Your future city
The Belfast Agenda
A draft for consultation
2,000 people shared their dream for a future Belfast - we want to know what you think
What is the Belfast Agenda?

It is Belfast’s first community plan, built by a partnership of organisations and led by Belfast City Council. It represents our joint commitment to the city and its long-term success.

It is our shared agreement to work better together for the good of everyone who lives here.

It is an ambitious and inclusive vision for the future with a set of stretch goals that will create a better quality of life for all.

There is strong agreement and commitment across all political parties in Belfast City Council to deliver the Belfast Agenda.

It sets out a leadership framework that will support inclusive economic growth and improved services for residents and businesses. We want sustainable success for the city and we want to ensure this success can reach everyone who lives here.

The Belfast Agenda identifies the work that we all need to focus on if we are to unleash the energy and ability that exists in our people and communities.

Its content is shaped by a substantial evidence base; by conversations with people across the city about the type of place they want Belfast to be and by a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges that we face.

It is an agenda for everyone - for all parts of Belfast and our diverse and talented communities as well as for the many people beyond our boundaries who depend on the city’s success for work.

It is still developing and over the coming months we want as many people as possible to tell us what they think about the direction being set so we can improve it and ensure that our resurgent and dynamic city goes from strength to strength. It provides a framework within which we can create more detailed action plans using an outcomes-based approach, informed by a detailed, shared evidence base.

We, the Party Group Leaders of Belfast City Council, commit ourselves to the collaborative leadership needed to drive and deliver this vision for Belfast. We want to thank our partners and people across Belfast who have worked with us to bring it to this point. We look forward to working with all of you to re-imagine our Belfast.
The Belfast opportunity

A new vision for Belfast in 2035
Our focus for the next four years

Growing the economy

Living here

City development

Working and learning

How we developed the Belfast Agenda

Making it happen

The community planning partners
The Belfast opportunity

Introduction from Belfast’s Community Planning partners

Imagine yourself in 2035 - what do you want to achieve? What are your hopes for you and your family? What kind of Belfast do you want to live in? Now think - what might help achieve this and what might get in the way?

Over the last two years we’ve been asking people what they want in a future city. More than 2,000 people told us what they thought. They said they wanted a city where everyone has a good start in life, a good education and a good job - where everyone has safe, good quality places to live, work and play, where people get on with each other.

They talked about Belfast as a place where we take care of each other, that celebrated youth and age and diversity, and made sure no-one was left behind.

Belfast should have a vibrant cultural life and be a place that inspires innovation. A well connected place in which you can move around easily. People wanted Belfast to be outward-looking and confident on the world stage, competitive and forward-looking. They talked about the beauty of the city, its natural and built environment and the need to take care of the place now and for future generations.

Our conversations across the city confirmed that Belfast is already a place of energy, optimism and ambition.

Our city has a young and increasingly diverse population and is attracting people from across the world who are bringing new skills and vibrancy to our communities.

People want to come here to experience our city - tourism is growing year on year. Our success in economic growth areas such as tourism is making a vital contribution to the wider Northern Ireland economy. We are a major employer of people living in and outside the city. Our higher and further education institutions and industries are important contributors to research and development, skills and trade. We have real talent and creativity and are not shy of hard work. Such energy is a magnet for global companies who are attracted by, amongst other things, our talent and next generation digital connectivity.

We have a unique history of pioneering voluntary and community action with strongly embedded social capital across many of our communities.

The city has been transformed through physical and cultural regeneration. In recent years over £2 billion has been invested in cultural facilities, retail, leisure and housing. Our revitalised city centre, with its top class bars, restaurants and hotels, is evidence of the many positive changes that have already taken place.

But there are also things that are getting in the way of connecting people to this success - health, educational and economic inequalities are too wide and, while certain people and parts of the city have benefited from economic growth, many others remain disconnected from wider success, unable to reach their potential because they don’t have the skills or have not had the right life opportunities.

Division and segregation continue to put a brake on the potential of many people and communities. We have a highly qualified and highly skilled population but we also need to address educational inequalities that leave too many people without formal qualifications. Unemployment within the city ranges from 1 per cent to 16 per cent across wards with people facing multiple barriers to opportunity.

And we need to ensure that our urban infrastructure is renewed so that it meets the demands of a 21st century economy, including the need for effective, sustainable transport solutions.

The Belfast Agenda is about re-imagining our city, building upon our strong foundations - it is about creating opportunity and removing the barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their potential.

The city is resurgent and re-energised. Now is our time - and every one of us needs to ensure that we can connect as many people as possible to Belfast’s opportunities.
Our shared values

Our agenda has been influenced by a set of shared values that have shaped its design and will inform its delivery.

- **A focus on outcomes for people**
- **Partnerships for collaborative gain**
- **Equality and Good Relations**
- **Inclusiveness, care and compassion**
- **Sustainable development and respect for our environment**
- **Resilience for the future**
- **Innovative, people-centred design and delivery**
- **Decisions driven by evidence**

**Belfast’s statutory community planning partners**

- Belfast City Council
- Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Education Authority
- Health and Social Care Board
- Invest NI
- Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Public Health Agency
- South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
- Tourism NI
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- Libraries NI
- Sport NI
A new vision for Belfast in 2035

Belfast will be a city re-imagined. A great place to live for everyone. It will energise and drive a successful economy where everyone can reach their potential. Beautiful, well connected and culturally vibrant, it will be a city shared and loved by its people and admired around the world. It will be a producer of and magnet for talent, investment, innovation and creativity - a compassionate place where people create value and are valued.
We’ve tried to capture what people across Belfast have told us they want in the city for the future. We want you to tell us if we’ve got this right.
Our outcomes

The five things people want by 2035

Belfast will be a city...

where everyone benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy

where everyone fulfils their potential

that is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all

that is vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly

where everyone experiences good health and wellbeing

Vision for 2035
To develop our vision for 2035, we engaged with local people at meetings and through surveys and social media. We called this the Belfast Conversation.

We’ve captured what people told us in five statements that describe a better future. We called these our outcomes - each one reflects a different aspect of the kind of life people want.

1. Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
   By 2035, Belfast will have a diverse and growing economy and a bigger and more competitive business base, capable of attracting increased visitors and investment. It will provide high levels of employment, supported by a skilled workforce and the city will create wealth that can be enjoyed by all.

2. Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all
   By 2035, Belfast will be a place where everyone will continue to feel welcome and safe and will be treated fairly with equality and respect in a city that values diversity and encourages civic participation.

3. Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential
   By 2035, everyone will be supported and enabled to reach their full potential to succeed and make a positive contribution to city life. Everyone will have access to information, education, training and lifelong learning and can access jobs and opportunities to actively participate in all areas of life.

4. Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
   By 2035, everyone will live a healthy lifestyle and will experience the best possible physical health and emotional wellbeing. Health inequalities will be reduced and those who suffer from poor health will receive the care and support they need in a compassionate city.

5. Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city
   By 2035, everyone will enjoy attractive, well-serviced, clean neighbourhoods and a thriving city centre equipped with a range of facilities, activities and things to do. It will be a city that will encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport, as well as recycling waste and improving energy efficiency. It will be a city where everyone will be able to enjoy the natural and built beauty of Belfast, linked to its hills, parks, river, lough, fine buildings and public space.

We recognise that these outcomes are ambitious and delivering them will require long-term commitment. Many of the issues we need to address are complex, however, these shared outcomes have a strong power to bring partners together and to fire the ambitions of our people. We believe they will provide the energy and enthusiasm to drive the Agenda forward.

Tracking our outcomes
We need a way of checking progress towards our outcomes, so we have chosen a number of indicators - called population indicators to help us keep on track. Many of these are also in the NI Executive’s new Programme for Government meaning that we will be able to work with partners in the Executive to make progress to achieve better outcomes for local people. See page 44 for more details.
Our ambition for growth and opportunity

There are many things that we will need to do to make this vision a reality. Success will depend on hard work, ingenuity and collaborative commitment by all the organisations and people with a stake in our city’s future.

To create a sense of urgency and encourage innovation and new thinking, we have set four bold ambitions to achieve by 2035. We recognise that these are challenging but we believe that if, as a city, we can meet these goals, then we will have made substantial progress towards realising our vision.

We know from the experience of other cities that growing our population will be both an indicator of success and a means to achieving it. We also know that the best route to a better outcome for most people is a good job. Therefore, we want to put a figure on our ambition for increasing the population and jobs. Our aim is that by 2035 our city will be home to 70,000 more people and 50,000 more jobs.

We know that we will need to shape our city to ensure that this can happen in a sustainable way and that is the purpose of our new Local Development Plan which will shape the physical future of the city - including housing, roads and other infrastructure alongside our Belfast Agenda.

Of course, growth on its own is not enough. It must be inclusive and should help reduce inequalities and create opportunities for all.

So we have set ourselves two further bold ambitions - that every young person leaving school has a destination that fulfils their potential. And that we reduce the current significant gap in life expectancy between our most and least deprived neighbourhoods.
By 2035...

Our city is home to an additional 70,000 new residents.

Our urban economy supports 50,000 more jobs.

There will be a 50 per cent reduction in the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods.

Every young person leaving school has a destination that fulfils their potential.
Belfast now

Our people

Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland with a population of 338,907.

We are one of the youngest cities in Europe - young people up to the age of 21, make up nearly a third of our population, while a fifth of the city is under 15 years old.

Our older population is growing - today 15 per cent of the population is 65 and older, by 2037 this will grow to nearly a quarter (22 per cent).
Growing the economy

**Working population:** Belfast has the largest workforce in Northern Ireland (66 per cent of its population or 245,963 people).

**Productivity:** the city drives regional productivity with its workforce generating £34,583 Gross Value Added per head.

**Growth sectors:** Belfast’s Knowledge economy is growing fast. Its creative industries sector is the fourth fastest growing in the UK, with 1,646 businesses supporting 11,545 jobs.

**Skills:** a successful education system for many: 68 per cent (3,526) of school-leavers went on to further or higher education. Nearly one third (28 per cent) of the working age population has a university degree or higher.

**Business friendly:** Belfast has been recognised as Europe’s most business friendly city of its size for two years running.

**International reputation:** over 70 per cent of our universities’ research activity is considered world leading or internationally excellent.

**Business start-ups:** Belfast has the highest business birth rate (11 per cent) in the region but struggles when compared to places like Manchester (19 per cent), Birmingham (20 per cent), Leeds (15 per cent) or Bristol (15 per cent).

Living here

**Quality of life:** the city has a thriving cultural and social scene, high quality sporting facilities and many excellent examples of natural and built heritage. It has been ranked in the top five cities in the UK for having the best quality of life.

**Open Space:** Belfast has an abundance of open space - more than any other urban area in the UK - including parks, playing fields, greenways as well as the River Lagan and Belfast Hills.

**Voluntary and Community sectors:** Belfast has vibrant Community and Voluntary sectors. Over one quarter of all the voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in N. Ireland are in Belfast.

**Life expectancy:** average life expectancy in Belfast is lower than the Northern Ireland average for both males (75.7 years) and females (81.0 years).

**Deprivation:** 7 of the 10 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland are in Belfast. 39 per cent of children and 22 per cent of people aged 60 and over are affected by income deprivation.

**Health inequalities:** people are living longer but there is a difference (6.5 years for females and 9.9 years for men) between the most deprived areas and the least deprived in the city.

**Housing stress:** in 2015, nearly 7,000 people were in housing stress.

**Housing structure:** nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of houses in Belfast are socially rented, whilst 57 per cent are owner-occupied.

**Interfaces:** despite good progress in community relations the city has 88 physical interface sites.
City development

**Tourist visitors:** Belfast supports a growing tourism industry with over 1.3 million visits contributing £278 million to the economy and supporting 17,000 jobs. In 2016, Titanic Belfast was named as the world’s number one tourist attraction.

**Business visitors:** between 2012 and 2014 there were an estimated 200,000 overnight business trips to Belfast.

**Connectivity:** there are two airports within 30 minutes of the city centre, which deal with 7.1 million passengers each year. During 2015, Belfast Harbour handled over 23 million tonnes of goods and 1.4 million passengers, representing 70 per cent of Northern Ireland’s and 20 per cent of the entire island’s seaborne trade.

**Sustainable transport:** over half of the workforce (52 per cent) travel to work by car or van; 16 per cent by public transport; and only 2 per cent by bike.

**Connectivity (Digital):** Almost 100 per cent of households have access to high speed broadband.

Working and learning

**Schools:** Belfast has 55,000 school children attending 225 schools.

**Universities:** the city’s two universities have 45,000 students, whilst the Belfast Metropolitan College serves 20,000 students each year.

**Working age population:** two-thirds (66 per cent) of the population are of working age (ie aged between 16 and 64 years).

**Jobs:** Belfast’s economy supports over 210,000 jobs, 92 per cent of which are in the services sector. A third (31 per cent) are in the public sector.

**Qualifications:** 60 per cent of school-leavers in 2014 to 2015 achieved at least 5 GCSEs grades A* to C (or equivalent), including English and Maths - less than the region’s average of 66 per cent.

**Educational inequalities:** 36 per cent of young people entitled to free school meals achieve five GCSEs grade A-C as compared to 73 per cent of those who are not.

**Long-term unemployed:** 5 per cent of the working-age population are claiming an unemployment-related benefit (10,900 people). Nearly two fifths of these (39 per cent) were long-term unemployed.
Belfast as a regional driver

**Economic driver:** Belfast’s economy supports nearly a third (30 per cent) of all jobs in Northern Ireland. The city contributes to over a quarter (28 per cent) to the region’s productivity.

**The city region:** the Greater Belfast region, including surrounding areas of Lisburn and Castlereagh, Ards and North Down, Antrim and Newtownabbey and Mid and East Antrim, represents 51 per cent of the Northern Ireland population, supports 57 per cent of jobs, and contributes 57 per cent to Northern Ireland’s economy.

**Foreign Direct Investment:** outside London, Northern Ireland is the leading UK region for attracting inward investment. This success has been across a range of knowledge intensive sectors. In particular Belfast is the world’s top destination city for financial services technologies investments.

For statistical sources go to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastagenda
Our focus for the next four years: 2017-2021

- inclusive growth

Our vision and outcomes are long-term, but we have identified a number of priorities for the next four years that we need to act on right away.

For Belfast to work we need as many people as possible to contribute to, and benefit from, its success.

This is why the Belfast Agenda is not just about economic growth but about all the things that make the benefits of growth as inclusive and widespread as possible. We need to address interlocking issues of poverty, economic inactivity, unemployment and underemployment. In particular we need to create jobs and make sure that those most in need of work can get those jobs.

Inclusive economic growth is about more and better jobs; improving living standards and earnings; offering in-work progression and challenging barriers to employment. As it is about improving life chances, it is something that no one organisation or sector can deliver alone; we must do it together.

Our priorities for the next four years include making sure that people have the best life chances and best living experience no matter where they are born or live in Belfast.

The next section of this document goes into detail about our immediate priorities, under the headings of:

Growing the economy;
Living here;
City development; and
Working and learning.

For each priority, we have proposed some stretch goals and workstreams which we hope will create real progress towards achieving our vision for 2035.

We want to know what you think about these priorities and if we are focusing on the right things.
More detail about what we aim to do under each of our priorities is outlined below:

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<th>Living here</th>
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<td>• Develop the city’s infrastructure and improve connectivity locally, nationally, and internationally</td>
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<td>• Drive the physical and cultural regeneration of the city centre</td>
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<td>• Deliver key strategic physical projects and policies</td>
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<td>• Attract more tourists</td>
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<td>• Address educational inequalities and increase skills attainment</td>
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<td>• Address barriers to employment at a structural and personal level</td>
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<td>• Enhance and increase the skill levels of our residents and attract and retain even more skilled people</td>
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<td>• Match people and skills to opportunities across Belfast</td>
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<td>• Reduce poverty and economic inactivity</td>
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Growing the economy

Together, we will:

• create employment and opportunity;
• attract investment into Belfast;
• foster business growth in Belfast;
• strengthen business relationships and make it easy to do business;
• maximise the impact of the city region;
• increase tourism spend; and
• reduce economic inequalities.

Why this is a priority for Belfast

A thriving and prosperous economy is the engine of change for our city and the critical contributor to all of the outcomes that we wish to achieve.

As the region’s capital city, major population centre and the hub for business and employment, Belfast is critical to Northern Ireland’s economic future.

Growing a diverse and inclusive economy and creating more and better jobs has consistently been the main priority raised by residents and other stakeholders.

The economic growth and prosperity of Belfast is spread well beyond the city. More than half of those employed in Belfast travel from outside the council boundary. While there is uncertainty in the global economic market, Belfast does not face this challenge alone. Business will continue as the city and region adapt to meet the new challenges, locally and internationally. Belfast already has a proven track record in successfully attracting foreign investment.

The city continues to offer favourable economic conditions, including competitive labour costs, a pool of skilled graduates and a growing international reputation as a venue for major events and leading tourist destination.
Global trends tell us of the importance of growth in new sectors, including financial technologies, cybersecurity, film and animation and connected health. Our long-term agenda must include plans for these shifts.

To build on our strengths and prepare for the future, the city has systemic issues that need to be addressed by all partners. For example, the city continues to suffer from high economic inactivity and relatively low rates of business start-up. And while in many parts of the city we have high skill levels, in other parts many people don’t have the skills they need to succeed.

There is still a substantial fiscal deficit, demonstrating that the city needs higher levels of productivity. We have an imbalance between the size of our private and public sectors.

As a result, Belfast has shown only limited improvement in its competitiveness in the past five years when compared to 40 other European cities. To be competitive at an international level, Belfast needs to tackle these underlying and interconnected issues with innovative and collective action.

Rebalancing the economy by encouraging private sector investment is essential for generating sustainable growth, increasing productivity and creating diverse and well paid jobs.

Central to this is removing barriers to employment including improving skills and employability levels. It is important that as many people as possible benefit from growth and the city’s success.

We need to be a connected and cohesive city that extends its influence well beyond its boundaries and delivers for the local population - a balanced and sustainable programme of inclusive economic growth is required.
Our ambition for growing the economy

So that the city can address its priorities for inclusive economic growth and achieve the ambitions that we have set, partners have identified a number of stretch goals and workstreams. These will require long-term collaborative commitment by many organisations.

While some proposals are already in motion, most need development over the coming months.

**Stretch goals - four years.**  
**Together, by 2021, we will:**

1. create 15,000 new jobs;
2. attract £1 billion of private sector Foreign Direct Investment;
3. support 4,000 small business start-ups;
4. double the economic value of out-of-state tourism; and
5. welcome 1.5 million overnight tourist stays per year.

**Workstreams**

**Develop and deliver an integrated, sustainable approach to inclusive economic growth and investment**

We want solid, partnership-based delivery of economic growth for the city and the city region. We will establish a Belfast Economic Growth Forum with the NI Executive to drive forward the achievement of our economic growth goals and develop joint solutions to shared challenges.

This partnership will create an effective economic strategy for Belfast and the city region, which supports and complements the Executive’s strategy for economic growth. It will build a coherent and evidence-based approach to improving city competitiveness, job creation and support for businesses.

It will deliver long term strategies for key growth sectors, including retail, hotel, office development, financial tech and creative industries, as well as export-led strategies to support business growth.

**Work locally to drive inclusive growth**

We will work with city partners to develop a Belfast-led inclusive growth programme that fosters place-based growth to maximise the multiplier effect of social and physical infrastructure investments. It will identify and support opportunities for residents to enter the workforce by providing accessible routes into employment and offer a coherent progression pathway through the labour market. The programme will also seek to build a measure of inclusive growth so that we can ensure we are making progress.
Drive city region sustainable growth

We want to see a Growth Deal for the Belfast city region. By this we mean a long-term approach to investment in infrastructure, key business sectors, regeneration schemes, tourism product and skills.

This will ensure that the city and Northern Ireland as a whole can improve productivity and competitiveness, take advantage of the opportunities that reduced corporation tax will create and also deal with many of the deep seated social and economic issues in the city region.

Along with the NI Executive, we will explore new financial mechanisms and models to enable better use of budgets by NI Departments, public bodies and councils to facilitate economic growth and the implementation of agreed priority schemes.

We will exploit the financial tools available to both central and local government to invest in capital schemes which can unlock major investment and development opportunities.

Build the city’s position as a magnet for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

We will work with Invest NI to attract and support investment in the city. We will have a market-facing strategy to ensure that Belfast is business and investor friendly.

We will continue to provide a warm welcome and a network of professional and other services for new and existing businesses, investors and developers that are keen to invest in the city.

Maximise the city’s connections to drive growth

We will work with city partners to create and deliver a new International Relations Framework to maximise the city’s new and existing international connections to drive trade, investment and tourism and to encourage cultural and other linkages.

Create a resilient city

As part of the 100 Resilient Cities programme, founded by the Rockefeller Foundation, we will appoint a Belfast Commissioner for Resilience who will work with partners to develop a strategy to take a targeted approach to addressing those issues which pose the greatest risk to the city and its economy.

Make Belfast a great place to do business and supporting entrepreneurs and business starts

We are committed to a joint programme that further enhances Belfast’s reputation as a place to create and grow successful businesses, which supports local entrepreneurs, meets the needs of business start-ups, existing companies businesses that wish to grow and also those foreign owned businesses that may choose to invest in the city.

Designed in partnership with the business sector we will offer tailored support that:

- simplifies the regulatory process;
- offers routes to financing and investment;
- provides access to a skilled local workforce;
- signposts to professional networks; and
- supports and helps in sourcing the right development land, office space or retail outlet.

We will develop the ‘business eco-system’ in the city to create a supportive environment for business start-up, growth, investment and success.

We will make it easier for businesses to access the support they need by developing and branding a cohesive continuum of support, from pre-enterprise awareness to starting and growing a business and exporting.

Provide sector specific support

As part of our work to support local businesses we will also provide sector specific support and support and nurture business in the burgeoning creative and digital sector.

We’ve invested in a new Innovation Factory that joins other innovation hubs to enhance a growing city innovation and knowledge economy.

Harness innovation to drive city growth

Information technologies and data science are powerful engines for the future economic growth of Belfast. Partners will work with our local universities, digital small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and the third sector (non-government organisations such as voluntary and community groups) to design and deliver a Smart Belfast framework. This will build the foundations required to generate innovative solutions to address major city challenges while also supporting our local SME sector to develop world-class products.
Together, we will:
• improve neighbourhoods;
• improve the city living experience;
• improve community relations;
• reduce life inequalities;
• enable active, healthy and empowered citizens;
• provide fit-for purpose city services;
• support and care for people who face multiple challenges; and
• support our young people and older people.

Why this is a priority for Belfast

Belfast must provide the opportunity for all of its residents to lead healthy, engaged and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant, growing, welcoming and sustainable communities and neighbourhoods.

A thriving and healthy Belfast enables and empowers its residents to reach their full potential at every stage of life. It means providing the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life whether that is through employment, education, volunteering, learning for fun, sports or participating in the arts, culture, and heritage.

For many people, Belfast offers a high quality of life. It is a culturally rich city, playing host to a wide range of festivals and arts, music, sports and cultural events in which the majority of our citizens are actively engaged throughout the year.

Most of our residents are living longer, healthier lives. People over 60 already make up one fifth of our population and this is forecast to increase dramatically to over one third by 2050. Older people have told us that “Belfast is already a good place to grow old”. As a member of the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age-friendly Cities, we must continue to improve our services and structures to meet the
needs of an ageing population with a wide range of abilities and needs. The city relies heavily on the contribution older people make to their families, their communities and the economy.

But the city is also a place of young people, who make up nearly a third of the population of Belfast, making our city one of the youngest in Europe. The city’s Youth Forum, informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, works to ensure the voice of young people in how the city is run and how its future is shaped. The city has a substantial and vibrant third sector infrastructure, working to safeguard and support the interests of children and young people.

For many individuals, and across a significant number of neighbourhoods, however, the city is not performing well. Seven of the ten most deprived wards in Northern Ireland are in Belfast. This has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents. Suicide rates in the 10 per cent most deprived areas are almost five times higher than those in the 10 per cent least deprived. Similarly, the gap in life expectancy between the 10 per cent most and least deprived areas of Northern Ireland is approximately 10.7 years for males and 7.7 years for females.

Working with our partners through the delivery of the ‘Making Life Better’ strategy within the context of the Belfast Agenda is an important opportunity to make progress in addressing many of these inequalities and achieving improved wellbeing outcomes for the people of Belfast.

Housing is a key issue in creating sustainable communities. Affordable and safe housing is fundamental to the quality of life of our residents. In 2015, there were over 6,900 people in housing stress in the city. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) is a key community planning partner and social housing has an important role to play in creating the type of city we want Belfast to be in the future. We will therefore be working together to maximise the benefits of housing investment in the city, increasing the tenure mix, growing the population of the city centre and helping to create sustainable, safe and cohesive communities.

We are committed to making Belfast a place that is compassionate, safe and welcoming to everyone. We need to continue to work hard, maximising the impact of the NI Executive’s Together Building United Communities strategy to continue to transform our city into one shared by all. When we asked people across Belfast how satisfied they were with Belfast as a place to live, 92 per cent answered the question positively; however only 51 per cent felt that people from different religious and political backgrounds got on well. Many of our citizens continue to live parallel lives with some communities still separated by physical barriers. It is no coincidence that the poorest neighbourhoods in Belfast continue to be those located in and around interfaces and flashpoint areas.

There has been significant partnership work over the years to ensure that people in Belfast feel safe and are safe. Overall crime and most types of crime in Belfast have decreased over the last ten years. We will continue to work through our Policing and Community Safety Partnerships to ensure that local communities are safe and free from the fear of crime.

Building relationships across communities is central to achieving our vision for Belfast. In recent years, the population of Belfast has changed substantially. We’ve welcomed new people from other countries who have made Belfast their home. This diversity has enriched our culture and contributed to our prosperity.

Working through our Shared City Partnership and within our individual organisations, we will build upon and refocus our collective work to deal with the issues of division and segregation that directly impact on individual life opportunities and the ability of organisations to deliver effective public services.
Our ambition for living here

We must deliver services differently, in a more integrated way that is focused on the needs of people. We will draw on the best examples of innovation to establish transformative ways of working that encourage communities, individuals and partners to design and deliver better services. We want to learn from these and then make them part of our day-to-day delivery.

Stretch goals - four years
Together, by 2021, we will:

1. deliver £1 billion of physical investment in our neighbourhoods;
2. deliver 1,800 social housing units;
3. invest £1 million in communities to drive social innovation;
4. ensure 4,000 young people participate in shared city programmes;
5. make progress towards our 2035 ambition of 50 per cent reduction in the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods; and
6. make progress towards reducing the number of interface barriers.

Workstreams

Design an integrated, inter-agency approach to neighbourhood regeneration and maximise the impact of local assets and investment

Partners will work together to integrate services on the ground in a way that is responsive to what makes a difference to local people in the area.

We will work with communities to design innovative area-based interventions that maximise the potential of existing programmes, assets and investments by partners.

Partners across the city are investing in important community assets, while communities themselves are bringing forward and executing investment projects. Creating physical assets is not enough, however, they must in turn deliver outcomes for local people. Agencies need to work together to maximise the benefits of local assets and where possible use them as a means of making services more integrated and accessible. There are a number of programmes seeking to improve community assets as a driver for regeneration, including the council's Local Investment and Belfast Investment Funds, and NI Executive programmes such as the Social Investment Fund, Urban Villages and Building Successful Communities.

It is important that we take a strategic overview to ensure that interventions are planned and managed in a way that maximises their benefit to local people. In the years ahead community planning partners will be building houses, schools, health-care assets, new leisure centres and many other assets. The Belfast Agenda provides an opportunity to plan these better together, providing better services, saving money and achieving better outcomes for local people.
Design and deliver a fully integrated, inter-agency approach to early intervention, including early years support and family programmes

Building on the work already done by the Executive and partners we will work together to ensure we see the whole picture of a child’s development so that they have the continual support they need to reach their potential.

We will encourage a focus on support for families in the city through an integrated family early intervention programme. Our aim is for an integrated service provision to support families facing challenges, maximising the impact of the city’s ten Family Support Hubs.

Deliver a city and neighbourhood Community Safety programme

Ensuring neighbourhoods are safe remains a key priority for everyone in Belfast and strong partnership working has meant that we have good foundations on which to build.

We will continue to work with the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnerships to deliver an integrated programme of work to improve community safety across the city.

Ensure an age-friendly Belfast

By the middle of this century it is estimated that more than a third of Belfast’s population will be over 60 years old. We need to plan effectively to ensure the needs of people in the city are met. Older people themselves have expressed the need for particular focus to address social isolation, access to suitable housing and poverty (more than half of the city’s older people live in fuel poverty).

As a member of the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age-friendly Cities, we will work with the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership to deliver an active ageing programme that informs future partner service design and planning.

Design and deliver Belfast City Shared Space, Peace IV and Interfaces programmes

We will work with the Shared City Partnership to deliver an integrated plan to improve good relations, developing a sustainable, transferable and scalable approach to management of shared space, while creating leadership and networking opportunities. We will seek to develop an Interfaces Programme as well as securing Peace IV funding to deliver programmes for over 4,000 children and young people. Partners will also work with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and others to address segregated housing issues through the NIHE Community Cohesion Strategy and the NI Executive’s Together: Building a United Community Strategy, facilitating growth of sustainable shared neighbourhood estates where possible.

Deliver an integrated cultural and arts strategy

Culture and arts make a vital contribution to the city helping to improve quality of life, drive the economy and make Belfast a shared, welcoming and proud city. Belfast gets a strong return on funding of arts and heritage returning approximately £8 for the city for every £1 of our investment. This investment helps engage with over 170,000 participants, reach audiences of four million and provide around 8,000 employment opportunities for artists each year.

We will deliver a four year action plan that will celebrate Belfast’s distinctive culture by inspiring communities, attracting audiences and strengthening the sector. This plan will support increased access to arts and heritage, providing opportunities for participation in activities, events and festivals.
Design and deliver an integrated city programme to address health inequalities, including enhancing mental wellbeing and reducing social isolation

We will work, through the Belfast Strategic Partnership, to ensure the design and delivery of programmes that maximise the impact of the regional Making Life Better Strategy within Belfast. This will address aspects of physical health, including physical activity and active travel and mental wellbeing, particularly issues of social cohesion, community vulnerability and isolation. We will maximise the benefits of our membership of the World Health Organisation’s Healthy Cities Network to improve health in the city. We will also look for opportunities to maximise the health impact of Belfast’s leisure transformation programme, encourage greater participation in sports, deliver the Growing Communities Strategy and address food poverty, health and nutrition.

Maximise the benefit of our natural and built environment

Residents have told us that the natural environment is one of Belfast’s great strengths and we need to work strategically to ensure that we maximise the benefit of our open and green spaces, our river and hills to achieve better outcomes. We will work with our partners to deliver an Open Spaces Strategy, taking forward Heritage Lottery Fund applications and exploring potential for delivery of a Neighbourhood Attractiveness programme for Belfast to tackle dereliction. We will also seek to take a sustainable approach to protecting and improving the city's natural and built environment. Examples of this approach would include delivery of the city’s Biodiversity Action Plan, Air Quality Action Plans, new Local Development Plan and considering neighbourhood dimensions to the Belfast Resilience Programme.

Use social innovation to unlock service transformation

City partners will explore how to transform and improve the way we plan and deliver services at both the city and local level. We will test and adopt new socially innovative tools and techniques at neighbourhood level.

We want to find better ways of working at the local level, particularly in exploring how we can work with residents and partners, to co-design and deliver more effective solutions that can be adopted at scale across the city.

Supporting children and young people to fulfil their potential

Young people make up a third of the population of Belfast, making our city one of the youngest in Europe. It is vital that their vision shapes the future. Partners will work to support an integrated approach to better outcomes for children and young people. This will include ensuring young people are listened to and valued and can confidently shape their own futures. We are committed to making sure that young people are empowered, safe, happy, achieving at each stage of life and able to play their part in their city and communities.
City development

Together we will:

• promote and position the city to compete;

• develop the city’s infrastructure and improve connectivity locally, nationally and internationally;

• drive the physical and cultural regeneration of the city centre;

• deliver key strategic physical projects and policies;

• attract more tourists; and

• protect and enhance our environment and built heritage.

Why this is a priority for Belfast

Belfast is at the heart of a metropolitan area with strong ambition. The transfer of planning powers means that city partners can shape the city to deliver the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda. We can now shape spaces and places in our city in order to ensure sustainable growth.

Belfast has many natural and historical advantages that it can call upon to support growth. However, there are still gaps in its key infrastructure which must be addressed if the city is to grow.

The city centre is key to creating the economic growth we need. Belfast has done well in recent decades to create an economically dynamic and attractive city centre. It has, however, some way to go in comparison to other European cities of comparable size.

We want to increase the number of people living, working and investing in the city centre. We want to better connect the city centre and the communities that surround it.

A strong city core needs the right mix of offices, retail, hotels, tourist attractions, creative industries, universities and colleges, housing and social infrastructure; only then can it drive regeneration for its surrounding communities and throughout the city.
Connectivity is vital, Belfast is the transport and logistical hub for the entire region. It’s port is the second largest on the island of Ireland, handling 23 million tonnes of goods and over 1 million passengers each year. George Best Belfast City Airport and Belfast International Airport carried over 7 million passengers between them in 2015. The Executive’s ambitions to improve air connectivity to Northern Ireland will support Belfast’s aims to grow the economy, increase FDI and visitor numbers. Infrastructure, particularly transport infrastructure, is vital to connecting our communities to opportunities for jobs and to each other. We must ensure that community infrastructure, such as schools, housing, transport, health and leisure facilities and parks and open spaces are planned in a cohesive way to allow people to get the most from them.

Belfast has a large ‘Travel to Work’ area with more than half its workforce travelling from other areas. Over 44 per cent rely on the private car for this journey with only 14 per cent opting for public transport. Notwithstanding recent investment in public transport there continues to be only a relatively small growth in passenger numbers using public transport.

Digital connectivity is improving; nearly 100 per cent of households in Belfast have access to optical fibre broadband. The city is rolling out free City WiFi. Belfast is part of a project providing the fastest connection from North America to Europe.

Water, sewage and energy infrastructure are in need of significant investment.

Belfast’s household recycling levels have made significant progress and over 40 per cent of domestic waste is now recycled. Recycling levels are good compared to similar cities but much reusable and economically useful material is still being lost to landfill and a figure of 70 per cent should be possible. The circular economy is an under-exploited opportunity.
Our ambition for city development

We need to create the conditions for growth, with resilient infrastructure that can support the city’s development and get people where they need to go. We also need to build on Belfast’s distinctive sense of place and ensure the world knows what it has to offer in order to attract investment, tourists and talent.

Stretch goals - four years
Together, by 2021, we will:

1. grow the city’s rates base by 5 per cent;
2. create 1.5 million square feet of Grade A office accommodation;
3. create 2,500 new hotel bed spaces;
4. increase the use of sustainable transport by 15 per cent;
5. reduce the level of household waste going to landfill to 35 per cent;
6. increase the percentage of residents satisfied with the city living experience; and
7. move to 14 or higher in the UK Retail Ranking.

Workstreams

Create the Belfast Local Development Plan

Alongside our community plan, we’re also creating a new Local Development Plan, which will set out how the council area should develop and what it will look like in the years to come.

The Local Development Plan will be vital to the delivery of the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda as it will provide a 15 year planning framework to support economic and social outcomes in the city, while providing the delivery of sustainable development.

It will facilitate growth by coordinating public and private investment by encouraging development where it can be of most benefit to the wellbeing of the community and allocate sufficient land to meet the needs of the city.

Importantly, it will provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development should take place. You can find out more about the Local Development Plan at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/ldp

Create a partnership and plan for sustainable urban infrastructure

Infrastructure planning for the Belfast city region needs to be taken forward in a strategic and integrated way, not on a project by project basis. We will establish a new Strategic Infrastructure Group which will identify key infrastructure investment needs and work with the NI Executive to shape the NI Investment Strategy.

Develop an integrated city transport plan

We will maximise the opportunities of the £150 million Belfast Transport Hub and Rapid Transport System. We will address under-use of public transport, particularly in relation to commuter patterns and work to promote active travel. We will work in partnership to progress key transport infrastructure, including the York Street Interchange. We will develop a comprehensive solution to city centre parking.
Deliver city centre regeneration and investment projects

We are committed to encouraging city centre living and creating a vibrant, well-connected environment for people to enjoy. The City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy already stands as an example of our shared ambition - jointly adopted by the council and the Department for Communities. We will take forward a joint programme to advocate for and deliver key projects.

Seek devolution of comprehensive development powers

We will work with the NI Executive to bring forward the devolution of comprehensive development powers to local government to enable critical city regeneration schemes to happen, as well as securing important investment and creating further employment opportunities.

Increase the supply of mixed tenure housing

Housing development and management can have a positive effect on the economy, supporting the construction industry, increasing demand for goods and services and supporting jobs. It also plays a vital role in growing the city’s population.

Social housing is an important aspect of this. In 2015-16 NIHE spent almost £100 million in Belfast. As a statutory partner, the NIHE is committed to maximising the positive impact of housing investment in the local economy and its regenerative impact on local communities. This will include the use of social investment finance to support opportunities for social enterprise.

Build citywide commitment to Belfast place positioning

A strong sense of place and a clear statement of what the city has to offer is critical to attracting investment, tourism and talent. City partners will support and deliver a common shared Belfast narrative and implementation plan, including a city ambassador programme and city marketing strategy, in order to ensure international reach and help attract investment, tourism and talent.

We are committed to encouraging city centre living and creating a vibrant, well-connected environment for people to enjoy.

Deliver the integrated tourism strategy

We will work with partners to support a range of aligned and mutually supportive workstreams in order to deliver on the ambition of doubling the value of tourism over the next few years.

The strategy builds on Belfast’s unique appeal and story, its character and its people. We will do this through strong partnership working; by investment to attract leisure and business tourists and attracting, nurturing and retaining creative talent.

Develop a further world-class visitor attraction

The scoping, financing, design and delivery of a world-class city centre visitor attraction will have huge benefits for Belfast. There is clear evidence that the city tourism offer would be transformed by a substantial new attraction in the city centre to complement the existing offering including Titanic Belfast.

Establish a Belfast sustainable development framework

We’re committed to sustainable development. This means making the necessary decisions to realise our vision of economic growth, maximising wellbeing and protecting the environment, without affecting the ability of future generations to do the same.

In support of regional sustainable development objectives, we will work with partners in the city and in government departments to develop a Belfast framework that supports sustainable economic success, particularly in addressing constraints relating to energy, transport and city water infrastructure.

Manage resources and waste

Successful cities manage the impact of growth and ensure that it does not limit the quality of life of future generations. This includes reducing our consumption of non-renewable resources and minimising and managing waste effectively. We will develop a strategy which will ensure waste is managed effectively and investigate the economic potential of the circular economy to increase skills, jobs and growth, including maximising the benefits of the Cleantech Hub at Giant’s Park.

Develop a city energy programme

We will work with partners to better manage energy usage across the city’s public estate. We will build opportunities with all partners, including the private sector and local communities, to encourage investment and deployment of renewable sources in order to make the city more attractive to investors and to tackle fuel poverty.
Together, we will:

- address educational inequalities and increase skills attainment;
- address barriers to employment at structural and personal level;
- enhance and increase the skill levels of our residents and attract and retain even more skilled people;
- match people and skills to opportunities across Belfast; and
- reduce poverty and economic inactivity.

Why this is a priority for Belfast

Having a good job is a way to really improve life for many in Belfast and is key to ensure we reduce economic inequality. That is why removing barriers to employment for local people is the key focus of the Belfast Agenda and our approach to economic growth.

Belfast is a vibrant 21st century city of enormous talent and a major contributor to our region’s growing and important knowledge and creative industries. Belfast now supports over 210,000 jobs with 56 per cent of these taken by people who commute from surrounding areas. The city is home to Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University and Belfast Metropolitan College, which between them have some 73,000 full and part-time students.

According to 2011 census figures, 28 per cent of our working age resident population hold a university degree equivalent or higher. Recent work undertaken by the Centre for Cities reported that whilst Belfast was ranked fifteenth in the UK for having a highly skilled population, it ranked second highest in terms of the share of the population having no formal qualifications. This has significant implications for the economic success of the city and the region. Skill levels in Belfast have a significant impact on regional competitiveness and in terms of attainment levels some of the highest levels of educational inequality in the region exist in the city.
Despite the relatively strong growth of the city economy, there is still a very marked polarisation of those who are well qualified and those who have no qualifications or who are low skilled. 17 per cent of the total working age population in Belfast had no qualifications in 2015, according to the Labour Force Survey. Only 3.1 per cent of those aged 16 years and over are self-employed. This is significantly lower than the 7.5 per cent figure for Northern Ireland. This is also lower than in other UK cities such as Liverpool (10.8 per cent), Manchester (14.4 per cent), Newcastle (11.7 per cent), Leeds (12.1 per cent), and Sheffield (10.7 per cent).

Economic inactivity is high compared with other cities and to the NI average. This problem is compounded as time goes on; the longer a person is out of work and the harder it becomes for them to find a way back into the labour market. Part-time underemployment, that is, working part-time hours but wanting to work more - is a particular problem for women and young people.

There are structural and personal barriers to employment that we need to address if we are to take on the challenges facing people in our most deprived communities. For example, access to affordable childcare is a key issue - with average weekly childcare costs equating to 58 per cent of the median wage at skill level 1. The Executive’s new Childcare Strategy will have an important role to play in addressing this issue. This is a key issue for lone parents and low income families. Structural issues, such as conditions related to welfare benefits, also have an impact. Health is also a major barrier and the main reason for people leaving the labour market, reinforcing the very inter-related nature of the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda. The council and its partners will therefore work together with the Executive to find ways to overcome these barriers.

Evidence emerging from the work of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the RSA’s Inclusive Growth Commission demonstrates a strong relationship between education and skills inequalities and poverty within society. This is an inter-generational challenge which needs a fresh approach. Through our Employability and Skills Framework we will try to connect people to real and good jobs - ensuring they are job ready; upskilling and providing a pathway to employment and in-work career progression.

We will work with the city’s anchor institutions - those larger organisations with a historic investment in the city’s long-term success - to better leverage their economic power as employers, suppliers and contractors to build a resilient mutually supportive city economy.

In partnership we will develop new placed-based models which enable the widest range of people to participate fully in, and benefit from, economic growth. We will seek to better match the education and skill attainment levels among our resident population with the future business needs of key growth sectors and thereby better connecting people to employment opportunities.
Our ambition for working and learning

Our skills base is vital to competitiveness, productivity, inclusiveness and growth. For people in Belfast to achieve their potential we need to take a more integrated approach to learning and skills.

Economic destiny is often shaped by the earliest years of life and we must work together to ensure that children are ‘school ready’ and that, as they progress, they have the life skills set they need to get a job and progress in life.

To address our priorities for ‘Working and Learning’ and deliver on our ambitions, partners have identified a number of ‘game-changing’ programmes of work. These will require long-term collaborative commitment by many organisations.

Some of the proposals are already in an initiation phase but most will require significant development and testing work over the coming months.

Stretch goals - four years
Together, by 2021, we will:

1. reduce the gap between Belfast’s economic inactivity rate and the NI average;
2. reduce the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications to fewer than 14 per cent;
3. increase the proportion of the working age population with Level 2 qualifications and above to more than 82 per cent;
4. increase the percentage of school-leavers entering employment, education or training to 98 per cent; and
5. reduce the gap in educational attainment* between those entitled to free school meals and those who aren’t, from 33 per cent to less than 30 per cent (*at Level 2 or above, including English and maths).
Workstreams

Deliver an integrated approach to employment and skills

To create higher levels of business growth, employment and income for our communities, we need to realise the potential of Belfast’s people and remove barriers to employment. We will further develop the Belfast Employability and Skills Framework, establishing an Employment and Skills Board to take this work forward.

Deliver a ‘Belfast Works’ employability programme

Partners will work together to design and deliver a Belfast Works programme. This will be a scalable integrated whole life programme that will support those furthest from the labour market through to employment. We will work with employers to identify, plan and prepare for emerging job opportunities and to create effective pathways to employment.

Devolve funding to the city region for the delivery of a large scale skills and employability programme

Partners will work with the NI Executive to co-design the policy framework for improving skills and employability (building on the scalable learning from the Belfast Works programme). We will seek devolved powers and funding for skills and employment support driven by outcomes-led local commissioning. We also want to maximise the potential of the national Apprenticeship Levy.

Deliver an integrated city programme to address educational inequalities

Partners will work to build stronger links between schools, families and local communities. They will focus on addressing numeracy and literacy issues, particularly during the transition period between primary and post primary education. We will support the vital links between schools, families, local communities and employers.

Partners will come together when new schools are being developed in order to deliver a more holistic and integrated package within a new build that would address educational, health, parental and family issues within the community.

Maximise the benefits of our higher and further education offer

We have world class further and higher educational institutions in the city. We will work to maximise their positive impact on the city and society, and support them in attracting talent not only from all parts of the city but from around the world.

Establish a city pledge for our young people and a commitment to being a learning city

City partners will establish a pledge that commits the city to developing coherent pathways for education, training and employment for our young people. Partners will support joint programmes of work to support lifelong learning as part of Belfast’s commitment to being a learning city.

Leverage the power of Belfast’s anchor institutions and city partners

We will design and deliver a programme of work with the city’s anchor institutions and other city partners to leverage their economic power as employers, suppliers and contractors to build a resilient mutually supportive city economy. There are particular opportunities to harness the collective procurement power of the public sector to deliver on wider social outcomes.
How we developed the Belfast Agenda

How we’ve got here - the story so far.

We’ve been building towards the Belfast Agenda over the past two years and more. In advance of Local Government Reform in 2015, we were preparing for our duty to lead a community planning process in the city, learning and building new approaches to make a difference for the city and its people.

Since then we’ve been engaging with stakeholders and communities across the city, to begin to create a shared vision and plan for Belfast, the Belfast Agenda. Over this time many of our partners have also been engaging and consulting across our city on many of the themes, issues, priorities and areas of work that have emerged during this process.

The Belfast Conversation

A key element of the development of the Belfast Agenda was a series of citywide facilitated public workshops, online questionnaires and social media interaction. This was known as the Belfast Conversation and generated nearly 7,000 comments, that helped to create the vision, aspirations, and outcomes in the Belfast Agenda.

The Belfast Conversation covered a broad range of subjects reflecting issues affecting quality of life and wellbeing in the city. Much of the feedback was about aspirations for the future, to make Belfast a better place. The conversation was very creative and there was a lot of energy from those who took part across a whole host of issues.

The ideas that emerged from the Conversation have contributed to the development of a 2035 vision statement and five long term outcome statements. These form the strategic direction of travel for the Belfast Agenda. They seek to encompass the breadth of ambition needed for success and offer a context within which organisations can determine how they might contribute to making them a reality.

To see the results of the Belfast Conversation please visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communityplanning.
Some of the key milestones in our journey so far:

**Summer 2014**
City residents’ survey.

**November 2014 - February 2015**
Understanding existing priorities and city issues with partners.

**April 2015**
Local Government Reform and Community Planning duty takes effect.

**Spring - Summer 2015**
The Belfast Conversation: wide programme of public engagement across the city, public events and online feedback.

**Autumn - Winter 2015**
Identifying city outcomes and testing the draft framework with partners.

**Spring - Autumn 2016**
Drafting the plan with partners.

**Data and evidence**
We’ve been drawing on a wealth of information and data about Belfast, its opportunities and the challenges local people face. We’ve been working with local universities and other experts to make sure that our plan is based on firm foundations. This evidence is used throughout this document to help explain why our priorities have been chosen.
Making it happen

The Belfast Agenda represents a hugely ambitious body of work for the city that will require the active, co-ordinated participation of many organisations and individuals across many sectors.

It will require new thinking in terms of collaborative planning, financing, data collection, performance management and programme delivery at the city and neighbourhood levels. It will necessitate the adoption of the latest innovations in smart technologies and data analytics.

Ensuring deep linkages with the delivery mechanisms for the Programme for Government will be a critical success factor. The council and its partners will look for complementary opportunities for both plans, not only in terms of resourcing and programme delivery, but also in relation to measurement and shared learning.

The council has significant experience in delivering multi-agency programmes and will draw on this expertise in the development of a supporting governance and delivery infrastructure for the Belfast Agenda. But it is recognised that there is substantial enabling work to be done by all partners to make the Agenda a reality.

This includes:

- agreement on governance structures that provide clear representation and accountability;
- lightweight, responsive decision-making mechanisms at both a senior strategic level and at a programme management level;
- collective performance management arrangements - that provide shared understanding of impact and the effectiveness of delivery;
- mechanisms for organisations to share evidence, research, and practice to inform decision-making; and
- a shared means of working together to test new approaches to ‘intractable’ issues.

In this, its first ever iteration, the Belfast Agenda is setting a city level strategic direction and associated workstreams. As we move to more detailed planning and delivery we need to think locally as well.

Further work will be required to design enhanced mechanisms for area-based planning and delivery which will draw upon existing good practice and the geographically based initiatives of partner organisations.

We want to find better ways of working at the local level - particularly in exploring how we can work with residents and partners to co-design and deliver more effective solutions that can be adopted at scale across the city.
**Belfast’s statutory community planning partners**

- Belfast City Council
- Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Education Authority
- Health and Social Care Board
- Invest NI
- Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Public Health Agency
- South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
- Tourism NI
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- Libraries NI
- Sport NI

**NI Government departments**

- The Executive Office
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
- Department for Infrastructure
- Department for the Economy
- Department of Education
- Department of Finance
- Department of Health
- Department of Justice
- Department for Communities

A wide range of organisations and individuals from across Belfast have contributed to the development of this document over the past 18 months through the Belfast Conversation and other engagement. This has included representatives from our further and higher education institutions, the business community and the voluntary and community sector.

We recognise that the Agenda is the continuation of a conversation about the priorities that will ensure better outcomes for the people of Belfast and that it builds on the positive work of many partnerships and agencies in Belfast over the last number of decades.

**Public consultation**

We are seeking the views of wider city partners, stakeholders and communities on this draft Belfast Agenda to inform the final version, which will be published in and take effect from 2017.

In addition to consulting on the draft Belfast Agenda, the council and its partners are seeking views on the associated Equality Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Key dates in the consultation process include:

- Programme of briefings workshops and online engagement (consultation programme opens on 15 December 2016 and closes on 20 April 2017)
- Consultation analysis in spring 2017
- Publication of the Belfast Agenda in spring/summer 2017

Further information on upcoming engagement events and how to respond to the consultation is available at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastagenda or email communityplanning@belfastcity.gov.uk
We have identified a number of population indicators, aimed at tracking the progress of our outcomes over the long-term. In this appendix we’ve linked them to each of our five outcome statements. Together they give us a sense of whether our city is heading in the right direction.

The Programme for Government has set a similar framework of indicators for Northern Ireland. The Belfast Community Planning Partners acknowledge the interdependencies between the Belfast Agenda and the Programme for Government. Our shared outcomes and indicators will help ensure closer working to improve the lives of local people.

In future, when partners are co-designing programmes they will want to consider how their work can help move these indicators in the right direction.

1. Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
   1.1 City productivity levels
   1.2 Investment into Belfast
   1.3 Performance of the Belfast Urban Area economy
   1.4 The number of new business start-ups versus the number of business deaths
   1.5 The proportion of the population living in relative poverty
   1.6 The proportion of working-age population in Belfast who are unemployed
   1.7 The employment rate of 16 - 64 year olds by deprivation quintile
   1.8 Skills barometer measure - the gap between current and future skill needs
   1.9 Economic inactivity rate (excluding students)
   1.10 Average earnings
   1.11 Total spend by external visitors
   1.12 Supply of suitable housing
Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all

2.1 Number of victims of any crime
2.2 Number of hate-motivated crimes
2.3 Proportion of people who feel safe
2.4 Number of anti-social behaviour incidents
2.5 Number of interfaces
2.6 The number of people who agree that people from different background get on well together
2.7 Proportion of population who believe the cultural identity is respected by society

Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential

3.1 Proportion of population who have attained Level 2 or above
3.2 Gap between percentage of school-leavers and percentage of free school meals school-leavers achieving at Level 2 or above, including English or maths
3.3 Proportion of school-leavers entering employment, education or training
3.4 Proportion of care leavers who aged 19 were in education training or employment
3.5 Proportion of children who have reached attainment at Key Stage 2 (up to 11 years)
3.6 Proportion of pre-school children at the appropriate stage of development
3.7 School attendance rates
Appendix 1: Linking Population indicators to outcomes

4 Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing

4.1 Healthy life expectancy at birth
4.2 Gap in healthy life expectancy
4.3 Preventable deaths
4.4 Proportion of the population of adults and/or children who are obese
4.5 Proportion of population who smoke
4.6 Proportion of adults drinking above sensible drinking guidelines
4.7 Proportion of people who rank themselves as having high levels of wellbeing
4.8 Proportion of adults participating in moderate exercise at least five days per week
4.9 Number of households in housing stress
4.10 Proportion of population living in decent homes
4.11 Proportion of the population volunteering
4.12 Proportion of the population participating in culture, arts and sport

5 Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city

5.1 Air quality
5.2 Percentage of household waste that is recycled or composted
5.3 Percentage of all journeys which are made by walking, cycling or public transport
5.4 Visitor numbers
5.5 Renewable energy as a percentage of all energy consumed
5.6 Number of miles of cycle lanes, footways and footpaths
5.7 Proportion of homes that are energy efficient
5.8 Visitor satisfaction
5.9 Satisfaction with Belfast as a place to live

Data development

The city also needs a number of new ways of measuring progress towards our outcomes. Partners have also agreed to work together to create some new measures including:

- A Belfast Inclusive Growth Monitor Scorecard
- A measure for social enterprise
- A measure of city innovation
- A respect index
- A liveability index
- Access to and quality of open space
- Trust and confidence in public service
- A measure of individual wellbeing
- Average journey time on key transport corridors
- International reputation
Have your say on the Belfast Agenda

If you live, work, study or have a business in Belfast, then the Belfast Agenda affects you.

We want to hear your views as we seek to improve the Belfast Agenda. We want to know what you think about our proposed:

- vision for Belfast;
- long-term outcomes that we want for Belfast;
- the ambitions we want to achieve by 2035; and
- the priorities we should be focusing on for the next four years.

You can share your views by completing our online questionnaire on our website by Thursday 20 April 2017.

Find out more

To find out more about the Belfast Agenda or to download a copy of the full plan go to our website.

We will be holding briefing sessions in January and February. Keep an eye on our website for details or sign up to receive our email updates.

www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastagenda