Strategy and Council-specific Economic Development Strategies. In order to support these actions, the LEP was created with stakeholders from the public, private, third sector and academia, FE colleges as well as advisors from Invest NI and the Department for the Economy. The LEP reports back to Council and the strategic decisions have to be approved by Council. This resulted in an action plan which was agreed in principle at the December 2025 Council meeting.

6. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The primary aims and objectives of the LEP Action Plan is to address regional imbalance in productivity and wages across Northern Ireland. Each Council area has its own priorities. The funding approved by DfE to Ards and North Down Borough Council amounts to £4.15 million over the course of the programme (2025 to 2028).

The expected increase in productivity and medium wages will be measured through the increase in tradeable businesses, an increase in Invest NI client companies and a growth in median wages and employment rates across the Borough.

The Action Plan has six workstreams and are as follows:

- A: Space to Grow – Workspace and Land
- B: Business Growth & Export Accelerator
- C: Sector Propositions & Investment
- D: Vacancy and dereliction scheme
- F: Enablers & Advocacy
- G. Building Culture & Initiative

The total budget allocated to the Ards and North Down LEP Action Plan is £4.15 million, split as follows: £2.77 million for capital and £1.38 million for resource/revenue.

7. Who initiated or wrote the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service?

The Economic Development Manager and her team

8. Who is responsible for the implementation of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service?

The Economic Growth section

9. Is this policy affected by timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities?

Yes

Equality

1. Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

Yes

1a. If Yes, which Section 75 categories are expected to benefit?

All

1b. How are they expected to benefit?

The council commissioned an Economic Scoping study in ANDBC to assess the Council's progress towards achieving its job creation, productivity and visitors target over the last six years and looked at how the economy is likely to evolve between now and 2030. The study engaged a range of stakeholders including public sector bodies, skills providers, business development organisations, third sector organisations and innovative businesses.

The key findings were as follows:

- Jobs: Employment has increased above the NI average, but productivity and tourism metrics have regressed.
- Productivity: GVA per head has declined relative to the NI average.
- Tourism: Overnight stays and visitor expenditure have decreased in real terms.
- Accommodation: Lack of suitable premises is a major barrier to retaining and attracting high-productivity businesses.

The growth sectors identified were as follows:

1. Creative Technology (e.g. screen industries)
2. Financial, Professional & Regulatory (RegTech)
3. Advanced Manufacturing
4. Health & Wellbeing
5. Agri-Food
6. Cybersecurity

The recommended interventions were as follows:

1. Innovation & Entrepreneurship Support: Mentorship, grants, networking, and digital skills.
2. Commercial Space Facilitation: Development briefs for Council assets, innovation hubs, and flexible office space.
3. Smart Infrastructure & Digital Readiness: Digital twin pilots, spin-out soft landing programmes.
4. Access to Finance: Use of LEP funding, Financial Transactions Capital (FTC), and managed loan funds.
5. Skills Development: Upskilling initiatives, and alignment with industry needs.
6. Partnerships & Joint Ventures: Collaborations with universities, public bodies, and social enterprises

The LEP followed the main recommendations of the report with a view to improve the economic conditions that will lead to better opportunities for all people in our community. The successful implementation of the plan will increase the potential for businesses to grow in the Borough and to create local jobs and better jobs. The plan also supports companies that are likely to generate a higher level of business and to export. This type of company is more likely to influence the productivity rates in ANDBC and to create wealth at local level. At present ANDBC has the worst productivity levels out of all the NI Councils and the LEP Action Plan aims to redress that balance so that all people in the Borough can benefit from economic progress.

2. Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Yes

2a. If yes, are they:

Financial - is it dependent on financial support of Council or another named Body or Organisation?

3. Who are the internal/external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

Staff, Service Users, Other Public Sector organisations, Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions, Potential Visitors, Private sector, Education providers, finance organisations

4. Is this policy associated with any other Council Policy (or Policies)?

Yes

4a. If yes, please state the related Policy (or Policies)

The Action plan has been influenced by the Council's Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2029-2030 (130).

Ards and North Down Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024-2028

The Roadmap to Sustainability (to be revised in 2026)

5. Does this policy affect Internal or External users?

External

Evidence to help inform the Section 75 screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

6. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

All

Religious belief evidence

Data is not collated in relation to individuals (Owners, employees or employers or other stakeholders) religious belief. The Action Plan focused on increasing economic outputs in Ards and North Down and to support the business community regardless of their religious beliefs.

Political opinion evidence

Data is not collated in relation to individuals' (Owners, employees or employers or other stakeholders) political opinions. The Action Plan focused on increasing economic outputs in Ards and North Down and to support the business community regardless of their political opinion.

Racial group evidence

The Economic Development section is regularly involved with the migrant community through different programmes such as Go Succeed and the LMP and, the support proposed in the LEP Action Plan will be provided to all eligible businesses which meet the criteria laid out by each programme. As with other programmes, the Council ensures that participants have the right to work in the UK to participate in our programmes. Under the LEP action Plan, it is likely that participants in any of the initiatives will either be business owners or will be in a senior management position and that their status will have been checked before they become involved with the any of the LEP initiatives.

Age evidence

The economically inactivity rate for AND population aged 16 to 24 was the highest compared to other working age population. In AND, The Young People Not In Employment, Education and Training was around 9.5% (2017-2021).

A worrying trend was observed for claimant among people aged 16 to 24. In 2020, the number of claimants increased in all age groups (16 to 24, 25 to 49 and 50+). However, in AND, the increase in 16-24 age group was the highest (98%) compared to population between 25 to 49 (92%) and population over 50 (56%). Youth unemployment is now one the greatest challenges in NI, and this is reflected in AND. Underachievement in schools means the youths are likely to face a hostile labour market as they don't

have suitable qualifications. Graphs below show the proportion of school pupils who achieved at least 5 GCSE grades A*-C. In 2020, 79.8% of school pupils or leavers achieved at least 5 GCSE's grade A*- C (or equiv.) including GCSE English and Math. However, two DEAs in AND had lower achievement in this category compared to NI average (77.7%), which were Ards Peninsula DEA (74.3%) and Newtownards DEA (74.2%).

The aging population in AND is also a factor which influences the levels of economic inactivity as many retire in AND and stop contributing activity to the economy. The LEP Action plan aims to increase the number of tradeable businesses and median wages and this could have a beneficial effect on the younger population which would have more opportunity to apply and potentially secure jobs locally if more businesses started to trade and expand in the Borough. This could also attract older/retired people to return to work locally and to contribute to the aims and objectives of the LEP Action plan.

Marital status evidence

No impact on marital status

Sexual orientation evidence

No impact on social orientation.

Men and women generally evidence

This GEM Global Report 2025 reveals the need to deconstruct the traditional perception of a single entrepreneur profile (young, male, graduate, etc.), since this is not the reality of contemporary entrepreneurship. Such fixed perceptions can be an obstacle hindering the development of entrepreneurial support for people with different needs and ambitions.

In most economies, men are more likely to start a business than women, and far more likely to own an established business. Furthermore, these gaps typically increase with income level. Out of 51 economies, there are 14 in which male early-stage entrepreneurial activity rates exceed that of females by five percentage points or more. Nine of these are in the high-income group. However, as targeted support programmes for women have increased, so too have women's startup rates.

At the same time, far too many women entrepreneurs are still seen by national experts as not getting equal access to resources essential to entrepreneurial success. Women's relative access to those resources is scored as less than sufficient in almost half of the economies (25 of 51), including 10 from the high-income group.

The LEP Action plan will take action to ensure that women have access to programmes and projects developed. In Ards and North Down, it has been demonstrated that women represent around half of the Go Succeed clients and they are also well represented in other LMP programmes. What is evident though is that women tend to work in lower paid jobs than men as they tend to be the principal carer for children and family.

Disability evidence

Recent data in 2020 showed that there were 15,510 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claimants. There was a steady increase of claimants in AND area. Census 2021 results showed that, on Census Day 2021, around 1 person in 4 (25.3%) in AND had a limited long-term health problem or disability (41,344 people). Looking in more detail, nearly one person in every nine (11.1%) in AND had a long-term health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activities a lot (18,092 people). Over half of the population aged 65 or more (52.5% or 19,018 people) had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. In contrast, this falls to just 8.3% of those aged 0 to 14. The data also shows clear age gradient for the types of limitation. The percentage of people whose day-to-day activities were limited a lot rose from 3.0% of those aged 0 to 14 years to 23.7% of those aged 65 years or more, while the percentage of people whose day-to-day activities were limited a little rose from 5.3% to 28.8%. Data showed that only 44.3% of people with disability were employed in 2021 compared to the 81.3% of average employment rate in AND. People with disability or mental health issues are most likely to be viewed negatively as a work colleague or boss. This stigma and prejudice may impact on the sustainability of employment for people with disabilities.

Dependants evidence

No impact on dependents.

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and

priorities for each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy / decision?

7. Please provide details of different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the categories

Individuals who apply for participation in any of the programmes under this LEP Action Plan will be assessed and considered where the criteria of the programme is met. It has no adverse impact on any categories of section 75.

Requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered and met where reasonable and proportionate to the need identified.

8. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Religious belief?

None

9. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Political opinion?

None

10. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Racial group?

None

11. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Age?

Minor

11a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Age

The improvement of the local economy and the creation of local employment opportunities is likely to attract young inactive individuals back into work. It also goes for retired professionals who may wish to return to work on a part time basis because the jobs are local and do not involve commuting.

12. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Marital status?

None

13. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Sexual orientation?

None

14. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Men and women generally?

Minor

14a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Men and women generally

Although the ratio between men and women working or starting their own business is rather balanced in Ards and North Down, women are less likely to work in managerial positions than men as they are often the main carer for children and/or family. The LEP action plan's objective to create "good jobs" as per the Programme for Government's proposals is likely to attract women and to give them the opportunity to work close to home, which makes it easier to achieve a good work-life balance.

15. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Disability?

Minor

15a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Disability

Keeping in mind that two third of the action plan is based on capital development (purchase of

land/preparation of land/development of new business accommodation), the council would ensure that any development is in line with the legislation in terms of accessibility.

As Disability is not always visible, it is important for the LEP Action Plan to take into consideration that people with neuro-diverse conditions should have equal chances to benefit from the delivery of the action plan. The findings from the national state of the sector survey into neurodiversity at work indicate that HR and line managers across the UK and beyond are working to unlock neurodivergent potential in their businesses. The report provides practical advice grounded in solid evidence and signposting the priorities of supporting aspirations, wellbeing, and making tailored adjustments.

The reality for neurodivergent people in the workplace reveals that, among the working-age population, 80% of individuals without reported disabilities are employed. In stark contrast, this percentage drops to only 37% for neurodivergent individuals. These disparities underscore the need for transforming perceptions and employment practices to fully harness the potential and talent of neurodivergent people.

The importance of neuro-inclusion is rising on HR agendas, a trend expected to accelerate over the next three years. Employers from leading global corporations indicate they will be more open to hiring non-traditional candidates this year and will also hire for skills instead of formal qualifications.
CIPD.

It is also recognised that neuro-diverse individuals can show a high level of creativity and innovation in business and this should be supported. The Council through the LMP's academy for people with Disability supports individuals with a disability to prepare for and gain employment. This academy is considered as a pipeline to further employment and to the work of the LEP. The academy has worked for three years to change the perception of employers and trained them to provide the conditions and the environment in which a person with a disability can contribute efficiently to the economy.

16. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Dependants?

None

17. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? If Yes, provide details. If No, provide reasons.

Religious belief

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Political opinion

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Racial group

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Age

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Marital Status

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Sexual orientation

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Men and women generally

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Disability

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

Dependants

No

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative.

18. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and/or racial group?

None

19. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and/or racial group?

Yes

19a. Please provide your reasons below

Individuals who apply for participation in or for the delivery of any LEP programme or project will be assessed in line with programme/project. Any procurement process or call for application will be in line with Section 75 and will offer opportunities to those individuals who meet the criteria for each initiative. However, the relationship that we have established through Go Succeed and the LMP with support organisations for migrants and ethnic minorities will allow us to promote the work of the LEP.

Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006

20. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability?

Yes

20a. Provide details of opportunities identified

As above, the Council through the LMP's academy for people with Disability supports individuals with a disability to prepare for and gain employment. This academy is considered as a pipeline to further employment and to the work of the LEP. The academy has worked for three years to change the perception of employers and trained them to provide the conditions and the environment in which a person

with a disability can contribute efficiently to the economy. It is likely that people with a disability will gain employment in the medium term with new companies established as a result of the implementation of the Action Plan. This change in mentality that we are witnessing at present through continuous work is likely to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability.

21. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life?

Yes

21a. Provide details of opportunities identified

Some of the capital projects will be developed in partnership with the council and, depending on the contractual/legal arrangements, may remain with the council. People with a disability employed through any of these project would contribute to supporting them in public life.

Additional Considerations

22. Are there any potential impacts of the policy / decision (positive or negative) on people with multiple identities?

No

Monitoring Arrangements

23. Outline what data you could collect in the future to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties

The projects/programme will be monitored and evaluated. It is likely that in the case of Business Support Programme, some personal data will be collected, but only as strictly necessary. The type of data will be dependent on the reporting requirement from DfE which we do not have at present. This will need to be confirmed at a later date when the reporting process is agreed.

25. On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy/decision is

Screened Out - No negative impacts

26. Monitoring Recommendations

None

Conclusion

It is felt that the LEP Action provides an opportunity for all groups under Section 75 across the Borough. It is an instrument designed to improve productivity and increase median wages and ultimately create wealth in the Borough by providing established businesses with the support that they need to grow and become INI clients or export outside their direct area. This type of businesses creates employment which benefits all sections of the population.

The development of business accommodation, the lack of which has been identified in several reports commissioned by the Council, will allow people to work locally without having to commute and put pressure on the environment. It is felt that, in the long term, having business infrastructure within the Borough will attract further investment and drive growth and employment. the environmental impact of the initial build should be counterbalanced by the benefits of working locally or accessing ones place of work in a more sustainable manner. With Council being responsible for the LEP secretariat, it is felt that the personal data and sensitive data will be handled carefully and in an accountable manner, in line with the Council policy and its strict application.

Please upload any supporting documents for review



LEP Action plan draft V2.docx

Email

karine.mcguckin@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Screening Panel Comments

Appendix - Religious Belief

Religious belief (Internal)

* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

	Catholic	Protestant & other Christian	Other religions	Total
Males F/T	33	388	34	425
	8%	84%	8%	100%
Males P/T	*	*	*	8
	25%	63%	13%	100%
Females F/T	58	223	6	287
	20%	78%	2%	100%
Females P/T	12	20	5	35
	32%	54%	14%	100%
Total	105	606	46	757
	14%	80%	6%	100%

Religious belief (External)

The Northern Ireland Census 2021 (NISRA) statistics for the Borough area show the religious group the person belongs to or for people with no current religion their religious group of upbringing. People with no current religion and no religion of upbringing are labelled 'None'.

On Census Day 2021 in Northern Ireland just under one person in five (19.0%) either had 'no religion' (17.4%) or 'religion not stated' (1.6%). Nearly one person in three in Ards and North Down (32.1%) had 'no

religion' or 'religion not stated' On census day 2021 bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 45.7% of the population were either Catholic or brought up as a Catholic, while 43.5% were recorded as 'Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related)'. Again, bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 1.5% of the population are classified as 'other religions' and 9.3% of the population identified that they neither belonged to nor were brought up in a religion. This points to the increasingly secular nature of the population ('None').

	All usual Residents	Catholic	Protestant and other Christian Religions	Other Reglions	None
Ards and North Down	163,659	22,912	111,288	1,636	27,822
Northern Ireland	1,903,178	875,461	818,366	19,031	171,286

	Ards and North Down	Northern Ireland
All Usual residents	163,659	1,903,178
Catholic	18,003	799,334
Presbyterian	47,461	323,540
Church of Ireland	22, 912	228,381
Methodist	6,546	38,063
Other Chrtistian Religions	16,365	133,222
Other Religions	1,636	19,031
No Religion/Not stated	52,370	361,603

Appendix - Political Opinion

Political opinion (External)

Electoral Office data from recent Local Government elections (2023) and Northern Ireland Assembly Elections (2022) detail the political representation on Ards and North Down. Data also shows the turnout to vote. This tends to be lower than the rest of Northern Ireland, suggesting less strong political opinions, however the results show a preference in Ards and North Down for Unionist Parties.

Constituency	Registered Voters	Turnout
North Down	70,176	60%
Strangford	70,755	68%
Northern Ireland	1,373,731	63%

District Electoral Area	Eligible Electorate	Votes Polled
Overall Turnout (2023)		
Ards and North Down Borough Council Area	123,736	57,677
Overall Turnout (2023)		
Northern Ireland	1,380,372	745,400

Party	Local Government Seats Held	Local Government Seats Held	NI Assembly Elections seats held	NI Assembly Elections seats held
	ANDBC	Northern Ireland	North Down and Strangford	Northern Ireland
Alliance	12	67	4	17
Aontù	0	0	0	0
DUP	14	122	3	25
Green	2	5	0	0
Independants	3	19	1	2
People before Profit	0	1	0	1

SDLP	1	39	0	8
Sinn Fèin	0	144	0	27
TUV	0	9	0	1
UUP	8	54	2	9
Other	0	1	0	0

Appendix - Racial Group

Racial group (Internal)

* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

Racial Group	Total	Percentage
White	682	78.66%
Black	*	*
Chinese	*	*
Other	*	*
Did not want to answer	*	*
Left Black	176	20.30%

Racial group (External)

On Census Day 2021, 3.4% of the population, or 65,600 people, belonged to minority ethnic groups. This is around double the 2011 figure (1.8% – 32,400 people) and four times the 2001 figure (0.8% – 14,300 people); Taken together the bulletin reports and tables released today show an increasing diversity from 2011 to 2021 in Northern Ireland's population across statistics on ethnic group, main language, country of birth and passports held. This increasing diversity is evident to a greater or lesser degree across all 11 Local Government Districts.

All Usual Residents	163,660
White	159,892
Irish Traveller	24
Roma	19
Indian	388
Chinese	500
Filipino	308
Pakistani	87
Arab	28
Other Asian	468
Black African	309

Black Other	135
Mixed	1,236
Other ethnicities	266

Main Language	Ards and North Down	Northern Ireland
English	160,385	1,808,019
Other	3,279	95,158

Passports Held	Ards and North Down	Northern Ireland
All Usual Residents	163,659	1,903,178
UK only	109,651	894,493
Ireland Only	13,092	513,858
Uk and Ireland	13,098	95,158
Other Passport(s)	4,909	95,158
No Passport	21,275	304,508

Appendix - Age

Age (Internal)

Age Profile	Female	Female %	Male	Male %
16 to 29	20	6%	26	65%
30 to 39	75	23%	83	19%
40 to 49	105	33%	121	27%
50 to 59	80	25%	176	39%
65+	42	13%	41	9%
Total	322	100%	447	100%

Age (External)

On Census Day 2021 Ards and North down had the largest increase in the number of people aged 65 and over. This rose from 27,692 (17.7%) in 2011 to 36,226 (22.1%) in 2021, demonstrating the scale of population change due to ageing.

Age Profile	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
0 to 14	361,602	27,822
15 to 39	589,983	44,187
40 to 64	609,015	55,644
65+	323,539	36,226
Total	1,903,173	163,659

Appendix - Marital Status

Marital Status (Internal)

* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

Marital Status	Total	Percentage
Single	180	20.76%
Married	405	46.71%
Divorced	35	4.04%
Co Habiting	14	1.61%
Separated	25	2.88%
Civil Partnership	*	*
Left Blank	207	23.88%

Marital Status (External)

Statistics classifies people aged 16 and over according to their legal marital or civil partnership status on Census Day 21 March 2021. The law in relation to marriage and civil partnership changed in the ten years to 2021. A summary of the changes in Northern Ireland is given below:

- civil partnership for opposite-sex couples became legal in late 2019;
- marriage for same-sex couples became legal in 2020; and
- in late 2020 a couple in a civil partnership could convert their status from civil partnership to marriage.

The rise in the 'single' population and the fall in the 'married' population here is in line with results from recent censuses in England and Wales. These figures mirror changes in society and specifically in personal relationships that has been witnessed over the last 50 years. Ards & North Down LGD, which has the oldest demographic profile of all 11 LGDs, has the highest percentage of adults who were widowed, at 8%.

Marital Status	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
Single	575,966	41,540
Married or in Civil Partnership	682,065	68,340
Separated, Divorced or Formally in a Civil Partnership	151,570	13,400
Widowed or Surviving partner from a Civil Partnership	97,004	10,720

Appendix - Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation

Statistics show that 2.1% (31,600) of NI population aged 16 and over identified as 'lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+)' and 90.0% (1,363,900) identified as 'straight or heterosexual'. More urban LGDs have a higher percentage of people who identified as LGB+. Almost 8% of our population aged 16 and over (119,300) either ticked 'prefer not to say' or chose not to answer the question. Taken together, these are labelled 'No sexual orientation stated' in these statistics.

8.8% percent of people who identified as LGB+ in Northern Ireland live in the Ards and North Down Borough, Statistics also show that 800 Households in the Borough are living in a same sex couple relationship.

Living in households by relationship	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
Living in a Same Sex Couple	9,600	800
Not Living as a Couple	694,600	53,500
	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
All usual Residents (over 16)	1,515,700	134,000
Straight or Hetrosexual	1,364,130	121,940
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or other Sexual orientation	30,314	2,680
No sexual orientation stated	121,256	9,380

Appendix - Men and Women Generally

Men and women generally (Internal)

Male	Female	Total
511	356	867
58.94%	41.06%	100%

Men and women generally (External)

The Northern Ireland usually resident population increased by 5.1% (92,300) from 2011 to 2021. The Census 2021 population is recorded at 1,903,175 people up from 1,810,863 people in 2011. Ards & North Down had an increase of population from 2011 of 7,000, which is 4.5%.

The census day population comprised of 967,000 females and 936,100 males. Statistics show that for every 100 females in Ards and North Down Borough there were 94.9 males.

Statistics show that 54% of the Borough are employed 2% are Unemployed and 43% are Economically inactive. Of those employed, 37% were in the Public administration, education and health Industry and 2% were in the Agriculture, energy and water industry.

62% of employed people travelled to work in a car or van and 34% travelled 5km-20km to their place of work.

There were 70,445 households recorded in Ards and North Down 4,400, 5.9% were unoccupied at the time of the survey.

The average household size in sits at 2.30 (2.44 in NI). 31% are single occupancy and 6% had more than 6 people living in the property.

72% of the Borough owns their own property, this has decreased by 2% from 2011 where 13% are Social rented and increase of 2% increase in 2011.

LGD	Male	Female

Northern Ireland	932,554	970,618
Ards and North Down	80,192	83,466

Appendix - Disability

Disability (External)

A self-assessment of whether a person has a long-term health problem or disability that limits daily activities and which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. It includes problems that are due to old age. The 2021 Census (NIRSA) demonstrates an increase of 15% or more in the percentage of people who reported a long-term health problem or disability which limited day-to-day activities. 41,300 or 25.3% of people in Ards and North Down had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Ards & North Down experienced an increase of 31.4% from 2011. These changes are in part a reflection of the Boroughs ageing population.

The following statistics show a breakdown in residents in Northern Ireland and Ards and North Down borough with a Disability that is expected to last 12 months or more.

The figures show that 7.2 per cent of the Borough have deafness or partial hearing loss, 68% being over the age of 65. 2% have blindness or partial sight loss, 11% of those people are aged 0-39 years. 1.6 % have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair, in comparison to Northern Ireland statics this means that 9.3% of all those who have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair reside in the Borough.

0.8% have an intellectual or learning disability including dyslexia and Downs Syndrome. 1.6% have Autism or Asperger syndrome, 49% are between 0-14 years whilst 40% are aged 15- 39 year. 8.1 % have an emotional, psychological or mental health condition, includes depression and schizophrenia, this is highest in the age ranges of 40 – 64 years (47%). 2% have frequent periods of confusion or memory loss, including Dementia, this is most prevalent with ages 65+. 10% of residents have another condition, for example Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes, again this is most prevalent in age 65+. Taken together these results show that policy making must consider Ards and north Down aging population and health and disability issues as well as recognition for those that provide unpaid care throughout the Borough.

LGD	All usual residents	Activites Not Limited	Limited a little	Limited a lot
Northern Ireland	1,903,178	1,446,415	247,413	209,349
Ards and North Down	163,659	122,744	22,912	18,002

Long term Health Conditions	None	1	2	3 or More
Northern Ireland	1,237,065	342,572	152,254	171,286
Ards and North Down	101,468	32,731	14,729	14,729
Disability Breakdown Age range (0 - 65+)	Ards and North Down		Northern Ireland	
Deafness or Partial Hearing loss	11,802		109,457	
Blindness or Partial Sightloss	3,214		33,961	

Mobility or dexterity difficulty that required the use of a wheelchair	2,641		28,138	
Intellectual or learning disability include dyslexia and Downs Syndrome	1,469		16,923	
Autism or Asperger Syndrome	2,628		35,367	
Emotional, psychological or mental health condition inc depression and schizophrenia	13,275		165,127	
Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss inc Dementia	3,432		37,789	
Other conditions E.g Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes	167,752		16,636	

Appendix - Dependants

Dependants (External)

For the Purposes of S75 a dependant can be classed as Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.

In Census 2021 one person in eight of NI population aged 5 or more (or 222,200 people) noted that they provided unpaid care. One important point to note in Policy making is that 2,600 children aged 5 to 14 in Northern Ireland provide unpaid care.

Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage of people who provide unpaid care throughout Northern Ireland , 13.7% estimated at 30,414 residents. 'Unpaid care' covers looking after, giving help or support to anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age

A dependent child is a person aged 0 to 15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s). 'No dependent children' includes households with no children and households where all children are non-dependent.

In Ards and North Down there were 27,822 Children (defined as those aged 0 to 14). Children make up 19.2% of the Northern Ireland population. This percentage varies across the Local Government Districts and is lowest in Ards and North Down where the proportion is 17.0%.

According to Birth statistics on NISRA Ards and North Down recorded 2,854 births between 2020 and 2022 , giving an indication of the numbers using buggies or prams in use.

	Dependent children in household: None	Dependent children in household: one	Dependent children in household: Two	Dependent children in household: Three
Northern Ireland	71%	11%	11%	6%

Ards and North Down	74%	11%	11%	4%
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24. Does this policy require an Equality Impact Assessment?

No

1. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. E.g

Delivery of the Local Economic Partnership Action Plan 2025-2028

2. What definition of 'rural' is the Plan using in respect of Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition)

Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

3. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes

3a. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The Action plan is inclusive and will target the Borough as a whole. In terms of capital development, it is likely to target Bangor, Newtownards and Portaferry. The capital developments can only happen on land that has been designated for industry. In terms of revenue expenditure, the business support programmes will be open to all companies across the Borough. This will result in the inclusion of all part of the borough in the delivery of the plan.

3b. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

As above, the capital element of the action plan has its limitations but plans are considered to develop a projects in the Ards Peninsula.

The Revenue expenditure part of the plan will not impact on people in rural areas differently as all businesses in the Borough may be able to apply for support, subject to eligibility criteria being met.

3c. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on

Rural Business

Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas

Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes

Deprivation levels can be found at Home Page | NI Area Statistics | NISRA

4a. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

4b. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

There is a requirement from the Department for the Economy to have a third sector representative on the LEP. This representative is the CEO of the County Down Rural Community Network which provides support and guidance with rural issues and concerns. There are also five elected members on the LEP representing both urban and rural areas of the Borough. The LEP held a workshop in September 2025 in order to identify the main issues the the funding could address. It was identified then that Business Accommodations were needed in the more rural parts of the Borough. This was translated in an action that is currently in the action plan agreed in December 25 by Council.

4c. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

The Local Economic Partnership is made up of representatives from all sectors and interests and one of the full members of the Partnership represents the County Down Rural Community Network. As such, this member advises of issues pertinent to the rural areas of the Ards and North Down area and the barriers faced by potential participants so that it can be taken into consideration in the design and content of the programmes proposed by the Action Plan 25-28.

Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

5. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the Social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

- Lack of Business Accommodation
- Travel to work distance - Commuting
- Road infrastructure
- Businesses leaving the rural area as they have no space to grow

Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

6. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes

6a. Please explain how the development, adopting, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service been influenced by the rural needs identified.

Provision has been made to investigate the development of a site in the Ards Peninsula which could be developed to create business hubs for small companies.

The other Business Support programme will be promoted to all eligible business across the Borough.

Documenting and Recording

7. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and

compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

relevant information complied.

Sustainability is a holistic approach that considers ecological, social and economic dimensions, recognising that all must be considered together to find lasting prosperity.

Sustainable development is all about meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Depending on your answer your answer may be a 'positive' impact or a 'negative' impact. Specific guidance at each question.

There may be 'no impact'.

If you are not sure complete as 'don't know'

1. What impact will the proposal have on the local community including the ability of people to meet their essential needs?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Transport - Is the activity accessible to everyone via public transport or active travel, in a safe and sustainable way?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive
<p>Public Placemaking, Community & Culture - Is the activity impacting on people's sense of place and community by being included and connected to the area?</p> <p>Is the activity impacting on our cultural offering, helping citizens, visitors and young people become acquainted with art and culture?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Transport	All activities should be accessible by public transport or, the plan includes provision to develop local infrastructure which will limit the need to travel
Public Placemaking, Community & Culture	People who become employed locally as a result of the action plan projects are likely to feel more included in the community

2. What impact will the proposals have on local, sustainable food supply chains?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Food - If this activity involves either the direct or indirect purchase of food or catering services will there be a negative impact on a sustainable food system?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Food systems currently account for 21-37% of total global greenhouse gases and are a primary cause of environmental degradation and significantly contribute to socio-economic and health inequalities. This can be mitigated by specifying sustainable food and catering services, fresh seasonal food of a high nutritional value produced through low environmental impact farming methods and high standards of animal welfare.</p>	Don't know

3. What impact will the proposals have on diversity and equality of opportunity?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Equal opportunity - Does the activity have a positive or negative impact on inclusivity and discrimination?</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
<p>Equal opportunity</p>	<p>The Action Plan is fully inclusive as demonstrated in previous sections and other related programmes will ensure that the Action Plan offers opportunities to all.</p>

4. What impact will the proposals have on prosperity, social value and fair trade?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Decent jobs and income - Are local employment opportunities being created removed 'or removed'? Will there be any volunteering opportunities?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Will the financial benefits help raise local income levels and tackle poverty and derivations of poverty such as food and fuel poverty?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive
<p>Social Value - Will the activity lead to the creation of works or services? Are there opportunities to support apprenticeships or training opportunities to combat social exclusion? Are there any opportunities to work with organisations with an environmental or social mission (e.g., from the VCSE sector)?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive
<p>Human and labour rights - Will there be provisions to ensure workers up the supply chain have their human and labour rights respected?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Products at high risk of the use of child labour and contravention of human and labour rights include electronic equipment, textiles, agricultural commodities and construction materials.</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Decent jobs and income	The LEP Action plan aims to increase job creation and to concentrate on "good jobs" as per the objectives of the programme for Government. It also aims to increase the median wages for local people.
Financial benefits	The Plan aims to result in the increase of median wages. The tendering processes for capital work will stipulate that delivery agent must pay the living wage to their employees as agreed by Council.
Social value	The tendering process for capital projects will have a social value clause in them to ensure that we can measure the social impact of these projects at local level and beyond
Human and labour rights	The Council engages with local reputable employers to ensure that employees rights are respected. This form parts of the tendering process which includes the modern slavery act.

5. What impact will the proposals have on greenhouse gas emissions, including energy and transport?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Greenhouse Gas Emmissions - Will this activity have a positive or negative impact on greenhouse gases (most commonly caused by fossil fuel burning or deforestation)?</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Greenhouse gases include CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs or SF6.</p> <p>The most common sources include consumption of brown (non-renewable) electricity, burning of coal, oil, petrol, diesel, natural gas, emissions from landfill sites, and the destruction of natural carbon sinks such as peat bogs, woodlands, forests, grasslands, freshwater lakes, and wetlands.</p>	<p>Don't know</p>
<p>Energy - Will the activity reduce energy demand through energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Will energy come from renewable energy sources e.g., solar, wind etc.?</p> <p>Will buildings be designed and constructed to high energy and environmental standards?</p>	<p>Don't know</p>
<p>Transport - Will the activity be accessible to everyone via active travel (Bike/walking) or public transport? Does the proposal help to reduce non-essential travel and individual car use?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	<p>Positive</p>
<p>Embodied carbon - Will the activity use materials from 'heavy industries' such as cement, concrete, iron and steel, or require international transportation of materials using aviation or shipping?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p>	<p>Negative</p>

Comments

	Comments
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	The Capital element of the LEP Action plan will align with the commitments of the Roadmap to Sustainability to be revised by Council in 2026.
Energy	The capital element of the action plan involves the preparation/purchase/ development of sites for business accommodation. All new accommodations' specifications will be designed to maximise energy efficiency and to use low carbon technology.
Transport	One of the sites identified for potential development is situated beside the green way which allows for local people to use active travel. As far as the revenue expenditure projects are concerned, public and sustainable transport is available
Embodied carbon	The development/renovation/retrofitting of the capital projects are likely to use material from the heavy industry for structural integrity, however, any acceptable plan would need to include sustainable and renewable materials as part of the design.

Mitigation

	Mitigation
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	One of the key actions of the roadmap to Sustainability is to set emission targets for projects led by Council. The ToR for developments will have to be agreed by Council.
Energy	One of the key actions of the Roadmap to Sustainability is to put in place mitigation/.carbon emission reduction measures. This will form part of the Terms of Reference for each capital project.
Transport	as above
Embodied carbon	as above

6. What impact will the proposals have on waste generation or how waste is managed?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Waste generation - Will this activity lead to the production of waste?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Have you considered how to reduce waste through demand management and re-use strategies which support the circular economy?</p>	<p>Negative</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Waste Management - Is waste going to be managed in a responsible, sustainable way?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Will waste be monitored? What recycling provisions are there? Will any waste be sent to landfill?</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Waste generation	This only applies to capital projects. The preparation of sites may involve demolition. It is intended to use the rubble as core material for further construction so that waste is recycled. The waste produced by the finished buildings will be selected and in line with the Council's waste management target and its commitment.
Waste management	The waste produced will be managed in line with the Council's strategy which is to promote the reduction of waster produced as well as encouraging an increase in the recycling of wastes. All councils in NI are scored on this by Climate Emergency UK each year to monitor progress towards net zero.

Mitigation

	Mitigation
Waste generation	It is intended to use the rubble as core material for further construction so that waste is recycled. The waste produced by the finished buildings will be selected and in line with the Council's waste management target and its commitment to net zero
Waste managemen	The waste produced will be managed in line with the Council's strategy which is to promote the reduction of waster produced as well as encouraging an increase in the recycling of wastes. All councils in NI are scored on this by Climate Emergency UK each year to monitor progress towards net zero.

7. What impact will the proposals have on the direct consumption of natural resources, including materials, minerals and fresh water?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Materials - Will this activity lead to the consumption of raw materials? (Raw materials include steel, oil, corn, grain, gasoline, wood / forest resources, plastic, natural gas, and coal).</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Can materials be swapped or reduced, to minimize pressure on natural resources and reduce environmental impact?</p>	Negative
<p>Will lifecycle costing exercises be used in procurement (e.g., if purchasing vehicles, energy-intensive equipment or major capital projects) in order to minimise the consumption of natural resources and achieve value for money</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</p>	Positive
<p>Fresh water - Will this activity increase pressure on freshwater resources through direct water consumption?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	Negative
<p>Will the activity impact on the public's ability to access a clean and safe water supply?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Unsustainable water consumption includes use of mains water or other freshwater supplied without water efficiency or recycling measures.</p>	No Impact

Comments

	Comments
Materials	For capital projects, it is likely that raw material will be used for structural integrity. The ToR will favour locally sourced raw material rather than imports.
Lifecycle costing exercises	This can be build into the procurement of the projects

	Comments
Fresh water	It is likely that the consumption of fresh water will be higher when the finished buildings are occupied.
Accessing clean and safe water	

Mitigation

	Mitigation
Materials	The Council, through its Roadmap to Sustainability is committed to the sustainable development of the Council's infrastructure and shared spaces. It will ensure that any capital development follows these commitments.
Lifecycle costing exercises	This will be build into the procurement process to ensure that natural resources are preserved as much as possible.
Fresh water	The development of any capital project will be done in partnership with Dfl to ensure that the water supply is appropriate, sustainable and safe. It is likely that the business accommodation created will be kitted with sustainable water use systems and the final design will inform how much water these projects are likely to use. It is unknown at this stage. ToRs will dictate water saving equipment to be used.
Accessing clean and safe water	NI Water will not allow connection without fail safe valves to prevent backflow.

8. What impact will the proposals have on local resilience to the adverse effects of climate change and severe weather events, including drought, landslips, flooding and sites designated as being at risk of flooding or sea level rise?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Adverse Weather and Climate Impacts - Will buildings, infrastructure, or natural assets be at risk to the adverse effects of climate change and extreme weather?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>For Northern Ireland, climate change is causing hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters with more extreme weather and rising sea levels.</p> <p>A precautionary approach is advised for all planning and construction decisions, taking into account the latest UK Climate Change Projections and making sure that development is not permitted on flood plains and / or land at risk of flooding under future climate scenarios.</p> <p>Avoid activities that may be vulnerable to overheating or flood risk.</p> <p>New assets (e.g. landscaping, buildings etc.) should be future proofed, ensuring all investments are resilient to current and future climate conditions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Don't know</p>

Comments

	Comments
<p>Adverse Weather and Climate Impacts</p>	<p>As the capital aspects of the action plan are currently only at discussion stage, no site has been formally agreed for redevelopment or construction. All new buildings would need to go through a development brief that would need to be agreed by Council and which would therefore be in line with its commitments to sustainability.</p>

9. What impact will the proposals have on the local environment (e.g., air/water/soil pollution, land conversion, visual impacts, traffic, noise, vibration, odour, dust, particulates, smoke), heritage (including designated heritage, archaeology sites or listed buildings) and wildlife (including protected sites and species)?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Air pollution - Will the activity produce air pollutants?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Air pollutants include: Particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5); Ozone (O3) Nitrogen dioxide (NO2); Carbon Monoxide (CO); Sulphur Dioxide (SO2).</p> <p>The most common causes of air pollution are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel combustion from motor vehicles (e.g. cars and heavy-duty vehicles) • Heat and power generation (e.g. oil and coal power plants and boilers) • Industrial facilities (e.g. manufacturing factories, mines, and oil refineries) • Municipal and agricultural waste sites and waste incineration/burning. 	<p>Negative</p>
<p>Ozone layer depletion - Will this activity produce ozone depleting substances (fluorinated gases)?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) • perfluorocarbons (PFCs) • sulphur hexafluoride (SF6) <p>For example through the use of refrigeration and air conditioning units.</p>	<p>Don't know</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Water/soil pollution - Will this activity involve any construction work, street works or road deliveries of construction materials or other goods?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Soil and water pollution is caused from damaging rainwater run-off arising from road surface treatments, tyre abrasion, fuels and lubricants.</p> <p>Procurement and contractual mechanisms can be used to ensure that building and civil engineering contractors adhere take steps to ensure pollution is prevented from occurring or from dispersing to other areas. Contractors can minimise the use of all substances that could cause pollution and failing that, implement and communicate procedures to ensure the correct disposal (or release) of substances that could cause pollution.</p>	<p>Negative</p>
<p>Chemical pollution - Will there be any use of toxic chemicals including pesticides, paint or cleaning products?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	<p>Negative</p>
<p>Will there be any excess fertiliser use that could result in nitrogen or phosphorus runoff?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Noise pollution - Is the activity likely to create a noise nuisance?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Noise pollution can have detrimental effects on human health, amenity, productivity and the natural environment.</p> <p>Eliminating or reducing excessive noise is a legal responsibility and helps to limit the disturbance of residents and businesses, caused by activities and operations.</p>	<p>Negative</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Land conversion - Will this activity result in the reduction in the area of forested land, directly or indirectly?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Deforestation usually arises from the clearing of land for development, agriculture, or logging for paper, wood, or minerals.</p>	No Impact
<p>Built Heritage - Will this activity impact on designated heritage sites such as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Archaeology Site, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site or Registered Park and Garden?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	No Impact
<p>Natural Heritage and Biodiversity - Will this activity result in any displacement or loss of biodiversity, overfishing or affect protected or designated sites (e.g. ASSIs, SPAs etc).</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Changes in land use exert the most significant effect on biodiversity. These changes include the conversion of natural ecosystems into agriculture or into urban areas; changes in frequency, duration or magnitude of wildfires and similar disturbances; and the introduction of new species into land and freshwater environments.</p>	No Impact

Comments

	Comments
Air pollution	Any new building under this plan will not involve heavy manufacturing. The plan intends to facilitate the development of light industrial units or business accommodation only.
Ozone layer depletion	
Water/soil pollution	The development of new business accommodation will involve construction work and delivery of goods and materials
Chemical pollution	The development of new buildings will involve the use of paint and cleaning products
Excess fertiliser use	

	Comments
Noise pollution	It is likely that noise will be generated during the development phase of the capital projects
Land conversion	
Built Heritage	
Natural Heritage and Biodiversity	

Mitigation

	Mitigation
Air pollution	It is likely that the creation of local business accommodation will actually decrease air pollution as people will not have to commute to Belfast every day if they can work locally.
Ozone layer depletion	
Water/soil pollution	Prevention measures will be build into the procurement process to prevent water and soil pollution. The capital development specifications ToR will dictate that there is adequate flood resilience and adaptation measures included in the building to incorporate future weather changes.
Chemical pollution	Specifications can be built in the procurement process to ensure that the type of products used are environmentally friendly. BREAAAM documents will specify the range of products which are environmentally safe to use.
Excess fertiliser use	
Noise pollution	As above, the building work may create increased noise levels for a limited period of time, but the finished buildings will be business accommodations, not heavy manufacturing. They are unlikely to increase noise pollution. Time restrictions may be imposed by Environmental Health depending of the operation type run by the businesses.
Land conversion	
Built Heritage	
Natural Heritage and Biodiversity	

10 What impact will the proposals have on ensuring peace, justice, public participation and partnership working for sustainable development?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Peace - Will this activity have a negative or positive impact on community safety, crime or anti-social behaviour?	Positive

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Justice - Are there safeguards in place to prevent against bribery and corruption?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</p> <p>Decision making should be open and transparent with clear governance and accountability arrangements.</p>	Positive
<p>Political voice - Are citizens involved and do they have a role in deciding what happens and how it gets implemented?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</p>	Positive
<p>Partnerships - Will this activity involve working with others either locally or at a national level to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Peace	A wealthier community is likely to influence the level of education and the achievements of future generations which will result in committed citizens who are less likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour.
Justice	The LEP is made up of a series of respected stakeholders and the secretariat is the responsibility of the Council. Council officers ensure that the activities of the LEP are compliant and it will report directly to the Department for the Economy and be audited yearly.
Political voice	The scoping study carried out in 2025 with a wide variety of stakeholders, saw the LEP as a positive step towards making the Borough a more productive and wealthy place. Any capital project forming part of the action plan would need to go to consultation with the community before the planning application can be approved.
Partnerships	The LEP has mandatory partners but can invite experts in their field to advise on particular aspects of a project. As the plan evolves, the LEP will decide if such contribution could enhance the proposed projects.

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is

Screened Out - Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)

Mitigating Actions

At this stage, the proposals on the site locations and what work will be conducted has not been firmed up. It is an evolving action plan.

Once the location of the sites have been confirmed and what work the Council proposes to do will dictate what measures need to be taken to ensure that it adheres to its environmental and sustainability commitments.

1. Is Data Protection relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes

2. Is the introduction or change of this policy or processing activity likely to result in a high risk to individuals' interests, including physical, material or non-material damage?

No

3. Explain broadly what the policy/strategy/plan or public service aims to achieve and what type of processing it involves.

The LEP Action plan has two main streams. One revenue stream which represents about a third of the funding and a capital stream which represents two third.

The revenue streams will take the form of Business Support programmes such as mentoring, support for trade shows and missions, support to change behaviour to ensure that the next generation develops an entrepreneurial mind early. This part of the programme will require applicants to provide personal and business information. The data will allow us to monitor postcodes, gender, whether the person declares themselves as having a disability, business registration number for subsidy control, and sensitive business information for the business mentors to be able to take their business to the next level.

As far as capital expenditure is concerned, the data will be different in that it will form part of a procurement process or a legal contract. All of this will have to be protected and processed in line with the Council's data protection policy.

4. Describe the nature of the processing

We will collect the information through application forms through the delivery agent or directly if we manage the project. If the delivery agent acts on the Council's behalf, a DSA will be produced so that the information is passed on to us. Most of the data is kept in digital format and all hard copies are kept securely in offices which are locked at night and can only be accessed by staff (Signal). All personal data sent by email is encrypted and this part of the data sharing agreement which is signed by all parties. The data will be shared with the funding body with whom we have a DSA and/or a MOU/LoO (DfE and INI)

5. Describe the context of the processing

The data held belongs to programme participants and their consent will be sought to share their information with the Delivery Agent, the LEP/Council and potentially the DfE/INI if needed and agreed. Any other consent for promotional purposes is sought separately through a consent form to be duly signed by the participant. They can withdraw their consent if they do not wish to be part of the initiatives anymore. The policy applied is that of the Council. It is very unlikely that the LEP action plan will involve children (apart from one project which will focus on early entrepreneurship and will be delivered externally). It is also unlikely that the Action Plan will include vulnerable groups. If it does when it evolves, the safeguarding policy will be applied.

6. Describe the purposes of the processing.

The processing aims to monitor the contracts and to report back to the Department for the Economy the progress of the LEP' action plan. However, most of the data will be anonymised unless we ask specific participants for their consent to promote one of the programmes.

7. Consultation

The LEP secretariat will ask all Delivery Agents to provide regular reports, including a final report on the

programmes they have run. This is necessary for reporting purposes to the DfE. As such, it is intended to survey the participants to assess the level of satisfaction with the programmes. This is within the scope of the data sharing agreement used by the Council.

Again, this information will be anonymised when reported to DfE.

8. Necessity and Proportionality

Only the minimum personal information is required so that we can assess the impact of the programme and meet our obligations with the DfE. IT is anticipated that we will need to report on the number of participants, their gender (to assess women participation in the programmes). This is only done for reporting and evaluation purposes and all information will be presented to the Local Economic Partnership and the Council, or made public through promotion in an anonymised format.

9. Identify and assess risk

	Describe the source of risk and nature of potential impact on individuals. Include associated compliance and corporate risks as necessary.	Likelihood of harm	Severity of harm	Overall risk
Details	emails/correspondence/ data breach	Possible	Significant	Medium

10. Identify measures to reduce risk

	Risk	Options to reduce to eliminate risk	Effect on risk	Residual risk	Measure approved
Details	data breach	Training and adherence to policy	Reduced	Low	Yes

Data Protection Officer Comments