

## Monitoring of Investment Programme EQIA

August 2014  
Final EQIA Stage 7 Report

### **Background**

The final EQIA report for the Investment Programme was considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22 June 2012, the Committee accepted the findings of the EQIA and this decision was ratified by Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012.

The Investment Programme set out the Council's commitment to deliver significant additional investment over the period 2012 – 2015 balanced across the city. The Investment Programme contains four areas of commitment which are

### ***Commitment 1 – Physical Investment***

- Investing £150million in capital project to build assets and support construction and the wider economy.

### ***Commitment 2 – Economy***

Investing £34 million in local economic growth

- Delivering 400 work placement, internships and apprenticeship opportunities
- Delivering 200 employment opportunities
- Increasing our local procurement by 10% per annum.

### ***Commitment 3 – People, Communities and Neighbourhoods***

- Using our £5 million Local Investment fund to attract and complement other funding for neighbourhood regeneration
- dealing with dilapidated and derelict building
- Levering an extra £3million to support community funding
- Implementing a £10 million grant aid programme.
- Rolling out £4 million PEACE III funding to support programmes which will improve community relations and reduce segregation across the city
- Investing £1.5 million in delivering the Renewing the Routes Programme

### ***Commitment 4 – Value for Money***

- Keeping any rates increase to the rate of inflation or below
- The introduction of social and community clauses in our contracts
- Sustaining and enhancing the value of the city's rate base to ensure future investment

The Investment Programme is underpinned by a set of core principles which underpin everything that we do

1. Good relations and equality
2. Balanced Investment
3. Partnership and Integration
4. Value for Money

## 5. Sustainability

### **Monitoring update**

Work has been ongoing on the delivery of these four commitments and the following is an update on progress to this point and the delivery of the mitigating actions identified in the EQIA.

#### ***Commitment 1 – Physical investment***

£75 million worth of physical projects has been completed or are underway across Belfast. Completed projects include

- Relocation of Belfast Welcome Centre (city centre)
- Alleygating Phase 3 (city wide)
- Roselawn - Mercury Abatement (East)
- Ardoyne Pitch and Mitch (North)
- Duncrue Fuel Station (North)
- Demolition and clearance of Old Grove (North)
- Ballysillan Play Park (North)
- Marrowbone Pitch (North)
- Redevelopment of Mary Peters Track (South)
- Mountain Bike Trail at Barnett Demesne (South)
- John Luke Bridge (South)
- Dunville Park Regeneration
- Hammer Pitch
- Woodvale Park regeneration

A wide range of projects are currently on the ground including Connswater Community Greenway/East Belfast Flood Alleviation Scheme and Girdwood Hub and there are more projects at tender preparation stage.

We have already surpassed our target for securing external monies, leveraging £75 million from Europe and other sources and allocated more than half the £5 million Local Investment Fund toward 40 community schemes.

#### ***Commitment 2 – Economy***

We have exceeded the target set for employment opportunities by providing 488 permanent and temporary employment opportunities which includes apprenticeships, internships and pre-recruitment support.

In addition we have ring fenced a number of jobs for the long term unemployed which is the first time this type of initiative has been tried in the public sector in Northern Ireland.

We have assisted 402 young people into further education, training or employment via our Achieve Bursary Fund scheme, have provided employability and skills training to 5381 people and helped 703 people find employment.

We have hosted major city events, like the World Police and Fire Games, which have contributed almost £25million towards our local economy.

All are physical contracts are now screened to ensure that include opportunities for social clauses and community benefits

To invest in our local economy we have spent £30 million on procuring good and service from local business and 45 % of our supplies are based in Belfast

### ***Commitment 3 – People, Communities and Neighbourhoods***

To support the people and communities in Belfast we have carried out £486,000 of refurbishments to more than 300 dilapidated building and spent a further £260,000 on remedial works to other properties.

We have made over 250 environmental and commercial improvement to main arterial routes into Belfast through the Renewing the Routes scheme.

To build a peaceful and inclusive city we have deliver £5.5 million of projects which included £3.4 million of EU Peace III money, spent £4.7 million on community support services which included a grant aid programme in support of 760 community groups and facilitated the first interagency forum on tackling poverty in the City.

### ***Commitment 4 – Value for Money***

Demonstrating our commitment to providing Value for Money to the ratepayers we have frozen the district rate for two consecutive years without affecting any of the front line services.

No complaints attributed to the Investment Programme have been received.