September 2nd, 2024

Chairperson: Alderman A Grehan

Vice Chairperson: Alderman A G Ewart MBE

Aldermen: J Baird and M Gregg

Councillors: P Burke, J Gallen, A Gowan, J Harpur, C Kemp, J Laverty BEM, U Mackin, A Martin, C McCready, T Mitchell and N Parker

Ex-Officio: The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson
Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin

Notice Of Meeting

A meeting of the Regeneration and Growth Committee will take place on **Thursday, 5th September 2024** at **6:00 pm** in the **Council Chamber and Remote Locations** for the transaction of business on the undernoted agenda.

A hot buffet will be available in the Members Suite from 5.15 pm for those Members who have confirmed in advance.

DAVID BURNS
Chief Executive
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Agenda

1.0 APOLOGIES

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

(i)   Conflict of Interest on any matter before the meeting (Members to confirm the specific item)

(ii)   Pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest (Member to complete the Disclosure of Interest form)

3.0 REPORT OF HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 - 2029
For Decision

3.2 Labour Market Partnership – Final Action Plan and Funding Contract 2024-2025
For Decision

3.3 Integrated Marketing Campaign Annual Review
For Decision

3.4   Regional Tourism Partnership - Visit Belfast Annual Service Level Agreement

For Decision

4.0   REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING & CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1   Council Validation Checklist Requirements

For Decision

4.2   Procedure for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements for Affordable Housing

For Decision

4.3 Local Development Plan 2032 Quarterly Update

For Noting

5.0 REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION & GROWTH

5.1 Rescheduling of date of February 2025 Regeneration and Growth Committee

For Decision

6.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

6.1 Rural Business Development Grant Scheme funded by DAERA under the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Programme (TRPSI)

For Noting

6.2 BRCD Destination Royal Hillsborough

For Decision

Confidential due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

6.3 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Evaluations
For Noting

Confidential for reason of:

a) information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, and

b) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

   📄 *2Confd For Noting - ERDF EVALUATIONSx3.pdf*   *Not included*

6.4 Lease Amendment Request
For Decision

Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

   📄 *3Confd Lease amendment request.pdf*   *Not included*

6.5 Tolerton Sports Zone, Seymour Hill
For Decision

Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

   📄 *4Confd Tolerton Sports Zone.pdf*   *Not included*

6.6 Leasing of Pitch, Lough Moss Leisure Centre

For Decision

Confidential due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

    📄 ***5Confd Lough Moss Leisure Centre - letting of pitch 5i (002).pdf***   ***Not included***

6.7   **Unit 4C Omni Park Dundonald**

Confidential due to information relating to the financial of business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

Not included

6.8   **Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields Site**

Confidential due to information relating to the financial of business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

Not included

7.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Committee:	Regeneration & Growth
Date:	5 September 2024
Report from:	Head of Economic Development

Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 - 2029

1.0   **Background**

1. The Council appointed Runda Hospitality & Tourism Solutions in September 2023 to review, revise and update the LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for 2024-2029.

2. The emerging draft LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 has been developed following a structured consultation process, and a period of research and analysis.

3. Two workshops for the Regeneration and Growth Committee have taken place - one in January 2024, and more recently in July 2024 where more information was provided on the emerging priorities, growth targets and key strategic pillars.

Key Issues

1. At the June Regeneration and Growth Committee a summary version of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan was presented by the Tourism Manager. Feedback was received, and changes made to the wider Strategy. These changes include:

    -   Change front cover image,
    -   Inclusion of how success be measured over lifespan of the Strategy,
    -   Opportunities around famous sons and daughters,
    -   Vision and Proposition moved to the front of the Strategy,
    -   Attention placed on importance of supporting festivals and events,
    -   Ideas listed for proactively seeking accommodation investors,
    -   Recommendations made for investigating potential of Lagan Valley Regional Park,
    -   Better explanation of 'immersive' tourism experiences,

2. Also, following feedback from the June Regeneration and Growth Committee it was felt a workshop with the consultant would be advantageous, allowing Members to get a better understanding of the new direction for LCCC Tourism and have sight of the extended version of the draft LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029. In summary, the emerging Strategy will place more emphasis on Tourism Industry and Destination Development, whilst continuing to support the Infrastructural investment and development work such as City and Growth Deal for Royal Hillsborough and developing more quality accommodation in the area.

3. Attached is the updated draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 for consideration, before the document is shared with the wider tourism and hospitality sector for an eight-week consultation period. Officers will be available at Committee to answer Members' questions.

4. It is proposed that officers use the opportunities through third party hosted events to have lead conversations with focus groups and those involved in the tourism industry. The purpose of these focus groups will be to heighten awareness of the strategy, motivate private sector collaboration and investment opportunities with the Council acting as an enabler at local, sub-regional and regional levels.

5. For information, both the Draft Summary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 (**see Appendix**) and the extended Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 (**see Appendix**) will be shared as part of the consultation process.

6. Attached (**see Appendix**) is the proposed consultation questionnaire for the planned eight-week public consultation period.

2.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee considers and agrees:
1. The Strategy and Action Plan be issued for an eight-week public consultation exercise.
2. A final draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will be presented to Committee following the public consultation.

3.0 Finance and Resource Implications

An allocation was included in the Tourism Development budget estimates for 2023/24.

Future impact of the actions will be considered on a case-by-case basis as part of the estimates setting process should Members agree and post the adoption of the strategy.

4.0 Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments

4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	Yes
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out It is not anticipated that the Tourism Strategy Policy will impact adversely on any Section 75 group, but instead, through an open and transparent consultation process with all shareholders, will promote equality of opportunity and good relations (**see Appendix**).	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	Yes
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out. Tourism Strategy Policy benefits the tourism and hospitality industry from both rural and urban areas of the Council area (**see Appendix**).	

Appendices:	Appendix 1a – Draft Summary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 Appendix 1b – Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 Appendix 1c – Consultation Questionnaire Appendix 1d – Equality/Good Relations Screening Appendix 1e – Rural Needs Assessment

Tourism Strategy and Action Plan
2024-2029

| Position | Innovate | Collaborate | Nurture | Grow |

Contents

Balmoral Show, Lisburn

1.1. Summary and Context

The Lisburn & Castlereagh Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 is a strategic roadmap for raising the profile of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable, and socially inclusive tourism destination with a vibrant community spirit at its heart.

The ambition of this strategy is to position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a renowned tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences like Royal Hillsborough – Northern Ireland's only designated Royal residence. The purpose of this plan is to maximise social and economic benefits for tourism providers and communities across urban and rural areas in city, town, villages and hamlets.

To achieve success a twofold approach is recommended that applies equal value to

1.	**Infrastructural investment and development:** i.e., the curation of high-quality tangible infrastructure that has been a core responsibility for Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team to date and will remain so for the future.
	
	Examples:
	• Securing +£26million investment for the development of Royal Hillsborough as a world-class heritage village
	• Installation of the Digital sculpture trail in Hillsborough Forest: ten giant sculptures created by leading artists that encourage exploration supported by an augmented reality digital app
	• Installation of the Guess How Much I Love You trail: celebrating the author and Lisburn resident, Sam McBratney who wrote the international bestseller *Guess How Much I Love You*
	
	Looking to the future, this will encompass further projects such as
	• attracting investment for the development of quality accommodation
	• scoping the potential for
	   - new tourism product: e.g., Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Ulster Aviation Society, Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB
	   - an annual tourism event to grow domestic and international visitors e.g., a food-themed festival, Christmas markets

2.	**Tourism industry and destination development:** this is essential for
	• maximising social and economic opportunities
	• sustainable tourism development
	• achieving a return for investments made on tangible infrastructure
	• meeting the expectations of the visitor who seeks to forge a deep connection with a destination and its people
	
	Activity encompasses:
	• Building a robust collaborative framework
	   - between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's tourism team and local tourism and hospitality providers
	   - across Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry
	   - between Lisburn & Castlereagh and external stakeholders that can support the destination including Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland

- Investing in new experience development: curating experiences delivered by local providers that reveal the story of people and place

- Championing tourism product and experiences that are unique to Lisburn & Castlereagh: e.g., Ulster Aviation Society, the Linen Museum, Royal Hillsborough, visitor experiences that showcase diverse aspects of the destination's story e.g., scenic beauty, food, linen design

- Enterprise development: supporting tourism businesses to maximise economic opportunities

Importantly, this twofold approach to tourism development will require careful consideration so that the full brief that Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team is responsible for throughout 2024-2029 and beyond a) has the full support of council and b) is appropriately resourced to achieve social and economic success along with the growth targets set out in this plan.

It is thereby recommended that a refocus of LCCC's tourism team is conducted in the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review to include resourcing the following activity

- product, industry and partnership development
- digital marketing

1.2. Vision and Value Proposition

The vision statement and value proposition form the foundation for all activities conducted by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council in collaboration with tourism businesses, key stakeholders and partners.

While the vision statement summarises the destination's ambition, the value proposition is created from the visitor's perspective.

Strategic plans, annual plans, and actions must align to the vision statement and value proposition. They are ideally used when engaging with tourism stakeholders and procuring services such a PR, marketing and advertising so that the destination's tourism offering, aims, and objectives are understood.

The vision statement and value proposition have been created following consultation with Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry, communities, and key stakeholders. These are working documents and can change over time as the destination evolves and as the external environment changes.

1.2.1. Vision statement

The vision of this strategy is to

Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a leading tourism destination distinguished by innovative tourism experiences that are unparalleled in Ireland, places of immense natural beauty, a rich built and cultural heritage, a vibrant food and drink scene and a deep sense of community that champions social inclusion bound by a collaborative spirit and a sustainable ethos that benefits people, planet and pocket at its heart.

1.2.2. Value proposition

Stretching from the shores of Lough Neagh in the west to the hills above Dundonald in the east, and from the Belfast Hills in the north to the source of the River Lagan in the south, Lisburn & Castlereagh is bordered by six of Northern Ireland's 11 district council areas within easy reach of Belfast and Dublin.

Home to Hillsborough Castle and Gardens (Northern Ireland's only designated *Royal* residence) and the Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB (Northern Ireland's only Regional Park), Lisburn & Castlereagh is unparalleled as a tourism destination in Ireland.

Characterised by a deep sense of community and a leisurely pace of life where welcoming people have time to engage in conversation across urban and rural neighbourhoods, an annual calendar of experiences and events inspire visitors to explore:

- **Culture and Heritage:** from being the home of Royal Hillsborough village with its remarkable Georgian architecture, art galleries and stately homes to the Ulster Aviation Society with 30+ historic aircrafts and craft design ranging from handmade linen to fine art ceramics

- **Food and Drink:** a celebrated destination for food and drink with gastro pubs, restaurants and farmer's markets that champion local produce complemented by experiences in private homes, cookery schools as well as Hinch Distillery and Hilden Brewery that are beloved locally

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- **Adventure and Activities:** a haven for walkers and hikers - Lagan towpath walk connects Lisburn to Belfast; biking, boating, falconry, horse-racing and horse-riding, parkland golf courses, and Ireland's largest aqua park at Let's Go Hydro

- **Events and Festivals:** year-round community and large-scale events include the Down Royal Racing Festival that takes place annually in November - with a heritage dating back to 1865, this racecourse is the only one in Northern Ireland to host jump and flat racing

Complimented by restaurants, cafes, bars and accommodation from glamping, self-catering cottages, B&Bs and guesthouses to stately homes, castles and hotels, Lisburn & Castlereagh is naturally suited to domestic and international leisure visitors including individuals and groups, couples, families, soft adventurers, golfers, inter-generational travellers and enthusiasts of nature, culture & heritage, food & drink, and the great outdoors.

For business tourism, Lisburn & Castlereagh is home to outdoor spaces and indoor venues including the Eikon Exhibition Centre (Northern Ireland's largest events venue with 10,000 SQMs of indoor event space on a 55-acre site), historic buildings and hotels for meeting, conference, events and incentive groups from 10 to 10,000 delegates.

As a collaborative and responsible community, we welcome everyone who shares our commitment to social inclusion and a sustainable ethos that benefits people, planet and pocket.

Castlereagh Hills Golf Course

1.3. Key Priorities

This section summarises the activity that has emerged via research that needs to be prioritised to achieve the ambitions outlined in the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

Apply a balanced approach	Adopt a twofold approach that blends a commitment to a) the development of quality tourism infrastructure and b) tourism industry and destination development
Infrastructure Development and Promotion	• Promote existing tourism infrastructure so that it benefits the local community and visitors • Successfully manage the development of projects that are underway (e.g., Royal Hillsborough) ensuring to promote these to generate benefits for the local community and visitors.
Experience Development	• Deliver enterprise development supports to curate experiences that authentically share the story of local people across urban and rural communities to meet the expectations of contemporary visitors • Ensure that these experiences are bookable by independent visitors and private bookings to maximise opportunities
Food and drink	• Continue to champion LCCC as a destination renowned for quality food and drink, places to eat and drink • Additionally, craft and promote food and drink-related experiences that allow for a deeper exploration of this priority theme
Commercial Development	Deliver enterprise development supports to maximise social and economic benefits by empowering LCCC's tourism and hospitality industry to • make strategic choices about which sales channels, markets and customer segments to engage in • master data collation and analysis to assess progress, mitigate challenges and identify opportunities
Collaborative Framework	Build a robust collaborative framework, noting that this is the foundation for all successful tourism destinations: • between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council departments • between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's tourism team and local tourism and hospitality providers • across Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry • between Lisburn & Castlereagh and external stakeholders that can benefit the destination including Visit Belfast, Lough Neagh Partnership, Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland

Sustainable Tourism Development	• Embed an ethos of sustainable and regenerative tourism development, ensuring that this informs all activity • Apply a dual approach a) led by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland policies and b) industry-led: empowering tourism providers to adopt and promote Leave No Trace principles
Social Inclusion & accessibility	Place social inclusion at the heart of all activity and champion accessible tourism development
Invest in accommodation	Proactively seek investors to develop quality sustainable accommodation that is suited to LCCC's profile, to include luxury lodge style accommodation
Events and festivals	Continue to champion the annual community and large-scale events programme while curating a signature festival with an innovate concept and programming that can generate opportunities during the low season, potentially by expanding LCCC's Christmas markets across December and into the New Year
Investigate Tourism Potential	Work with key stakeholders to support the development of experiences that are unique in Ireland including • Royal Hillsborough • Ulster Aviation Society • EIKON exhibition centre and Maze Long Kesh • Down Royal Racecourse • Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB: jointly funded by LCCC and Belfast City Council
	Noting that Dundonald International Ice Bowl (DIIB) in its current format reads as a sports and recreational offering rather a tourism offering, assess if and how DIIB can be positioned and developed as part of LCCC's wider tourism offering
Integrated Marketing Campaigns	Continue with the management of campaigns conducted by LCCC's tourism team that have been successful in raising the district's profile and driving footfall from the NI and ROI markets
Data collation and analysis	Collate an annual report (2024-2029) so that progress is visible and measurable to include NISRA, Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland data; in-destination visitor counter data; local market research data; data collated via a survey issued to tourism businesses

Communications	• Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a place apart with its own unique identity and character that is home to authentic and unparalleled experiences • Consider how a) LCCC can benefit from Visit Belfast's approach to "neighbourhood tourism" and b) if/how LCCC should continue to be branded by Visit Belfast under the Belfast Plus brand in the future
	Promote the tourism offering across the following categories to encompass visitor attractions, activity and experience providers, events and festivals, places to eat, drink and stay - natural assets: i.e., places of interest and natural beauty - culture and heritage - outdoor recreation, adventure and activities - food and drink experiences - events and festivals: community and large-scale events - places to eat and drink: e.g., restaurants, gastro pubs, cafes - places to stay: e.g., hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs, self-catering

Be strategic	Ensure that all activity targets the opportunities that are most suited to LCCC including

Customers:	**Markets:**	**Tourism**
• individuals, groups • couples, families • inter-generational travellers • soft adventurers, golfers • enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, soft adventure and outdoor activities	• NI • ROI • North America • GB • France • Germany	Leisure tourism: a priority Luxury tourism Business tourism

Visit Belfast	Continue to partner with Visit Belfast via an agreed SLA to maximise opportunities via NI, ROI and international markets - agree metrics so that outcomes can be measured - assess the SLA after a defined period (e.g., 3-5 years) to decide how best to proceed into the future
Lough Neagh Partnership	Explore the following opportunities: • potential for new experience development • potential collaborations with LN tourism providers • how to profile LN as part of the district's tourism offering
Spread social and economic benefits	Leverage the promotion of signature attractions such as Royal Hillsborough. ensuring that this promotion maximises social and economic benefits for urban and rural communities

Address Visitor Services	**Enhance the Visitor Information Services (VIC)** 1. **At the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum** give equal consideration to the • provision of customer-centric VIC services and • delivery of a quality visitor experience via the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum as a visitor attraction
	2. **Address the mobile Visitor Information service (trailer) currently based at Hillsborough Forest Park** • installing services such as a power point and WIFI in the trailer so that work can be conducted during quiet times • adding external communications to include QR codes, local tips and maps to maximise promotional opportunities • using the trailer as a flexible VIC in the future that can be placed anywhere in the district as required to maximise opportunities
	3. **Install a permanent Visitor Information Centre at Hillsborough Forest Park to** • service the +600,000 visitors to the park • raise awareness about the tourism offering in Royal Hillsborough and (importantly) throughout the Lisburn & Castlereagh district
	Across all Visitor Services: • **Reduce the use of print materials** • **Adopt a hybrid approach:** noting that the contemporary visitor wants to a) meet a person who can share local insights seconded by b) information provided by digital communications • **Invest in training and robust data collation** to maximise opportunities and achieve measurable success • **Think innovation:** e.g., during high demand periods - extending visitor services on bike or by foot - recruiting and training volunteers to support visitor services - training tourism businesses (e.g., accommodation providers) to extend the work of VIC's by generating referral and packaged opportunities for the district
Refocus LCCC's tourism team	To achieve the ambition and growth target outlined in this plan, refocus LCCC's tourism team in the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review by considering how to resource the following functions: product and partnership development, digital marketing

1.3.1 Strengths and Considerations

The key strengths and considerations that Lisburn & Castlereagh need to be aware of and address in all future activity are here summarised:

Strengths

- Passionate tourism industry and communities, eager to raise the profile of their destination
- Prime eastern location with easy accessibility to Dublin and Belfast and wider exploration
- Variety of city, town, villages and hamlets, each with their own character
- Vibrant communities with a deep sense of identity across urban and rural areas
- New product development: Royal Hillsborough, Dundonald International
- Strong tourism product: golf, horse racing, visitor attractions
- Product that is unparalleled in Ireland: e.g., Royal Hillsborough, Ulster Aviation Society
- Ability to meet diverse visitor interests: culture & heritage, food and drink, adventure & activities
- Scenic beauty: home to Lagan Valley Regional Park, NI's only Regional Park
- Quality and diversity of scenery: Lough Neagh (west), hills above Dundonald (east), Belfast hills (north), River Lagan (south)
- Renowned for exceptional food and drink offering
- Year-round calendar of community, larger scale events & festivals and farmers markets
- Integrated Marketing Campaigns: raising the destinations' profile in NI and ROI
- Visit Belfast partnership: expanding the potential to target new domestic and international visitors

Considerations

- A need to position L&C as a destination with a unique identity, rather than as a suburb of Belfast
- A need to drive tourism dispersion across the destination across urban and rural areas
- While rich in tourism product, there is a lack of immersive experiences delivered by local people
- Low supply of experiences bookable by independent visitors
- A lack of accommodation to achieve dwell time and a high proportion of ungraded accommodation
- Tourism industry reporting a need for greater collaboration
- A need for LCCC's tourism team to apply a balanced approach supporting a) infrastructure development and b) the tourism industry with collaborative and economic development opportunities
- While there are champions of sustainable and accessible tourism, this is not consistent across industry
- A lack of data capture making it challenging to measure performance
- In the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review, an opportunity to refocus LCCC's tourism team to maximise social and economic opportunities, inc. by resourcing the following functions: product & partnership development, digital marketing

1.6. Growth Target, Key Strategic Pillars and Objectives

In the contemporary context international tourism is in an uncertain place following the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the prevalence of international economic and geopolitical unrest.

While the challenges are clear, in the current environment these co-exist with optimistic forecasts. Both the Department of the Economy's Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland – 10 Year Plan and Tourism Ireland project growth in the value of tourism in Northern Ireland:

- The *Department for the Economy's Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland - 10 Year Plan* (2024) sets out the strategic aim of increasing the value of tourism to the Northern Ireland economy by 50% -75% compared to 2019, or growth of 4%-6% per annum.

- The *Tourism Ireland Marketing Plan* (2024) sets targets of driving tourism revenue growth in Northern Ireland by +6.5% year-on-year to 2030. This is compared to targeted island of Ireland growth of 5.6% average year on year growth to 2030.

Following research and consultations including with Ulster University's Economic Policy Centre, a target has been set to increase revenue generation via tourism in Lisburn & Castlereagh by 34% in 2029 compared with 2019: i.e., 5.6% per annum over six years 2024-2029.

This target serves to provide a benchmark against which tourism businesses can assess their performance and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council can assess destination-wide performance.

Integrating all outcomes that have emerged, activity over the next six-years will be guided by five strategic pillars:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Position	Innovate	Collaborate	Nurture	Grow

While the following table summarises the key focal points for these pillars, the Action Plan 2024-2029 under section three outlines the actions to address across these pillars under the following eight objectives:

- Objective 1 Embed a collaborative framework in the destination
- Objective 2 Invest in tourism product, new experience & festival development
- Objective 3 Invest in enterprise development and data analysis processes
- Objective 4 Invest in communications
- Objective 5 Embed a culture of responsible tourism in all activity
- Objective 6 Reimagine Visitor Services to inspire visitors
- Objective 7 Work in partnership with Visit Belfast to maximise opportunities

> The Action Plan 2024-2029 under section 3 of this plan itemises the objectives and associated actions that apply to each of these pillars that need to be addressed over the coming years to achieve the vision, ambition and targets set out in this strategy.

Table 1:Focal points for the five strategic pillars 2024-2029

Strategic pillar	Key focal points
Position	Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable and socially inclusive tourism destination that is unlike any other, defined by

	• a leisurely pace of life
	• close-knit communities, deeply connected with their homeplace
	• welcoming people who take time to engage in conversation with visitors
	• attractions and experiences that are impossible to experience anywhere else in Ireland inc. Northern Ireland's only Royal Residence, the Ulster Aviation Society and The Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB
	• vibrant hubs across city, town, villages and hamlets
	• a place to enjoy nature and the great outdoors
	• a place that meets diverse visitor needs and interests: culture and heritage; outdoor recreation, adventure and activities, food and drink
	• accessible geographical location
	  - bordered by 6 of Northern Ireland 11 district council areas
	  - within easy reach of Belfast: including by foot along the Lagan towpath that connects Lisburn with Belfast
	  - within easy reach of Dublin

Innovate	Be a frontrunner in innovation, ensuring this is a hallmark of all activity inc. by
	• investing in quality tangible infrastructure: including the successful completion of the Royal Hillsborough development plan • investing in the development of authentic immersive experiences that share the unique story of people and place (ensuring that these experiences are bookable by individuals and groups) across the following themes: culture, history & heritage; outdoor recreation, adventure & activities; food & drink • promoting services and experiences that share Lisburn & Castlereagh's unique tourism offering via communications • curating a signature tourism-relevant event/festival during the lifetime of this plan with an innovative concept and programming that has the potential to attract domestic and international audiences • the delivery of Visitor Services: e.g., incorporating flexible solutions (on foot, by bike or boat), sharing insights and gems directly from local people • seeking investment in sustainable accommodation solutions that are in-keeping with the destination and align with its ethos
Collaborate	Be a champion of collaboration by embedding a collaborative framework:

	• within the destination:
	  - create a robust network that connects all tourism and hospitality businesses so that they know, support and refer each other to include the delivery of a) one annual forum sharing industry-relevant updates, followed by networking, b) two half day networking events and c) min. one annual familiarisation trip
	  - promote engagement with the tourism destination offering and associated businesses among local communities
	  - provide tourism businesses and community members with the opportunity to become an extended part of Visitor Services
	
	• outside the destination: proactively develop partnerships with stakeholders that can support, promote and maximise opportunities inc. Visit Belfast, The Lough Neagh Partnership, Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and professional travel buyers

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Strategic pillar	Key focal points
Nurture	Promote Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination defined by integrity and thoughtful hospitality, making this evident in all activity including by
	• ingraining a sustainable and regenerative tourism ethos with evidenced based outcomes • caring for all people including those with physical, mental and intellectual needs by a) supporting education and awareness and b) providing guidance and communications that empower visitors to make sound choices about how to experience the destination • championing and supporting tourism and hospitality providers • placing community and local people at the heart of the tourism offering • guiding visitors so that they behave responsibly in the destination • curating experiences that celebrate cultural heritage, preserving traditions (e.g., linen craft) inherited from the past for future generations • preserving built heritage for future generations by investing in quality destination development that enriches the lives of local communities and the experience for visitors • safeguarding the natural environment and biodiversity: e.g., Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB
Grow	Support local livelihoods, economic growth and enterprise development

	• Deliver supports for industry to a) expand commercial capabilities, b) promote collaborative and cross-referral opportunities and c) instil robust data collation and analysis processes, ensuring that benefits spread across the Lisburn & Castlereagh's geography.
	
	• Apply a dual approach to data collation and analysis by a) supporting tourism businesses to improve their data collation processes and b) investing in destination-wide metrics encompassing local data (inc. data collated via a survey issued to tourism businesses, counter data at visitor attractions, footfall data from events and festivals) and data available via Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and NISRA.
	
	• Adopt a proactive and goal-focused approach to achieve success, targeting opportunities that are best suited to Lisburn & Castlereagh:
	  - **Customer segments:** individuals and groups, couples, families, soft adventurers, golfers, inter-generational travellers and enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, soft adventure and outdoor activities
	  - **Markets:** Northern Ireland (local, neighbouring locations and wider NI), ROI, North America, Great Britain, France, Germany
	  - **Opportunities:** leisure tourism (including luxury leisure) as a priority and business tourism for relevant providers
	
	• Invest in visitor services to maximise opportunities
	
	• In the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review refocus LCCC's tourism team to maximise social and economic opportunities, giving due consideration to resourcing the following activity: product and partnership development, digital marketing

Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

| Position | Innovate | Collaborate | Nurture | Grow |

Contents

1.1. Summary and Context

The Lisburn & Castlereagh Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 is a strategic roadmap for raising the profile of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable, and socially inclusive tourism destination with a vibrant community spirit at its heart.

The ambition of this strategy is to position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a renowned tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences like Royal Hillsborough – Northern Ireland's only designated Royal residence. The purpose of this plan is to maximise social and economic benefits for tourism providers and communities across urban and rural areas in city, town, villages and hamlets.

To achieve success a twofold approach is recommended that applies equal value to

1.	**Infrastructural investment and development:** i.e., the curation of high-quality tangible infrastructure that has been a core responsibility for Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team to date and will remain so for the future.
	
	Examples:
	• Securing +£26million investment for the development of Royal Hillsborough as a world-class heritage village
	• Installation of the Digital sculpture trail in Hillsborough Forest: ten giant sculptures created by leading artists that encourage exploration supported by an augmented reality digital app
	• Installation of the Guess How Much I Love You trail: celebrating the author and Lisburn resident, Sam McBratney who wrote the international bestseller *Guess How Much I Love You*
	
	Looking to the future, this will encompass further projects such as
	• attracting investment for the development of quality accommodation
	• scoping the potential for
	  - new tourism product: e.g., Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Ulster Aviation Society, Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB
	  - an annual tourism event to grow domestic and international visitors e.g., a food-themed festival, Christmas markets

2.	**Tourism industry and destination development:** this is essential for
	• maximising social and economic opportunities
	• sustainable tourism development
	• achieving a return for investments made on tangible infrastructure
	• meeting the expectations of the visitor who seeks to forge a deep connection with a destination and its people
	
	Activity encompasses:
	• Building a robust collaborative framework
	  - between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's tourism team and local tourism and hospitality providers
	  - across Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry
	  - between Lisburn & Castlereagh and external stakeholders that can support the destination including Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland

- **Investing in new experience development:** curating experiences delivered by local providers that reveal the story of people and place

- **Championing tourism product and experiences that are unique to Lisburn & Castlereagh:** e.g., Ulster Aviation Society, the Linen Museum, Royal Hillsborough, visitor experiences that showcase diverse aspects of the destination's story e.g., scenic beauty, food, linen design

- **Enterprise development:** supporting tourism businesses to maximise economic opportunities

> This twofold approach to tourism development will require careful consideration so that the brief Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team is responsible for throughout 2024-2029 and beyond a) has the full support of council and b) is appropriately resourced to achieve social and economic success along with the growth targets set out in this plan.

This plan follows the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 (the first tourism strategy coordinated by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council since its establishment as a local authority in Northern Ireland in 2015) and is set out in two key parts:

- **Strategic Analysis:** a summary of the research and outcomes that inform the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029
- **Action Plan 2024-2029:** defining the strategic pillars and associated actions for the next five years

Across these two parts, the plan has three sections:

1. Summary and Context
2. Where We Are Now
3. The Way Forward: Action Plan 2024-2029

1.2. Vision and Value Proposition

The vision statement and value proposition form the foundation for all activities conducted by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council in collaboration with tourism businesses, key stakeholders and partners.

While the vision statement summarises the destination's ambition, the value proposition is created from the visitor's perspective.

Strategic plans, annual plans, and actions must align to the vision statement and value proposition. They are ideally used when engaging with tourism stakeholders and procuring services such a PR, marketing and advertising so that the destination's tourism offering, aims, and objectives are understood.

The vision statement and value proposition have been created following consultation with Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry, communities, and key stakeholders. These are working documents and can change over time as the destination evolves and as the external environment changes.

1.2.1. Vision statement

The vision of this strategy is to

Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a leading tourism destination distinguished by innovative tourism experiences that are unparalleled in Ireland, places of immense natural beauty, a rich built and cultural heritage, a vibrant food and drink scene and a deep sense of community that champions social inclusion bound by a collaborative spirit and a sustainable ethos that benefits people, planet and pocket at its heart.

1.2.2. Value proposition

Stretching from the shores of Lough Neagh in the west to the hills above Dundonald in the east, and from the Belfast Hills in the north to the source of the River Lagan in the south, Lisburn & Castlereagh is bordered by six of Northern Ireland's 11 district council areas within easy reach of Belfast and Dublin.

Home to Hillsborough Castle and Gardens (Northern Ireland's only designated *Royal* residence) and the Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB (Northern Ireland's only Regional Park), Lisburn & Castlereagh is unparalleled as a tourism destination in Ireland.

Characterised by a deep sense of community and a leisurely pace of life where welcoming people have time to engage in conversation across urban and rural neighbourhoods, an annual calendar of experiences and events inspire visitors to explore:

- **Culture and Heritage:** from being the home of Royal Hillsborough village with its remarkable Georgian architecture, art galleries and stately homes to the Ulster Aviation Society with 30+ historic aircrafts and craft design ranging from handmade linen to fine art ceramics

- **Food and Drink:** a celebrated destination for food and drink with gastro pubs, restaurants and farmer's markets that champion local produce complemented by experiences in private homes, cookery schools as well as Hinch Distillery and Hilden Brewery that are beloved locally

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- **Adventure and Activities:** a haven for walkers and hikers - Lagan towpath walk connects Lisburn to Belfast; biking, boating, falconry, horse-racing and horse-riding, parkland golf courses, and Ireland's largest aqua park at Let's Go Hydro

- **Events and Festivals:** year-round community and large-scale events include the Down Royal Racing Festival that takes place annually in November - with a heritage dating back to 1865, this racecourse is the only one in Northern Ireland to host jump and flat racing

Complimented by restaurants, cafes, bars and accommodation from glamping, self-catering cottages, B&Bs and guesthouses to stately homes, castles and hotels, Lisburn & Castlereagh is naturally suited to domestic and international leisure visitors including individuals and groups, couples, families, soft adventurers, golfers, inter-generational travellers and enthusiasts of nature, culture & heritage, food & drink, and the great outdoors.

For business tourism, Lisburn & Castlereagh is home to outdoor spaces and indoor venues including the Eikon Exhibition Centre (Northern Ireland's largest events venue with 10,000 SQMs of indoor event space on a 55-acre site), historic buildings and hotels for meeting, conference, events and incentive groups from 10 to 10,000 delegates.

As a collaborative and responsible community, we welcome everyone who shares our commitment to social inclusion and a sustainable ethos that benefits people, planet and pocket.

Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

1.3. Creating the Plan

The scope requested of the Lisburn & Castlereagh Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 is:

- provide strategic guidance to
  - raise the profile of the district as a tourism destination
  - achieve economic growth that benefits the district's tourism businesses and local economy
  - leverage tourism to raise pride and identity, generating social and wellbeing benefits
  - provide guidance on offline and online marketing

- make recommendations about the opportunity to develop new tourism products and experiences

- review the former Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, noting that the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 requires a fresh approach in the context of a post Covid-19 and Brexit era

- identify potential sources of funding to enable implementation of this Tourism Strategy

- provide guidance about how to maximise the role and the potential of the district's Visitor Servicing function, analysing gaps and new opportunities (e.g., digitalisation)

Guided by this direction, this plan is informed by consultations, an analysis of the provision of Visitor Services, a product audit, in-destination site visits and desk research:

- **Consultations:**
  - Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) officers
  - LCCC tourism and hospitality businesses
  - LCCC elected representatives
  - Tourism Northern Ireland
  - Tourism Ireland
  - Visit Belfast: leisure and business tourism representatives
  - Professional travel buyers (leisure and business tourism) in Ireland and abroad, including the ITOA and ETOA associations
  - Disability Federation Ireland
  - Ulster University Economic Policy Centre
  - Climate action experts
  - Leave No Trace
  - Independent data intelligence and international benchmarking organisations

- **In-destination site visits:** an in-person assessment of signature tourism products that are unique to the Lisburn & Castlereagh district including:
  - Hillsborough Castle and Gardens: Northern Ireland's royal residence
  - Ulster Aviation Society: 30+ historic aircrafts and exhibits celebrating Northern Ireland's aviation heritage, expertly curated by passionate volunteers

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- Down Royal racecourse: the only racecourse in Northern Ireland to host both jump and flat racing, with a heritage dating back to 1865
- Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB (4,200 acres): Northern Ireland's only Regional Park with rich biodiversity and heritage
- Maze Long Kesh: a 347-acre site that is home to the Ulster Aviation Society and the 5,000m2 EIKON exhibition venue and exhibition facility renowned for hosting events such as the Balmoral Show (Northern Ireland's largest agri-food event with +100,000 visitors in May annually)
- Places to dine, visit and stay:
  - places to dine including gastro pubs and restaurants
  - places that offer food & drink experiences with tours and tastings such as distilleries and breweries
  - places to stay: including hotels and guest houses

- **Product Audit:** an analysis of existing tourism products and experiences to identify strengths, gaps and opportunities under the following categories:
  - Natural assets: places of natural beauty
  - Experiences: culture & heritage; adventure & activities; food & drink; wellness and sustainability
  - Accommodation providers
  - Events and festivals
  - Exclusive Venues

- **Visitor Services review:**
  - site visits and consultations were conducted with Visitor Services teams in Dublin, Belfast, Newry Mourne Down and Derry ~ Londonderry
  - reports and visitor services models from Ireland, Scandinavia and Germany were studied
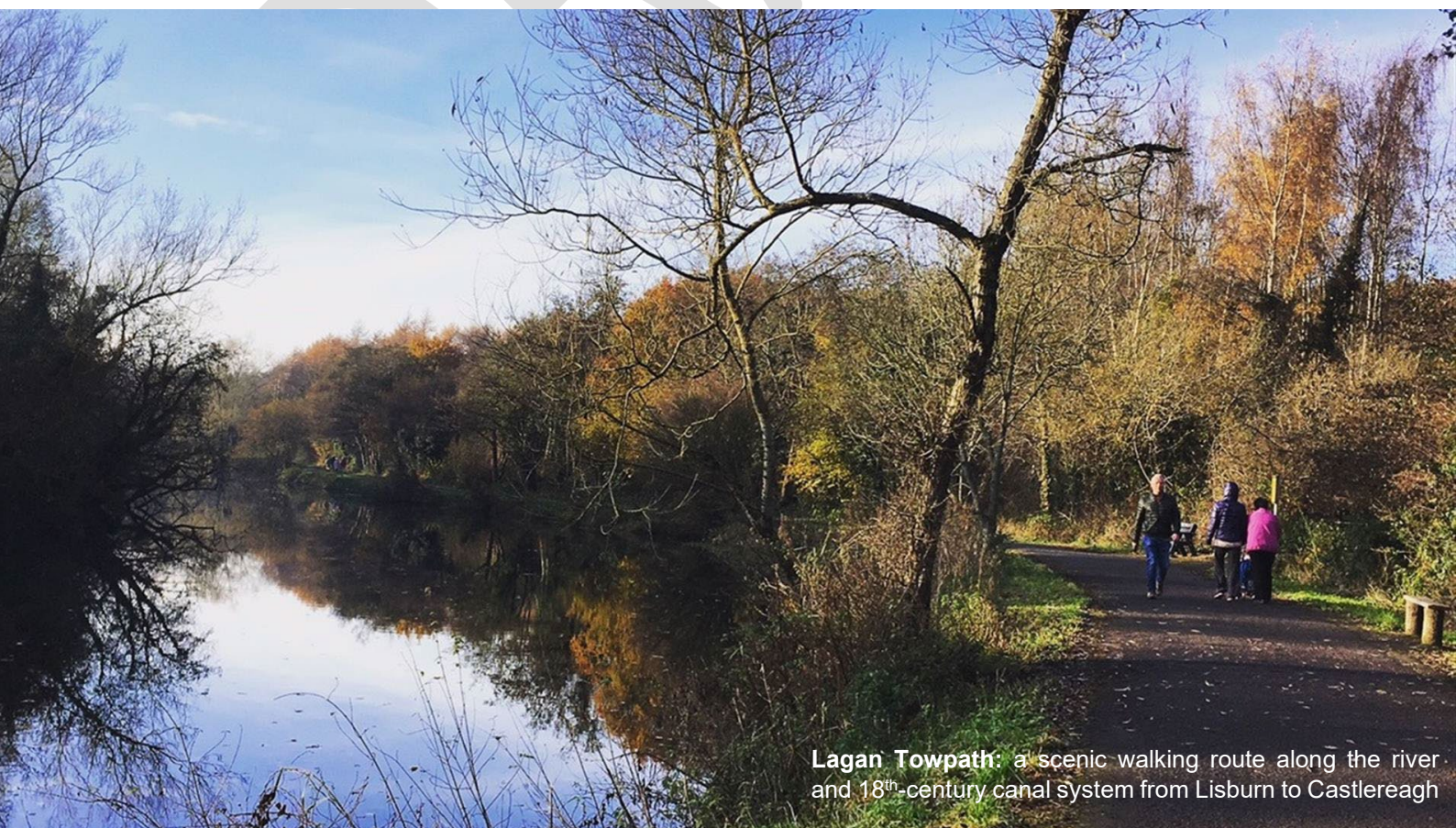
Lagan Towpath: a scenic walking route along the river and 18th-century canal system from Lisburn to Castlereagh

- **Desk Research:** reports and analyses relevant to LCCC's tourism strategy including regional Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) strategies, national strategies and independently published reports

This plan including all recommendations and actions aligns with regional and national policies and strategies:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC):	National Strategies and Policies	Visit Belfast related reports	Independent reports
- LCCC Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 - LCCC Community Plan 2017-2032 - LCCC Corporate Plan and Ambitions 2024/2028 - LCCC Interim Corporate Plan 2021-2024 - LCCC Local Development Plan 2032 - Hillsborough Tourism Masterplan - Hillsborough Castle and Heritage Village Outline Business Case June 2021 - Royal Hillsborough Sustainability Report - LCCC Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2021-2022	- Tourism NI's Draft Tourism Strategy 2024-2034 - Together Building a United Community Strategy - Rural Needs Act - Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act - Tourism NI 2022-23 operating plan - Tourism NI Annual Report 2020 - Lagan Valley Regional Park Five Year Management Plan 2023-2028 - Tourism Ireland Marketing Plans - Department for the Economy Economic Strategy - Department for the Economy Economic Vision (2024): Good jobs, Regional Balance, Raise Productivity, Net Zero - Department of Culture, Arts and Heritage: A Way Forward - DAERA Northern Ireland Food Strategy	- LCC and Visit Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership 2022-2023 - Visit Belfast Business & Operational Plan 2022-2023 - Visit Belfast Draft Strategy 2024-2027 - Visit Belfast Business Plan 2024	- United Nations Climate Change reports - World Tourism Organisation (UN Tourism) reports - Booking.com Sustainable Travel Report 2023 - Disability Federation of Ireland Advocacy Plan 2024-2026 - Future.TI (Destination Germany) 2020 - Food NI's *Our Food the Power of Good*

Ulster Aviation Society
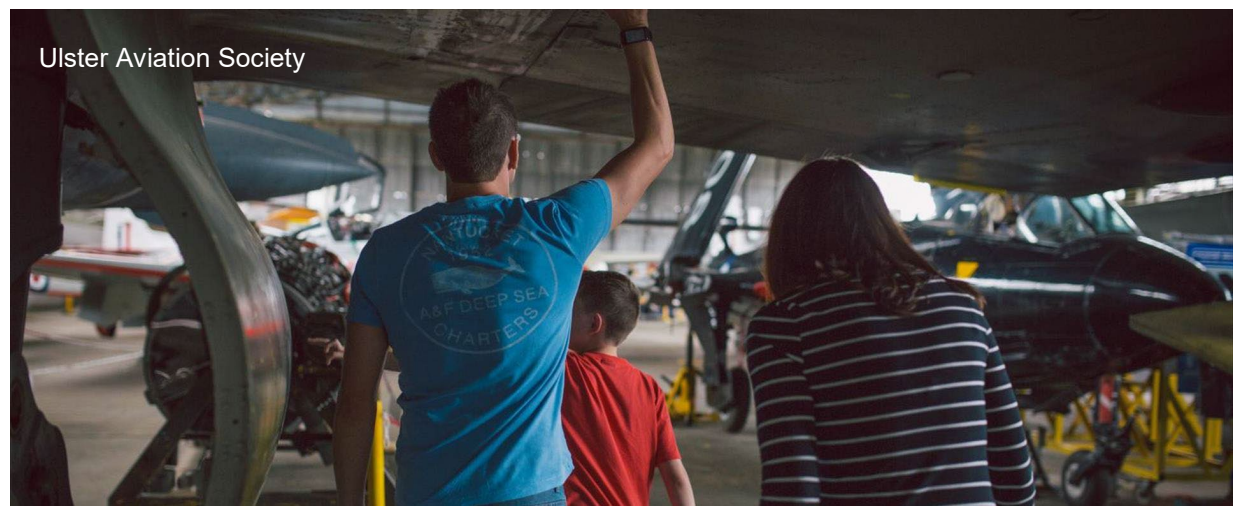
1.4. Tourism Priorities: past and future

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council has been extremely successful in the development of tourism infrastructure for which the council's tourism team has been instrumental. Examples of high profile projects:

- **+£26 million investment secured for Royal Hillsborough village:** home to Hillsborough Castle and Gardens and Hillsborough Forest, this investment will support the development of Royal Hillsborough as a world-class heritage village.

  The funds represent a combined investment made by Belfast Region City Deal, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Historic Royal Palaces (HRP)

- **Completion of tourism infrastructure projects:**
  - Digital sculpture trail in Hillsborough Forest: encompassing ten giant sculptures created by leading artists that encourage exploration supported by an augmented reality digital app
  - Guess How Much I Love You trail: celebrating the author and lifelong Lisburn resident, Sam McBratney who wrote the international bestseller *Guess How Much I Love You* in 1994 (selling more than 55 million copies worldwide), this Public Art and Literature Trail is accessible through a digital app or offline map

- **+£52 million investment for Dundonald International Ice Bowl:** development of a state of the art facility featuring an Olympic-sized ice rink, 24-lane bowling alley and catering facilities

  Opening in 2026, it is estimated that the ice bowl will welcome more than 700,000 visitors annually by contrast with existing annual visitor numbers of 500,000

Other notable achievements following the inception of the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 include

Elevating the food and drink offering: a key theme in the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022	• raising the profile of the rich food and drink heritage and innovative producers as a primary motivator for visiting the Lisburn & Castlereagh district that is home to gastro pubs, restaurants, and quality artisan industries • developing an annual programme of farmers markets alongside food & drink related themed events • raising the profile of local destinations that champion quality Northern Ireland food and drink produce: e.g., the Speciality Food Fair that takes places in August annually in the Moira village
Events and festivals	Supporting the development of an annual programme of community and larger scale events across the district to drive visitor footfall e.g., • Balmoral Show that takes place in the Eikon Exhibition Centre Lisburn, welcoming more than 120,000 visitors in May annually • Down Royal Festival of Racing in November annually
Integrated Marketing campaigns	A key theme in the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, successes include delivering an annual Integrated Marketing Campaign to increase awareness and footfall to the district

Looking to the future: going forward the tourism team will continue to focus on the above outlined activity to include

- positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a leading destination for food and drink
- supporting events, festivals and farmers markets
- delivering integrated marketing campaigns
- tourism infrastructure development: ensuring that the management of any such projects is handed over to the appropriate operational experts upon completion.

Additionally, to maximise social and economic opportunities Lisburn & Castlereagh will place a priority focus upon

- building a robust collaborative framework that connects
  - tourism industry business providers: developing partnership opportunities
  - Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry with the local community
  - Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team with local tourism business providers and all stakeholders that can support the development of this tourism destination including Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Visit Belfast

- curating tourism experiences that share the story of people and place

- enterprise development: delivering training and mentoring supports that can help local tourism providers maximise opportunities individually and collectively

- embedding a culture of sustainable and regenerative tourism and social inclusion within all activity

- promoting Lisburn & Castlereagh as a leading tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences

- maximising opportunities that can deliver a return on investment for the destination's tourism infrastructure projects

> As this activity brings increased responsibilities, a refocus will be required to appropriately resource the Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team to achieve success and the growth targets outlined in this plan.

The requirement for this renewed focus is evident throughout the Key Findings outlined in the following section.

Christmas Market, Castle Gardens

1.5. Key Findings

This section highlights the key outcomes that have emerged to inform the growth target and strategic priorities in this plan under the following ten headings

I.	Positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a tourism destination
II.	Travelling across boundaries and understanding the visitor's perspective
III.	Regional Partnership: Visit Belfast and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
IV.	An assessment of the tourism offering and destination
V.	Lough Neagh Partnership
VI.	Dispersion across all tourism businesses and the destination
VII.	Sustainability, regeneration, climate action and biodiversity
VIII.	Placing inclusion, collaboration and community at the heart of tourism development
IX.	Supporting livelihoods and the economy: commercial and data analytics development
X.	The future of Visitor Services in Lisburn & Castlereagh

I. Positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a tourism destination

From the outset of the consultation process, the debate arose among tourism businesses about whether Lisburn & Castlereagh is a) a tourism destination with its own identity and character or b) a suburban destination that is an extension of Belfast.

This uncertainty about the positioning of the Lisburn & Castlereagh district manifests in council reports too. For example, the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's Interim Corporate Plan 2021-2024 states that *"there can be a perception of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a suburb of Belfast rather than somewhere to live and work."*

Ultimately the balance of opinion landed on positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination with its own character that offers the added convenience of being easily accessible to Belfast. The strong sentiment expressed is that the Lisburn & Castlereagh district is differentiated by

> Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a tourism destination with its own unique character that offers the convenience of being accessible to other places, including Belfast

- **a slower pace of life**: described as a destination "at ease," an ideal place for visitors to unwind in the company of welcoming people who have the time to engage in conversation

- **a deep sense of community:** this aligns with the sentiment of Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan 2017-2032: "*Local identity is important. People identify strongly with the towns, villages, and neighbourhoods they live in…*"

- **an accessible geography:** with a broad variety of experiences possible within easy commuting distance a) within the district and b) outside the district: e.g., it is possible to walk from Lisburn to Belfast along the Lagan towpath in 2-3 hours

Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry has asked for ambition, calling out the potential to achieve more by increasing the profile of the destination's unique tourism offering across the full breadth of the geography in urban and rural areas. The Lisburn & Castlereagh Community

Plan 2017/2032 in turn acknowledges the potential to achieve more, stating that the tourism opportunity has not yet reached its' full potential and is still "underdeveloped."

Through consultations, stakeholders have emphasised how this is a compelling, must-visit destination, particularly for

- families: with lots to do from Lets Go Hydro to outdoor activities and forest trails

- culture and heritage enthusiasts: 745 archaeological sites and monuments, six Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes, Ulster's rich industrial heritage in fine linen

- food and drink enthusiasts: with vibrant farmer's markets (e.g., in the historic Royal Hillsborough village), excellent places to eat from pubs to restaurants, Hinch Distillery and Hilden Brewery (Ireland's oldest independent brewery)

- soft adventure enthusiasts: from parkland golf courses with idyllic views to breathtaking landscapes for walking and cycling such as the Lagan Valley Regional Park (4,200 acres and 11 miles of riverbank), Hillsborough Forest and open parkland at Moira Demesne

- luxury tourism: home to Royal Hillsborough - renowned for striking architecture, old-world charm and Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, the destination is a natural fit for visitors who appreciate exclusive experiences

- business tourism: a prime location to meet the needs of corporate meetings, conferences, incentives, and events:
  - Eikon Exhibition Centre: Northern Ireland's largest events venue with 10,000 SQMs of indoor event space on a 55-acre site
  - Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
  - Unique venues such as Hilden Brewery and Hinch Distillery
  - outdoor spaces such as Lagan Valley AONB (4,200 acres)
  - in-destination hotels: while the supply of accommodation in Lisburn & Castlereagh is limited, additional rooms can be sourced from neighbouring areas such as Belfast

II. Travelling across boundaries and understanding the visitor's perspective

When positioning the tourism offering of any destination, it is important to be aware that visitors from the domestic and international marketplace are not concerned with district council or geographical boundaries. Instead, they travel from one compelling location to another in search of memorable experiences that reflect the story (traditions, customs, values, way of life) of local communities.

In the context of Lisburn & Castlereagh it is essential to be mindful of this given the district's

- **location:** stretching from the shores of Lough Neagh in the west to the hills above Dundonald in the east, and from the Belfast Hills in the north to the source of the River Lagan in the south, the district is bordered by six of Northern Ireland's council areas
  - Belfast: population of approximately 348,000
  - Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon: population of approximately 220,000
  - Newry Mourne and Down: population of approximately 182,000
  - Ards and North Down: population of approximately 164,000
  - Mid Ulster: population of approximately 151,000
  - Antrim and Newtownabbey: population of approximately 146,000

- **regional partnership:** a formal agreement whereby Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council works in partnership with Visit Belfast to support the promotion of tourism businesses in Lisburn & Castlereagh

Within this framework, the strategic approach for Lisburn & Castlereagh needs to
- focus upon raising the profile of the district's tourism offering so that local businesses (individually and collectively) stand out to win domestic and international visitors and maximise dwell time
- maximise opportunities for Lisburn & Castlereagh by
  - targeting the 1.3+ million people (70% of Northern Ireland's population) who live in Lisburn & Castlereagh (population of approximately 149,900) and within 6 neighbouring district council areas (combined population of approximately 1.2+ million including 348,000 in Belfast) for day trips and short stays
  - targeting the wider Northern Ireland marketplace
  - targeting the Republic of Ireland marketplace, noting that County Dublin (with a population of 1.4+ million) is within easy reach of the district
  - targeting international market opportunities in markets prioritised by Tourism Ireland: North America, Great Britain, France and Germany.
- work in partnership with Visit Belfast to maximise opportunities

Noting that Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism offering is dually promoted by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council under the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh brand and by Visit Belfast under the Belfast Plus brand, the industry in Lisburn & Castlereagh has asked for promotion of the tourism offering in their destination to be amplified across domestic and international markets over the next five years. The success of this activity can be measured against the growth targets outlined in this plan.

> Leverage Lisburn & Castlereagh's prime location and strategic partnerships to maximise opportunities via the local, national and international marketplaces

III. Regional Partnership: Visit Belfast and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

The consultation process raised ambiguities about how tourism is promoted by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Visit Belfast. Noting that clarity was requested in this regard, the partnership between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Visit Belfast along with their associated roles are outlined below.

Visit Belfast	Visit Belfast operates as a not-for-profit Destination Marketing Management Organisation (DMMO) supported by Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland to provide marketing, sales and visitor servicing activity with the purpose of delivering on city-wide and national tourism strategies.
	Visit Belfast's remit is thereby to create and service domestic and international visitors across leisure, business and cruise tourism for • Belfast • Regional tourism partners: bound by a Service Level Agreement, this includes Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Ards and North Down Borough Council • Destination Northern Ireland • developing an established annual programme of farmers markets alongside food and drink related themed events

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	• raising the profile of local destinations that champion quality Northern Ireland food and drink produce: e.g., the Speciality Food Fair that takes places in August annually in the Moira village

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	Lisburn & Castlereagh District Council's tourism team operates at a localised level with priorities encompassing
	
	• development of tourism infrastructure such as
	   - trails: e.g., the Digital sculpture trail in Hillsborough Forest and the Guess How Much I Love You trail
	   - large scale projects: e.g., securing investment and supporting the development of Royal Hillsborough (£26 million) and Dundonald International Ice Bowl (£52 million)
	   - food and drink product offering: e.g., the development of farmer's markets and raising the profile of the diverse quality of places to eat and drink across the district
	
	• promotion of the district's tourism offering: primarily to Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland leisure tourism visitors via digital marketing and in-destination Visitor Services

Regional partnership between Visit Belfast and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Since the Greater Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership was first set up in 2006, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Visit Belfast have engaged in a collaborative partnership bound by a Service Level Agreement whereby Visit Belfast promotes the Lisburn & Castlereagh district via marketing, sales and Visit Belfast-operated visitor services.

Lisburn & Castlereagh is marketed under *Belfast Plus* with the purpose of a) highlighting the district's proximity to Belfast and b) the breadth of experiences and services located here that meet the needs of leisure, business, and cruise tourism visitors.

Under the Belfast Plus brand, activity conducted by Visit Belfast includes

- promotion via
  - Belfast Plus web pages and social media channels
  - Belfast City & Region Guide
- inclusion in targeted marketing campaigns that prioritise the domestic, Republic of Ireland and Great Britain markets
- visitor services across the following locations with dedicated Belfast Plus branding: Visit Belfast Welcome Centre, Belfast International Airport and George Best Belfast City Airport (travel advisory services, literature distribution, event information, ticketing service and accommodation booking)
- Belfast industry engagement programme: raising the profile of the Lisburn & Castlereagh district's tourism offering to generate referral bookings via Belfast-based tourism and hospitality businesses
- Cruise Belfast website and Cruise Terminal Visitor Servicing: March-October
- Visit Belfast Business Events website and conference guide
- representation at consumer and trade shows for leisure and business tourism in Ireland and internationally

The future opportunity, metrics and neighbourhood tourism

Looking to the future, by working in partnership with Visit Belfast there is an opportunity for Lisburn & Castlereagh to leverage Belfast's brand recognition as a tourism destination and Northern Ireland's capital city to a) achieve measurable promotional and economic opportunities for tourism businesses and b) increase dwell time in Lisburn & Castlereagh.

Noting that Visit Belfast's Business Plan 2024-2025 has set a KPI to achieve 780,000 visits across overnight trips (250,000), day trips (200,000), cruise tourism (296,000) and corporate delegates (24,000), it is recommended that an updated Service Level Agreement (SLA) with clear objectives, actions and KPIs are agreed for Lisburn & Castlereagh over a defined period (e.g., 3 or 5 years) and that the success of this SLA is assessed via agreed KPIs and metrics.

Visit Belfast's focus on neighbourhood tourism

Within the SLA, the context for "neighbourhood tourism" outlined as a strategic focus in Visit Belfast's Strategy 2024-2027 also needs consideration. As neighbourhood tourism champions engagement with local people and places, this opportunity is especially relevant for Lisburn & Castlereagh with a variety of neighbourhoods across urban and rural areas.

Notably, the importance of *"neighbourhoods"* where *"local identity is important"* is widely referenced across Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council plans, including the Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan 2017/2032.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council: maximising opportunities

To maximise opportunities via the Visit Belfast collaboration and beyond this collaboration, this plan recommends that the council

- regularly engages with Visit Belfast to ensure that agreed actions and associated KPIs are achieved, strengths are optimised and challenges are addressed

> Continue to partner with Visit Belfast, alongside targeting opportunities at a local, regional and national level

- continues with the integrated marketing campaigns delivered by Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team that target Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland visitors
- proactively develops partnerships with key tourism stakeholders including Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland
- proactively develops partnerships with professional travel buyers across leisure and business tourism, noting that the buyers consulted for this plan welcomed learning more about Lisburn & Castlereagh as a tourism destination
- actively engages with local tourism businesses to foster a culture of cross collaboration across the destination
- develops alliances that can benefit Lisburn & Castlereagh, for example with Visit Belfast visitor services representatives and Belfast-based accommodation providers that can refer visitors
- reviews targeted marketing campaigns conducted by Visit Belfast that prioritise the domestic, Republic of Ireland and Great Britain markets to
  - assess the opportunity for Lisburn & Castlereagh
  - ensure that duplications across Lisburn & Castlereagh and Visit Belfast's marketing activity are avoided
  - measure the success of Visit Belfast-led campaigns for Lisburn & Castlereagh via robust data collation and analysis
- reviews initiatives such as those provided by Visit Belfast, Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland to determine opportunities for Lisburn & Castlereagh

IV.   An assessment of the tourism offering and destination

To ensure that the Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism offering is communicated with clarity over the next six years, the key categories for promotion have been identified as

- **natural assets:** places of natural beauty (e.g., Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB) and hub communities across the district's urban and rural landscapes: city, town, villages and hamlets

- **culture and heritage:**
  - experiences and services that share the story of people and place
  - tangible heritage: e.g., Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
  - cultural heritage: traditions inherited over generations such as fine linen making

- **outdoor recreation, adventure and activities:** from land and water based activities (e.g., walking, hiking, biking, boating, golfing and horse-riding) to fun for all ages at locations such as Let's Go Hydro, Down Royal Racecourse

- **food and drink:** quality tourism experiences with local providers such as
  - immersive experiences: e.g. learn how to make a local dish or how a local beer or whiskey is crafted
  - guided trails: showcasing local food and drink provenance and suppliers with insights provided by an expert

- **events and festivals:** from community to large scale events

- **places to eat and drink:** from gastro pubs to restaurants and farmer's markets

- **places to stay:** encompassing all categories such as glamping, self-catering, B&Bs, guesthouses and hotels

- **exclusive venues**: for private and corporate occasions

Table 1 summarises key outcomes from the product audit conducted for this plan raising the following points

- **an opportunity to curate experiences that share the story of people and place:** for example, while there are 133 places to eat and drink such as cafes, pubs and restaurants, there are only 5 food and drink tourism experiences delivered by local providers

- **an opportunity to increase experiences bookable by independent visitors:** a low proportion of tourism experiences and activities are available to book on dates calendared across the season - limiting the potential for public promotion and the supply of experiences for independent visitors and small groups

- **a low availability of quality accommodation:** 6 out of 94 accommodation providers listed are hotels. A high proportion of providers are not officially graded

- **abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation and adventures:** Lisburn & Castlereagh is well positioned to target visitors interested in the great outdoors including via golf, equestrian, water sports activities, walking and biking trails

Table 1: summary product audit outcomes

Category	Notable outcomes
Natural assets	Lisburn & Castlereagh has natural assets that are ideal for outdoor recreation including Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB, Hillsborough Forest, Slievenacloy Nature Reserve, Wallace Park and Portmore Lough.
Culture, history and heritage attractions and experiences	17 providers in this category: visitor attractions (12) and experiences (5). While all 17 service private bookings, just 6 of the 17 provide services bookable by independent visitors.
Outdoor recreation, adventure and activities	43 in this category: golf (7), equestrian (8), water sports (7) and farm activities (6). While all 43 service private bookings, < 50% provide services bookable by independent visitors.
Food and drink experiences and activities	5 in this category • 3 tours: Hilden Brewery, Hinch Distillery, Coca Cola Visitor Experience • 2 cookery schools The above are largely available subject to request for private bookings. There is low availability of experiences for this theme that is a priority for Lisburn & Castlereagh and an absence of experiences such as guided walking trails that share insights into local provenance and producers.
Places to eat and drink	177 listings: cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants – Lisburn & Castlereagh benefits from a quality food and drinking offering.
Places to stay	94 listings across hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and self-catering: a high proportion of providers operate ungraded accommodation: i.e., quality standards are not certified by Tourism Northern Ireland Across a total availability of 1477 beds, the allocation per accommodation provider category is summarised below: • **690:** 3 and 4 star graded hotels • **606:** self-catering (majority have no official grading) • **181:** guesthouse (majority have no official grading)

The audit combined with feedback from the consultation process has raised important points addressed in the following sections

    A. Meeting the visitor demand for experiential tourism
    B. Promoting signature tourism offerings that are unique to Lisburn & Castlereagh
    C. Availability of accommodation
    D. Tourism events, festivals and funding

A. Meeting visitor demand for experiential tourism:

Visitor expectations have been changing in recent years with a rising demand for experiential tourism. This is acknowledged in Tourism Northern Ireland communications emphasising how the contemporary visitor seeks authentic and engaging experiences (known as *immersive* experiences) that delve into the uniqueness of an area. The expectation is that these experiences

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- **are rooted in place:** i.e., they share the story of local people and their community

- **offer an opportunity to learn something new**: e.g.,
  - a skill such as playing an instrument or learning a craft
  - an insight into a local tradition, a moment in history, a local hidden gem

- **are compelling and memorable:** e.g.,
  - a walking experience with a local guide showcasing breathtaking views
  - learning how to bake or cook a new recipe in a local chef's kitchen
  - hearing how a local craft whiskey is made, ending with a guided tasting
  - crafting a piece of wood, glass or clay with a master crafts person
  - following a themed trail (e.g., food and drink) that shares the provenance of local ingredients and insights into local producers
  - discovering new places, ways of living and communities on foot, or bike or boat

- **provoke thought and emotion:** i.e., they offer a fresh perspective and can stir a wide range of emotions such as excitement or happiness

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Responding to the demand for experiential tourism, Tourism Northern Ireland launched the Embrace A Giant Spirit destination experience brand in 2019 with the cited promise of *"sharing the giant spirit of Northern Ireland and awakening the giant spirit in our visitors."* The brand hallmarks known as inspirers are summarised below:

- **Big heartedness:** defining the warm, friendly and down-to-earth nature of people in Northern Ireland

- **Legends and stories:** untapping the legends, myths and history of Northern Ireland to showcase how exciting and inspirational culture and creativity is

- **Originality:** showcasing Northern Ireland's pioneering spirit

- **Land, water and sea:** sharing the natural beauty of Northern Ireland while preserving and nurturing this so it can be enjoyed by future generations

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As the product audit has raised the opportunity for Lisburn & Castlereagh to curate experiences that meet the needs of visitors seeking experiential tourism, this plan recommends that this is prioritised via bespoke enterprise development programmes to curate a compelling collection of experiences delivered by local people across the following themes:

> Curate authentic experiences that share the story of people and place, ensuring that these are available to book on a scheduled and private basis

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- culture & heritage
- adventure & activities
- food & drink

To reach the widest possible audience, these experiences need to be bookable online (for independent visitors) and on a private booking basis (for private bookers and groups).

B. Promoting signature tourism offerings unique to the Lisburn & Castlereagh district

Lisburn & Castlereagh is in the fortunate position of having signature tourism attractions that are unique to this destination. These include

- Royal Hillsborough, Hillsborough Castle & Gardens
- Ulster Aviation Society
- EIKON exhibition centre and Maze Long Kesh
- Down Royal Racecourse
- Dundonald International Ice Bowl
- Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB

The outcomes for each noted attraction are addressed below along with recommendations to increase their profile and maximise opportunities.

Royal Hillsborough, Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

As previously noted, £26 million investment has been secured for the development of Royal Hillsborough village (widely known as Hillsborough) that because it has retained many of its original features is characterised by a distinctive sense of place.

To safeguard the village for future generations along with improving the quality of life for residents and the experience for visitors, the noted investment will be used to

- upgrade public realm across the streetscape and square, including the historic Courthouse
- address upgrades required at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

> Raise the profile of Hillsborough Castle and Gardens so it enters the league of top 10 paid visitors' attractions in Northern Ireland

Apart from Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, the village is home to accommodation providers and quality places to eat and drink making it an ideal destination for visitors.

Noting that consultations with professional travel buyers made it clear that there is a desire to learn more about this offering and how it can be used for diverse requirements from luxury to corporate and from general to special interest visitors, the ambition is to raise the profile of this attraction during the lifetime of this plan so that it enters the league of top 10 paid visitor attractions as defined by Northern Ireland's Statistics and Research Agency- NISRA (joining other attractions such as Titanic Belfast, Mount Stewart, Marble Arch Caves and Saint Patrick's Centre).

Aligned with this ambition, this plan recommends the curation of a) a collection of experiences that share Royal Hillsborough's unique story (e.g., experiences delivered by Hillsborough Fort Guards) and b) communications that clarify the services and venues available to meet the needs of leisure and business tourism visitors.

> Position Royal Hillsborough as part of the wider tourism offering, ensuring that social and economic opportunities spread across the district

Importantly, as outlined in the LCCC Corporate Plan and Ambitions 2024/2028, Royal Hillsborough should not be presented as the sole reason for visiting the Lisburn & Castlereagh district, but rather as a visitor attraction that is part of a wider tourism offering that draws the visitor "to a range of other historic and natural attractions in the area."

Ulster Aviation Society

Unlike anything else in Ireland, 30+ historic aircrafts and exhibits celebrating Northern Ireland's aviation heritage are displayed in two hangars that are listed buildings within the 347-acre Maze Long Kesh site in Lisburn. The exhibition is curated by passionate volunteers, many of whom are mechanics, engineers and pilots devoted to the maintenance of the aircrafts that are presented in working order and pristine condition.

With tours (available subject to pre-booking) delivered by volunteer guides who are knowledgeable and passionate, the experience feels like walking on to a movie set where aircraft usually only seen in photographs are accessible to view and touch.

> Provide bespoke supports so that the Ulster Aviation Society can maximise promotional and commercial opportunities

As an experience, the Ulster Aviation Society has potential to be further developed to attract leisure and business tourism visitors seeking an original venue. To realise this opportunity, bespoke supports are required so that the Ulster Aviation Society is equipped with the commercial and operational know-how to achieve success.

EIKON exhibition centre and Maze Long Kesh

Maze Long Kesh is a 347-acre open space that houses two tourism-relevant sites: the Ulster Aviation Society and the 5,000m2 EIKON exhibition centre. Known for hosting the Balmoral Show (+100,000 visitors- Northern Ireland's largest agri-food event), EIKON is the largest exhibition centre in Northern Ireland.

> Target commercial opportunities for EIKON supported by a strategic plan and explore the potential for tourism at Maze Long Kesh

The venue functions well on a practical level with ample internal and external spaces, car and coach parking with easy access to accommodation in Lisburn & Castlereagh and neighbouring areas such as Belfast.

Noting that consultations conducted for this plan have confirmed interest in exhibition spaces that avoid the hassle of traffic-heavy urban areas, there is the potential to increase Lisburn & Castlereagh's reputation for the delivery of exhibitions for which a targeted commercial and operational strategic plan that champions a sustainable ethos (including sustainable travel solutions for reaching the exhibition centre) is required.

Considering the expanse of the Maze Long Kesh site, a separate study should be conducted to assess if and how the site can be further developed for the benefit of local communities and tourism.

Down Royal Racecourse

Located in County Down (approximately 20 minutes outside of Belfast), the Down Royal Racecourse stages some of the most prominent races on the Irish racing calendar. Renowned for being the only racecourse in Northern Ireland to host both jump and flat racing, Down Royal promises a compelling experience for visitors and a novel way to connect with local people.

With numerous private suites to avail of throughout the racecourse, this plan recommends that Down Royal is positioned as part of Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism offering to target leisure and business tourism visitors.

Dundonald International Ice Bowl

Set for an investment of £52 million and a target (post redevelopment) to welcome more than 700,000 visitors, Dundonald International Ice Bowl will boast an Olympic-sized ice rink, 24-lane bowling alley and extensive catering facilities.

A key function of a tourism visitor attraction is to create a compelling and memorable experience that shares a unique insight into the story of people and place, with the power to attract visitors - thus increasing in-destination dwell time that benefits the local economy.

> Assess if and how Dundonald International Ice Bowl can be positioned as part of the tourism offering

Within this context, in its current format Dundonald Ice Bowl reads as a sports and recreational offering rather than as a fit for tourism.

This plan thereby recommends that an assessment is conducted to determine if and how Dundonald International Ice Bowl can be positioned as an integral part of Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism offering and strategy.

The Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB

The Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB is a precious natural asset that is Northern Ireland's only Regional Park and one of nine designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Northern Ireland. Encompassing 4,200 acres and 11 miles along both sides of the River Lagan, the park bridges the urban hubs of Lisburn and Belfast connecting the cities via a towpath.

Home to a rich biodiversity and heritage, the park is characterised by an array of outdoor spaces including smaller parks, farmlands, woodlands, and meadows. Following a site visit of the Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB, it became clear that it has the potential to be developed to meet the needs of leisure and business tourism visitors. Some of the ideas raised included a safari-style exploration by jeep accompanied by Park Rangers that would be unique in Ireland.

While one third of the park's expanse is in the Belfast City Council area, two thirds are in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area. The value of the Lagan Valley Regional Park is recognised across Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council policies including the Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan 2017/2032 that references the park as a unique *"tourism/recreation asset that requires protection for future generations."*

As the opportunities that the park presents are variable and vast, this plan recommends that an independent study is conducted to include an assessment of

- how the park can be best positioned as a tourism asset with a sustainable and regenerative ethos at its heart
- what kind of experiences and services can be developed to meet the needs of the local community, leisure and business tourism customers in Ireland and internationally
- what kind of events can be curated
- what kind of customers and markets are suited to the offering
- how can the park generate social and economic benefits as a tourism offering
- what kind of communications are required for tourism purposes
- what kind of supports are required to achieve success

> Conduct an independent assessment to determine how best to position the Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB as a quality sustainable tourism offering that benefits the local community and visitors

As the park is jointly funded by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Belfast City Council, this study would be ideally conducted in partnership with both councils.

C. Availability of accommodation

The product audit conducted for this plan confirms that there are 587 bedroom units with a total capacity of 1477 beds available across the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area.

More than 50% of the available rooms are in Lisburn, the district's only city. A further 17% of available rooms are concentrated in the historic villages of Royal Hillsborough and Moira, with the balance largely spread throughout Aghalee, Ballynahinch, Carryduff and Dundonald.

The total of 1477 available beds are spread across the following accommodation provider categories:

- **690:** 3 and 4 star graded hotels with the 4-star La Mon Hotel & Country Club (a total of 280 beds) and the 3-star Premier Inn Lisburn (a total of 180 beds) providing the highest proportion of inventory

- **606:** self-catering (the majority have no official grading)

- **181:** guesthouse (the majority have no official grading)

Considering the destination's capacity to attract luxury visitors, there are no 5-star options and a significant proportion of accommodation providers are ungraded.

While the destination has benefited from new openings in recent years including the Haslem Hotel in Lisburn (2020) with 45 bedrooms and Arthurs Townhouse in Royal Hillsborough (2023) with 12 bedrooms, the low availability of quality accommodation is widely referenced including in the Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan 2017/2032: *"the estimated number of overnight stays was the lowest across all councils […]. There is a lack of hotel accommodation in the area and in general the number of beds in licensed accommodation."*

While Lisburn & Castlereagh's location means that it can benefit from the wider availability of accommodation in neighbouring areas such as Belfast, the low availability of accommodation can impact dwell time running the risk that Lisburn & Castlereagh attracts a high proportion of day trippers rather than longer stays.

This in turn means that visitors have less opportunity to choose staying in this district area in a destination that offers a slower pace of life by comparison with Belfast.

This plan accordingly recommends scoping the potential to develop sustainable accommodation solutions across all accommodation categories: e.g., self-catering, guesthouses and hotels.

Considering the destination profile and the presence of The Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB, it is recommended that the potential for luxury lodge style accommodation that works in harmony with the natural environment is explored.

> Maximise opportunities for increased dwell time by exploring the potential for investment in sustainable accommodation solutions

D. Tourism events, festivals and funding

Supporting the development of an annual programme of major and community events to drive visitor footfall has been a priority focus for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. Examples of major events supported by the council include

- Hillsborough Castle & Gardens Honey Fair: August annually
- Down Royal Festival of Racing: November annually

The product audit conducted for this plan highlighted twelve events defined as small or major events. However, not all these events (e.g., Northern Ireland International Cross Country – October annually) are relevant for the purposes of tourism.

A tourism event should showcase a destination's culture, people and place in a way that **a)** enriches the visitor experience, **b)** welcomes visitors from the local community and Northern Ireland marketplace, and **c)** proactively targets and generates new money via external visitors (e.g., from the Republic of Ireland and international markets) into the economy.

Importantly, the event must have a strong concept and should ideally take place during low season months when the economic benefits are most needed. Appendix 1 summarises examples of successful tourism events in Ireland.

Within this context, it is recommended that a new event is identified with the potential to attract domestic and international visitors. This event should draw upon Lisburn & Castlereagh's unique identity and strengths: e.g., food and drink, Christmas markets. It should also be rooted in a compelling concept and innovative programming.

> Curate the concept and delivery of one successful tourism-focused festival during the lifetime of this plan

Once concepts and programming are identified, it is further recommended that the council should consult with Tourism Northern Ireland for guidance, noting that there are two funding options currently available (national and international) as summarised under Appendix 2.

If Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council proceeds with a new event, it is recommended that investment via Tourism Northern Ireland's national event fund is initially sought. Once this event establishes a strong track record and a demonstrated ability to win external visitors, the potential to apply for the international event fund can be determined.

V. Lough Neagh Partnership

The Lough Neagh Partnership is a stakeholder organisation that was established in 2003 to help manage and protect Lough Neagh. The board of the partnership is comprised of key stakeholders, elected representatives, landowners, fishermen, farmers, local communities. The Lough Neagh Partnership is the primary organisation responsible for the sustainable development of Lough Neagh.

Core funding for this partnership is provided by all councils that surround the lough. This includes Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council where a 3-mile stretch along the lough's shoreline (with two sand refineries and a private marina) is part of this jurisdiction.

> Explore the potential for Lough Neagh to be positioned as part of Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism offering

This partnership facilitates the potential for

- **new experience development:** delivered by providers on the stretch of Lough Neagh that is part of the Lisburn & Castlereagh district

- **collaborations:** with tourism providers that represent Lough Neagh

- **profiling Lough Neagh** as part of the Lisburn & Castlereagh tourism offering

VI.   Dispersion across all tourism businesses and the destination

While positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination that is home to unique visitor attractions and experiences, it is essential to ensure that opportunities are maximised across the district for all tourism and hospitality businesses, their associated communities, and local economies.

> Focus on promoting the full tourism offering and dispersion so that all tourism providers and communities across Lisburn & Castlereagh benefit

Via the consultation process, Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism businesses have asked that signature visitor attractions with extensive capacity for visitors are

- promoted as part of the wider collection of tourism experiences and services
- leveraged to benefit all tourism businesses along with all urban and rural communities across city, town, villages, and hamlets

This approach is essential for sustainable tourism development that encourages year-round travel and dispersion. Showcasing the full breadth of what the destination can offer is also key for a) appealing to diverse visitor interests and b) creating reasons to repeat visit.

This plan thereby recommends that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council stays abreast of the full catalogue of market-ready tourism experiences and services that are ready for promotion during the lifetime of this plan and beyond across the following categories:

- **Culture, history and heritage:** e.g., historic visitor attractions and museums, guided walking trails, craft experiences (e.g., ceramics, textiles)

- **Outdoor recreation, adventure and activities:** e.g., activity centres, guided walking, hiking, boating and biking experiences, golfing, horse riding

- **Food and drink experiences and activities:** e.g., guided food and drink trails, cookery experiences and guided tours (Hilden Brewery and Hinch Distillery)

- **Places to eat and drink:** places such as gastro pubs and restaurants that champion local provenance, produce and producers

- **Places to stay:** all accommodation types- self-catering, B&Bs, guesthouses and hotels

- **Exclusive venues:** exhibition centres, hotels, stately homes, eateries, visitor attractions and places like Castlereagh Golf Club and Drumbo Park Greyhound Stadium with spaces for semi-private and private hire

VII.   Sustainability, regeneration and climate action

While sustainable and regenerative tourism is not referenced in the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, it is prioritised in other Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council policies. For example, the Local Development Plan 2032 references *"sustainable tourism development"* that benefits

Hilden Brewery: oldest independent brewery in Ireland

local people, the local economy and visitors and the LCCC Corporate Plan and Ambitions 2024/2028 champions the promotion of sustainable tourism along with "the use of our asset base to increase sustainability" under Strategic Theme No 3 – Planet.

Sustainability will be a key priority for the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029, aligning with existing council policies and the *Department for the Economy's recent Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland - 10 Year Plan's* vision to establish Northern Ireland as a destination with *"sustainability at its core."*

Accordingly, the intention is to ingrain a culture of sustainability so that the destination's landscape, built heritage and cultural heritage is celebrated and preserved for future generations. Accordingly, tourism activity will demonstrate a holistic commitment to

- safeguarding the environment
- championing local communities
- supporting livelihoods and the local economy

While this approach brings wide-ranging benefits to local people, it also meets the expectations of visitors as national and independent reports confirm a rising demand for sustainable tourism destinations.

Whereas sustainable tourism seeks to minimise harm, regenerative tourism aspires to actively heal and nurture.

Within tourism lexicon, the term *sustainability* is often used to reference both sustainable and regenerative tourism practices. However, as regenerative tourism development can achieve more and there is a growing understanding of its greater impact, Lisburn & Castlereagh needs to be transparent about both sustainable and regenerative activity alongside the associated outcomes.

During the period 2024-2029, key activity will include:
- working with tourism and hospitality businesses to ingrain a culture of sustainability, maximising all associated social and economic benefits
- instilling and promoting measures that safeguard the environment and reduce emissions, ensuring that outcomes are visible and measurable based on pre-determined baselines
- curation of sustainable tourism experiences and products that authentically represent people and place
- promoting existing and future sustainable travel solutions (e.g., on foot, by bike, boat, or public transport), routes (e.g., Lagan towpath) and itineraries
- considering the prevalence of quality places to eat and drink, working with experts to provide guidance about what ingredients are sustainable for promotion on menus
- providing guidance for tourism businesses and communities about how to support visitors so that they engage respectfully within the destination
- raising awareness by communicating activity across offline and online channels
- aligning with UN Sustainable Development Goals and the VICE model for sustainable tourism

> Sustainable and regenerative tourism is a strategic priority 2024-2029.
>
> A culture of sustainability will be ingrained that demonstrates an evidence-based commitment.

- **Visitors:** welcoming, involving and delighting visitors
- **Industry:** achieving a profitable and prosperous industry
- **Community:** engaging and benefiting host communities and showcasing/respecting their unique identities and culture
- **Environment**: being mindful of the collective impact of visitors, industry and community on the environment and the importance of nurturing and protecting this

VIII.   Placing inclusion and collaboration at the heart of tourism development

Inclusion has arisen as a key pillar for the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 encompassing accessible tourism development, social inclusion, community engagement and collaboration as priorities. This aligns with the Department for the Economy's Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland - 10 Year Plan that identifies inclusion as a key pillar.

In the context of the Lisburn & Castlereagh District, this ambition is explained further below under the following headings: collaboration; community; accessible tourism development and social inclusion

Collaboration: this was a key pillar of the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, prioritising the development of partnerships with

- stakeholders such as Visit Belfast and Tourism Northern Ireland
- tourism businesses and sites with the capacity to welcome large visitor numbers such as the Historic Royal Palaces and the Ulster Aviation Society
- stakeholders that can support investment in tourism accommodation
- businesses to create packaged experiences, including food and drink

Going forward, the strategy will build on this approach to include establishing a robust collaborative foundation across tourism and hospitality businesses in the Lisburn & Castlereagh district. As collaboration is the foundation of all successful tourism destinations, this is a key step to achieving the increased promotion and growth set out in this plan. Led by the Lisburn & Castlereagh Councils' tourism team, activity will include

- **direct engagement** with Lisburn & Castlereagh Councils' tourism team and local tourism and hospitality businesses
- **an annual calendar of events** organised by Lisburn & Castlereagh Council's tourism team:

  - **one annual forum:** one full day in-person event when tourism industry-relevant updates are delivered, ending with a networking event
  - **networking events:** two half day in-person events where businesses meet each other and establish the potential for partnership opportunities
  - **familiarisation trip:** min. one annual day trip empowering businesses to make new connections and experience the destination on a firsthand basis

- **capability supports:** designed to a) connect local businesses, b) increase collaborative and networking skillsets, c) generate referral opportunities across businesses and d) raise awareness of how the Lisburn & Castlereagh offering sits within the wider Northern Ireland context and the Embrace A Giant Spirit destination experience brand

Community: noting that community is at the heart of all Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council policies and that community is at the heart of sustainable tourism development, this plan recommends that Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry and offering connects with community.

This can be addressed in multiple ways including by
- making the community aware that as tourism shares the story of people and place, it shares their unique story
- making visitors aware of ways they can directly engage with community: e.g., via golf clubs, horse racing events, farmers markets, events and festivals
- empowering community representatives to become local experts with the know-how to guide visitors and support sustainable tourism
- promoting the profile of tourism experiences, products and hospitality services to residents and businesses, including how these support local livelihoods and the economy

- identifying if there are community representatives from non-tourism backgrounds with the skillsets required to transition into tourism – e.g., to deliver tourism experiences

Accessible Tourism Development and Social Inclusion: the intention is to build a culture and infrastructure that promotes accessibility for all people.

Guided by experts, relevant stakeholders, organisations and local industry experts, all sectors of the tourism and hospitality industry will be supported to be responsible and proactive about addressing diverse human needs including via communications, product, experience and service delivery.

This will include the promotion of Universal Design along with no and low-cost solutions that can improve accessibility within tourism businesses and infrastructure

Inclusion and collaboration is a strategic priority 2024-2029:

- creating a robust collaborative framework for local tourism providers
- connecting the local community with tourism
- establishing partnerships with key stakeholders
- recognising and addressing the needs of all people

IX. Supporting livelihoods and the economy: commercial development and data analytics

Aligned with sustainable tourism development, this plan advocates for livelihoods, job creation and the local economy ensuring that benefits spread across the full breadth of the destination. This aligns with the LCCC Corporate Plan and Ambitions 2024/2028 that references the following benchmarks for success:

- an increase in job numbers, including via start-up activity
- an increase in the number of visitor trips and visitor spend per annum

While the starting point for economic success is rooted in collaboration whereby tourism and hospitality businesses work together and in partnership with the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's tourism team, Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland, additional supports are required to maximise economic development opportunities. These include

- **strategic capabilities:** empowering tourism businesses to make smart choices about which opportunities to target to achieve growth
- **data collation and analysis:** promoting how data collation and analysis is essential for achieving sustainable, stable and profitable revenue generation

To achieve the growth targets in this plan, the delivery of commercial and data analytics enterprise development supports are recommended to help businesses and the local economy thrive.

Data collation and analysis: challenges, benefits and processes
Tourism businesses advise that it is challenging to assess business performance and trends at a local level. While there is useful information and data available at a national level via Tourism Northern Ireland (largely informed by NISRA data), the industry seeks a) destination-

specific insights and b) consolidated data: i.e., one report that captures performance and trends.

Devising a local data capture mechanism will take time and present challenges. These include

- *collating data across diverse sectors:* accommodation, visitor attractions, experience & activity providers, festivals, places to eat, drink & socialise
- *inconsistent data collation:* not all businesses have processes in place to record data – e.g., some will not be able to advise what percentage of their visitors come from the domestic and international marketplace.
- *Covid-19:* the pandemic disrupted the collation of tourism data

Conversely, robust data collation can deliver significant benefits. These include:

- *an empowered industry:* via quality data capture, LCCC (businesses and destination) can indicate strengths and challenges to optimise economic performance
- *grant aid and funding:* robust data can support funding applications strengthening the opportunity to achieve funding for LCCC (businesses and destination)

Mindful of challenges, it is recommended that Lisburn & Castlereagh develops a two-way approach:

Tourism businesses	Support education and awareness building an industry understanding of a) why data collation is essential for growing business opportunities, b) what data to collate and c) how to analyse this data to maximise opportunities
Destination	Plan for LCCC-wide data capture beginning with a survey questionnaire that a) can be completed anonymously by tourism businesses, b) includes all businesses - those with robust and weaker data capture processes and c) is easy to complete – i.e., a short number of relevant questions: visitor numbers, country of origin, channels (how visitors make their bookings) Using the outputs from this questionnaire and relevant insights available to LCCC (e.g., footfall at events), Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland data, generate an annual overview of performance and trends to share with industry

The Parson's Nose, Royal Hillsborough

The following fields should be considered for inclusion in the survey questionnaire:

1.	Business Category	A. Accommodation provider B. Visitor Attraction C. Experience & Activity providers D. Events & festivals E. Venues (places to eat, drink and socialise)		
2.	Numbers	*Accommodation:* total bed nights		
		Business category B-E: total visitors' numbers		
3.	Markets include the option to tick the percentage of visitors per market	ROI NI GB	US France Germany	Spain Italy Other
4.	Channels include the option to tick the percentage of visitors per market	Website Social Media	Referral: e.g., a local partner Direct: e.g., phone, email)	Travel Buyer Other
5.	Track unavailable data	For data capture requests 2-4, include a field entitled "data is unavailable." This will enable a) tourism businesses with incomplete data to participate and complete what they can and b) LCCC to assess gaps in data collation and annual progress in this regard		

X.   The future of Visitor Services in Lisburn & Castlereagh

The provision of guidance about how to maximise the role and the potential of the district's Visitor Servicing function was an ask of this plan to include assessing gaps and new opportunities. This task is explored in this section under the following headings:

A. Existing Visitor Services
- Lisburn & Castlereagh
- Visit Belfast and Northern Ireland Visitor Information Centres

B. Learnings: the provision of Visitor Services for the future

C. Recommendations for Visitor Servicing in Lisburn & Castlereagh 2024-2029

The outcome confirms that the future of Visitor Servicing is a hybrid model that seamlessly integrates human resources with digital solutions.

A. Existing Visitor Services

Lisburn & Castlereagh

With the core purpose of providing visitors with quality insights about things to do and places to see, eat and stay in the district and across Northern Ireland, Lisburn & Castlereagh operates one fixed Visitor Information Centre known as the *Lisburn Visitor Information Centre* located (since March 2022) in the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum. This centre offers

- communications that support visitors:
  - printed materials: free maps along with flyers and brochures that promote businesses and the destination
  - website research via reception staff
- booking assistance including emailing and printing tickets
- a gift store, with locally made products championed
- printing and photocopying services (available at a small charge)
- parking, including accessible parking
- comfort services, including accessible toilets

In addition, the district operates a mobile Visitor Information service in the form of a pop-up trailer seven days a week in the carpark of Hillsborough Forest Park during the high season period from April to September. This trailer facilitates one staff member to manage information requests and to distribute the stocked printed communications (maps, flyers, brochures) to visitors.

Visitor Information services provided by Lisburn & Castlereagh are in high demand with 30,000 enquiries serviced by staff members in 2023. Key challenges and viewpoints that have emerged regarding existing services offering are:

- **Services are print-reliant:** printed communications such as maps, flyers and brochures are the key sources of information for visitors

- **The layout of the Lisburn Visitor Information Centre could function more effectively to engage the visitor:** for example to include a welcome desk visible upon arrival, large screens with rolling content, inspiring window displays, and compelling communications that showcase the local tourism offering
- **Lisburn & Castlereagh would benefit from a permanent Visitor Information Centre at Hillsborough Forest Park:** the existing mobile Visitor Information service located at Hillsborough Forest Park attracts +600,000 visitors annually.

  The district would benefit from a permanent Visitor Information service centre in this location that can encourage visitation across the district

- **The mobile (trailer) Visitor Information service could function more effectively:**
  - power points and WIFI access could be added so that additional work such as social media management can be conducted during quieter times
  - destination branding could be added on the exterior to include QR codes with compelling content and a photographable map
  - with a fixed location for the Visitor Information service centre at Hillsborough Forest Park, this trailer offers the flexibility of basing Visitor Information services in diverse locations throughout the destination

- **Digital marketing:** the Visitor Information services team would benefit from a dedicated resource for digital marketing

Visit Belfast and Northern Ireland Visitor Information Centres
Lisburn & Castlereagh is additionally promoted via Visit Belfast services:

- **Visit Belfast Welcome Centre:** the main resource and information hub, located in the heart of Belfast City
- **Cruise Welcome hub:** working closely with Belfast Harbour in a Cruise Destination Management role to promote Belfast and neighbouring areas such as Lisburn & Castlereagh to cruise passengers (+300,000 in 2023)
- **Visitor touch points:** e.g., airports with self-service information

Just as the Lisburn Visitor Information Centre provides information relevant to the Lisburn & Castlereagh district as well as throughout Northern Ireland, Lisburn & Castlereagh tourism businesses can benefit from referrals from Visit Belfast and other Visitor Information Centres throughout Northern Ireland.

B. Learnings: the provision of Visitor Services for the future

Apart from assessing the Visitor Information service centres in Lisburn & Castlereagh, as part of the research for this plan

- site visits and consultations were conducted in Dublin, Belfast, Newry Mourne Down and Derry ~ Londonderry
- visitor services models from Ireland, Scandinavia and Germany were analysed

The consensus is that the key purpose of Visitor Servicing is to **inspire** visitors to see more and do more, in turn supporting the local economy. Visitor Services must thereby meet the needs of the contemporary visitor who seeks to

- connect with people who live locally
- intimately understand the destination, from a local perspective
- find recommendations that match their unique interests while bypassing the requirement to research high volumes of online and offline content

Further outcomes emphasised the need for

- **a hybrid model approach:** aligning the personal contact provided by Visitor Services teams with the digital solutions that support their work.
- **quality training:** supporting Visitor Services teams to a) meet the needs of the contemporary visitor and b) promote a sustainable and accessible tourism ethos
- **innovation:** for example by
  - **extending the Visitor Services function:** working with local tourism providers (e.g., hotels), non-tourism businesses (e.g., newsagents) and trained volunteers so that visitors are supported across a wider integrated framework
  - **adopting flexible solutions:** e.g., providing Visitor Services through alternative methods (on foot or by bike) rather than solely within buildings
- **KPI-led performance management:** collation of qualitative and quantitative data that measures Visitor Services performance so that strengths are optimised, and challenges are swiftly addressed

C. Recommendations for Visitor Servicing in Lisburn & Castlereagh: 2024-2029

Following this research, the following table summarises the key recommendations for Lisburn & Castlereagh to consider regarding the delivery of Visitor Services:

1. **Address the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) located in the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum giving equal consideration to**
   a. the provision of customer-centric VIC services and
   b. the delivery of a quality visitor experience via the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum as a visitor attraction

   As part of this work, consider how
   - the Visitor Information Centre can be modernised to engage the visitor and maximise opportunities for Lisburn & Castlereagh
   - the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum can be developed and reconfigured to a) share the heritage of fine-linen design and b) maximise social and economic opportunities for the district

- other services could be positioned here that align with the ethos of services offered in the building: e.g., City Centre Management and Community Services

In addition,

- assess the costs of installing a welcome desk visible upon arrival, large screens with rolling content, inspiring window displays, and compelling communications that showcase the local tourism offering

  Once costs are finalised, consult with the Visitor Services team to determine what should be prioritised based on their potential to generate increased opportunities

2. **In the immediate term, address the mobile Visitor Information service (trailer):**
- install a power point and WIFI so that work can be conducted during quiet times
- brand the exterior so that it promotes the destination and compelling content – with local tips and maps inc. via QR codes
- once visitor servicing at Hillsborough Forest Park is addressed, use the trailer as a flexible VIC that be based on diverse locations across the district

3. **Install a permanent Visitor Information Centre at Hillsborough Forest Park:** identify a building convenient to Hillsborough Forest Park where a permanent Visitor Information service centre can be placed to service the +600,000 visitors to the park and raise awareness about the tourism offering in Royal Hillsborough and (importantly) throughout the Lisburn & Castlereagh district

4. **In the immediate term, manage and reduce printed material:**
- regularly audit printed material to ensure that only essential communications are stocked
- where possible, rely upon communications that can be photographed by visitors to reduce paper waste

5. **Think hybrid – combine human and digital power:**
- ensure that the service provided champions engagement with team members that is valued by visitors, blended with the convenience of digital solutions
- invest in a dedicated digital marketing resource – this is essential for maximising opportunities

6. **Think flexibility and innovation:** particularly during high demand periods and events, consider alternative methods for Visitor Servicing – for example, delivered by a cyclist on a branded bicycle

7. **Lean on the wider community to extend services:** engage with local tourism and non-tourism businesses (e.g., newsagents, public transport providers) to create a wider Visitor Services network by delivering a **Local experts programme** whereby
- tourism and hospitality providers are informed about how to refer and grow opportunities for the destination

- **non tourism businesses** that interface with visitors (e.g., retail stores, places to eat and drink) are informed about how to refer and grow opportunities for the destination
- **volunteers** are trained to support visitor services activity, particularly during high demand periods

8. **Invest in training and robust data collation:**
- ensure that the Visitor Services team receive ongoing training to meet the needs of the contemporary visitor to maximise opportunities for the destination
- work with the team to identify easily collated metrics that can measure performance along with processes for regular assessment of same

Hillsborough Forest, Digital Sculpture Trail

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1.6. Growth Target and Key Strategic Pillars

In the contemporary context international tourism is in an uncertain place following the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the prevalence of international economic and geopolitical unrest.

While the challenges are clear, in the current environment these co-exist with optimistic forecasts. Both the Department of the Economy's Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland – 10 Year Plan and Tourism Ireland project growth in the value of tourism in Northern Ireland:

- The *Department for the Economy's Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland - 10 Year Plan* (2024) sets out the strategic aim of increasing the value of tourism to the Northern Ireland economy by 50% -75% compared to 2019, or growth of 4%-6% per annum.

- The *Tourism Ireland Marketing Plan* (2024) sets targets of driving tourism revenue growth in Northern Ireland by +6.5% year-on-year to 2030. This is compared to targeted island of Ireland growth of 5.6% average year on year growth to 2030.

Following research and consultations including with Ulster University's Economic Policy Centre, a target has been set to increase revenue generation via tourism in Lisburn & Castlereagh by 34% in 2029 compared with 2019: i.e., 5.6% per annum over six years 2024-2029.

This target serves to provide a benchmark against which tourism businesses can assess their performance and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council can assess destination-wide performance.

Integrating all outcomes that have emerged, all activity over the next six-years will be guided by five strategic pillars:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Position	Innovate	Collaborate	Nurture	Grow

While the following table summarises the key focal points for these pillars, the Action Plan 2024-2029 under section three outlines the objectives and stepwise actions to address under each pillar.

> The Action Plan 2024-2029 under section 3 of this plan itemises the objectives and associated actions that apply to each of these pillars that need to be addressed over the coming years to achieve the vision, ambition and targets set out in this strategy.

Let's Go Hydro Resort & Spa

Table 3: key focal points for the five strategic pillars 2024-2029

Strategic pillar	Key focal points
Position	Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable and socially inclusive tourism destination that is unlike any other, defined by

	• a leisurely pace of life
	• close-knit communities, deeply connected with their homeplace
	• welcoming people who take time to engage in conversation with visitors
	• attractions and experiences that are impossible to experience anywhere else in Ireland inc. Northern Ireland's only Royal Residence, the Ulster Aviation Society and The Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB
	• vibrant hubs across city, town, villages and hamlets
	• a place to enjoy nature and the great outdoors
	• a place that meets diverse visitor needs and interests: culture and heritage; outdoor recreation, adventure and activities, food and drink
	• accessible geographical location
	  - bordered by 6 of Northern Ireland 11 district council areas
	  - within easy reach of Belfast: including by foot along the Lagan towpath that connects Lisburn with Belfast
	  - within easy reach of Dublin

Innovate	Be a frontrunner in innovation, ensuring this is a hallmark of all activity inc. by
	• investing in quality tangible infrastructure: including the successful completion of the Royal Hillsborough development plan • investing in the development of authentic immersive experiences that share the unique story of people and place (ensuring that these experiences are bookable by individuals and groups) across the following themes: culture, history & heritage; outdoor recreation, adventure & activities; food & drink • promoting services and experiences that share Lisburn & Castlereagh's unique tourism offering via communications • curating a signature tourism-relevant event/festival during the lifetime of this plan with an innovative concept and programming that has the potential to attract domestic and international audiences • the delivery of Visitor Services: e.g., incorporating flexible solutions (on foot, by bike or boat), sharing insights and gems directly from local people • seeking investment in sustainable accommodation solutions that are in-keeping with the destination and align with its ethos
Collaborate	Be a champion of collaboration by embedding a collaborative framework:

	• within the destination:
	  - create a robust network that connects all tourism and hospitality businesses so that they know, support and refer each other to include the delivery of a) one annual forum sharing industry-relevant updates, followed by networking, b) two half day networking events and c) min. one annual familiarisation trip
	  - promote engagement with the tourism destination offering and associated businesses among local communities
	  - provide tourism businesses and community members with the opportunity to become an extended part of Visitor Services
	
	• outside the destination: proactively develop partnerships with stakeholders that can support, promote and maximise opportunities inc. Visit Belfast, The Lough Neagh Partnership, Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and professional travel buyers

Strategic pillar	Key focal points
Nurture	Promote Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination defined by integrity and thoughtful hospitality, making this evident in all activity including by
	• ingraining a sustainable and regenerative tourism ethos with evidenced based outcomes • caring for all people including those with physical, mental and intellectual needs by a) supporting education and awareness and b) providing guidance and communications that empower visitors to make sound choices about how to experience the destination • championing and supporting tourism and hospitality providers • placing community and local people at the heart of the tourism offering • guiding visitors so that they behave responsibly in the destination • curating experiences that celebrate cultural heritage, preserving traditions (e.g., linen craft) inherited from the past for future generations • preserving built heritage for future generations by investing in quality destination development that enriches the lives of local communities and the experience for visitors • safeguarding the natural environment and biodiversity: e.g., Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB
Grow	Support local livelihoods, economic growth and enterprise development

	• Deliver supports for industry to a) expand commercial capabilities, b) promote collaborative and cross-referral opportunities and c) instil robust data collation and analysis processes, ensuring that benefits spread across the Lisburn & Castlereagh's geography.
	
	• Apply a dual approach to data collation and analysis by a) supporting tourism businesses to improve their data collation processes and b) investing in destination-wide metrics encompassing local data (inc. data collated via a survey issued to tourism businesses, counter data at visitor attractions, footfall data from events and festivals) and data available via Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and NISRA.
	
	• Adopt a proactive and goal-focused approach to achieve success, targeting opportunities that are best suited to Lisburn & Castlereagh:
	  - **Customer segments:** individuals and groups, couples, families, soft adventurers, golfers, inter-generational travellers and enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, soft adventure and outdoor activities
	  - **Markets:** Northern Ireland (local, neighbouring locations and wider NI), ROI, North America, Great Britain, France, Germany
	  - **Opportunities:** leisure tourism (including luxury leisure) as a priority and business tourism for relevant providers
	
	• Invest in visitor services to maximise opportunities
	
	• In the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review refocus LCCC's tourism team to maximise social and economic opportunities, giving due consideration to resourcing the following activity: product and partnership development, digital marketing

2. Where We Are Now

This section explores the status of tourism in Lisburn & Castlereagh following the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 and outcomes relevant for the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 under the following three headings:

- **The Past:** an overview of the vision, ambition and priorities in the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022

- **Current Position:** the status of tourism post the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 and prior to the initiation of the Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2024-2029

- **The Future:** outcomes that inform the Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2024-2029

2.1 The Past

The Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 sets out a vision for Lisburn & Castlereagh to achieve 10% growth in staying visitors and revenue spend by advancing as a *"confident, vibrant and successful […] quality tourism destination"* that offers *"authentic quality experiences."*

Outlining how Lisburn & Castlereagh enjoys a prime eastern location close to the urban centres of Belfast and Dublin, two international airports, M1 and A1 roads, rail links and accessible port links, five cornerstones were identified as key for tourism development:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
The Gemstone	Refine	Collaborate	The Foundations	Broadening the Charm

The Gemstone

This cornerstone focuses on investing in Royal Hillsborough to position the village that encompasses Hillsborough Forest and Hillsborough Castle and Gardens (the only location in Northern Ireland with Royal status) as the leading must-see visitor attraction in the Lisburn & Castlereagh district.

The Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 references financial investments secured to develop the village, castle, gardens, forest, Old Fort and Courthouse to deliver a programme of works under the Hillsborough Tourism Master Plan encompassing

- **public realm scheme for the heart of the village:** a series of works focused on enhancing the quality of the village to include the streetscape, footpaths and access to them, traffic flow, street dressing and wayfinding, lighting and street furniture

- **enhancing and upgrading the village's tangible assets for the benefit of the local community and visitors:** 17th century Hillsborough Old Fort, 18th century Old Courthouse, 18th century Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, Hillsborough Forest (in cooperation with the Northern Ireland Forest Service)

Emphasising the historic and contemporary importance of Royal Hillsborough, the plan states how Royal Hillsborough

- is the gemstone that sets the Lisburn & Castlereagh District apart from anywhere else
- is key for positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a world-class tourist destination that will inspire further tourism growth across the whole council area
- is a prime location for world-class events and festivals that can attract domestic and international visitors
- will require investment in quality accommodation to realise its tourism potential

Refine

This cornerstone defines ways Lisburn & Castlereagh can be positioned as a quality tourism destination including through

- **food:** supporting the speciality food sector to establish the district as a leading culinary destination renowned for provenance, quality produce and exceptional producers

- **events:** supporting a calendar of vibrant events that share the story of people and place, including the Balmoral Show and Horse Racing that is synonymous with the district

- **Lisburn:** supporting the district's only city by
  - championing the Lisburn Historic Quarter
  - developing a new city centre hotel
  - emphasising the creative industries synonymous with Lisburn such as the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum

- **Hub communities:** championing the full breadth of the district across urban and rural areas encompassing charming towns, villages and hamlets and a compact city that is easy to navigate

Collaborate

A key cornerstone of the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, the approach focuses on developing relationships with private, public and community partners including ambitions such as

- **Maze Long Kesh:** exploring the tourism potential at Maze Long Kesh alongside the Ulster Aviation Society and Eikon Centre that are located here.

- **Development of tourism packages:** working with tourism industry partners and stakeholders to develop tourism packages
  - with Hillsborough Caste and Gardens to encourage visitation at Royal Hillsborough village and the wider environs
  - between local tourism and hospitality businesses, including to emphasise the quality food and drink offering

- **Investment in accommodation:** working with stakeholders and investors to achieve investment and development opportunities for quality accommodation across the district

- **Partner** with all stakeholders and organisations such as Tourism Northern Ireland that can support tourism activity conducted by Lisburn & Castlereagh

The Foundations

This cornerstone focuses on infrastructure to improve the quality of life for local people and the experience for visitors. It references the enhancement and development of roadways and waterways alongside regeneration projects within hub communities such as the West Lisburn Master Plan with a new spatial framework encompassing the revitalisation of Market Square, enhancing connectivity, commercial and retail development

Broadening the Charm

This cornerstone recommends promoting the Lisburn & Castlereagh district as a series of boutique offerings across urban and rural areas to include

- highlighting the vibrancy and uniqueness of the region's hub communities across city, towns, villages and hamlets

- leveraging Royal Hillsborough to emphasise the unique character of the district

- working closely with community to ensure that the district's tourism development plans benefit local people as a priority, alongside the visitor

- showcasing how culture, heritage and the arts are intrinsic to the district's story

- considering how signature leisure facilities such as the Dundonald International Ice Bowl can be positioned to attract domestic and international visitors

2.2 Current Position

The Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 was the first tourism strategy coordinated by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council since its establishment as a local authority. Soon after the initiation of this strategy, the world experienced unprecedented disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022 that stopped or limited domestic and international travel.

Despite significant challenges, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council adopted a goal-focused approach that has led to achievements upon which the Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2024-2029 can build.

> Despite the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, a robust foundation of successes has been achieved

These include:

- **Multiple tourism infrastructure projects:** for example
  - Royal Hillsborough as a world-class heritage village: securing a+£26million investment to develop / enhance public realm and historic buildings
  - Digital sculpture trail in Hillsborough Forest: ten giant sculptures created by leading artists supported by an augmented reality digital app
  - Guess How Much I Love You trail: celebrating the author and lifelong Lisburn resident, Sam McBratney, writer of the international bestseller *Guess How Much I Love You* (1994)

- **Elevating the food and drink offering:**
  - raising the profile of the rich food and drink heritage, innovative producers and quality eateries as a primary motivator for visiting the Lisburn & Castlereagh area
  - developing a successful annual programme of farmers markets

- - championing communities that champion provenance and quality Northern Ireland food and drink produce: e.g., the Speciality Food Fair in Moira (August annually)

- **Securing investment in accommodation:**
  - **The Haslem Hotel in Lisburn (2020):** 45 rooms and 7 apartments, with restaurant, bar, meeting and function space
  - **Arthur's Royal Hillsborough (2023):** 12 luxury boutique rooms and café / restaurant

- **Events and festivals:** an annual programme of major and community events to drive visitor footfall such as the Balmoral Show (+120,000 visitors in May annually) and the Down Royal Festival of Racing (November annually)

- **Integrated Marketing campaigns:** delivering an annual Integrated Marketing Campaign to increase awareness and footfall to the Lisburn & Castlereagh district

Expectations of the contemporary visitor:
The world has changed since the pandemic. As outlined by Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland, the contemporary visitor seeks sustainable destinations that champion the environment and local people. These visitors

- are interested in authentic experiences that share the story of people and place
- make considered choices about the services and destinations they invest in
- are mindful of their impact on people, planet and pocket

Balancing infrastructure development with tourism industry development
The resources of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's tourism team to date have leaned toward the development of tourism infrastructure.

Going forward to meet the needs of the contemporary visitor, this approach will need to be rebalanced so that the team is additionally supported to proactively invest in

Sustainable tourism development: working with tourism businesses and key stakeholders to ensure that all activity is underpinned by an ethos and practices that promote
- safeguarding the environment
- championing local communities
- safeguarding livelihoods and the local economy

Experience development: the curation of experiences that showcase the story of local people and across urban and rural communities across the following themes:
- culture, heritage and the arts
- food and drink
- outdoor recreation, adventure and activities

Economic development: the delivery of enterprise development supports that empower tourism businesses to make smart choices about where to invest their resources (time, human and financial) to
- maximise social and economic benefits
- benefit local livelihoods and the economy

Collaborations, relationship building and partnerships: embedding a deep-rooted, multi-layered collaborative framework between Lisburn & Castlereagh's
- tourism and hospitality business providers
- tourism industry and the local community
- tourism team with the local tourism industry and stakeholders that can support tourism development inc. Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Visit Belfast

Communications: creation of compelling offline and online communications that present with clarity the destination's unique story and tourism offering:

- positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination with its own character differentiated by
  - a slower pace of life, a deep sense of community, an accessible geography
  - unparalleled experiences: e.g., Royal Hillsborough, Ulster Aviation Society
  - immense natural beauty and vibrant hub communities with people who have the time to engage in conversation

- highlighting all relevant categories of tourism and hospitality business including
  - accommodation providers: e.g., hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and self-catering
  - visitor attractions: e.g., Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum
  - experience and activity providers
  - events and festivals
  - places to eat and drink
  - venues: for private and corporate occasions

Opportunities for growth

In May 2023, the World Health Organisation declared that the Covid-19 pandemic no longer represented a international health emergency. Since then, challenges continue to manifest including

- the cost-of-living crisis as a primary concern among domestic and international markets
- evidence of the erosion of Northern Ireland's value for money rating
- the trend toward last-minute booking making it more difficult to predict future performance
- limited hotel capacity, curbing the potential to increase dwell time and maximise commercial opportunities

While these challenges are significant, there is optimism regarding tourism development in Northern Ireland. The *Department for the Economy's Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland - 10 Year Plan* (2024): projects an increase in the value of tourism to the Northern Ireland economy by 50% -75% compared to 2019 (growth of 4%-6% per annum). The *Tourism Ireland Marketing Plan* (2024) projects tourism revenue growth in Northern Ireland of +6.5% year-on-year to 2030.

To achieve its fair share of growth, Lisburn & Castlereagh will need to adopt a twofold approach by continuing to progress tourism infrastructural development while nurturing tourism industry and destination development.

2.2.1 Strengths and Considerations

The following chart summarises the key strengths and considerations based on the current environment that Lisburn & Castlereagh need to be aware of and address in all future activity:

Strengths

- Passionate tourism industry and communities, eager to raise the profile of their destination
- Prime eastern location with easy accessibility to Dublin and Belfast and wider exploration
- Variety of city, town, villages and hamlets, each with their own character
- Vibrant communities with a deep sense of identity across urban and rural areas
- New product development: Royal Hillsborough, Dundonald International
- Strong tourism product: golf, horse racing, visitor attractions
- Product that is unparalleled in Ireland: e.g., Royal Hillsborough, Ulster Aviation Society
- Ability to meet diverse visitor interests: culture & heritage, food and drink, adventure & activities
- Scenic beauty: home to Lagan Valley Regional Park, NI's only Regional Park
- Quality and diversity of scenery: Lough Neagh (west), hills above Dundonald (east), Belfast hills (north), River Lagan (south)
- Renowned for exceptional food and drink offering
- Year-round calendar of community, larger scale events & festivals and farmers markets
- Integrated Marketing Campaigns: raising the destinations' profile in NI and ROI
- Visit Belfast partnership: expanding the potential to target new domestic and international visitors

Considerations

- A need to position L&C as a destination with a unique identity, rather than as a suburb of Belfast
- A need to drive tourism dispersion across the destination across urban and rural areas
- While rich in tourism product, there is a lack of immersive experiences delivered by local people
- Low supply of experiences bookable by independent visitors
- A lack of accommodation to achieve dwell time and a high proportion of ungraded accommodation
- Tourism industry reporting a need for greater collaboration
- A need for LCCC's tourism team to apply a balanced approach supporting a) infrastructure development and b) the tourism industry with collaborative and economic development opportunities
- While there are champions of sustainable and accessible tourism, this is not consistent across industry
- A lack of data capture making it challenging to measure performance
- In the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review, an opportunity to refocus LCCC's tourism team to maximise social and economic opportunities, inc. by resourcing the following functions: product & partnership development, digital marketing

2.3 The Future: Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2024-2029

Taking stock of the situational analysis and the findings summarised in the executive summary, the following is a checklist of activity that is integral to the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 so that opportunities are maximised for Lisburn & Castlereagh:

Apply a balanced approach	Adopt a twofold approach that blends a commitment to a) the development of quality tourism infrastructure and b) tourism industry and destination development
Infrastructure Development and Promotion	• Promote existing tourism infrastructure so that it benefits the local community and visitors • Successfully manage the development of projects that are underway (e.g., Royal Hillsborough) ensuring to promote these to generate benefits for the local community and visitors.
Experience Development	• Deliver enterprise development supports to curate experiences that authentically share the story of local people across urban and rural communities to meet the expectations of contemporary visitors • Ensure that these experiences are bookable by independent visitors and private bookings to maximise opportunities
Food and drink	• Continue to champion LCCC as a destination renowned for quality food and drink, places to eat and drink • Additionally, craft and promote food and drink-related experiences that allow for a deeper exploration of this priority theme
Commercial Development	Deliver enterprise development supports to maximise social and economic benefits by empowering LCCC's tourism and hospitality industry to • make strategic choices about which sales channels, markets and customer segments to engage in • master data collation and analysis to assess progress, mitigate challenges and identify opportunities
Collaborative Framework	Build a robust collaborative framework, noting that this is the foundation for all successful tourism destinations: • between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council departments • between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's tourism team and local tourism and hospitality providers • across Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism industry • between Lisburn & Castlereagh and external stakeholders that can benefit the destination including Visit Belfast, Lough Neagh Partnership, Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland

Sustainable Tourism Development	• Embed an ethos of sustainable and regenerative tourism development, ensuring that this informs all activity • Apply a dual approach a) led by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland policies and b) industry-led: empowering tourism providers to adopt and promote Leave No Trace principles
Social Inclusion & accessibility	Place social inclusion at the heart of all activity and champion accessible tourism development
Invest in accommodation	Proactively seek investors to develop quality sustainable accommodation that is suited to LCCC's profile, to include luxury lodge style accommodation
Events and festivals	Continue to champion the annual community and large-scale events programme while curating a signature festival with an innovate concept and programming that can generate opportunities during the low season, potentially by expanding LCCC's Christmas markets across December and into the New Year
Investigate Tourism Potential	Work with key stakeholders to support the development of experiences that are unique in Ireland including • Royal Hillsborough • Ulster Aviation Society • EIKON exhibition centre and Maze Long Kesh • Down Royal Racecourse • Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB: jointly funded by LCCC and Belfast City Council
	Noting that Dundonald International Ice Bowl (DIIB) in its current format reads as a sports and recreational offering rather a tourism offering, assess if and how DIIB can be positioned and developed as part of LCCC's wider tourism offering
Integrated Marketing Campaigns	Continue with the management of campaigns conducted by LCCC's tourism team that have been successful in raising the district's profile and driving footfall from the NI and ROI markets
Data collation and analysis	Collate an annual report (2024-2029) so that progress is visible and measurable to include NISRA, Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland data; in-destination visitor counter data; local market research data; data collated via a survey issued to tourism businesses

Communications	• Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a place apart with its own unique identity and character that is home to authentic and unparalleled experiences • Consider how a) LCCC can benefit from Visit Belfast's approach to "neighbourhood tourism" and b) if/how LCCC should continue to be branded by Visit Belfast under the Belfast Plus brand in the future
	Promote the tourism offering across the following categories to encompass visitor attractions, activity and experience providers, events and festivals, places to eat, drink and stay - natural assets: i.e., places of interest and natural beauty - culture and heritage - outdoor recreation, adventure and activities - food and drink experiences - events and festivals: community and large-scale events - places to eat and drink: e.g., restaurants, gastro pubs, cafes - places to stay: e.g., hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs, self-catering

Be strategic	Ensure that all activity targets the opportunities that are most suited to LCCC including		
	Customers: • individuals, groups • couples, families • inter-generational travellers • soft adventurers, golfers • enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, soft adventure and outdoor activities	**Markets:** • NI • ROI • North America • GB • France • Germany	**Tourism** Leisure tourism: a priority Luxury tourism Business tourism

Visit Belfast	Continue to partner with Visit Belfast via an agreed SLA to maximise opportunities via NI, ROI and international markets - agree metrics so that outcomes can be measured - assess the SLA after a defined period (e.g., 3-5 years) to decide how best to proceed into the future
Lough Neagh Partnership	Explore the following opportunities: • potential for new experience development • potential collaborations with LN tourism providers • how to profile LN as part of the district's tourism offering
Spread social and economic benefits	Leverage the promotion of signature attractions such as Royal Hillsborough. ensuring that this promotion maximises social and economic benefits for urban and rural communities

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Address Visitor Services	**Enhance the Visitor Information Services (VIC)** 1. **At the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum** give equal consideration to the • provision of customer-centric VIC services and • delivery of a quality visitor experience via the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum as a visitor attraction
	2. **Address the mobile Visitor Information service (trailer) currently based at Hillsborough Forest Park** • installing services such as a power point and WIFI in the trailer so that work can be conducted during quiet times • adding external communications to include QR codes, local tips and maps to maximise promotional opportunities • using the trailer as a flexible VIC in the future that can be placed anywhere in the district as required to maximise opportunities
	3. **Install a permanent Visitor Information Centre at Hillsborough Forest Park to** • service the +600,000 visitors to the park • raise awareness about the tourism offering in Royal Hillsborough and (importantly) throughout the Lisburn & Castlereagh district

	Across all Visitor Services:
	
	• **Reduce the use of print materials**
	
	• **Adopt a hybrid approach:** noting that the contemporary visitor wants to a) meet a person who can share local insights seconded by b) information provided by digital communications
	
	• **Invest in training and robust data collation** to maximise opportunities and achieve measurable success
	
	• **Think innovation:** e.g., during high demand periods
	  - extending visitor services on bike or by foot
	  - recruiting and training volunteers to support visitor services
	  - training tourism businesses (e.g., accommodation providers) to extend the work of VIC's by generating referral and packaged opportunities for the district

Refocus LCCC's tourism team	To achieve the ambition and growth target outlined in this plan, refocus LCCC's tourism team in the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review by considering how to resource the following functions: product and partnership development, digital marketing

Action plan 2024-2029

While the SCOT Analysis under Appendix 3 summarises the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats that Lisburn & Castlereagh needs to be aware of based on the current environment, the Action Plan in Section 3 identifies the activity that needs to be addressed to achieve the vision, ambition and growth target set out in this plan under the following five strategic pillars:

1.	Position	Position Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable and socially inclusive tourism destination
2.	Innovate	Be a frontrunner in innovation, ensuring that this is a hallmark of all activity
3.	Collaborate	Be a champion of collaboration by embedding a collaborative framework within the destination and developing strategic partnerships outside the destination
4.	Nurture	Promote Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination defined by integrity and thoughtful hospitality
5.	Grow	Support local livelihoods, economic growth and enterprise development across urban and rural areas and communities

Hinch Distillery

3. The Way Forward: Action Plan 2024-2029

The objectives and actions outlined in this plan align with the recommended twofold approach to be adopted by Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team with the support of council to maximise social and economic benefits as outlined below

1. **Infrastructural investment and development:** i.e., the curation of high-quality tangible infrastructure that has been a core responsibility for Lisburn & Castlereagh's tourism team over the lifetime of the Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, and will remain a priority over the lifetime of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

2. **Tourism industry and destination development:** that will be an additional core priority over the lifetime of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

The Action Plan outlines the timebound actions to target under the following seven objectives:

1. Embed a collaborative framework in the destination
2. Invest in tourism product, new experience and events & festival development
3. Invest in enterprise development and data analysis processes
4. Invest in communications, positioning L&C as a destination with a distinct identity
5. Embed a culture of responsible tourism in all activity
6. Reimagine Visitor Services to inspire visitors
7. Work in partnership with Visit Belfast to maximise opportunities

While the plan recommends actions to address, this list is not exhaustive and will be expanded upon during the lifetime of this plan in line with industry innovations and as new initiatives and opportunities arise aligned with the ambition of this plan.

TIMING OF ACTIONS WITHIN THIS PLAN
- Immediate Term (IT): 2024 Year 1 / Y1
- Short-term (ST): 2025-2026 Years 2-3 / Y2, Y3
- Medium-term (MT): 2027-2028 Years 4-5 / Y4, Y5
- Long-term (LT): 2029 Year 6 / Y6

For each noted action the relevant strategic pillar/s that applies is indicated:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Position	Innovate	Collaborate	Nurture	Grow

While Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council will lead this plan, its success is dependent upon proactive engagement from the district's tourism industry and the support of stakeholders here noted:

Acronym	Stakeholder
AIPCO	Association of Professional Conference Organisers
AVEA	Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions
BCC	Belfast City Council
IAAT	Ireland's Association for Adventure Tourism
IGTOA	Irish Golf Tour Operators Association
ITOA	Irish Tour Operators Association
LC	Local Chamber
LCCC	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
LCIND	Lisburn & Castlereagh tourism industry
LCCOM	Lisburn & Castlereagh communities
LNP	Lough Neagh Partnership
LNT	Leave No Trace
PS	Private Sector
TNI	Tourism Northern Ireland
TI	Tourism Ireland
VB	Visit Belfast

Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum

	Embed a collaborative framework in the destination: Objective 1 / O1								
No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	Invite industry and key stakeholders to an event to a) learn about the outcomes of this plan, b) set the context for the future and c) emphasise how collaboration will be key for success					LCCC	LCIND, TNI, TI, LNP, VB, LNP	Collaborate Nurture Grow	Min. 50 guests
1.1	Explain how this is day 1 of an annual collaborative network framework to include: A. 1 industry forum (in-person): industry / stakeholder update, speakers, networking B. 2 half day events (in-person): industry-relevant topic/s followed by networking C. One annual industry FAM Trip: this can include other stakeholders such as Visit Belfast visitor information team members D. A suite of enterprise development supports that will be scheduled to support economic growth E. Account Management: to include annual meetings with a member of the LCCC tourism team								
1.2	Explain that this collaborative framework will promote the development of connections, partnerships and information sharing a) across industry (accommodation, visitor attractions, experience/activity providers, festival organisers, places to eat, drink & socialise), b) between industry and stakeholders and c) between industry and community								
1.3	Promote the dates for all events in year one, outlining the focus topics for each year (taking inspiration from the list below)- advising industry that they are welcome to share their views on topics they would like to explore: • Sustainability and regeneration • Leave No Trace • Accessible Tourism • Sharing the story of people & place through exceptional services & compelling experiences • Tourism-relevant capital grant aid/funding • Data capture: industry and destination • Travel buyers: opportunities and needs • Engaging community in tourism • Festivals: annual calendar and new programming • Local, regional, national stakeholders: their functions, ways they can support tourism • Enterprise development: needs, maximising social & economic opportunities								
1.4	End with a networking event and meal showcasing local produce								
2	Establish the account management process a) assigning one LCCC team member to each local business, b) ensuring that each business if informed of their assigned team member and contact details, c) that an annual process is initiated whereby min. 2 meetings take place annually to catch upon on progress and needs					LCCC	LCIND	Collaborate Nurture Grow	Each tourism business is assigned one dedicated account manager
2.1	Continue this process annually								

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
3	Ensure that the role of tourism and how it aligns with community (sharing the story of people and place) is promoted throughout all communications including policies and strategies so that a) the value of tourism and how it generates social and economic benefits is valued and b) the community is encouraged to promote and support local tourism services and experiences					LCCC	LCCOM	Collaborate Nurture Grow	Encourage the local community to be champions of tourism
4	Foster a collaborative culture between LCCC tourism team and external stakeholders					LCCC		Collaborate Nurture Grow	Collaborate with stakeholders that can support the growth of tourism in L&C
4.1	Work collaboratively with Visit Belfast across to ensure that there is clarity about • the ambition and vision to position Lisburn & Castlereagh (L&C) as a renowned leading tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences • the product offering in the L&C district and how to promote same					LCCC	VB		
4.1.1	Arrange annual meetings with Visitor Services Information teams to ensure they have up to date communications and product knowledge. Invite team members on the annual industry FAM trip								
4.2	Work collaboratively with Tourism Northern Ireland to ensure that there is clarity about the • ambition and vision to position L&C as a renowned leading tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences • product offering in the L&C district • desire to avail of all TNI opportunities that can maximise opportunities for L&C in the domestic and international marketplace • availability of funding and enterprise development supports that can benefit L&C					LCCC	TNI		
4.3	Work collaboratively with Tourism Ireland to ensure that there is clarity about the • ambition and vision to position L&C as a renowned leading tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences • product offering in the L&C district • desire to avail of all TNI opportunities that can maximise opportunities for L&C particularly in the GB, North American, German and French markets					LCCC	TI		
4.4	Collaborate with professional leisure tourism travel buyers that are best suited to L&C: a) introducing these buyers to L&C tourism businesses that meet their needs, b) ensuring that the buyers have a key point of contact in the LCCC tourism team, c) responding to buyer queries promptly and d) inviting buyers to attend L&C FAM trip opportunities					LCCC	TNI, TI, ITOA, IGTOA		
4.4.1	As product and opportunities for business tourism expand, engage with travel buyers that are specialists in this field – supported by guidance from national tourism bodies					LCCC	TNI, TI, AIPCO		
4.5	Collaborate with local, regional and national organisations that can support tourism development in L&C					LCCC	AVEA, IAAT		
6	Promote a collaborative culture within LCCC ensuring that a) all departments are aware of the value of tourism and b) the LCCC tourism team is made aware of funding opportunities available via other departments and other sources that can support tourism development					LCCC			Maximise opportunities within LCCC to support tourism development
6.1	To achieve the ambition set out in this plan and to maximise social and economic opportunities, refocus LCCC's tourism team within the context of the Economic Development Efficiency Review giving due consideration to resourcing the following functions and activity: product and partnership development, digital marketing								

	Invest in tourism product, new experience and events & festival development: Objective 2 / O2								
No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	Invest in the development of large-scale tourism products include **1.1** Royal Hillsborough, Hillsborough Castle & Gardens (RHHCG) **1.2** Ulster Aviation Society (UAS) **1.3** EIKON exhibition centre **1.4** Down Royal Racecourse (DRR) **1.5** Dundonald International Ice Bowl (DIIB) **1.6** Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB (LVRP) **1.7** Accommodation growth **1.8** Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum					LCCC		Position Innovate Grow	
1.1	Manage the £26 million development of Royal Hillsborough village to include a) upgrading public realm across the streetscape, square and historic Courthouse and b) upgrades at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens – enhancing and preserving this historic area and attraction for future generations					LCCC	LCIND	Position Innovate Nurture Grow	Promote RHHCG as an iconic attraction in a way that maximises social and economic opportunities across L&C
1.1.1	Raise the profile of this attraction so that it enters the league of top 10 paid visitor attractions as defined by NISRA - leveraging the attraction's potential to welcome leisure and business tourism visitors					LCCC	LCIND	Position Grow	
1.1.2	Leverage this iconic attraction to raise the profile of L&C's tourism offering across urban and rural areas to spread social and economic benefits					LCCC	LCIND, TNI, TI, VB	Position Collaborate Innovate Grow	
1.1.3	Determine the potential to curate immersive experiences (e.g., delivered by the Fort Guards) to raise the profile of this attraction and generate new opportunities for L&C					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
1.2	Ulster Aviation Society: work with the team of volunteers to position UAS as a leading visitor attraction in L&C determining the potential to a) develop bespoke immersive experiences and b) support enterprise development with training and mentoring that empowers UAS to grow leisure and business tourism opportunities					LCCC	LCIND, TNI	Position Innovate Grow	Support organisations with the potential to grow tourism opportunities in L&C
1.3	EIKON exhibition centre: work with the team to determine the potential to grow L&C's reputation for the delivery of exhibitions and any supports that may be required to achieve this goal such as a communications, commercial and operational plan					LCCC	LCIND, TNI	Position Innovate Grow	
1.4	Down Royal Racecourse: work with the team to position DRR as a compelling tourism experience determining the potential to a) develop bespoke immersive experiences (e.g., engaging a local tipster, behind the scenes experiences etc.) and b) support enterprise development with training and mentoring that empowers DRR to grow leisure and business tourism opportunities					LCCC	LCIND, TNI	Position Innovate Grow	

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.5	Dundonald International Ice Bowl: with the team to manage the £52 investment to include an Olympic sized ice rink, a 24-lane bowling alley and catering facilities					LCCC		Position Innovate Grow	Support DIIB to maximise opportunities and determine if DIIB is tourism-relevant
1.5.1	Achieve the target to welcome 700,000 visitors to DIIB post redevelopment, promoting this experience to the local, NI and ROI markets – embedding data collation processes so that the visitor's location/market of origin can be determined					LCCC	LCIND		
1.5.2	Determine if DIIB can be positioned as a sports and recreation offering and a viable tourism offering with the potential to attract out of state visitors					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
1.6	Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB: as two thirds of LVRP's expanse is under the jurisdiction of LCCC and one third is under the jurisdiction of Belfast City Council, consider the opportunity to work in partnership to conduct an independent study to assess the potential for tourism development to include • how the park can be positioned as a tourism asset with a sustainable and regenerative ethos at its heart • what experiences and services can be developed to meet the needs of the local community, leisure and business tourism customers in Ireland and internationally • what events can be curated • what customer segments and markets are suited to the offering • how the park generates social and economic benefits as a tourism offering • what communications are required for tourism purposes • what enterprise development supports are required to achieve success • how LVRP could be best managed via a partnership between LCCC and BCC to maximise opportunities					LCCC, BCC	LCIND, TNI	Position Innovate Collaborate Nurture Grow	Determine the opportunity for LVRP to support tourism development in L&C as NI's only National Park
1.7	Accommodation growth: create an integrated team to include LCCC's tourism team and representatives from other council departments to • define communications targeted at potential investors, emphasising an interest in sustainable development across all categories: quality hotels, guesthouses, self-catering (e.g., lodges in nature) • define if a professional needs to be engaged to support this activity					LCCC	PS	Position Innovate Collaborate Nurture Grow	Achieve growth to maximise dwell time
1.7.1	Lean on the Collaborative Framework (O1) to promote opportunities along with capital grant and funding programmes among L&C tourism businesses to determine if there are interested local investors					LCCC	LCIND		
1.8	Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum: reimagine this tourism offering to increase domestic and international visitors aligned with enhancing Visitor Information Services (see O6)								
2	Deliver three separate programmes focused on the development of new (never brought to market) immersive experiences across the following theme categories: culture and heritage; outdoor recreation, adventure and activities; food and drink					LCCC	TNI, LCIND, LCCOM	Innovate Nurture Grow	

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
2.1	Ensure the programme approach is informed by outcomes that have emerged from this plan: • *NI destination experience branding:* experiences must align with NI's EAGS brand • *L&C branding;* experiences must align with L&C *you're welcome* brand • *Achieve geographic spread:* experience collection must represent urban and rural areas/communities • *Champion innovation:* fresh ideas/new angles that make L&C standout • *Meet the needs of independent visitors and private bookings/groups:* experiences must be bookable a) by independent visitors (online) and b) privately by groups • *Maximise economic opportunities:* the collection must represent year-round experiences; experiences that benefit the day (early morning, daytime) and evening/nighttime economy					LCCC	TNI, LCIND, LCCOM	Position Innovate Collaborate Nurture Grow	*Across all 3 programmes* 15 experiences suited for sale in the international / domestic marketplace: min. 5 per theme category
2.2	Create an EOI outlining a) the programme purpose, ambition and conditions, b) sample experiences sought via the programme – emphasising the focus on <u>new</u> experience development, c) who the programme is open to community members (with no/low tourism experience) capable of delivering an experience and tourism businesses with a new idea, d) how to register for a virtual information session to find out more								
2.2.1	Promote the programme across social media channels, tourism industry and via channels open to local stakeholders connected with community								
2.2.2	Deliver a facilitated virtual information session: guiding registrants to understand the expectations and commitment required so that they can make an informed decision about whether the programme is suited to them								
2.3	Once participants are qualified, deliver the programme to include training, mentoring and market testing to verify the quality of experience delivery								
2.4	Post the programme (using acquired learnings) the participants bring their experiences for sale to the market – taking commercial responsibility for their success								
2.5	For participants ready for growth, guide/support their progression onto a) local and/or b) national programmes to expand commercial opportunities								
2.6	Embed experience providers into L&Cs annual collaborative framework								
3	Identify the concept and programming for a signature L&C event & festival, noting that this should • have the capacity to attract out of state visitors • align with a theme that is authentic to Lisburn & Castlereagh: e.g., food and drink, heritage, Christmas markets • ideally take place during the low or shoulder season to maximise economic advantages when most needed • align with TNI's definition of what constitutes a tourism event					LCCC		Position Innovate Collaborate Grow	Identify a festival with the potential to win domestic and international visitors for L&C
3.1	Lean on the collaborative network to seek the opinion of L&C industry					LCCC	LCIND		

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
3.1.2	Seek the advice of TNI to ensure that the considered concept/s are of interest and can support the growth of visitors to L&C and NI					LCCC	TNI	Position Innovate Collaborate Grow	
3.2	Once the event is identified, trial it over a defined period (e.g., 2 years) supporting its promotion and growth					LCCC	TNI, LCIND		
4	As part of this activity, determine opportunities to develop new product and experiences via the Lough Neagh Partnership					LCCC	LNP		

Invest in enterprise development and data analysis processes: Objective 3 / O3

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	Lean on the collaborative framework (O1) to determine supports required by industry to maximise opportunities for businesses and destination L&C. These supports could include • Understanding the tourism landscape to maximise opportunities • Commercial planning across B2C and B2B sales channels • Pricing and contracting across B2C and B2B sales channels • How to align with sustainable and regenerative tourism development • How to create communications that are mindful of social inclusion • How to deliver a customer-centric experience • Mastering data collation and analysis					LCCC	LCIND	Innovate Collaborate Grow	Empower L&C's tourism industry to make strategic choices that can maximise economic opportunities and support livelihoods
1.1	Engage with TNI to determine if there are national programmes that can help support requirements or if these supports need to be delivered independently by L&C					LCCC	TNI		
1.2	Determine who should attend these supports and (depending on numbers), when these supports should roll out: for example, on an annual basis or every two years					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
1.3	Be strategic, ensuring that these supports target the opportunities best suited to L&C *Ireland:* local market, NI, ROI / *International* GB, North America, France, Germany / *Visitors* • individuals, groups • couples, families • inter-generational travellers • soft adventurers, golfers • enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, soft adventure and outdoor activities / *Opportunities:* • Leisure Tourism - a priority • Luxury Tourism • Business Tourism: for relevant businesses					LCCC	LCIND, TNI	Innovate Collaborate Grow	
1.3.1	Raise awareness of the roles of key stakeholders, ensuring that L&C's tourism industry is informed about how to maximise opportunities by leaning on their support					LCCC, LCIND	VB, TNI, TI		

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
2.	• Informed by the outcomes of this plan, create a questionnaire to capture L&C-wide data, ensuring that this includes businesses with robust and weaker data capture processes • Review the data fields that have emerged (business category, visitor numbers, markets, channels) deciding if others should be added – e.g., area (urban, rural, coastal)					LCCC	LCIND	Innovate Grow	Empower tourism businesses to a) measure growth and b) swiftly identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. Empower L&C to measure performance and to benchmark progress against the growth targets in this plan.
2.1	Decide if this activity should be conducted internally by LCCC or with the support of an independent research agency to include crafting the questionnaire, issuing this to industry, collating outcomes					LCCC	PS		
2.2	At one of the events identified under collaborative framework (O1) ensure that data capture is a theme focus, inviting an expert speaker to guide industry on this topic.					LCCC	LCIND		
2.2.1	Show industry the questionnaire intended to capture this data – advising that it has been designed to a) be as simple as possible, b) include all businesses / organisations across all sectors – including those with limited data collation processes and c) for completion on an anonymous basis – invite feedback.					LCCC	LCIND		
2.2.2	Explain the intention to create an annual performance overview collating outputs from this questionnaire and other LCCC and national sources					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
2.2.3	Advise that the aim is for this questionnaire to be completed on a quarterly basis: seeking industry feedback in this regard – making a case for this approach by explaining how this would allow for an assessment of seasonal and annual performance					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
2.2.4	Explain that the proposed data collation process is separate to other processes, emphasising the importance of responding to requests for insights/data at a national level via TNI					TNI	LCIND, LCCC		
2.3	Once the final approach is agreed, initiate the process – issuing the questionnaire and monitoring outcomes					LCCC	LCIND		
2.3.1	By Y4 – aim for this process to be embedded in the tourism culture – repeated annually thereafter					LCCC	LCIND		
2.4	Promote education and awareness - encouraging industry to understand the importance of data capture and how to master this process					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
2.4.1	For businesses that need assistance, direct them to local and national enterprise development supports that can provide them with expert guidance aligned with their capabilities					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
2.4.2	As responses to the questionnaire will determine the level of businesses with no/low/partial data collation processes, an assessment can be made about whether L&C's industry needs dedicated support to improve data collation capabilities					LCCC	LCIND		
2.5	At the annual industry forum (O1), update attendees on progress and on data capture outcomes, once available					LCCC	LCIND		
2.5.1	Ensure that other relevant insights and metrics available nationally (via TNI, TI) and to L&C (e.g., visitor engagement metrics, user engagement on L&C digital channels) are shared annually					LCCC	TNI, TI		

Invest in communications, positioning L&C as a destination with a distinct identity: Objective 4 / O4

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	Across communications, position L&C as a destination with a unique identity aligned with the plan's vision statement and defined by - a slower pace and quality of life - a deep sense of community across urban and rural areas - vibrant hubs across city, town, villages and hamlets - people who take the time to welcome visitors and engage in conversation - natural beauty - rich architectural and cultural heritage - experiences that are unparalleled in Ireland, inc. Ireland's only Royal Residence - a vibrant calendar of events, festivals and farmer's markets - a prime east coast location with easy access to Belfast and Dublin - the unexpected: e.g., the opportunity to walk from Lisburn to Belfast via a towpath - a destination that champions responsible tourism					LCCC	LCIND	Position Innovate Collaborate Nurture Grow	Motivate visitors to engage by positioning L&C as a destination with a compelling tourism offering and a distinct identity
2.	Ensure that communications speak to visitors who are best suited to L&C - individuals, groups, couples, families, inter-generational travellers - soft adventurers (walkers, cyclists, boaters) and golfers - enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, outdoor activities - leisure and luxury tourism - business tourism								
3.	Ensure that the full breadth of L&C's tourism offering is promoted across the following categories - natural assets: places of natural beauty across urban and rural landscapes - culture, history and heritage - outdoor recreation, adventure and activities - food and drink - events and festivals - places to eat and drink - places to stay - exclusive venues								
4.	Ensure that key stakeholders are clear on how L&C is positioned and the ask by local industry to position L&C as a unique destination with its own identity and story – ensuring that relevant stakeholder platforms are updated accordingly					LCCC	VB, TNI, TI		
5.	Align communications with regional and national branding					LCCC	LCIND		

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No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
6	Develop itineraries that showcase how to experience L&C over diverse time periods: 24 hours, 48 hours, 72-hours, 5 days, 7 days so that the destination's compelling tourism offering, and geography is understood by visitors starting from the holiday research phase					LCCC	LCIND	Position Innovate Collaborate Nurture Grow	Inspire visitors via captivating communications, emphasising the full breadth of the destination to encourage exploration
6.1	Ensure that L&C communications – inc. these itineraries – share tips from a local perspective, with insights into locally known gems and beloved spots for exploration					LCCC	LCIND, LCCOM		
7	Ensure that communications reflect the full breadth of L&C's geography across urban and rural areas: from the shores of Lough Neagh in the west to the hills above Dundonald in the east, and from the Belfast Hills in the north to the source of the River Lagan in the south					LCCC	LNP		

Embed a culture of responsible tourism in all activity: Objective 5 / O5									
No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	*Sustainable and regenerative tourism:* support education and awareness, aligning activity with UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the VICE model for sustainable tourism					LCCC	LCIND, TNI	Position Nurture Grow	
1.1.	Use the collaborative network framework (O1) to promote education and awareness					LCCC			
1.1.1	Programme inspiring speakers (industry and stakeholders) who • *are champions of this ethos and approach:* sharing practical guidance and learnings • *can share best practice communications:* how to make sustainability visible					LCCC			
1.2	Embed Leave No Trace ethos and principles across industry - creating an industry of LNT champions through an annual education awareness training programme					LCCC	LCIND, LNT		LNT training: Y2: 2 X 15 pax: 30 in total
1.2.1	Consult with LNT to identify a suitable LNT trainer					LCCC	LNT		Y3: 3 X 15 pax: 45 in total
1.2.2	Liaise with LNT to deliver an introductory information session for the tourism industry to learn about this positive, proactive and ground-up approach before training initiates					LCCC	LNT		
1.2.3	LCCC to advise that LNT awareness training will be delivered for industry • the aim is for one team member per business to become an LNT champion – promoting the ethos across the business and wider L&C community • commitment: training takes place over one day in an indoor/outdoor location (6hr period) • process: invitation extended via email with places filled on a first come first serve basis					LCCC	LCIND, LNT		Y4: 2 2 X 15 pax: 30 in total Y5: 1 X 15 pax: 15 in total Y6: 1 X 15 pax: 15 in total
1.2.4	• Deliver LNT training • Collate feedback via evaluation forms to gauge satisfaction and gain learnings					LNT	LCCC		By Y6: 135 LNT champions
1.3	Make sustainability visible across L&C and industry tourism channels					LCCC	LCIND		
1.3.1	Add compelling sustainable tourism communications across the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh website: refreshing content with new updates on an annual basis					LCCC			
1.3.2	Identify L&C champions of sustainable and regenerative tourism - promote their practices, experiences and stories through LCCC channels					LCCC	LCIND		

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.4	Deliver industry-wide training on how to craft effective and compelling communications online and offline: inc. sustainability pledge, policy, core values, customer/visitor tips					LCCC	LCIND	Position Nurture Grow	
1.5	Encourage industry to engage with national Climate Action programmes and initiatives					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
1.6	Promote sustainable travel solutions and opportunities to explore L&C sustainably inc. on foot and by bicycle					LCCC	LCIND		
2	*Accessible tourism development and social inclusion*: promote education and awareness across industry: what is meant by accessible tourism, who is the accessible tourism visitor, why is this market important, what are the needs and how can these be addressed					LCCC	LCIND		By Y3, succeed in embedding an industry-wide understanding
2.1	Promote awareness of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Equality Act and its role in tourism businesses					LCCC	LCIND		
3	Use the collaborative network framework (O1) to promote education and awareness					LCCC	LCIND, TNI		
3.1	Programme inspiring speakers (industry and stakeholders) who • *are champions of this ethos and approach:* sharing practical guidance and learnings • *can share best practice communications:* how to guide accessible tourism visitors; how to share this ethos / approach online and offline • *have experience of accessible design:* a) Universal Design and b) no / low-cost ideas solutions					LCCC			
3.2	Make accessibility visible across L&C and industry tourism channels					LCCC	LCIND		
3.3	Include communications across the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh website: refreshing content with new updates on an annual basis					LCCC	LCIND		
3.4	Identify L&C champions of accessible tourism development - promote their practices, experiences and stories through L&C channels								
3.5	Deliver industry-wide training on how to craft accessible communications: inc. how to communicate when an environment is/is not accessible – providing clear/thoughtful guidance so visitors can make informed decisions					LCCC	LCIND		
4	Support the needs of non-English speakers translating content where possible for key markets (Germany and France) – leaning on the convenience of QR code					LCCC	LCIND		

Reimagine Visitor Services to inspire visitors: Objective 6 / O6

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	Scope the potential to fund the enhancement of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum to include a) improving visitor services, b) addressing the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum so that it becomes a leading attraction and c) determining other services (e.g., community services) that can be located here.					LCCC		Position Innovate Grow	
1.1	*Improve Visitor Services:* consider the outcomes in this plan inc. a) moving the welcome desk to greet visitors upon arrival, b) installing large screens with rolling content to promote L&C and occupy the visitor during high demand periods, c) installing compelling window displays that promote L&C and inspire the visitor, d) installing compelling communications inc. QR codes and photographable content, e) addressing shelving – ensuring that the entire space is well laid out, visually pleasing and uncluttered					LCCC			Reimagine the VIC, Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum to maximise social and economic opportunities
1.2	*Address the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum so that it becomes a leading attraction:* develop a masterplan so that a) L&C's heritage and expertise in fine linen making is celebrated and preserved for future generations and b) this tourism offering can achieve growth across domestic and international markets, generating social and economic benefits					LCCC			
1.3	*Determine other services that can be positioned here:* such as City Centre Management and Community Services – ensuring that these services are positioned in a way that is mindful of a) growing tourism and b) inspiring and providing clarity for visitors who are specifically interested in tourism services					LCCC			
2	Address the mobile Visitor Information Service (trailer) currently located at Hillsborough Forest a) ensuring that the trailer is equipped to optimise staff productivity, b) adding compelling communications to the exterior and c) determining how this trailer can be used as a mobile service that benefits all communities in L&C on the basis that a permanent VIC is installed at Hillsborough Forest					LCCC			Address the mobile VIC to maximise productivity and inspire visitors to explore the full breadth of L&C's geography. Develop a fixed VIC at HF to service 600,000 visitors
2.1	*Ensure that the trailer is equipped to optimise staff productivity:* install a power point and WIFI so that work (e.g., social media management) can be conducted during quiet times					LCCC			
2.2	*Add compelling communications to the exterior:* branding and compelling content (QR codes, local tips, maps) to inspire visitors during open and closing hours					LCCC			
2.3	*Determine how this trailer can be used as a mobile service:* decide if a) the mobile VIC can be retained as a flexible option that can be positioned throughout the destination on the basis that b) a permanent VIC can be installed at Hillsborough Forest (HF) to service the 600,000 annual visitors at this site					LCCC			
3	Scope the potential to develop a permanent VIC at Hillsborough Forest (HF)					LCCC			
4	Minimise paper communications at all VICs: a) conduct a monthly audit to ensure that only essential paper communications are stocked and b) engaged with suppliers to encourage the					LCCC			Champion sustainability

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
5	Ensure that services champion a hybrid model: combining human interaction with the convenience of digital supports					LCCC		Position Innovate Grow	Invest in VIC training to maximise opportunities for L&C, ensuring that performance is tracked to measure outcomes.
5.1	Invest in training so that VIC staff are equipped to meet visitor needs to maximise promotional and economic opportunities for L&C. Ensure that this training includes • guiding visitors about making strong choices based on their unique needs and interests • how to promote L&C's unique identity and unparalleled experiences • how to make recommendations to spread economic advantage across large- and small-scale experiences throughout L&C • how to guide the visitor to behave responsibly while in the destination								
5.2	To maximise opportunities via digital channels, invest in a dedicated digital marketing resource that is key for optimising opportunities for L&C's industry and economy.								
5.3	To ensure that the VIC achieves a strong return on investment, determine KPIs against which performance can be measured to include tracking the • number of annual visitor engagements • revenue generated via bookings • spread of revenue generated across the destination • number of bookings achieved offline versus online • increase in followers via social media channels • digital analytics Ensure that this data is recorded via a quarterly summary report so that strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats can be swiftly addressed								
6	Collaborate with other VICs (inc. Visit Belfast) on a consistent basis to ensure that L&C is top on referral list to maximise economic opportunities					LCCC	VB		Collaborate to maximise opportunities for L&C
7	Encourage the VIC to work closely with local tourism businesses that interface with visitors to maximise referral opportunities. Ensure that the VIC team attends annual networking events to build relationships.					LCCC	LCIND		
8	Particularly during high demand periods, consider the benefit of investing in flexible visitor information services delivered (e.g.,) on a branded destination bike or by foot • assess costs and who should deliver this service: e.g., a VIC staff member or community representative • provide relevant supports according to the chosen solution					LCCC	LCCOM		Be creative by considering a) flexible VIC services and b) including community in the delivery of VIC services
9	Consider the benefits of widening VIC services by including non-tourism businesses (e.g., newsagents), working with providers that are relevant for this initiative to • promote L&C's tourism offering to the local community and visitors • display tourism-relevant communications: e.g., QR codes and photographable maps					LCCC	LCCOM		

Work in partnership with Visit Belfast to maximise opportunities: Objective 7 / O7

No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
1.	Create a revised SLA with Visit Belfast over a mutually agreed duration of between 3 and 5 years					LCCC	VB	Position Innovate Collaborate Grow	Create a clearly define SLA so that responsibilities and metrics are pre-determined to maximise opportunities
1.1.	Ensure that this SLA clearly defines • the objectives, actions and KPIs that Visit Belfast is responsible for achieving on behalf of LCCC: including the baselines and metrics against which progress can be measured • commitments that LCCC is responsible for								
1.2	As part of the SLA, define • how L&C should be positioned via communications • how L&C can benefit from Visit Belfast's approach to "neighbourhood tourism" • if L&C should continue to be promoted under the Belfast Plus model or via another mechanism • the opportunities that Visit Belfast commits to target on behalf of L&C e.g., B2C, B2B, leisure and business tourism opportunities in Ireland and internationally • the channels, markets and customer segments that Visit Belfast commits to target on behalf of L&C across online and offline opportunities • all benefits that Visit Belfast can bring to L&C such as referral opportunities via Visit Belfast's VICs and tourism providers located in Belfast								
1.3	Agree a process for reviewing the SLA and associated activity and metrics: e.g., quarterly, annually								
1.4	Before embarking on a new SLA, decide if any amendments are required for this agreement								
2	Ensure that there is clarity about how opportunities can be maximised via a dual approach via activity conducted by a) LCCC's tourism team and b) LCCC's tourism team in collaboration with Visit Belfast					LCCC	VB		

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No.	Actions to achieve	IT	ST	MT	LT	Lead	Partner	Pillar	KPI
2.1	Noting that LCCC's tourism team is responsible for targeting leisure tourism in the NI and ROI marketplaces, ensure that targeted Integrated Marketing Campaigns are conducted to maximise promotional and commercial opportunities via visitors across local, national and ROI markets: • individuals, groups, couples, families, inter-generational travellers • soft adventurers (walkers, cyclists, boaters) and golfers • enthusiasts of nature, culture and heritage, food and drink, outdoor activities • leisure and luxury tourism					LCCC			Target opportunities in a targeted, goal-focused and solution driven manner to maximise opportunities
2.2	Noting that Visit Belfast is responsible for targeting the NI, ROI and international marketplaces, work with VB to maximise B2C promotional and commercial opportunities via leisure visitors across local, national and ROI and priority markets (North America, Great Britain, France and Germany)					LCCC	VB		
2.3	Work with Visit Belfast to maximise B2B promotional and commercial opportunities via leisure tourism professional travel buyers to grow international opportunities					LCCC	VB		
2.3.1	Proactively target B2B opportunities by developing relationships with professional travel buyers and inviting buyers that are best suited to L&C on FAM trips					LCCC	VB, TNI		
2.4	Work with Visit Belfast to maximise promotional and commercial opportunities for business tourism inc. via B2B professional travel buyers					LCCC	VB		
2.4.1	Proactively target B2B opportunities by developing relationships with professional travel buyers and inviting buyers that are best suited to L&C on FAM trips					LCCC	VB, TNI		
2.4.2	Raise the profile of L&C's business tourism offering among local non-tourism businesses to encourage bookings from the local marketplace					LCCC, LCIND	LC		
3	Work closely with Visit Belfast and national tourism agencies so that they can support L&C to grow targeted opportunities					LCCC	VB, TNI, TI		

CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Lisburn & Castlereagh's draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 sets out the council's vision, strategic objectives and ambitions for the next six years.

Council welcomes your views and comments and would be grateful for your response to the following questions. Please note that your responses will be shared publicly, although your personal details will not.

1. The ambition:

The Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 is provides a strategic roadmap for raising the profile of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable, and socially inclusive tourism destination with a strong community spirit at its heart that champions people and place.

Within this framework, **key ambitions** of this plan include;

- Positioning Lisburn & Castlereagh as a leading tourism destination with a unique identity and unparalleled experiences in Ireland
- Raising the profile of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a landmark tourism destination with world-class authentic experiences that share the story of people and place including culture, history and heritage; outdoor recreation, adventure and activities; food and drink; an annual calendar of events and festivals
- Adopting a twofold approach to tourism development that encompasses

    - **Infrastructural investment and development:** i.e., the curation and management quality tourism infrastructure
    - **Tourism industry and destination development:** i.e., working with tourism and hospitality business to maximise social and economic opportunities including by investing in collaborative opportunities and enterprise development supports

- Empowering tourism providers in the destination to achieve sustainable livelihoods, create employment and spread economic benefits into the wider community
- Engaging the local resident and business communities in the destination's tourism industry and offering

Overall, do you think that this is what the ambitions of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 should be? Yes, No, Don't know? Please use the free-type space below to express any additional views, comments, recommendations, or insights.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

2. Strategic Pillars

The **5 strategic pillars** that have emerged from the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan are

- **Strategic Pillar 1 - Position:** elevating the profile of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a distinguished, sustainable and socially inclusion tourism destination
- **Strategic Pillar 2 - Innovation:** Establishing a reputation as a leader and innovator in tourism development, ensuring that this evolves as an inherent hallmark across all activity
- **Strategic Pillar 3 - Collaboration:** embedding a collaborative framework a) within the destination (across the tourism industry and the local community) and b) outside the destination with key stakeholders such as Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Visit Belfast and the Lough Neagh Partnership
- **Strategic Pillar 4 - Nurture:** elevating the profile of Lisburn & Castlereagh as a destination defined by integrity and genuine care including by placing sustainable tourism development and sustainability at the heart of all activity
- **Strategic Pillar 4 - Grow:** providing the necessary guidance to support livelihoods, job creation and the local economy

Overall, do you think that this is what the strategic priorities for the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 should be? Yes, No, Don't know? Please use the free-type space below to express any additional views, comments, recommendations, or insights.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

3. Vision and Value Proposition

The vision and value proposition define the tourism offering and identity for this destination. Overall, do you feel that this is what vision and value proposition within the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 should be? Yes, No, Don't know? Please use the free-type space below to express any additional views, comments, recommendations, or insights.

4. Express your view

Please use the free-type space below to express any views, comments, recommendations or insights regarding the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

5. Equality

Is there anything more that should be considered as part of Section 75, Equality and Good Relations? Please use the free-type space below to express any views, comments, recommendations.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Name of the activity/policy/project

Strategies and Action Plans within Tourism

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?

Revised – the new emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 is being developed with the last strategy finished in December 2023. An Equality Screening exercise was carried out on this project for the previous Strategy and Action Plan is being reviewed for this next version.

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

The overall aim is to revise and update the 2018-2022 Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area. The revised Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will attempt to proactively address and support the areas tourism needs. The revised Tourism Strategy and Action Plan should be closely aligned with key existing strategies, policy documents, action plans and draw out opportunities/actions presented for the LCCC area. The subject of sustainable tourism is becoming more of a priority and measures should be taken into consideration when developing the new Tourism Strategy. The revised Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will demonstrate clear links to driving the local economy forward.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

The new Tourism Strategy and Action Plan is intended to be a road map for delivery of tourism initiatives to ultimately drive visitor trips, overnight stays, and tourism revenue into the Council area. It is anticipated that all nine of the Section 75 categories could potentially benefit from this policy. For example, it is anticipated that it will benefit those of different ages, religion, as well as those with disabilities and those with dependents who use the services of LCCC.

This policy will be open equally across the Council Area. The strategies and plans commissioned will be accessible to all organisations in the participating council area

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and LCCC will work to ensure that it is particularly accessible to those considered as marginalised or vulnerable within the participating LCCC.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Tourism Development Unit in LCCC

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

Owned by LCCC Service Transformation Directorate; implemented by the Tourism Development Unit

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project?

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial - The delivery of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 will be dependent on the annual budget estimates process. Some activity may require additional budgets.

Legislative: Tourism development is a non-essential service.

Other: Tourism Development supports economic development, generating jobs and economic wealth to the local area.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon? Delete if not applicable

Staff - all LCCC staff involved in the deliver or Tourism.

Service users - wide range of local and out of state visitors.

Other public sector organisations - Tourism NI, Forest Service, DAERA

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other – including Elected Members

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Hillsborough Master Plan	LCCC
LCCC Corporate Plan 2024-28	LCCC
Visit Belfast Tourism Strategy 2024-2027	Visit Belfast
Tourism Strategy for NI 10 year plan	Tourism NI
Forest Service NI Business Plan	DAERA
NI Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030	Department for the Economy
LCCC Equality Scheme and associated equality action plans and policies	LCCC

Available Evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

In developing the draft LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029, a wide range of information, research and expert advice was considered.

To support this screening document, it was necessary to look at many aspects of work covered by the Tourism Development. The main stages in tourism development planning include: the analysis of previous tourist development; evaluation of the position of tourism in the area including competition; formulation of relevant tourism policy by Government; the defining of a development strategy and the formation of a programme of action.

Tourism development can be defined as creating strategies and plans to increase/develop/encourage tourism for a destination. The fundamental reason behind planning and implementing strategies for developing the tourism sector is primarily to make money and to subsequently increase the GDP of an area or country. The emerging Tourism Strategy commissioned by LCCC provides a Vision and Action Plan, creating a 'road map' to assist the growth in the local tourism offer, maximising tourism opportunities that will in turn increase bed nights, trips and spend. One way to assist in this growth is to support minor and major events, expansion of accommodation provision and providing visitor information centres in the LCCC area.

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council work closely with Tourism NI and Visit Belfast to support this objective. Tourism NI's Mission is to build the value of tourism to the local economy, and state, 'Our Vision is to confidently and passionately champion the development and promotion of the Northern Ireland experience'.

Visit Belfast is funded and supported by Belfast City Council, Tourism Northern Ireland (Tourism NI), Tourism Ireland, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, strategic and corporate partners Translink, Belfast One, Diageo

Northern Ireland, Value Cabs, ICC Belfast, Titanic Belfast, Hastings Hotels and Victoria Square. Visit Belfast is a public-private sector partnership that represents over 500 tourism businesses, operators and services.

In the most recent NISRA, June 2019, Local Government Tourism statistics Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council is highlighted as having the least number of bed-nights and visitor trips of any Council. Whilst tourism revenue is slightly better performing this is partly attributed to the strong shopping and retail offer in the Council area. The new LCCC Tourism Strategy looks at ways to address the undersupply in commercial accommodation alongside other initiatives to attract more visitors and associated spend. The staging of events is one such way to steadily grow visitor numbers, especially the day visitor market. Another benefit from events is the positive PR attached to the same.

Feedback on the emerging Tourism Strategy will occur throughout the eight-week consultation period with a questionnaire directed to stakeholders, community and the public that will provide an opportunity for feedback on Section 75 equality and good relations.

We have also considered the most up to date NISRA population data from Census 2021 (published 22/09/22) Lisburn and Castlereagh Census Data

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	It is likely that the Council area will be visited by people from all religions and those with no beliefs. The 8-week consultation should provide an opportunity for any issues to be raised and how best to address these.
Political Opinion	There is no evidence of the political opinion of visitors to the Council area. It is likely that the area will be visited by people with different political opinions.
Racial Group	All proposed plans/initiatives/strategies will endeavour to support all visitors from a tourism perspective from across LCCC and beyond.
Age	The 2021 census showed the population in the Lisburn Castlereagh area totalled 149,106. 19% = (0-14 years) 30% = (15-39 years) 33% = (40-64 years) 18% = (65+ years).

	The Council area is visited by people of all ages for leisure and tourism activities, however particularly strong for families, culturally curious, and those interested in food and drink.
Marital Status	We do not have information on the marital status of people who visit the Council area.
Sexual Orientation	We do not have information on the sexual orientation of people who visit the Council area.
Men & Women Generally	We do not have information on the precise gender make up of visitors to the Council area. It is anticipated this will not be an issue raised as part of the feedback from the 8-week consultation.
Disability	Latest Census data (2021) and LGD boundary data (2014) indicates that 18.29% of the population have a disability or long-term health condition. This includes a wide range of disabilities, including physical, sensory and communication disabilities. The childhood disability figure for Northern Ireland is 5.5%, highest in UK (2017 Research Report, Caring More Than Most, Leeds University on behalf of Contact). Observation and feedback to date suggests that the new sculpture trail is being used by school groups of disabled children.
People with and without Dependants	Evidence suggests the Council area is being visited by people with and without dependants. Evidence in the past would suggest the area is visited namely by family groups, culturally curious and those interested in food and drink.

Needs, Experiences, and Priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief	The tourism product is for all religious beliefs with family attractions and things to do for everyone. It would not be

	anticipated that specific needs are required for differing religious beliefs.
Political Opinion	The tourism offering is for all political backgrounds with no anticipated negative feedback expected.
Racial Group	No issues expected about race once the Strategy and Action Plan go out for consultation, but we are aware that BME residents and visitors to the area may be under-represented as visitors to the Council area. We recognise that there is a need to ensure that people know about the free places to visit. There is a need to ensure that information about all the things to do and see in the Council area are available in other languages for those who do not have English as a first language. This has been taken into account when developing the recent Digital Sculpture Trail at Hillsborough Forest. The App is available in 4 different languages these are: Spanish, French, German and Chinese. We also have collateral literature in these 4 different languages for visitors.
Age	Market research would suggest the LCCC tourism product is more aligned to mature audiences looking to experience culture, short walks, and good food and drink. We would anticipate less of the youth market providing feedback on the emerging strategy.
Marital Status	No issues expected during the eight-week consultation period. The programme will be administered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories.
Sexual Orientation	No issues expected during the eight-week consultation period. The programme will be administered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories.
Men & Women Generally	No issues raised during consultation in relation to gender. However, council staff are aware of the need to ensure that forest facilities are perceived to be safe for lone visitors (especially females, young people, older visitors). No new issues raised since sculptures have been installed.

Although only a small proportion of those who have provided feedback to date have provided negative comments, more negative feedback has been received from females. |
| Disability | All proposed initiatives will be open to all businesses and organisations across the Council. |
| People with and without Dependants | Parents with buggies or people who care for those with physical disabilities may have accessibility issues. Parents with young children may visit different attractions within the Council area. |

Part 2. Screening Questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this activity/policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

We await feedback from the eight-week consultation to assess and monitor the impact on equality of the emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029.

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - **major or minor*** - see guidance below
Religious Belief	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Political Opinion	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Racial Group	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Age	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Marital Status	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None

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Sexual Orientation	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Men & Women Generally	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Disability	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
People with and without Dependants	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None

2(a) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

As feedback is received, consideration will be given to any issue raised before finalising and approving the new LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 204 – 2029.

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Political Opinion	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Racial Group	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Age	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	

Marital Status	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Sexual Orientation	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Men & Women Generally	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Disability	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
People with and without Dependants	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025?   Yes/No   If yes, specify which action.

No, however the policy will be kept under review to ensure that requests for information in various formats are monitored and provided across the Council, i.e. to ensure information is accessible to all.

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

No, activities conducted under this policy are available to all, regardless of Section 75 category. Through the consultation exercises disabled people will be targeted proactively for their feedback.

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

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group	We anticipate a positive impact for all, with an increased number of visitors to the area from all Section 75 groups.	Minor - positive

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

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group		No, there are no further opportunities to better promote good relations between these groups. All opportunities are currently being addressed.

Multiple identity

Provide details of any data on the impact of the activity/policy/project on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

We have taken into account the needs of different multiple identities in the development of the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan. For example, children with disabilities or older people with disabilities will benefit from enhanced accessibility measures.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project. There are 3 possible outcomes:

1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.

2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.

3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
Option 1 **Screen out** – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	
Option 2 **Screen out with mitigation** – some potential impacts could be identified in the eight-week consultation, and they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	The screening has not identified any impacts however will be more strenuously tested during the eight-week consultation period.
Option 3 **Screen in** for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	

| [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below] | |

Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

Feedback from the eight-week consultation will be considered once approval is granted from Regeneration and Growth Committee to go out for consultation.

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

If the activity/policy has been **'screened in'** for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No.   If yes, please provide details.

Not applicable

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The Tourism team will be responsible for monitoring of this project that will involve logging feedback and concerns from stakeholders, community and the public when required. The Council will proactively seek feedback on the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan by way of consultation questionnaires for an eight-week period following agreement from Committee.

Part 5 - Approval and Authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by:	Andrew Kennedy Tourism Development Manager	8.8.24
Reviewed by:	Annie Wilson Equality Officer	08.08.24
Approved by:	Paul McCormick Head of Economic Development	8.8.24

Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

Agenda 3.1 / Appendix 1e Tourism Strategy - Rural Needs Assessment - Mark...

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A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities
(Revised) April 2018

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Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

1B. 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.

Marketing and Promotions

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Adopting a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Implementing a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Revising a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Designing a Public Service	☐					
Delivering a Public Service	X					

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Marketing and Promotions

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The key aim of this campaign is to promote the LCCC area as a visitor destination across N. Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland and also support the promotion of Lisburn City Centre and its commercial offering (mainly retail and hospitality).

A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities
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1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).	X
Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).	
A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.	

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes [X]   No [ ]   If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The Marketing and Promotions (including Integrated Marketing Campaign and Visit Belfast) will impact on people in the rural area and it will promote economic investment by:-

- Increasing tourism footfall
- Increasing spend in rural areas
- Increase visitor dwell time in rural areas
- By offering a holistic "end to end" tourism offering to locals and visitors from further afield

The campaign will impact on people in rural and urban areas. The Council are aware that attracting more visitors to these areas will require mitigating any negative impacts this may have. Negative impacts will be considered as part of the collaborative process and mitigated as early as possible in the programme.

The rural share of the NI population is growing. Over the years 2001-2011 the number of people living in rural areas of NI increased by 15% in comparison to a rise of only 4% in urban areas. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

2C. 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.

Tourism is an expanding area and is being increasingly recognized for its overall contribution to the Northern Ireland economy.

The Marketing and Promotions campaigns will promote all tourism businesses across the whole LCCC area. The campaign will also help build businesses up after the temporary closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The sustainability and stability of businesses is very important in a rural context as these businesses sustain the local community.

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2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	X
Rural Tourism	X
Rural Housing	
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	X
Education or Training in Rural Areas	X
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	
Poverty in Rural Areas	X
Deprivation in Rural Areas	X
Rural Crime or Community Safety	
Rural Development	X
Agri-Environment	
Other (Please state)	

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

Agenda 3.1 / Appendix 1e Tourism Strategy - Rural Needs Assessment - Mark...

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SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. 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 [X]   No [ ]   If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. 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.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders [X]   Published Statistics [ ]

Consultation with Other Organisations [X]   Research Papers [ ]

Surveys or Questionnaires [ ]   Other Publications [ ]

Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below). [ ]

3C. 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.

- Draft Northern Ireland Programme for Government (2016-2021)
- Northern Ireland Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030
- Tourism NI- Operating Plan
- Tourism NI – Northern Ireland Tourism Priorities for Growth
- Forest Service NI Business Plan 2014-15
- OFMDFM – Together; Building a United Community (TBUC)
- OFMDFM – Lifetime Opportunities – Government's Anti-Poverty & Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2020
- Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act
- Hillsborough Tourism Master Plan. 2015
- Hillsborough Forest Economic Appraisal. 2017
- Public consultation and survey in Hillsborough Forest. 2016
- Visit Belfast Strategy 2024-2026

The Socio-economic profile and forecast, Lisburn & Castlereagh (2018-2032) identified the LCCC area as showing marked distinctions between the rural and urban populations. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas and the population forecast is set to grow by 8,300 residents between 2018-2032 (0.4% per annum, twice that of the NI equivalent). L&CCC's population growth outlook between 2018-2032 on average will be 1.65% making it the third highest across NI districts and 0.35 points above the NI rate.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

The Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016) has identified the following as key areas:

- Rural Businesses
- Rural Tourism
- Jobs or employment in rural areas
- Education or training in rural areas
- Poverty in rural areas
- Rural development
- Agri-Environment

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

The Scheme proposed will have a positive impact on the local rural business community and the Council area as a whole.

According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the LCCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

In Northern Ireland 58% of businesses are based in rural areas. The business base in the region as a whole is predominantly small to medium enterprises with a dominance of micro businesses. In terms of businesses located only in rural areas, 94% are defined as micro (having less than 10 employees). Agriculture plays a more important role in the economy of NI than is the case in the rest of the UK, it generates a higher proportion of total GVA (Gross valued added) in the economy and accounts for a higher proportion of our employment. Furthermore 78% of the total NI land area is in agricultural use. Rural businesses located in NI have particular challenges and need specific solutions. The slow uptake of agriculture and rural enterprises in NI with regards to innovation, the fact that only 67% of rural areas have superfast broadband coverage (98% in urban areas) and 14% of tourism expenditure takes place in rural areas (compared with 86% in urban) are further examples of challenges facing the small rural businesses in Northern Ireland.

In 2018 there were 4,755 VAT/PAYE registered businesses in the L&CCC area (NISRA). The close proximity to Belfast puts the L&CCC area in an advantageous position whereby the population density is a way to generate an increase in sales and revenue.

Considering that almost half of the L&CCC district is rural, the regeneration of the LCCC area, is a key priority for the Council whom over the next 10 years will continue to invest in regeneration initiatives. Economic development initiatives such as the Integrated Marketing Campaign and the marketing carried out by Visit Belfast on the Council's behalf will benefit the local rural population and visitors to the area as well as the urban areas. These projects will contribute towards the Council's overall strategic objective of increasing economic development in the L&CCC area for the benefit of all citizens.

A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities
(Revised) April 2018

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SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes [X]   No [ ]   **If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

The synopsis of the programme has been identified in Section 2B, fully considering the needs of the rural population. There have been no detrimental impacts identified.

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.

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5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.   X

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Margaret McAvoy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Officer
Division/Branch	Economic Development
Signature:	MARGARET MCAVOY
Date:	08/08/2024
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Andrew Kennedy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Manager
Division/Branch:	Economic Development
Signature:	ANDREW KENNEDY
Date:	8/8/24

Committee:	Regeneration & Growth Committee
Date:	5 September 2024
Report from:	Head of Economic Development

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Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Labour Market Partnership – Final Action Plan and Funding Contract 2024-2025

1.0	**Background**

1. The Council has been working with the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership in the design and development of a strategy for the next three years and a draft action plan for the period 2024/2025. This strategy and action plan form the basis of the LMP's funding bid for the initial 2024/2025 period. The indicative funding allocation that the Council hopes to receive is £368,462.69 towards programme costs and £92,115.67 that will offset some of the salary costs of the Programmes team within the Economic Development Unit. This amount is match funded by an allocation of £100,000 from the Economic Development Budget estimates on an annual basis.

2. Previous reports to the Committee have indicated that a degree of budget instability exists within the Department for Communities' funding of the Labour Market Partnership initiative as part of wider budget issues in Stormont. As a consequence, funding in support of the administration budget has been released in stages.

3. Three interim letters of offer have now been received covering the period 1 April 2024 to the 31 August 2024 in the total sum of £38,381.54. It is the understanding of officers that receipt of the letter of offer for the programmes element of the initiative is imminent.

Key Issues

1. The proposed 2024/2025 Action Plan was presented to the Regional Labour Market Partnership for Northern Ireland on 27 March 2024 by way of a formal application for the funding and subsequently approved on 21 June 2024. The Committee considered and agreed the draft action plan at its meeting in June 2024 so that the initiatives funded exclusively from the Council's match funding could proceed, and the planning for the delivery of the associated initiatives could progress subject to funding.

2. The Committee had also agreed to note the final agreed plan once confirmed by DfC. The final plan is therefore attached to this report for Members' information along with the funding matrix (**see Appendices).**

3. In line with the ongoing budget issues within the Department, DfC confirmed on 7 June 2024, that while funding for 2024/25 has been secured, this would be resourced over two financial years, which will equate to a funding offer of £263,187.63 in 2024/25 and £98,695.36 in 2025/26. This grant includes for the funding of the agreed proportions of resource funding of administration costs.

4. While uncertainties remain around the funding of subsequent years of the new three year strategy and action plan, this proposed financial timeline ought not to present significant issues to the delivery of the programmes or indeed the end users of the service. This is because previous delays in the release of funding have meant that each annual programme of support has been spread over more than one financial year and delivered on an accruals basis.

	5. The programmes for delivery under the LMP Action Plan 2024/25 will also feed into the Council's Performance Improvement Plan, in terms of a target of 90 people receiving support, and the delivery of a specific employment based training programme for the disabled.
	6. Members are asked to note that DfC have requested that our Council takes part in a pilot programme within projects in Lisburn and North Belfast. This pilot reflects how the Labour Market Partnership in our area has been able to access specific groups to meet employment opportunities. The pilot will focus on area based solutions. Further detail will be brought forward in the next overall plan once the outcome of the pilots are understood.

2.0	**Recommendation** It is recommended that the Committee notes the final Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2024/2025 and agrees that the associated projects proceed to delivery once the necessary letter of offer has been received.	
3.0	**Finance and Resource Implications** Operational Funding - £269,767.33 Administration Funding - £92,115.67 proportionate Total: £361,883 (Year 1 - £263,187.63 Year 2 - £98,695.36) Council Employability and Skills Match Funding £100,000	
4.0	**Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**	
4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	Yes
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out It has been concluded that a detailed equality impact assessment is not necessary as all the potential impacts identified are minor and positive. (**see Appendix**)	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	Yes
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out. The LMP has been developed in order improve employability conditions for those who are economically inactive or unemployed regardless of their urban / rural location.	

Appendices:	Appendix 2a - Final Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2024/25 Appendix 2b - Funding Matrix Appendix 2c - Equality screening

Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

Action Plan for 2024/25

Strategic Priority 1: To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area							
Indicators: % LMP members who feel the local LMP is making a positive contribution and delivering effectively							
Theme	Title of Programme/Project, Aims & Description	Key Activities	Start Date	End Date	Resource or cost	Performance Measures	Delivery Quarter
LMP Delivery & Development	**SP1.1 LMP Delivery and Development** To support the effective partnership delivery of the LMP Action Plan and development of future Action Plans.	Bi-monthly meetings of the LMP (i.e. every other month) Annual survey of LMP members 2 Business Sub Group Meetings	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	**SP1.1: £2,000** Venue/ Hospitality/ Catering etc. for Meetings	*How much did we do?* • 6 x LMP meetings. • 2 X Business Sub-Group Meetings *How well did we do it?* • 40/54 (74%) attendance at LMP meetings. • 15/25 (60%) attendance at Business Sub-Group Meetings *Is anyone better off?* • (7/9) 78% of LMP members who think that the LMP is making a positive difference • 11/15 (70%)of attendees at Business Sub-Group Meetings think that the LMP is making a positive difference	1,2,3,4

| LMP Delivery & Development | SP1.2: Development 1-Year Action Plan
To develop a 1-year Action Plan for 2025-26. | Develop a 1-Year Action Plan for 2025-26. | 01 April 2024 | 31 March 2025 | **SP1.2: £5,000** External consultancy budget. | *How much did we do?*
• 1 x 2025/26 Action Plan drafted to address identified local needs and approved by Regional LMP.

How well did we do it?
• (7/9) 78% of LMP Members feel that their views have been taken into account with regard to the Action Plan.
• (7/9) 78% of LMP Members feel that their views have been taken into account with regard to the Strategic Assessment.

Is anyone better off?
• (7/9) 78 % of LMP members reporting increased awareness of local employability and labour market issues | 3,4 |

Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally								
Indicators - % economic inactivity excluding students, % claimant count, % employment rate of people with disabilities, # all persons median wage, % No Qualifications								
Theme	**Title of Programme/Project, Aims & Description**	**Key Activities**	**Start Date**	**End Date**	**Costs**	**Performance Measures**	**Delivery Quarter**
Economic Inactivity	**SP2.1: Into Employment Programme** Providing support and training for those who are	One programme with 30 participants.	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£30,000	*How much did we do?* • 30 participants enrolled on the programme.	1, 2, 3, 4

unemployed and also economically inactive. The programme will prioritise applicants furthest from the labour market including the long term unemployed and using the area based Multiple Deprivation Measure as an indicator. It is also possible to locally target this provision, based on Census 2021 data, on the Super Data Zones in the LCCC DEAs where there is evidence of both a higher number of individuals 16+ who have no qualifications and where there is also evidence of higher numbers of individuals who are unemployed or economically inactive. Enabling participants to examine their aspirations alongside a specialist mentor, Addressing, any identified training needs and securing a placement with a suitable employer. Progression into full or part employment or further education. Geared to addressing labour supply shortages in Lisburn and Castlereagh.	The programme offer will entail delivery of 3 training packages. These one-week programmes will target a specific career pathway, suggestions will be determined by the the current employability landscape examples can include childcare, retail, hospitality. Each training programme will provide: • Mentoring and development of a bespoke action plan. • Provision of short accredited training course for each participant (Level 1 to level 3 as suitable and vocational in nature). Including an emphasis on 'soft skills' as well as the qualification. • Sector specific workshops to provide an industry overview leading to application form development and mock interviews with local employers. • Mentoring will continue throughout the completion of the training course and placement elements. Optional 12-week work placement in relevant business or directly into employment as appropriate.			External partner/ programme Costs of £30,000 Cost per participant of approximately £1,000 £30k Partner delivery costs to include: -Project Management -Recruitment -Industry Specific Employability Workshops -Mentoring -Training Courses	• 30 work placements available. • 15 employers engaged with the programme. *How well did we do it?* • 21 /30 (70%) complete the programme. • 21 /30 (70%) completed a work placement. • 17/21 (80%) of completerers reported satisfaction with the project. • 12/15 (80%) of employers reported satisfaction with the project. *Is anyone better off?* • 15 /21 (71%) completers gain a qualification. • 15/21 (71%) of completers feel more confident regarding their employability • 15/21 (71%) of completers gain new employment

| Economic Inactivity | SP2.2 (A) Gamified Essential Skills Learning Programme (Literacy)

Support for long-term unemployed or economically inactive through a project of activities designed to address and remove barriers to help move them closer to the labour market / improve employability.

Statistics show 14.6% of LCCC's working age population have no qualifications with some employers citing examples of local young people lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills and who are unable to follow basic instructions.

The NEET rate for LCCC over the period 2018-2022 was 9.4%. This means that in the cohort aged 16 to 24 years 9.4% were not in education, employment or training, compared to a NI average of 10.3%. Whilst below the NI average and third lowest all LGDs over this period, there remains a constituency of need in LCCC in this respect. | Gamified essential skills learning – use of innovative digital technologies and/or Virtual Reality (VR) technology to provide a new learning experience to deliver essential skills training in a format that can attract and engage young unemployed people or working age to acquire basic qualifications in English and Maths.   Deliver two programmes (2 cohorts of 10) in basic literacy.

Deliver a mentorship programme to provide one-toone specialist support to participants so their needs are assessed and they are inspired to participate, continue participation and supported into further training/employment. This may require working in tandem with organisations that provide complementary wrap around supports to tackle barriers that prevail. | 01 April 2024 | 31 March 2025 | £20,000 | What did we do?
• 1 x gamified essential skills course in literacy
• 20 participants enrolled onto programme.

How well did we do it?
• 12/20 (60%) of participants enrolled complete the project
• 9/12 (75%) of participants who completed reported satisfaction with the LMP project

Is anyone better off?
• 6/12 (50%) of completers gain a qualification as a result of participation on the programme
• 6/12 (50%) of completers report feeling more confident regarding their employability as a result of participation on the project. | 1, 2, 3, 4 |

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	Traditional classroom-based learning is not suitable to all people especially those who are from the neurodivergent community or may have had a bad experience at school. This programme will offer a novel approach using digital technologies to encourage greater participation in Essential Skills training. The provision of mentorship to participants in this programme in terms of oneto-one support pre-start (support recruitment and encouragement onto programme), during the programme (to include breaking down any barriers to participation) and post completion (to support into further training/employment)						
Economic Inactivity	**SP2.2 (B) Gamified Essential Skills Learning Programme (Numeracy)** Support for long-term unemployed or economically inactive through a project of activities designed to address and remove barriers to help move them closer to	Gamified essential skills learning – use of innovative digital technologies and/or Virtual Reality (VR) technology to provide a new learning experience to deliver essential skills training in a format that can attract and engage young unemployed people or working age to acquire basic qualifications in English and Maths. Deliver two	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£20,000	What did we do? • 1 x gamified essential skills course in numeracy • 20 participants enrolled onto programme. How well did we do it? • 12/20 (60%) of	

| | the labour market / improve employability.

Statistics show 14.6% of LCCC's working age population have no qualifications with some employers citing examples of local young people lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills and who are unable to follow basic instructions.

The NEET rate for LCCC over the period 2018-2022 was 9.4%. This means that in the cohort aged 16 to 24 years 9.4% were not in education, employment or training, compared to a NI average of 10.3%. Whilst below the NI average and third lowest all LGDs over this period, there remains a constituency of need in LCCC in this respect. Traditional classroom-based learning is not suitable to all people especially those who are from the neurodivergent community or may have had a bad experience at school. This programme will offer a novel approach using digital technologies to encourage greater participation in Essential Skills training. | programmes (2 cohorts of 10) - in basic numeracy.

Deliver a mentorship programme to provide one-toone specialist support to participants so their needs are assessed and they are inspired to participate, continue participation and supported into further training/employment. This may require working in tandem with organisations that provide complementary wrap around supports to tackle barriers that prevail. | | | | participants enrolled complete the project
• 9/12 (75%) of participants who completed reported satisfaction with the LMP project

Is anyone better off?
• 6/12 (50%) of completers gain a qualification as a result of participation on the programme
• 6/12 (50%) of completers report feeling more confident regarding their employability as a result of participation on the project. | |

	The provision of mentorship to participants in this programme in terms of oneto-one support pre-start (support recruitment and encouragement onto programme), during the programme (to include breaking down any barriers to participation) and post completion (to support into further training/employment)						
Skilled Labour Supply	**SP2.3: Sector-Focused Employability Academies** Positioned to address immediate gaps between demand for labour/ skills and supply of the same in Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Area. Whilst at the same time encouraging the unemployed and economically inactive into the workplace. These will address some of the occupations / sectors where there are particular labour supply shortages in Lisburn and Castlereagh. Possible examples may include HGV (£2,000 per person), Health & Social Care (£800 per person) and Manufacturing (£1,600 per person). i.e. HGV - £2,000 x 15 = £30k	3 X Sector-focused Employability Academies co-designed by the Project Officer with local employers. Highly geared to individual employer's specific skill needs The offer will entail:- • 15 Participants per academy • Employability facilitator/mentor • Mentoring, 'soft skill' development, personal employability development plans, CV writing & mock interviews. • Industry ambassador led master classes. • Guaranteed interview on completion of Academy	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£66,000 Delivery Partner Costs (£22,000 per Academy at a rate of approximately £1,466 per participant – costs will include promotion, recruitment, training, mentoring support etc.)	*How much did we do?* • 3 Academies provided • 45 participants enrolled *How well did we do it?* • 36/45 (80%) academy participants completed the programme. • 27/36 (75%) completers report satisfaction with the LMP project *Is anyone better off?* • 27/36 (75%) completers gain employment. • 18/27 (67%) of those who gained employment are still	1,2,3, 4

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	HSS - £800 x 15 = £12k MFT - £1,600 x 15 = £24k Average cost per person £1,466 approx.					in employment 6 months after completing the programme.	
Skilled Labour Supply	**SP2.4 Employer Led Upskilling Programme** Improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally. The Labour Market Partnership is offering an incentive to local businesses in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area to remove barriers to support industry-related training. The scheme is offering an incentive of up to a maximum of £500 per employee for a maximum of 4 employees per business, to businesses based in Lisburn and Castlereagh who are interested in providing a workplace training initiative for their employees. The small grant scheme is available for businesses that employ one or more employee(s) excluding the business owner, with the aim of improving employment	2 tranches of funding towards specific job-related qualifications which would be paid for after completion of the training. This would cover externally provided training e.g. Paediatric First Aid, CSR, Forklift Licence etc.	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£20,000	*How much did we do?* • 2 Tranches of Funding • 15 Employers Engaged • 40 participants/ employees involved in the programme. *How well did we do it?* • 40/40 (100%) participants/ employees complete their training. • 15/15 (100%) employers reported satisfaction with the LMP project • 30/40 (75%) completers report satisfaction with the LMP project *Is anyone better off?* • 40/40 (100%) employees upskilled by gaining a job-related qualification. • 25/40 (63%) of completers have the capacity to incfease hours/ earnings.	1 and 3

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	opportunities by offering entry level positions or upskilling opportunities as a result of training. This programme is not available to the public sector. It should be employer led and therefore not targeted at any particular sector. This should be accessible/ promoted to females to help address underemployment and/or pay gap issues. Also older workers to enable them to acquire skills to remain / reenter the labour market.					• 10/15 (67%) of employers are able to create new entry level positions and or higher-level positions for the employees as a result of the upskilling activity.	
Skilled Labour Supply	**SP2.5 Employee Upskilling: Meeting employer needs & supporting career progression** Supporting employers to upskill staff to enable career progression for those underemployed or employed & seeking career progression; creating employment vacancies and opportunities for those entering the labour market. Engage with local employers to identify their upskilling requirements and address their skills shortages via progression opportunities	Will include a range of upskilling / reskilling opportunities from L2 to L7 and will be available in response to employer need and demand. This positioning at L2-L7 differentiates this from SP2.4. Examples of training may include • Leadership and Management • Strategic Management • Data Analytics • Trade and Export • Electrical Vehicle Charging Installation • Intro to Hydrogen Boilers •HVO Bio Fuels These all relate to higher growth potential sectors, again the	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£65,000	How much did we do? • 10 Employers Engaged • 75 participants enrolled How well did we do it? • 8/10 (80%) of employers reporting satisfaction with project. • 56/75 (75%) of participants enrolled complete the project • 50/56 (89%) of completers reporting satisfaction with project.	1, 2,3, 4

	for existing staff. Support the upskilling of employees which enables job and career progression. Employers will be asked for the number of vacancies that may be realized.	programme will be Employer-Led.				_Is anyone better off?_ • 8/10 (80%) of employers have created new jobs as a result of the support received • 45/56 (80%) of completers gain a qualification as a result of participation on the project • 28/56 (50%) of completers have moved into higher paid employment	
Skilled Labour Supply	**SP 2.6 Self-Employment Options Support Programme** Providing support and training for those identified as economically inactive, unemployed or underemployed. This should be accessible/ promoted to females and older workers on the same rationale as for SP2.4 and SP2.5 above. This is positioned to complement the 11 Councils new Go-Succeed service. The latter is a service with multiple entry points. This LMP provision provides a financial incentive (that would only be available to	One programme with 40 participants. Mentoring and training support from the outset and throughout. Mentoring will continue post completion. Training includes: • Marketing guidance • Financial planning • Introduction to HMRC • Social media training • IT for the Office training • Confidence building and 'soft skill development' • Presentation / pitching skills • Procurement • Market research support and grant • Benefits adjustments calculations	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£62,000 Cost per participant of £1,550 **Cost Breakdown:** 40 x £500 Start-Up Grant £4,000 for programme management and grant administration £4,000 for group training including, finance, marketing, sales, legal, operations, technology	_How much did we do?_ 40 participants enrolled on the project. _How well did we do it?_ 32/40 (80%) of participants completed the programme. 24/32 (75%) of completing participants who reported satisfaction with the LMP project. _Is anyone better off?_ 26/32 (81%) of participants reported they have commenced self-employment.	1, 2,3, 4

					£34,000 for 1-2-1 Support, Mentoring, Specialist Benefits Advice and candidate monitoring	17/26 (66%) of completers still in self-employment 6 months after finishing participation.	
	employer enterprises on Go-Succeed). It also has the capacity to provide more 1 to 1 support than the entry level to Go-Succeed (ENGAGE) to address particular barriers to labour market participation. Which may enable some of these participants to gain entry level enterprise action planning/ business planning support via Go-Succeed and then additional support from LMP to then be able to re-enter Go Succeed at FOUNDATION or ENABLING GROWTH levels, if they have been able to create employment.	• £500 incentive/ barrier removal payment towards essential equipment at start up stage					
Disability	**SP2.7 Pathways to Employment for Individuals With a Disability** Providing support and training for individuals with a disability who are either currently out of work or underemployed. Enabling them to examine their aspirations alongside a specialist mentor, address any training needs and secure a flexible placement with a suitable employer. Progression into full time or part time employment, self-	For the participants the offer will entail: • Mentoring and development of a bespoke action plan • Provision of short, accredited training course for each participant (Level 1 to level 3 as suitable and vocational in nature). Including an emphasis on 'soft skills' as well as the qualification. • Mentoring will continue throughout the completion of the training course and placement /work elements.	01 April 2024	31 March 2025	£60,000 £60,00 Partner delivery costs to include: -Project Management -Recruitment Employer Engagement -Employability workshops -Mentoring -Training Courses	*How much did we do?* • 25 participants enrolled. • 25 employers engaged. • 25 work placements available. *How well did we do it?* • 17/25 (70%) participants complete the programme. • 12/17 (71%) completers report	1, 2,3, 4

| | employment or further education. | • 12-week placement in relevant business or directly into employment as appropriate (optional part-time on both)

In parallel with the above the programme will entail engagement of around 25 prominent local employers in a targeted employer-led and focused programme to match employers to participants. It will deliver employer education and awareness activities to address knowledge gaps and misperceptions about disability and educate on available supports (Access to Work, Workable NI). If required additional training will be offered specific to their available job roles | | | | satisfaction with the LMP project.
• 17/25 (70%) of employers who reported satisfaction with the LMP project.
• 15/25 (63%) participants complete a work placement.
• 12/15 (80%) who reported that the work placement was beneficial.

Is anyone better off?
• 12/17 (70%) completers gain a qualification
• 7/17 (41%) of completers undertake further education or training following completion of the project.
• 9/17 (53%) of completers gain new employment. | |

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Strategic Priority 3: To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally							
Indicators: % attending events reporting increased awareness of the work of the LMP.							
Theme	**Title of Programme/Project, Aims & Description**	**Key Activities**	**Start Date**	**End Date**	**Resource or cost**	**Performance Measures**	**Delivery Quarter**
Increased Awareness	**SP3.1: Job Fairs / Employability Events** Promote the programmes and support / encourage employers and participants to access and implement the schemes through a range of events to include employer engagement/education, apprenticeship and jobs fair, partner events, local job fairs	To include: - • Localised Job fairs X 2 • 2 other LMP events that could include:- ☑ A Female Returners event or a Disability Inclusion event. ☑ An event focused on areas of skills shortage (e.g. trades) or growth areas (e.g. green economy or creative sector). An Industry Masterclass. ☑ An event targeted at newly retired – possible 'attract back' ☑ Promotion of apprenticeships, outside traditional industrial sectors (i.e. aligned to L&C sectoral employment structure). This is likely to be a definite event given potential identified in Stratgeic Assessment for this to be a pathway with more potential.	1 April 2024	31 March 2025	**SP 3.1 £18,462.69**	*How much did we do?* • 4 events (2 Job fairs and 2 others) • 500 attendees across all events *How well did we do it?* • 200/250 (80%) of attendees report satisfaction with events *Is anyone better off?* • 175/250 (70%) of attendees at events reported increased awareness of LMP programme. • 100/250 (40%) of attendees surveyed at the Job Fairs intend to apply for a job as a result of the events. Note - all 250 attendees surveyed	1,2,3, 4

		The final choice of events will be determined in collaboration with LMP members and other stakeholders. • Budget to also include marketing.					

Budget Summary

The proposed budget for Lisburn and Castlereagh's LMP's 2024/25 Action Plan is set out below.

Budget Category	Budget Sub Category	Budget 2024-25
	LMP Staff costs Salaries	£90,000[1]

	Staff Costs (Mileage & Training)
	
	    ➢ *Mileage - £615.67*
	    ➢ *Training - £500*
	
	Running costs
		£1,115.67

	Audit	£1,000.00
	Total Administration	**£92,115.67**
Operational	**Strategic Priority 1**	
	SP 1.1 LMP Delivery and Development	£2,000
	SP 1.2: Development of a 1-Year Action Plan	£5,000
	Strategic Priority 2	
	SP2.1: Into Employment Programme	£30,000
	SP2.2 Gamified Essential Skills Learning Programme (A& B – Literacy and Numeracy).	£40,000
	SP2.3: Sector-Focused Employability Academies	£66,000
	SP2.4 Employer Led Upskilling Programme	£20,000
	SP2.5: Employee Upskilling	£65,000
	SP2.6: Self-Employment Options Support Programme	£62,000
	SP2.7: Pathways to Employment For Individuals With a Disability	£60,000
	Strategic Priority 3	
	SP3.1: Job Fairs / Employability Events	£18,462.69
	Total Operational	**£368,462.69**
Total	**Overall Total (Administration & Operational)**	**£460,578.36**

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[1] There are four rolein the L&C LMP team. These are Programme Manager FT; Programmes Officer FT; Programmes Officer PT; and Project Support Officer FT. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council will claim 60% of each up to a maximum of £90,000. Salaries for the roles can be provided to DFC on request.

LMP Funding Matrix - £5.5m

Total Funding	5,500,000.00	DfC available funding for local LMP delivery
Total Population	1,185,659	based on 2022 Mid Year Estimate of 16-64 year olds (source NISRA)
Deprivation	N/A	Based on 2017 Multiple Deprivation Measure (source NINIS)

Area	Basic Funding (30%)	Population (45%)			Deprivation (25%)			Total
		Area Population	%	Population Based Funding	No of SOAs in top 223*	%	Deprevation Based Funding	
Northern Ireland	£ 1,650,000.00	1185659	100	£ 2,475,000.00	223	100	£ 1,375,000.00	£ 5,500,000.00
Antrim and Newtownabbey	£ 150,000.00	91,247	7.70	£ 190,473.25	9	4.04	£ 55,493.27	£ 395,966.53
Ards and North Down	£ 150,000.00	97,365	8.21	£ 203,244.25	8	3.59	£ 49,327.35	£ 402,571.60
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	£ 150,000.00	135,635	11.44	£ 283,130.84	17	7.62	£ 104,820.63	£ 537,951.46
Belfast	£ 150,000.00	229,625	19.37	£ 479,329.95	76	34.08	£ 468,609.87	£ 1,097,939.82
Causeway Coast and Glens	£ 150,000.00	85,706	7.23	£ 178,906.71	21	9.42	£ 129,484.30	£ 458,391.01
Derry & Strabane	£ 150,000.00	94,102	7.94	£ 196,432.91	36	16.14	£ 221,973.09	£ 568,406.01
Fermanagh and Omagh	£ 150,000.00	70,043	5.91	£ 146,211.03	14	6.28	£ 86,322.87	£ 382,533.90
Lisburn and Castlereagh	£ 150,000.00	92,642	7.81	£ 193,385.24	3	1.35	£ 18,497.76	£ 361,883.00
Mid and East Antrim	£ 150,000.00	85,451	7.21	£ 178,374.41	12	5.38	£ 73,991.03	£ 402,365.44
Mid Ulster	£ 150,000.00	93,111	7.85	£ 194,364.25	4	1.79	£ 24,663.68	£ 369,027.93
Newry, Mourne & Down	£ 150,000.00	110,732	9.34	£ 231,147.15	23	10.31	£ 141,816.14	£ 522,963.29
Total	£ 1,650,000.00	1185659	100	£ 2,475,000.00	223	100	£ 1,375,000.00	£ 5,500,000.00

LMP Funding Matrix - £4m

Total Funding	4,000,000.00	DfC available funding for local LMP delivery
Total Population	1,185,659	based on 2022 Mid Year Estimate of 16-64 year olds (source NISRA)
Deprivation	N/A	Based on 2017 Multiple Deprivation Measure (source NINIS)

Area	Basic Funding (30%)	Population (45%)			Deprivation (25%)			Total
		Area Population	%	Population Based Funding	No of SOAs in top 223*	%	Deprevation Based Funding	
Northern Ireland	£ 1,200,000.00	1185659	100	£ 1,800,000.00	223	100	£ 1,000,000.00	£ 4,000,000.00
Antrim and Newtownabbey	£ 109,090.91	91,247	7.70	£ 138,526.00	9	4.04	£ 40,358.74	£ 287,975.65
Ards and North Down	£ 109,090.91	97,365	8.21	£ 147,814.00	8	3.59	£ 35,874.44	£ 292,779.35
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	£ 109,090.91	135,635	11.44	£ 205,913.34	17	7.62	£ 76,233.18	£ 391,237.43
Belfast	£ 109,090.91	229,625	19.37	£ 348,603.60	76	34.08	£ 340,807.17	£ 798,501.69
Causeway Coast and Glens	£ 109,090.91	85,706	7.23	£ 130,113.97	21	9.42	£ 94,170.40	£ 333,375.28
Derry & Strabane	£ 109,090.91	94,102	7.94	£ 142,860.30	36	16.14	£ 161,434.98	£ 413,386.19
Fermanagh and Omagh	£ 109,090.91	70,043	5.91	£ 106,335.30	14	6.28	£ 62,780.27	£ 278,206.47
Lisburn and Castlereagh	£ 109,090.91	92,642	7.81	£ 140,643.81	3	1.35	£ 13,452.91	£ 263,187.63
Mid and East Antrim	£ 109,090.91	85,451	7.21	£ 129,726.84	12	5.38	£ 53,811.66	£ 292,629.41
Mid Ulster	£ 109,090.91	93,111	7.85	£ 141,355.82	4	1.79	£ 17,937.22	£ 268,383.95
Newry, Mourne & Down	£ 109,090.91	110,732	9.34	£ 168,107.02	23	10.31	£ 103,139.01	£ 380,336.94
Total	£ 1,200,000.00	1185659	100	£ 1,800,000.00	223	100	£ 1,000,000.00	£ 4,000,000.00

LMP Funding Matrix - £1.5m

Total Funding	1,500,000.00	DfC available funding for local LMP delivery
Total Population	1,185,659	based on 2022 Mid Year Estimate of 16-64 year olds (source NISRA)
Deprivation	N/A	Based on 2017 Multiple Deprivation Measure (source NINIS)

Area	Basic Funding (30%)	Population (45%)			Deprivation (25%)			Total
		Area Population	%	Population Based Funding	No of SOAs in top 223*	%	Deprevation Based Funding	
Northern Ireland	£ 450,000.00	1185659	100	£ 675,000.00	223	100	£ 375,000.00	£ 1,500,000.00
Antrim and Newtownabbey	£ 40,909.09	91,247	7.70	£ 51,947.25	9	4.04	£ 15,134.53	£ 107,990.87
Ards and North Down	£ 40,909.09	97,365	8.21	£ 55,430.25	8	3.59	£ 13,452.91	£ 109,792.26
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	£ 40,909.09	135,635	11.44	£ 77,217.50	17	7.62	£ 28,587.44	£ 146,714.04
Belfast	£ 40,909.09	229,625	19.37	£ 130,726.35	76	34.08	£ 127,802.69	£ 299,438.13
Causeway Coast and Glens	£ 40,909.09	85,706	7.23	£ 48,792.74	21	9.42	£ 35,313.90	£ 125,015.73
Derry & Strabane	£ 40,909.09	94,102	7.94	£ 53,572.61	36	16.14	£ 60,538.12	£ 155,019.82
Fermanagh and Omagh	£ 40,909.09	70,043	5.91	£ 39,875.74	14	6.28	£ 23,542.60	£ 104,327.43
Lisburn and Castlereagh	£ 40,909.09	92,642	7.81	£ 52,741.43	3	1.35	£ 5,044.84	£ 98,695.36
Mid and East Antrim	£ 40,909.09	85,451	7.21	£ 48,647.57	12	5.38	£ 20,179.37	£ 109,736.03
Mid Ulster	£ 40,909.09	93,111	7.85	£ 53,008.43	4	1.79	£ 6,726.46	£ 100,643.98
Newry, Mourne & Down	£ 40,909.09	110,732	9.34	£ 63,040.13	23	10.31	£ 38,677.13	£ 142,626.35
Total	£ 450,000.00	1185659	100	£ 675,000.00	223	100	£ 375,000.00	£ 1,500,000.00

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template (Oct 2022)

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Labour Market Partnership Action Plan

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) is a core partner within the LMP, responsible for helping to improve labour market conditions locally through co-ordinated, collaborative multi-agency action. LCCC provides the secretariat and resource support, for the operation of the LMP and supports the LMP in the delivery of the Action Plan, through marketing, communication, procurement, human resources and financial administration services.

In order to develop the 24-25 Action Plan and associated submission for funding support from the Department for Communities (DfC) the LMP undertook a review of its 23-24 one-year Action Plan as well as a Strategic Assessment of local labour market conditions in the LCCC area. The exercise was undertaken to ensure that the priorities identified continue to reflect priority employability and labour market issues in the LCCC area. It was informed by analysis of information provided by statutory partners, as well as the results of ongoing engagement and consultation across the council area with Stakeholders, Employers and Elected Members. The LMP sits as an initiative under DfC's Employability NI Programme.

As a result of the Planning Exercise the following themes have been identified as local priorities for the Action Plan 2024-25:

1.   Economic Inactivity
2.   Disability
3.   Skilled Labour Supply

Cognizance was taken of the strategic assessment outcomes and local current provision to ensure that the action plan developed is relevant to the challenges and opportunities particular to the residents of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and is informed by:

- Programme for Government (PfG)
- Lisburn and Castlereagh Community Plan (2017-2030)

- Belfast Regional City Deal Employability and Skills Framework

Name of the activity/policy/project

Please see attached Apprendix 1 – Labour Market Action Plan 2024/25

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?
It is a revised Annual Action Plan

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council's vision is for an empowered, prosperous, healthy, safe and inclusive community. A target outcome of our LCCC Community plan is to reduce income inequality in this region. We aspire to grow our local economy so that it is a source of meaningful, rewarding work and reduces inequality (LCCC Community Plan). The Council is committed to working in collaboration with other agencies to secure these aspirations for example through the Strategic Community Planning Partnership. The opportunity to support the local labour market through multi- agency collaboration is welcomed by the Council for the opportunities it brings to support our local communities with interventions tailored to their needs. The Labour Market Partnership (LMP) can improve fairness in the labour market by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged while working to support local people back into work.

The LMP aims to contribute to strategic local objectives and the NI Executives strategic objectives, including achievement of targets set in:

Lisburn and Castlereagh Community Plan (2017-2030): Sets out a vision of "an empowered, prosperous, healthy, safe and inclusive society". The Community Plan aspires to grow the local economy so that it is a source of meaningful, rewarding work and reduces inequality within the LCCC area. The work of the LMP has a key role in delivering on these Community Plan imperatives, by improving fairness in the labour market through actions to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged and working to support local people back into work.

Programme for Government: The key focus therein on delivering sustainable skills and employment for people. The ambition behind the PfG is to deliver a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy in order to give children and young people the best start in life. Government and partner agencies are tasked

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with increasing the proportion of the workforce qualified to higher levels, getting more people working in better jobs, raising the number of graduates progressing into professional or management occupations and creating the conditions where people can achieve their potential. The work of the Lisburn and Castlereagh LMP will deliver against several outcomes in the PfG aligned to the above ambitions.

The current relevant outcomes identified within the Programme for Government are:
- Outcome 3: 'We have a more equal society'
- Outcome 6: 'We have more people working in better jobs'
- Outcome 8: 'We care for others and help those in need

The DfC is the lead department for a number of indicators, through which progress on these outcomes will be measured:

- Indicator 17: Economic inactivity rates excluding students
- Indicator 32: Employment rate of 16-64 year olds by deprivation quintile
- Indicator 33: % of people working part-time who would like to work more hours
- Indicator 19: % of population living in absolute and relative poverty

Belfast Regional City Deal Employability and Skills Framework: This focuses on the employability and skills strand of Belfast Regional City Deal, including the challenges posed by economic inactivity, lower business productivity and youth unemployment, all relevant to the work of the Lisburn and Castlereagh LMP. The latter stages of the framework pose interesting solutions based on a joined-up approach (e.g. re-skilling, higher level apprenticeships, work force planning models) which are also highly relevant to the LMP work.

Taking the above into consideration, the aim and objectives of the LMP have been summarised into 3 strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1 – LMP Delivery and Development - To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area by:

1.1: Delivery and Development: To support the effective partnership delivery of the LMP Action Plan and development of future Action Plans.

1.2: Development of a 1-year Strategic Assessment and 1-year Action Plan: Develop a 1-year Action Plan for 2025-26.

Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or Labour market conditions locally

Economic Inactivity:

2.1: Into Employment Programme: Provide support and training for those unemployed. The programme will prioritise those furthest from the labour market and who reside in areas of high deprivation.

2.2 Gamilfied Essential Skills Learning Programme – Provide support for long-term unemployment or economically inactive to address and remove barriers to help move them closer to the labour market/improve employability.

Skilled Labour Supply:

2.3 Sector-Focused Employability Academies: Deliver 3 x Sector-focused Employabilty Academies co-designed by the Project Officer and local employers.

2.4 Employer Led Upskilling Programme – Improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally.

2.5 Employee Upskilling Programme – Supporting employers to upskill staff to enale career progression for those underemployed or employed seeking career progression, creating employment vacancies for those entering the labour market.

2.6 Self-Employment Options Support Programme – Provide Support and training for those identified as economically inactive, unemployed or underemployed. Should be assessable to/promoted to females and older workers on same rationale as 2.4 and 2.5.

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Disability:

2.7 Pathways to Employment for Individuals with a disability – Providing support and training for individuals with a disability who are unemployed or underemployed.

Strategic Priority 3: To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision
available either regionally or locally.

Increased Awareness:

3.1   Job Fairs/Employability Events – Promote the programmes and support/encourage employers and participants to access and implement the schemes through a range of events to include employer engagement/education, apprenticeships, partner events and local job fairs.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council's vision is for an empowered, prosperous, healthy, safe and inclusive community. A target outcome of our LCCC Community plan is to reduce income inequality in this region. We aspire to grow our local economy so that it is a source of meaningful, rewarding work and reduces inequality (LCCC Community Plan). The Council is committed to working in collaboration with other agencies to secure these aspirations for example through the Strategic Community Planning Partnership. The opportunity to support the local labour market through multi- agency collaboration is welcomed by the Council for the opportunities it brings to support our local communities with interventions tailored to their needs. The Labour Market Partnership (LMP) can improve fairness in the labour market by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged while working to support local people back into work.

The LMP aims to contribute to strategic local objectives and the NI Executives strategic objectives, including achievement of targets set in:

Lisburn and Castlereagh Community Plan (2017-2030): Sets out a vision of "an empowered, prosperous, healthy, safe and inclusive society". The Community Plan aspires to grow the local economy so that it is a source of meaningful, rewarding work and reduces inequality within the LCCC area. The work of the LMP has a key role in delivering on these Community Plan imperatives, by improving fairness in the labour market through actions to support the most

vulnerable and disadvantaged and working to support local people back into work.

Programme for Government: The key focus therein on delivering sustainable skills and employment for people. The ambition behind the PfG is to deliver a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy in order to give children and young people the best start in life. Government and partner agencies are tasked with increasing the proportion of the workforce qualified to higher levels, getting more people working in better jobs, raising the number of graduates progressing into professional or management occupations and creating the conditions where people can achieve their potential. The work of the Lisburn and Castlereagh LMP will deliver against several outcomes in the PfG aligned to the above ambitions.

The current relevant outcomes identified within the Programme for Government are:
- Outcome 3: 'We have a more equal society'
- Outcome 6: 'We have more people working in better jobs'
- Outcome 8: 'We care for others and help those in need

The DfC is the lead department for a number of indicators, through which progress on these outcomes will be measured:
- Indicator 17: Economic inactivity rates excluding students
- Indicator 32: Employment rate of 16-64 year olds by deprivation quintile
- Indicator 33: % of people working part-time who would like to work more hours
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Belfast Regional City Deal Employability and Skills Framework: This focuses on the employability and skills strand of Belfast Regional City Deal, including the challenges posed by economic inactivity, lower business productivity and youth unemployment, all relevant to the work of the Lisburn and Castlereagh LMP. The latter stages of the framework pose interesting solutions based on a joined-up approach (e.g. re-skilling, higher level apprenticeships, work force planning models) which are also highly relevant to the LMP work.

Taking the above into consideration, the aim and objectives of the LMP have been summarised into 3 strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1 – LMP Delivery and Development - To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area by:

1.1: Delivery and Development: To support the effective partnership delivery of the LMP Action Plan and development of future Action Plans.

1.2: Development of a 1-year Strategic Assessment and 1-year Action Plan: Develop a 1-year Action Plan for 2025-26.

Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or Labour market conditions locally

Economic Inactivity:

2.1:   Into Employment Programme: Provide support and training for those unemployed. The programme will prioritise those furthest from the labour market and who reside in areas of high deprivation.

2.2   Gamilfied Essential Skills Learning Programme – Provide support for long-term unemployment or economically inactive to address and remove barriers to help move them closer to the labour market/improve employability.

Skilled Labour Supply:

2.3   Sector-Focused Employability Academies: Deliver 3 x Sector-focused Employabilty Academies co-designed by the Project Officer and local employers.

2.4   Employer Led Upskilling Programme – Improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally.

2.5   Employee Upskilling Programme – Supporting employers to upskill staff to enale career progression for those underemployed or employed seeking career progression, creating employment vacancies for those entering the labour market.

2.6   Self-Employment Options Support Programme – Provide Support and training for those identified as economically inactive, unemployed or underemployed. Should be assessable to/promoted to females and older workers on same rationale as 2.4 and 2.5.

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Disability:

2.7 **Pathways to Employment for Individuals with a disability –** Providing support and training for individuals with a disability who are unemployed or underemployed.

Strategic Priority 3: To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision
available either regionally or locally.

Increased Awareness:

3.1 **Job Fairs/Employability Events** – Promote the programmes and support/encourage employers and participants to access and implement the schemes through a range of events to include employer engagement/education, apprenticeships, partner events and local job fairs.

Are there any expected benefits to the Section 75 categories/groups from this policy? If so, please explain.

The Labour Market Partnership is intended to improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions across the borough of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. In order to ascertain the position of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, a full research exercise was undertaken of the current provision in the field of employability and skills to understand the issues faced by LCCC employers and the local community, which identified future needs. To enhance the research process the LMP recruited a consultant to assist with the development of the 2024/25 Action Plan. Exit surveys from Employer Exhibitors and Attendees at two LCCC LMP Job Fairs made an invaluable contribution to the research and development of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan submitted to Department for Communities provides a detailed summary of these findings, which were used to formulate a number of proposed schemes which are being considered to improve labour market conditions. The intended beneficiaries of the programme are residents that are experiencing barriers to employment due to economic inactivity, unemployment, underemployment, disability and those who reside in areas of high deprivation (SOA's as defined by NISRA). Many of the potential

participants fall within the Section 75 categories. It is important to note that some Section 75 groups are more likely to be underrepresented in employment, under-employed and at greater risk of facing unemployment. For example in Northern Ireland 60.2% of those with disabilities are economically inactive compared with 42.5% in the rest of the UK. Women constitute 79% of the part time workforce and 1/3 of working age women are economically inactive according to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "lone parents with dependents experience a lower employment rate and a higher economic inactivity rate, particularly for women who constitute the majority of lone parents".

The opportunity to support the local labour market through multi- agency collaboration is welcomed by the Council for the opportunities it brings to support our local communities with interventions tailored to their needs. LCCC as the secretariat to the LMP implemented a stakeholder engagement programme to inform the development of the 2024/25 Action Plan. This has entailed 1-1 meetings working to a structured topic list with LMP members and wider stakeholders including the following:-

- Head of Economic Development, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (Chair)
- Careers Service Lisburn
- Careers Service NI
- JBO Employer Advisors (DfC)
- JBO Universal Credit Managers (DfC)
- GEMS NI Social Enterprise
- Invest NI Southern Regional Team
- LCCC Economic Development Team
- Lisburn Area Learning Community
- Lisburn Chamber of Commerce
- Lisburn Enterprise Organisation
- Mencap NI
- NOW Group
- People 1st
- SE Health and Social Care Trust
- SERC
- The Princes Trust
- Ulster Supported Employment Ltd
- Inspire Business Centre

The Labour Market Partnership (LMP) can improve fairness in the labour market by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged while working to support local people back into work.

An outcome-based approach has been used to address the following local priorities in 2024/25. The 'turning the curve' charts used, refer to the assessment of the most recently available data at the time of the review. The 'turning the curve' exercises demonstrate how the delivery of the academies and programmes will improve the employability of Lisburn and Castlereagh residents in priority areas.

All LMP Service Providers have to demonstrate their awareness and adherence to Section 75 within their procurement submissions and consequent delivery of services.

Proposed programmes are as follows:

Strategic Priority 1 – LMP Delivery and Development - To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area by:

1.1: Delivery and Development: To support the effective partnership delivery of the LMP Action Plan and development of future Action Plans.

1.2: Development of a 1-year Strategic Assessment and 1-year Action Plan: Develop a 1-year Action Plan for 2025-26.

Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or Labour market conditions locally

Economic Inactivity:

2.1:   Into Employment Programme: Provide support and training for those unemployed. The programme will prioritise those furthest from the labour market and who reside in areas of high deprivation.

2.2   Gamilfied Essential Skills Learning Programme – Provide support for long-term unemployment or economically inactive to address and remove barriers to help move them closer to the labour market/improve employability.

Skilled Labour Supply:

2.3   Sector-Focused Employability Academies: Deliver 3 x Sector-focused Employabilty Academies co-designed by the Project Officer and local employers.

2.4   Employer Led Upskilling Programme – Improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally.

2.5   Employee Upskilling Programme – Supporting employers to upskill staff to enale career progression for those underemployed or employed seeking career progression, creating employment vacancies for those entering the labour market.

2.6   Self-Employment Options Support Programme – Provide Support and training for those identified as economically inactive, unemployed or underemployed. Should be assessable to/promoted to females and older workers on same rationale as 2.4 and 2.5.
.
Disability:

2.7   Pathways to Employment for Individuals with a disability – Providing support and training for individuals with a disability who are unemployed or underemployed.

**Strategic Priority 3: To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision
available either regionally or locally.**

Increased Awareness:

3.1   Job Fairs/Employability Events – Promote the programmes and support/encourage employers and participants to access and implement the schemes through a range of events to include employer engagement/education, apprenticeships, partner events and local job fairs.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Economic Development, Programmes Team, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC)

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

The Programmes Team, led by Emma Fearon within Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council provide the secretariat for the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership.   The Head of Economic Development sits on the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership as one of the core partners. The programme is funded through Department for Communities (DfC) budget allocation and is administered by the LCCC Economic Development Department, Programmes Team.

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project?

Yes

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial: Funded by Department for Communities and Infrastructure (DfC)

Other - Time - The project is required to be delivered within timeframes agreed between DfC and LCCC. We anticipate the Action Plan to be approved by March 2024.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon? Delete if not applicable

Staff: LCCC LMP Programmes Team

Service users: Programme participants are recruited from those who reside in the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area.

Other public sector organisations

The Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership (LMP) currently comprises representation from each of the following organisations:-

- Jobs and Benefits Office (DfC)
- South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
- Invest NI (DfE)
- Careers Service NI (DfE)
- Lisburn Area Learning Community Consortium
- Lisburn Chamber of Commerce
- SERC
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Economic Development Department
- Atlas Women's Centre
- Stepping Stones NI
- Workforce Training Services
- People 1st
- Youth Action NI
- Adapt NI
- The Princes Trust
- Ulster Supported Employment Ltd
- Tangible Consulting Ltd
- ProfileTree Web Design and Digital Marketing Age

Voluntary/community/trade union include:

The following contacts were consulted on the Action Plan Development:

- Atlas Women's Centre
- Stepping Stones NI
- Workforce Training Services
- People 1st § Youth Action NI
- Adapt NI
- The Princes Trust
- Ulster Supported Employment Ltd
- Tangible Consulting Ltd
- ProfileTree Web Design and Digital Marketing Age

Other

The participants are the main stakeholders affected by the scheme

LCCC Elected Members were consulted for their input to support the development of the Action Plan.

Deliver Agents Consulted were:

- Workforce
- People 1st
- Stepping Stones
- USEL
- Tangible Training
- Profile Tree

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project

Name of policy/strategy/ plan	Who owns or implements?
Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership – 2024/25 Action Plan	Developed under DfC's new Employability NI Framework (100% funded by DfC)
Equality and Disability Action Plans	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland https://www.equalityni.org/Employers-Service-Providers/Public-Authorities/Section75/Section-75/Equality-Schemes-(1)
Local Development Plan	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/planning/local-development-plan
LCCC Corporate Plan	LCCC Corporate Plan Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/general/ICP_2021_Final.pdf

Interim Equality Scheme	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/council/publications/equality-section-75/policies-section-75-screening

Available evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

The aim of the partnership is to improve employability outcomes and labour conditions across the Lisburn and Castlereagh Council District. Therefore, persons who are long term unemployed, underemployed, economically inactive or located in an area that has increased levels of deprivation will be targeted with an aim of increasing fairness in the labour market by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged while working to support local people back into work.

In developing the Labour Market Partnership, a wide range of qualitative and quantitative research initiatives were undertaken. The goal in this activity was to spread the net as wide as possible in terms of understanding the issues faced by LCCC employers and the local community, current provision in the field of employability and skills and gain a view of future needs.

Secondary research consisted of a review of the following publications:

- Programme for Government
- Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan
- Council Corporate Plan
- NI Industrial Strategy (Draft)
- Belfast Regional City Deal Employability and Skills Framework
- Economic Profile and Forecast for LCCC by Oxford Economics (May 2019)
- Annual Further Education Activity Reports produced by DfE
- The Labour Market Profile for Lisburn Castlereagh by DfE 2021,
- The Employment Outcomes and Challenges for Disabled People NI (DfC August 2021)
- Lisburn Castlereagh Labour Market Statistics (Oxford Economics July 2021)

- Locality Plans for a number of LCCC District Electoral Areas (LCCC June 2023)
- DfE Skills Barometer Reports 2021

LCCC as the secretariat to the LMP implemented a consultation and engagement programme to gain insight into the specific priorities and needs of the labour market in Lisburn and Castlereagh area. The results were used to inform the development of strategic priorities over the period 2024-27 and 24-25 Action Plan.

The research was implemented through a structured survey sent via the Smart Survey Platform to employability and skills partners as below.

- Head of Economic Development
- Careers Service Lisburn
- Careers Service NI
- JBO Employer Advisors (DfC)
- JBO Universal Credit Managers (DfC)
- GEMS NI Social Enterprise
- LCCC Community Planning Team
- Lisburn Area Learning Community
- Lisburn Chamber of Commerce
- Atlas Women's Centre
- Stepping Stones NI
- Workforce Training Services
- People 1st Training
- Youth Action NI
- Adapt NI
- The Princes Trust
- Ulster Supported Employment Ltd
- Tangible Consulting Ltd
- Profile Tree Web Design and Digital Marketing Agency

The aims and objectives of Labour Market Partnerships were generally discussed and the creation of Labour Market Partnership collaborations was broadly welcomed by the organisations consulted. Each stakeholder was invited to provide a summary of their current provision, the successes and failures of various programmes were discussed and proved very informative. Barriers and

obstacles to success experienced were considered. Finally, identified needs, potential opportunities and gaps in the current provision were examined. Therefore, a full examination was undertaken in order to understand the current situation and make recommendations based on the findings and gaps in labour market conditions.

Most up to date NISRA population data from Census 2021 (published 22/09/22) **Lisburn and Castlereagh Census Data** Information below is from the 2011 Northern Ireland Census which takes into account the Lisburn and Castlereagh Council Area.

Sec 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	The 2021 NI Census recorded the following statistics with regard to religious belief in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area; • 58% Protestant (or other Christian) • 27% Catholic • 4% Other • 13% None
Political Opinion	The 2021 NI Census recorded the following statistics with regard to political opinion in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area; 41% indicated that they had a British only national identity, 16% had an Irish only national identity and 21% had a Northern Irish national identity.
Racial Group	The 2021 NI Census recorded the following statistics with regard to racial groups in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area; **4%** were from an ethnic minority population and the remaining **96%** were white (including Irish Traveller).
Age	In 2021 NI Census statistics with regard to age in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area were recorded to inform the Corporate plan; • 19% Children were aged 0-14 years • 30% of people aged 15 -39 years

	• 33% aged 40 – 64 years • 18% aged 65+ years and older The population of the Council area aged 65 and over will increase by 9% by 2025 and 13% by 2030. In April 2020 the number of registered claimants in the 16 – 24 year age category in this area rose to 575 and in April 2021 the figure was 590. While the number of claimants is higher in the age 25 – 49 age group, that corresponds to a much bigger section of the population. We have identified that women and those in the 55+ age bracket experience particular barriers to employment and specific programmes are tailored to address their employability needs. The labour market has ensured many challenges as a result of Covid-19. In addition to furloughing and redundancies, many young people have seen their hours reduced over the course of the pandemic to the present day, greatly reducing their income while retaining their employed status (not evidenced as economically inactive). Even pre-Covid younger residents aged 16-24 were more likely to collect unemployment benefits than older age groups. Source Office for National Statistics (ONS). Actions will be aimed at preventing young people becoming long term unemployed (over 12 months) through all means available, suggested actions included industry taster courses and short term training interventions directly linked to areas of current work opportunity for example warehousing, forklift/ HGV licences, hospitality, CSR (Construction) training and digital skills.
Marital Status	The 2021 census records the following statics with regard to the marital status of persons over the age of 16 for the LCCC area; • Single – 33%

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	• Married or in civil partnership– 52% • Same-sex civil partnership – 0.1% • Separated– 3% • Divorced or formerly in civil partnership– 6% • Widowed or surviving partner in civil partnership– 6%
Sexual Orientation	ONS figures (2016) suggest at least 2% of the NI population identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bi-sexual. However, LGB support groups suggest this is a significant under-estimate based on lack of willingness/confidence to identify as LGB and the fact sexual orientation categories is now more inclusive of other categories and is referred to as LGBTQ+ Government Equalities Office research suggests over 4% of the 18-25 year age group identify as LGB, confirming that younger people are more likely to be open about sexual orientation.
Men & Women Generally	The 2021 NI Census report the population of Lisburn and Castlereagh Local Government District at 149.106, of which 49% were male and 51% were female. There is no official statistic on the number of people in N Ireland who identify as Transgender, non-binary or part of the LGBTQ+ population but referrals to advice services are increasing year on year which suggests a growing minority. During a Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) human rights, equalities and diversities workshop (April 2021) some of the main findings were: • Women constitute 79% of the part time workforce. • 1/3 of working age women are economically inactive.

	• In 2019/20 70% of apprenticeships were male, Higher Level Apprenticeships (HLA's) are 69%. • Occupational segregation is problematic; men tend to be more involved in engineering, manufacturing and construction. Women more involved in business, administration and law. One possible related solution is women only training programmes in non-traditional sectors, i.e., construction and engineering.
Disability	The rate of disability in Northern Ireland is higher than the other UK regions with the exception of Wales. The rates of disability among older age groups is higher than other regions of the UK. The 50-64 year old age group accounts for 33.4% of our disabled population compared to 26.9% of the UK disabled population as a whole. The most striking finding was that 60.2% of disabled people in Northern Ireland are economically inactive while the comparative figure for the UK as a whole stands at 42.5%. At 55.8% Lisburn and Castlereagh has the highest employment rate for Northern Ireland. The pay gap was also highlighted in this report. Northern Ireland compared favourably with other parts of the UK in this regard however there is still a difference in median pay between disabled and non-disabled employees which needs to be addressed. The concerns expressed by disabled participants engaging with this research were articulated in the report on their behalf. These included: • The need for investment and support for individuals with disability • The need for a more holistic approach based on needs to support individuals into employment.

	• The LMP should seek to fill gaps that may arise through the loss of EU(ESF) funding schemes and the transfer to the UKSPF. This transition will create gaps in support schemes • Implement broader based supports such as pre-employment engagement, pre-interview visits, money management to assist participants coming off benefits.
Dependants	Dependants can include children, older people and those with disabilities. **12.51%** of people in the 2011 Census stated that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others. On that basis, people with dependants are less likely to be employed or face greater barriers when seeking employment. According to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, lone parents, 91% of whom are women, also experience occupational segregation in employment, with lone parents with dependent children mostly employed in 'Personal Service' and 'Elementary' occupations. Caregiving has been identified as one factor influencing occupational segregation with women and lone parents choosing occupations. Allowing sufficient flexibility to balance the demands of caregiving. This may have a potential impact on the sustainability of employment, with women and lone parents having to consider pay and career progression with flexibility in employment and childcare provision.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Labour Market Partnership is intended to improvement the employability outcomes and labour market conditions across the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council district, irrespective of background or circumstance. Those who will be directly targeted will either be economically inactive unemployed or underemployed, have barriers to employment due to disability or reside in areas of high deprivation. This scheme will have direct and indirect benefits for some groups of service users, however, the aim of the LMP is to improve fairness in the labour market by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged while working to support local people back into work. Ultimately, this programme will benefit a wide range of groups, particularly groups that experience disadvantage or inequality.

Part 2. Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this activity/policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - major or minor* - see guidance below
Religious Belief	There is no evidence that people from particular religious or policial backgrounds are more likely to be unemployed, underemployed or economically inactive.	**None**
Political Opinion	There is no evidence that people from particular	None

	religious or political backgrounds are more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive.	
Racial Group	Extensive research was undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders across the Lisburn and Castlereagh Province. Research and consultations did not identify that people from a particular racial group are more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive.	None
Age	Young people (aged 16-24) are more likely to be unemployed and require targeted intervention in order to build new skills in fields representing current and emerging labour market opportunities.	Minor Positive
Marital Status	There have been no specific needs identified for people of different marital status.	None
Sexual Orientation	There have been no specific needs identified for people of different sexual orientations in relation to this policy.	None
Men & Women Generally	Some women need more interventions/support to enable them to take up or remain in employment. Women may be more likely to	None

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	need/want flexible work opportunities	
Disability	Disabled people need specific advice and to help them apply and be successful in the labour market. They require targeted intervention, training, understanding employers and flexible working conditions.	Minor Positive
People with and without Dependants	The need is specific support for people with dependants to enable them to undertake training and the right kind of job opportunities that they can balance work and care responsibilities.	Minor Positive

* See Appendix 1 for details.

2(a) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief		No groups will be targeted based on their employment statis, regardless of their Section 75 Categories
Political Opinion		No groups will be targeted based on their employment statis, regardless of their Section 75 Categories
Racial Group	Yes – The programme will target unemployed people across all racial groups.	

Age	Yes – Young people and the 55+ age group will be particularly targeted as this age group show high levels of unemployment and barriers to employment however, many of the programmes will be open to all.	
Marital Status		No – groups will be targeted based on their employment, regardless of their Section 75 categories.
Sexual Orientation		No – groups will be targeted based on their employment status, regardless of their Section 75 categories
Men & Women Generally		No – groups will be targeted based on their employment status, regardless of their Section 75 categories.
Disability		Yes – People with a disability will be particularly targeted as this Section 75 group show high levels of unemployment
People with and without Dependants		Yes – Programme will be promoted equally to ensure that carers and those from all backgrounds with dependents are aware of LMP opportunities

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Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025?   Yes/No   If yes, specify which action.

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

Yes

The Labour Market Partnership Action Plan aims to support disabled people back into training, education and employment. It also works closely with the Lisburn and Castlereagh business community to address barriers into and retaining employment for those who are disabled.

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

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief	The scheme is aimed at improving the employment landscape across Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area	No direct impact identified in relation to religion, political opinion or racial group. By providing employment opportunities for those facing unemployment, it will bring people from different

		backgrounds together.
Political Opinion	As Above	As Above
Racial Group	As Above	As above

*See Appendix 1 for details.

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

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief		The partnership is a financial assistance scheme that will address employment inactivity across the Lisburn and Castlereagh Council area. It doesn't lend itself to promoting good relations. If any opportunities arise, they will be addressed.
Political Opinion		As above
Racial Group		As Above

Multiple identity

Provide details of any data on the impact of the activity/policy/project on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

LCCC recognises that all individuals are not exclusive to just one designated group. "Multiple identity" has been given consideration within this screening exercise in order to ensure benefit to all groups. Some people who are the

targets of this project will experience disadvantage on a number of grounds, e.g., age, race, gender and disability.

If additional issues/impacts not already covered above arise, they will be addressed.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project. There are 3 possible outcomes:

1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.
2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.
3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
Option 1 **Screen out** – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	It has been concluded that a detailed equality impact assessment is not necessary as all the potential impacts identified are minor and positive. The Partnership overall is intended to address identified needs of particular target groups. Each element of the programme will also be considered for potential impacts. In order to best deliver equality of opportunity, the core partnership is made up of 8 core partners with the knowledge and experience needed to deliver on the objectives of the Labour Market Partnership. The Lisburn and Castlereagh LMP currently comprises of a

	representative from each of the following organisations: • Jobs and Benefits Office (DfC) • South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust • Invest NI (DfE) • Careers Service NI (DfE) • Lisburn Area Learning Community Consortium • Lisburn Chamber of Commerce • SERC • Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Economic Development Department A full research exercise was undertaken using a combination of primary and secondary research to develop an accurate portrayal of the current strengths, weaknesses, limitations and opportunities available across Lisburn and Castlereagh employment market. LCCC will continue to assess the situation and be more proactive especially mitigating risk surrounding promotion across all Section 75 categories etc.
Option 2 **Screen out with mitigation** – some potential impacts identified but they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	N/A
Option 3	N/A

Screen in for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	

Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

N/A

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The delivery and implementation of the Labour Market Partnership will be monitored on a quarterly basis via reports which are to be returned to DfC. The monitoring will focus on the number and attendance of meetings and the delivery outcomes of the Action Plan itself i.e. the impact the partnership is having.   The individual programmes will be monitored on a quarterly basis by their respective project officers and monitoring returns will be made to DfC. The actual performance indicators to be monitored vary according to programme but are listed on the Action Plan.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date

Screened by: Jacqueline Russell	Programme Officer	
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	
Approved by: Paul McCormick	Head of Service	

Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

Appendix 1 – Equality Commission guidance on equality impact

*Major impact:

a) The policy/project is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
b) Potential equality matters are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Minor impact

a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

No impact (none)

a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations;
b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Updated Template @ Oct 2022

Committee:	Regeneration & Growth
Date:	5 September 2024
Report from:	Head of Economic Development

Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Integrated Marketing Campaign Annual Review

1.0 Background

1. The Regeneration & Growth Committee in May 2022 approved a tender from Rumour Mill Creative Communications to deliver a three-year Integrated Marketing Campaign for LCCC, delivered in the period to run until the end of summer 2025.

2. The appointment of the specialist marketing services is based on a 1+1+1 contract, with years two and three based on the achievement of agreed targets and to the Council's satisfaction.

3. Key objectives of this Council wide Integrated Marketing Campaign include producing and activating an innovative, integrated marketing approach; promoting LCCC as a visitor and shopping destination all year round and at key seasonal times such as Christmas, Easter etc; increasing footfall, dwell time and consumer spend within the Council area; positioning LCCC as a positive lifestyle destination for a diverse audience across Northern Ireland and ROI; engaging with target audiences in a fun, creative and innovative way; promoting civic pride; and monitoring the marketing campaign regularly.

4. Two marketing campaigns have been completed since awarding the tender last October, namely Christmas & Lisburn Light Festival 2023 and Spring 2024. An evaluation for both is attached (**see Appendices**). At the time of writing, we are still within the Summer 2024 campaign and therefore no evaluation on activity is available. The evaluation for Summer 2024 will be brought to a future Regeneration and Growth Committee.

5. Members should note levels of investment have remained the same for the Council's Integrated Marketing Campaign since before 2009. For example, in 2009 the budget for promoting the Christmas campaign alone was £100,000 that equates to more investment than any of the more recent Christmas campaigns.

Key Issues

1. New destination branding was developed for Christmas and Lisburn Light Festival 2023. The Campaign was focused on Lisburn City Centre and its commercial offering (mostly hospitality and retail). The campaigns utilised TV, radio, digital and outdoor targeted media opportunities, and included footage from local visitor attractions and events to promote the city centre and wider Council offering in a positive "lifestyle" context. A summary page on outcomes is attached (**see Appendix**).

2. The Spring 2024 campaign (March/April) was conducted on a more modest budget (£30k) and therefore no TV was used. More emphasis was placed on the use of digital media that included social media and influencer marketings with large numbers of followers and reach. This was complemented with outdoor and print advertising. A summary page on outcomes is attached (**see Appendix**).

3. The vision of the emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 is to '*position Lisburn and Castlereagh as a leading tourism destination*'. From consultation with industry, it is important to note the desire to position Lisburn and Castlereagh as a '*destination with its own character… that is differentiated by a slower pace of life, a deep sense of community, an accessible geography*'.

4. The emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan takes stock of all the research, consultations and situationally analysis to highlight experiences and things to do in the area. It is highlighted that the Council should '*continue with the management of campaigns conducted by LCCC's tourism team that have been successful in raising the district's profile and driving footfall from the NI and ROI markets.*'

5. The Christmas and Lisburn Light Festival 2023 proved to be very successful in terms of generating new business for city centre traders and increasing the city centre's positive profile across Northern Ireland and the Republic as a shopping destination. The campaign was independently evaluated, and the results have quantified this success.

6. From independent CARD Group research on Lisburn Christmas Events (**see Appendix),** 78% of people had heard about the Christmas events prior to visiting the city centre, as part of the Integrated Marketing Campaign. We can infer from the data that for every £100 spend in Lisburn, the Council's Christmas activities encouraged an uplift in spend of approximately 30%. This research was summarised and incorporated in the wider Christmas Evaluation Report which was considered at the Leisure & Community Wellbeing Committee in May 2024.

7. A core element of the campaign each year focused on the Christmas period. In this context the core objective was to drive shoppers into Lisburn City Centre to do the bulk of their Christmas shopping. Further seasonal campaigns were used to promote Lisburn's offering and events for Spring and Summer.

8. Rumour Mill Creative Communications has reserved sites and bookings for Christmas and the Lisburn Light Festival 2024 promotions, pending approvals by the Council to proceed with year 3 of the contract.

9. Due to the lead in time required to procure a new 3-year service contract to be in place to allow the early planning of Christmas 2025 (which commences pre-summer 2025), it is proposed that this work is tendered in Autumn 2024. This should include consideration of the need to refresh the Integrated Marketing branding for the 2025-2028 period and beyond.

2.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:
1. Consider the findings of the attached evaluation documents for Christmas and Lisburn Light Festival 2023, and the Spring 2024 marketing campaign.

	2. Agree that officers commence year 3 of the tender for delivery of Integrated Marketing services. 3. Agree that the next 3-year period 2025-2028 of the Integrated Marketing Campaign is publicly procured.	
3.0	**Finance and Resource Implications** Up to a maximum £450,000 (DfC funding additional £70k in Year 1) over three years, and total average annual cost of up to £150K from the Tourism budget estimates.	
4.0	**Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**	
4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	Yes
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out LCCC does not anticipate that the Marketing and Communication Policy will hinder equality of opportunity for any Section 75 group, but instead, through open and transparent marketing and communications across all media platforms and channels it will aspire to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The reason for this decision is due to the following: • The nature of marketing and communication is inclusive to all sections of the community; • Currently none of the categories have been identified as being at risk of an adverse impact; • The policy is reviewed on an annual basis or per marketing campaign and would therefore highlight any issues. (**see Appendix**)	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	Yes
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out. Economic development initiatives such as the IMC will benefit the local rural population and visitors to the area as well as the urban areas. The project will contribute towards the Council's overall strategic objective of increasing economic development in the L&CCC area for the benefit of all citizens (**see Appendix**)	

Appendices: Appendix 3a – IMC evaluation - Christmas and Lisburn Light Festival 2023
Appendix 3b – IMC evaluation - Spring Adventures Await 2024
Appendix 3c – Christmas Campaign 2023 Summary
Appendix 3d – Spring Campaign 2024 Summary
Appendix 3e – CARD Group Lisburn Christmas Events Visitor Surveys
Appendix 3f and 3g – Equality and Rural Needs assessments

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LCCC Integrated Marketing Campaign Evaluation

Christmas & Lisburn Light Festival 2023

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Summary of Advertising

Google Ads (Youtube)

Digital

48 Sheets
AdShels
Digital Adshels

Outdoor

Content

Reels/TikTok

LCCC

Facebook Ads
Instagram Ads

Social

TV

ITV
ITVX
SKY ADSMART

Radio

Cool FM
Downtown Radio

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TV Advertising

Christmas Campaign 2023

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TV Advert

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TV AD Key Stats

KEY STATS

ITV

- **Impressions 1.2 Million**
- **Daily – 87,000**
- **49% TV Audience**
- **38.9% Mobile**

SKY

Impressions – 350k
Reach – 98k
Frequency – 3.5

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Radio Advertising
Christmas Campaign 2023

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Radio Advertisement

Campaign Dates:
November 27th – December 10th 2023

Total No of spots: 132
Total Impacts: 2,055,796
Audience reached: 617,184 adults
Reach: 39.62%
OTH: 3.33

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Content Creation

Christmas Campaign 2023

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Barkelicious Bakes

Rosie's Emporium

Percival Coffee

Jonzara

The Daily Apron

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Artwork

Christmas Campaign 2023

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Social Media Ads

Christmas Campaign 2023

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Digital Advertising

Advertising across Facebook, Instagram, Google and YouTube

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Social Media Advertising

Key Stats

Facebook + Instagram
Average Link Clicks – 600+
Average Reach – 160k
Average Impressions – 270k

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Social Media Advertising

Youtube Advertising

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**Key Stats
YOUTUBE**

**Views – 24,000+ views
Impressions – 47.1k impressions**

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LCCC Integrated Marketing Campaign Evaluation

Spring Adventures Await 2024

rumour mill
creative communications

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Content Creation – Creative

- **Campaign Name**: Spring Adventures Await

- New photography and videos captured for use across campaign marketing - online & offline.

- Models booked and used – genuine family of four & Male and Female adult couple

- Businesses featured in the content include:
  - Ballyburren Outdoor Escapes
  - Keanes Deli
  - Roundhouse Bakery
  - Pods at Streamvale Farm
  - Hillsborough Forest Park
  - Hillsborough Castle
  - Elää Boutique

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Content Creation – Creative

The new photography and videography content captured for Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh showcases an ethnically diverse cast, highlighting the inclusivity and vibrancy of the area. The content spans numerous locations across Lisburn and Castlereagh, featuring both well-known tourist spots and new attractions, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the region's offerings.

Key activities are prominently displayed, from outdoor adventures to cultural experiences, providing potential visitors with a rich visual journey through the area's diverse and dynamic landscape. This strategic approach not only enhances the visual appeal but also promotes the region as a welcoming and multifaceted destination for all visitors.

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Content Creation — Creative

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Content Creation —Creative

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Content Creation –Creative

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Content Creation – Creative

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Content Creation – Creative

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PR Activity

Public Relations / Social Media
- WhatsOn NI Partnership
- NI4Kids Partnership

- Blogs drafted for tourism:
  - https://www.visitlisburncastlereagh.com/blog/read/2024/04/the-perfect-weekend-for-two-in-lisburn-and-castlereagh-b262
  - https://www.visitlisburncastlereagh.com/blog/read/2024/04/spring-adventures-await-in-lisburn-and-castlereagh-b260
  - https://www.visitlisburncastlereagh.com/blog/read/2024/03/easter-fun-in-lisburn-and-castlereagh-b259

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PR Activity

For the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh Spring campaign, we opted to advertise through ezines, websites, and social media with Ni4Kids and What's On NI to leverage their extensive reach and targeted audience demographics. Ni4Kids is a trusted resource for families, offering valuable information on local events, activities, and family-friendly destinations, making it an ideal platform to promote our campaign to parents and children.

What's On NI, with its comprehensive coverage of events and attractions across Northern Ireland, provided a perfect avenue to engage a broader audience interested in regional happenings. By utilising these platforms, we ensured that our campaign message reached highly relevant and engaged audiences, maximizing the potential for attracting visitors to Lisburn & Castlereagh.

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NI4KIDS — EZINE

Spring is in the air, and Lisburn & Castlereagh is ready to welcome you with open arms!

Whether you're a local looking for new adventures or a visitor eager to explore, there's something for everyone, even the dog, in this charming area. Here's your guide to making the most of springtime in Lisburn & Castlereagh

Guess How Much I Love You Literature Trail: Embark on a whimsical journey inspired by the beloved children's book "Guess How Much I Love You." Follow in the footsteps of Little Nutbrown Hare and Big Nutbrown Hare as you explore Lisburn City Centre. This self-led adventure promises fun for the whole family as you discover hidden gems and scenic parks along the way.

Eat Your Way Through Lisburn & Castlereagh: Indulge your taste buds in the vibrant culinary scene of Lisburn & Castlereagh. From cool coffee shops in Royal Hillsborough to fine dining in Moira, there's no shortage of delicious dining options to explore. Whether you're craving a quick bite to break up your city shopping or a tasty meal in a historic gastropub, you'll find something to satisfy every craving.

Experience Ballyburren Outdoor Escapes: Immerse yourself in nature at Ballyburren Outdoor Escapes, where you can enjoy unforgettable adventures including Alpaca Trekking, outdoor yoga, foraging and scenic nature walks. Enjoy a luxury private picnic with family and friends, explore the peaceful countryside and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Hillsborough Forest Digital Sculpture Trail: Discover the intersection of art and technology at the Digital Sculpture Trail within Hillsborough Forest. Download the free 'Hillsborough' App and wander through the scenic forest to encounter amazing digital sculptures brought to life through augmented reality technology. It's a unique outdoor experience that the whole family will love.

Extend Your Stay: Make the most of your visit by extending your stay in Lisburn & Castlereagh. Whether you prefer a countryside cottage or a city centre hotel, there are plenty of staycation options to choose from. Unwind in style in boutique guest accommodation or enjoy the tranquillity of countryside pods, ensuring a memorable and relaxing stay.

High on Adventure: Looking for the perfect family outing? Look no further than High Rise! This indoor adventure centre is designed to be inclusive and accessible, ensuring that everyone can join in on the fun. Experience the excitement of Northern Ireland's newest and largest Clip 'n Climb indoor climbing arena. With thrilling attractions like the Leap of Faith and Vertical Drop Slide (suitable for ages 4 and up), there's something for every adventurer to enjoy.

Dundonald International Ice Bowl: Get ready for a day filled with excitement with a variety of activities available for all ages! Glide across Northern Ireland's only public Olympic-sized ice rink, with public skating sessions available seven days a week and DJ sessions with a state-of-the-art lighting system on weekends and selected holidays. Alternatively, gather your family and friends at the spectacular 30-lane bowling centre for a fun and interactive bowling experience. No matter which activity you choose, Dundonald International Ice Bowl guarantees a day filled with fun and laughter.

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NI4KIDS

NI4KIDS Facebook Competition

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What's On NI — Social Media

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What's On NI Ezine

Spring Adventures Await

As spring arrives, beckoning us outdoors, it's the perfect time to embark on new adventures with your family.

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What's On NI
Banner advertising

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What's On NI Results

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INFLUENCER ACTIVITY

Summary Report for Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh's Spring Campaign
Influencer Overview
For the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh's Spring Campaign, two influencers were utilised to maximize reach and engagement:
1. Jackie Gendron: She promoted the campaign on her own social media channels and through the Love Belfast page.
2. Caroline O'Neill (Digg Mamma): A prominent local influencer page.

Followers
The following details the influencers' social media reach:
•Love Belfast's Instagram: 108,000 followers
•Caroline's Instagram: 78,900 followers
•Jackie's Instagram: 23,200 followers
•Jackie's TikTok: 128,000 followers

Campaign Performance
The content shared by Jackie Gendron and Love Belfast achieved impressive engagement:
•Instagram Reel: 55,000 plays
•TikTok Video: 22,400 plays
These metrics indicate that the videos performed exceptionally well, surpassing average view counts expected based on the influencers' followings.

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INFLUENCER ACTIVITY

Performance Analysis

• Instagram Performance:

- With a combined following of 131,200 (108k from Love Belfast and 23.2k from Jackie), the Instagram Reel reached 55,000 plays. This represents approximately 41.9% of their total combined followers. Typically, average engagement rates for Instagram Reels hover around 5-10% for influencers. Achieving 41.9% is significantly higher, indicating strong content resonance and effective audience engagement.

• TikTok Performance:

- Jackie's TikTok, with a follower count of 128,000, saw 22,400 plays on the campaign video. This translates to around 17.5% of her followers viewing the video. Given that average TikTok engagement rates for views typically range from 5-15%, the campaign video outperformed standard expectations.

Conclusion

The Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh's Spring Campaign, executed with the help of Jackie Gendron and Love Belfast, not only reached a large audience but also generated higher-than-average engagement. The Instagram Reel and TikTok video both exceeded typical view rates, making this campaign a notable success.

INFLUENCER ACTIVITY

Campaign Performance

The content shared by Caroline O'Neill achieved remarkable engagement:

•Instagram Video Views: 108,000 views

•Instagram Likes: Nearly 950 likes

Performance Analysis

•Instagram Performance:

- With a follower base of 78,900, Caroline O'Neill's campaign video garnered 108,000 views. This view count represents approximately 137% of her total followers, indicating that the video reached well beyond her immediate follower base, likely through shares and Instagram's algorithm favouring the content.
- The video also received nearly 950 likes, translating to an engagement rate of about 1.2%. While likes are a valuable metric, the exceptionally high number of views is the standout success indicator here.

Comparison to Average Metrics

•View Rate:

- On Instagram, a typical engagement rate for video views ranges from 5-10% of an influencer's followers. Achieving a view rate of 137% far exceeds these averages, showcasing the video's high appeal and shareability.

•Like Rate:

- Although the like rate is lower compared to the number of views, it still reflects active engagement from a significant portion of her audience.

Conclusion

The Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh's Spring Campaign, promoted by Caroline O'Neill, demonstrated outstanding performance. The campaign video achieved an impressive 108,000 views, substantially exceeding her follower count and indicating a viral reach

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INFLUENCER ACTIVITY

Jackie Gendron / Love Belfast
@jgendron10 @jgendron5 @love_belfast

Love Belfast's Instagram Followers: 108k
Jackie's Instagram Followers: 23.2k
Jackie's TikTok Followers: 128K

Instagram Reel Plays: 55k
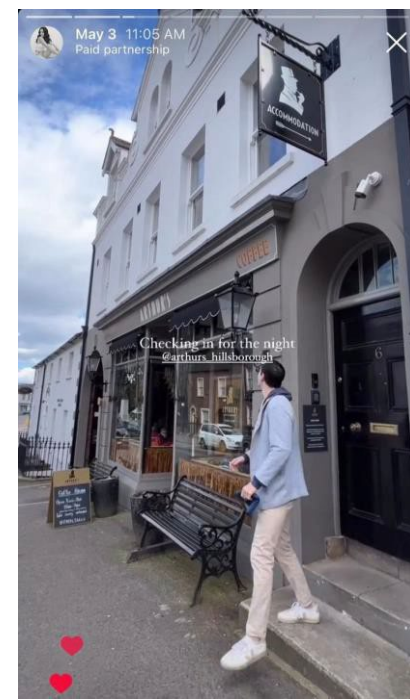TikTok Reel Plays: 22.4k

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Jackie Gendron
Instagram Stories

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INFLUENCER ACTIVITY

Caroline O'Neill / @diggmama

Caroline's Instagram Followers: 79.8k

Instagram Reel Plays: 108k

Four places to put on your list to visit this

Now this really was fun for all the family

rachmccrea Thank you. Added to our list this summer
7w 1 like Reply
— View replies (1)

yogabyita My home 🫶
7w 2 likes Reply •••
— View replies (1)

titanicdenim 🫶🫶🫶
7w 1 like Reply
— View replies (1)

millarjacky Brilliant! Great post for ideas over the summer!
6w Reply

denisecurran ✓ We love our walks at Hillsborough forest park! Unreal x
7w 1 like Reply
— View replies (1)

homeatrosecottage Love getting some new ideas for things to do on your doorstep 😍 xx
7w 4 likes Reply
— View replies (1)

aranislandsphotography Love this post
6w Reply •••

fortheheartofmermaids @who_knew_mchugh this is so nice to go together and with everyone and the kids. So special!
3w Reply

INFLUENCER ACTIVITY

Caroline O'Neill – Video Stills

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PRINT ADVERTISING

Overview

For the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh's Spring Campaign, strategic press advertising was utilised to maximise regional reach and engagement. The campaign targeted prominent print media outlets to ensure extensive coverage across Northern Ireland.

Print Press Advertising

1. The Irish News
   1. Rationale: The Irish News was chosen due to its status as the most read regional paper in the UK and Ireland, ensuring high visibility for the campaign.
   2. Circulation: 23,615 per issue
   3. Impact: Advertising in The Irish News provided a substantial reach, tapping into its large and engaged readership base, thereby increasing the campaign's awareness and visibility.

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PRINT ADVERTISING

News Letter Group

•Rationale: Despite a lower individual circulation, the News Letter group's package offers regional coverage across multiple local publications, providing a comprehensive spread across Northern Ireland.

•Circulation:

- News Letter: 6,623 per issue
- Derry Journal: 2,719 per issue
- Larne Times: 1,000 per issue
- Mid Ulster Mail: 1,418 per issue
- Newry Reporter: 2,347 per issue
- Portadown Times: 1,562 per issue

•Total Combined Circulation: 15,669 per issue

•Impact: The combined circulation of the News Letter group's regional papers, totaling 15,669, enabled the campaign to reach diverse local audiences across Derry, Larne, Mid Ulster, Newry, and Portadown. This extensive regional presence ensured that the campaign was visible to a wide demographic, reinforcing the campaign message throughout Northern Ireland.

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PRINT ADVERTISING

Summary

By advertising in The Irish News and the News Letter group, the Spring Campaign for Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh achieved a well-rounded and extensive press presence. The Irish News provided significant reach through its high circulation, while the News Letter group's diverse regional papers ensured comprehensive coverage across Northern Ireland. This strategic approach maximiaed the campaign's exposure, reaching a broad audience and enhancing the overall impact and effectiveness of the campaign.

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IRISH NEWS

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DERRY JOURNAL

Friday, April 19, 2024 derryjournal.com   CITY EDITION   43

NEWS

Spring adventures await you!

With so much to do, see and enjoy, Lisburn and Castlereagh is the place to visit this spring time! From scenic walks, family trails to vibrant shopping locations and must-eat bakeries and cafes, there's something for everyone in the charming areas of Lisburn and Castlereagh.

Guess How Much I Love You Trail

Grab your friends and family and embark on a journey filled with love, laughter, and unforgettable memories! Take part in this self-led adventure and follow in the footsteps of Little Nutbrown Hare and Big Nutbrown Hare on a whimsical adventure through Lisburn City Centre! This public art and literature trail is inspired by the beloved children's book "Guess How Much I Love You" by Sam McBratney. This enchanting trail promises fun for the whole family.

Eat your way through Lisburn and Castlereagh!

Lisburn and Castlereagh boast a vibrant and diverse culinary scene that caters to all taste buds and occasions! From cosy cafes, traditional pubs to fine dining restaurants and international eateries, there's no shortage of delicious dining options awaiting to be discovered across Lisburn and Castlereagh!

Castle 12 is a great Lisburn City Centre stop for that quick and tasty lunch to fuel you up before hitting the shops, or when walking the charming streets of Royal Hillsborough, Roundhouse Bakery is an excellent pitstop for coffee, bakes and delicious pastries! Perhaps your seeking that enjoyable pub environment, just like what you would find in The Pheasant in Royal Hillsborough.

Experience Ballyburren Outdoor Escapes

Take the family on an unforgettable adventure and experience like no other at

Funwith alpacas

Ballyburren Outdoor Escapes. Best known for their popular Alpaca Trekking, where you, your friends and your family get the opportunity to get up-close and personal with these incredible animals and enjoy scenic peaceful countryside treks alongside them!

Experience Hillsborough Forest Park Digital Sculpture Trail

Bring your family on a trail like no other! Experience the digital sculpture trail at Hillsborough Forest Park and be amazed by the intersection of art and technology. As you wander the peaceful and scenic forest park, you will encounter a series of amazing digital sculptures that can be brought to life through the creative use of augmented reality technology.

Your staycation location...

Whether you're seeking a peaceful countryside setting or a convenient city centre stay, Lisburn and Castlereagh offers an array of staycation options to suit everyone! Isa

After a day of adventure and exploring the bustling streets of Lisburn, unwind in style at the modern and convenient Lisburn City Centre's Haslem Hotel. If you prefer to take a night away from the city, The Pods at Streamvale is the perfect location to switch off.

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NEWS LETTER

LARNE TIMES

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MID ULSTER MAIL

NEWRY REPORTER

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PORTADOWN TIMES

Digital Advertising

Overview

The digital marketing strategy for the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh's Spring Campaign was highly successful, utilising a diverse range of ad formats to maximize engagement and reach. The campaign included Facebook posts, Instagram posts, Carousel ads, stories, and more.

Performance Metrics

•Ad Spend Distribution: The ad spend was strategically allocated across multiple ad formats to ensure broad coverage and engagement.

•Highest Performing Ad Set:

- • Impressions: 271,000
- • Reach: 292,000
- • Impact: This ad set, which had the highest budget allocation, delivered exceptional results, achieving impressive impressions and reach compared to the ad spend applied.

Overall Campaign Results

All ad formats performed exceptionally well, surpassing expectations across key performance indicators:

•Impressions: Every ad format delivered a higher-than-expected number of impressions, ensuring the campaign's visibility was maximized.

•Reach: The campaign successfully reached a broad audience, far exceeding initial targets.

•Clicks and Engagement: The ads generated significant click-through rates and engagement, contributing to the overall success of the campaign.

Digital Advertising

Conclusion
The digital marketing efforts for the Spring Campaign for Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh proved to be highly effective. The strategic allocation of ad spend across various formats resulted in exceptional performance in terms of impressions, reach, clicks, and overall results. The highest performing ad set, in particular, demonstrated outstanding efficiency and impact, underscoring the success of the digital marketing strategy. This robust performance highlights the campaign's effectiveness in promoting Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh, achieving substantial audience engagement and visibility.

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Digital Advertising

Activity:

- 4 weeks of digital activity on social media
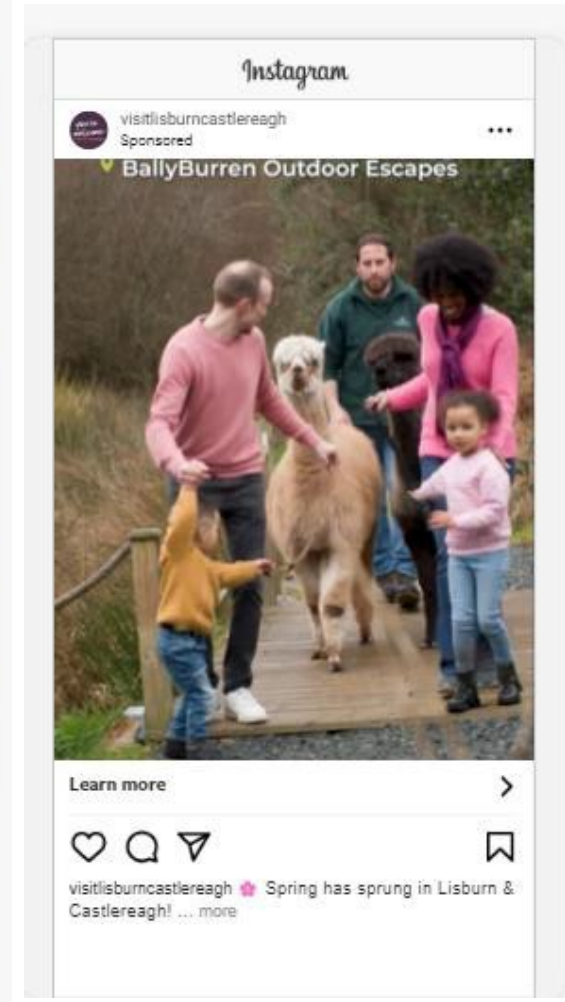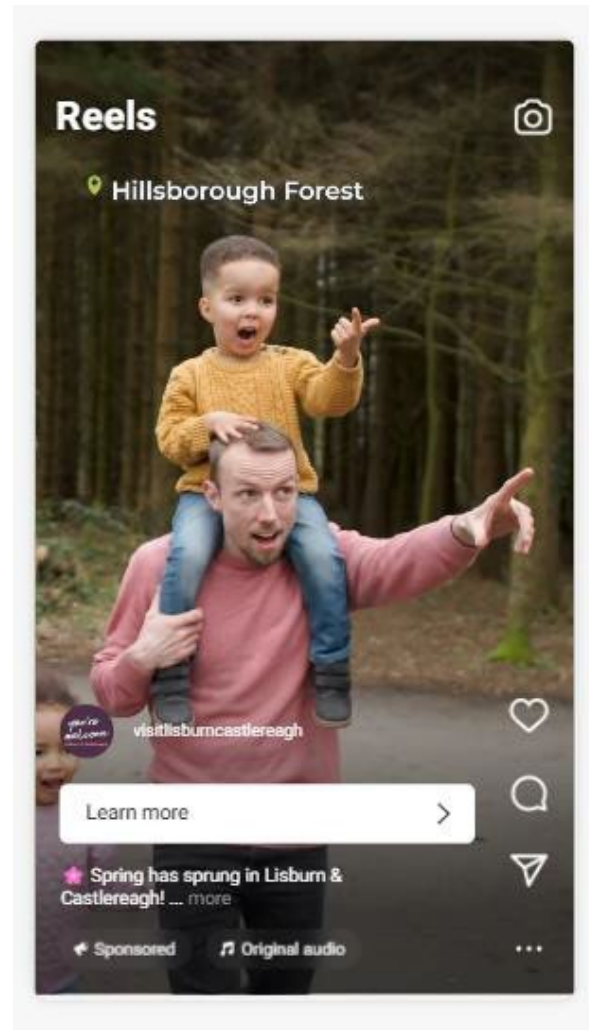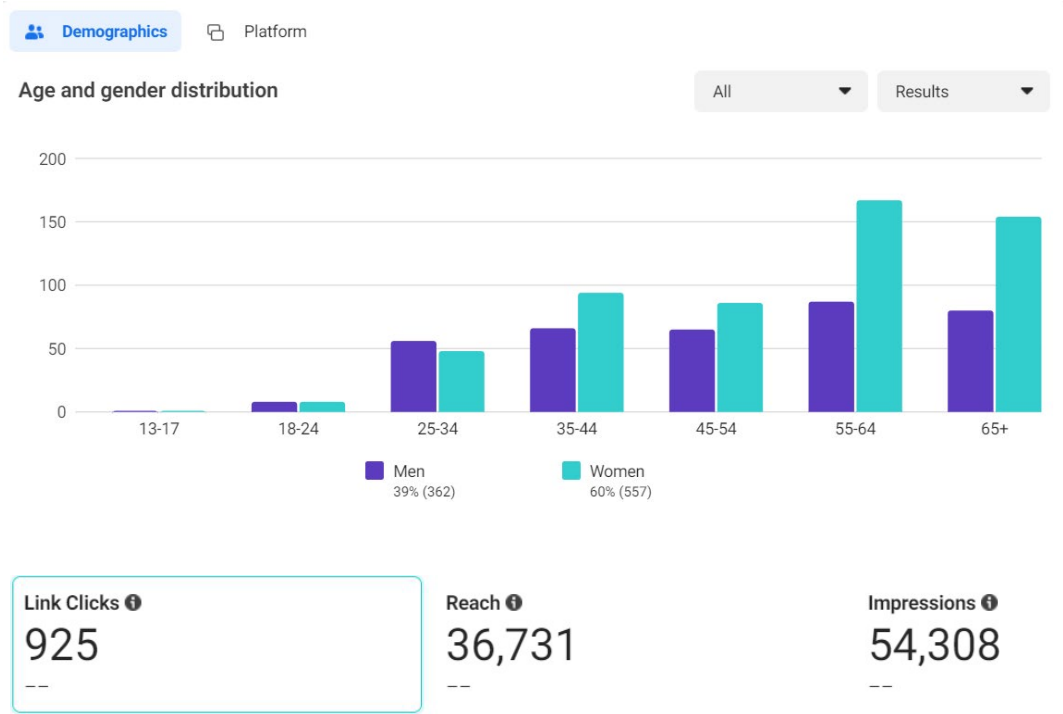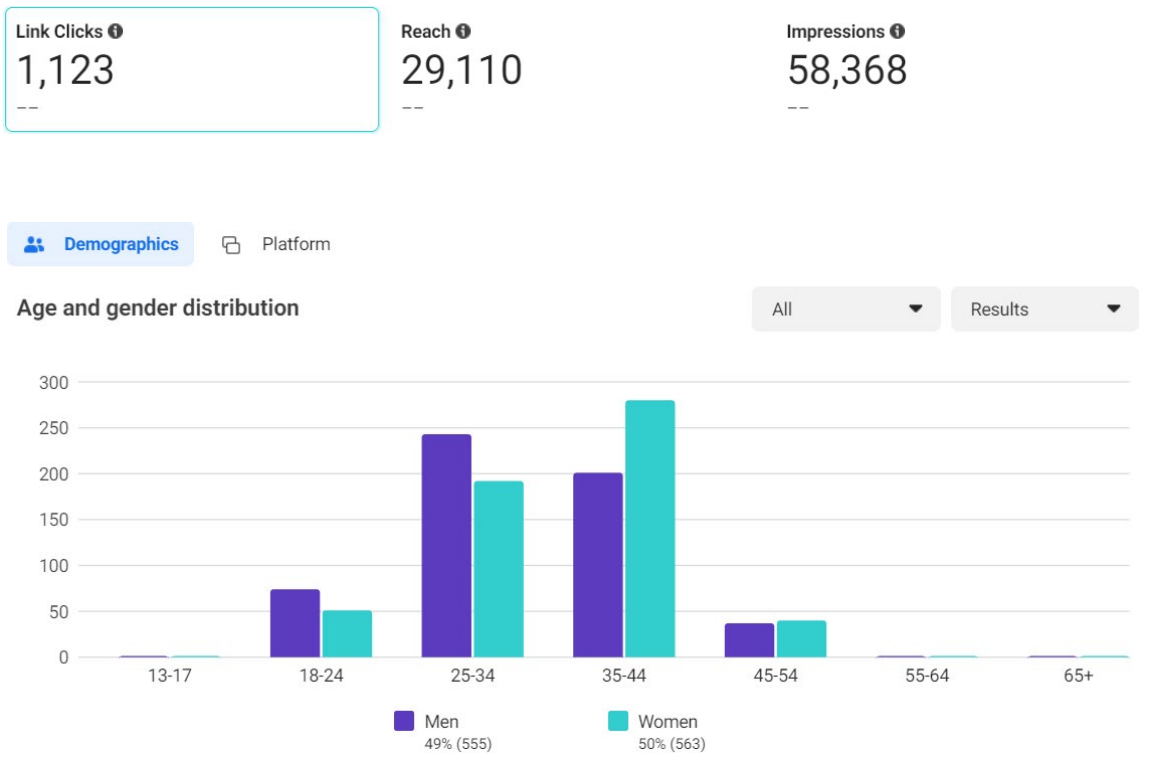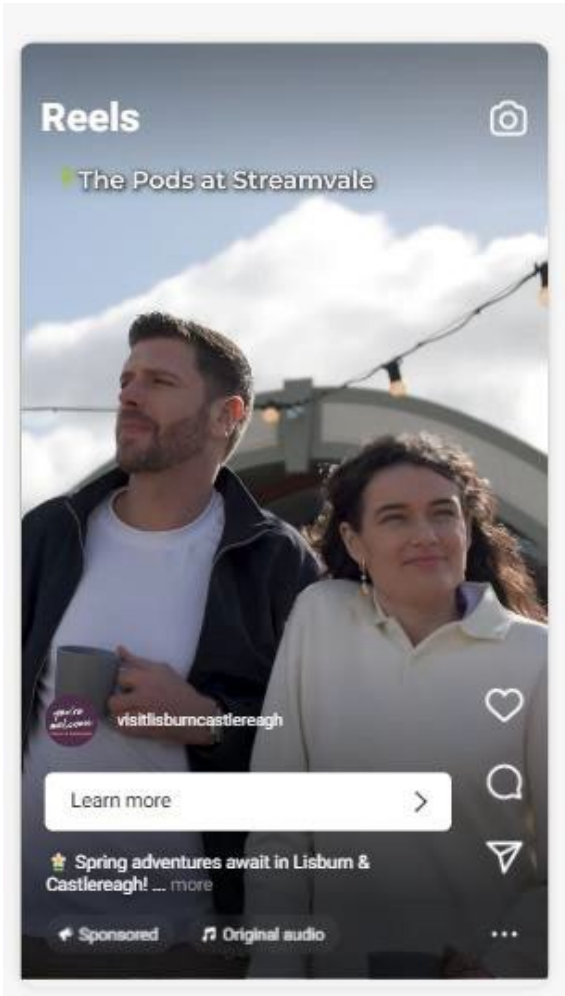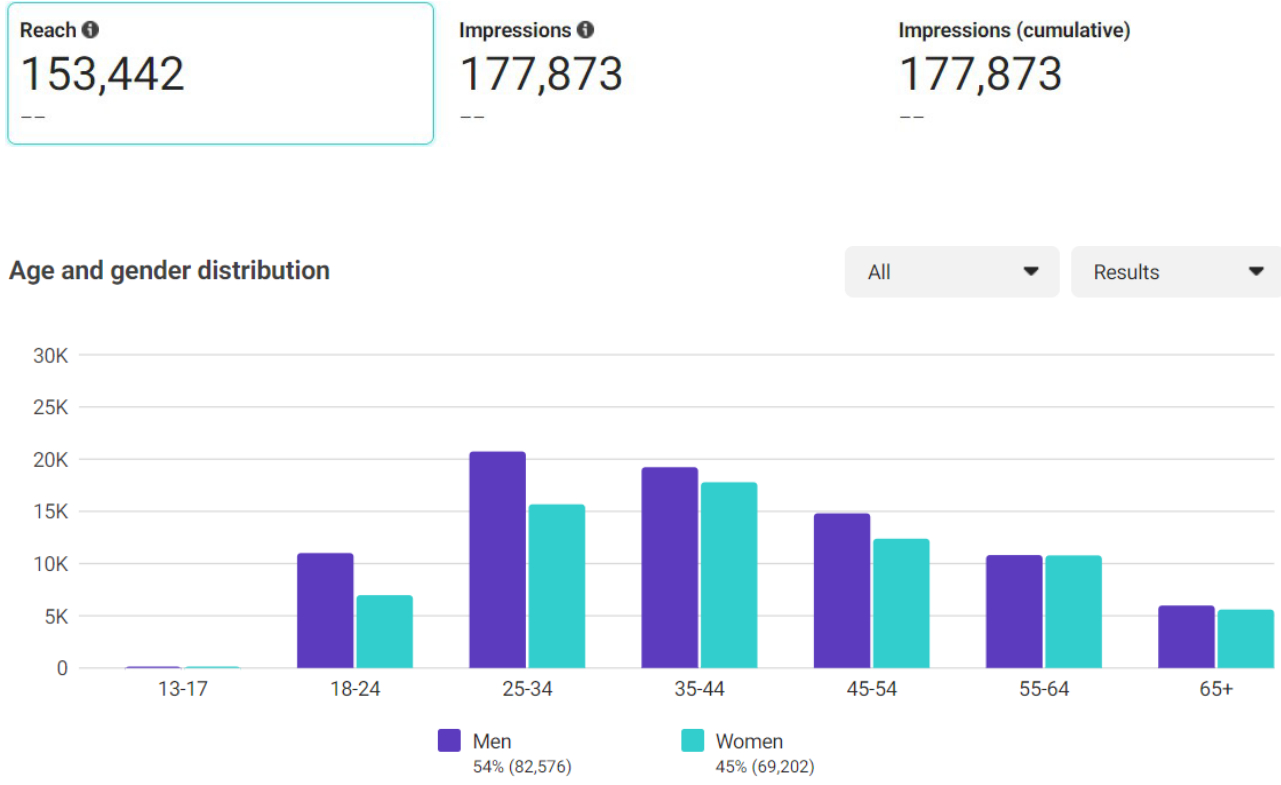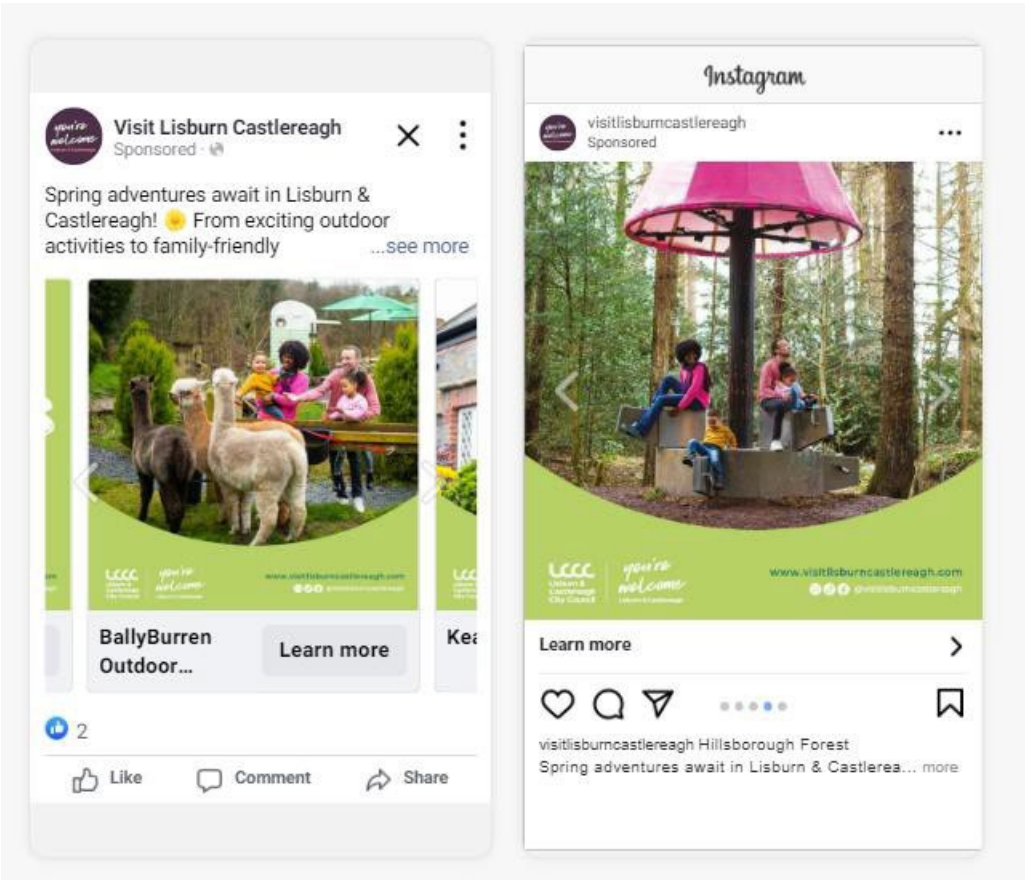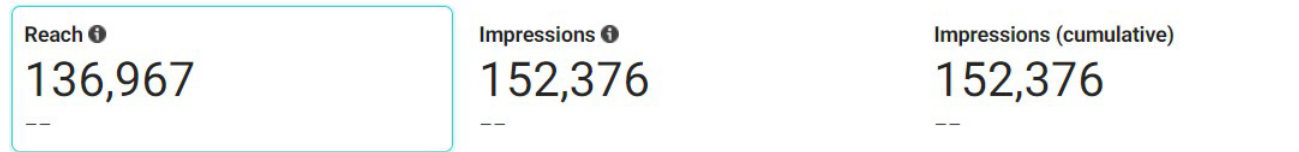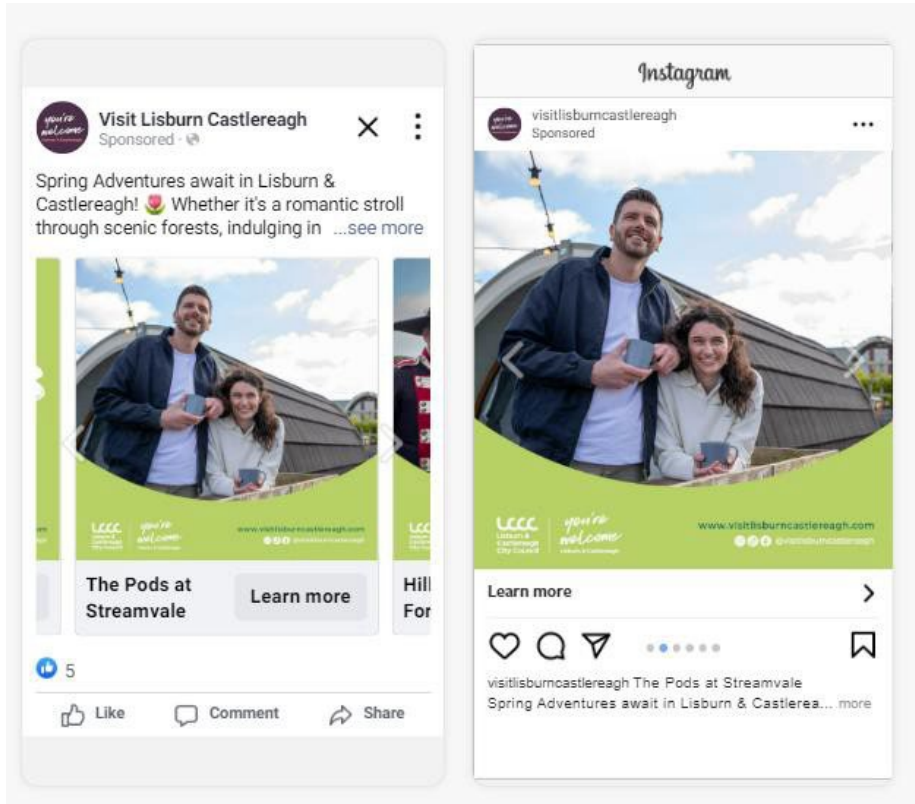
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Digital Advertising

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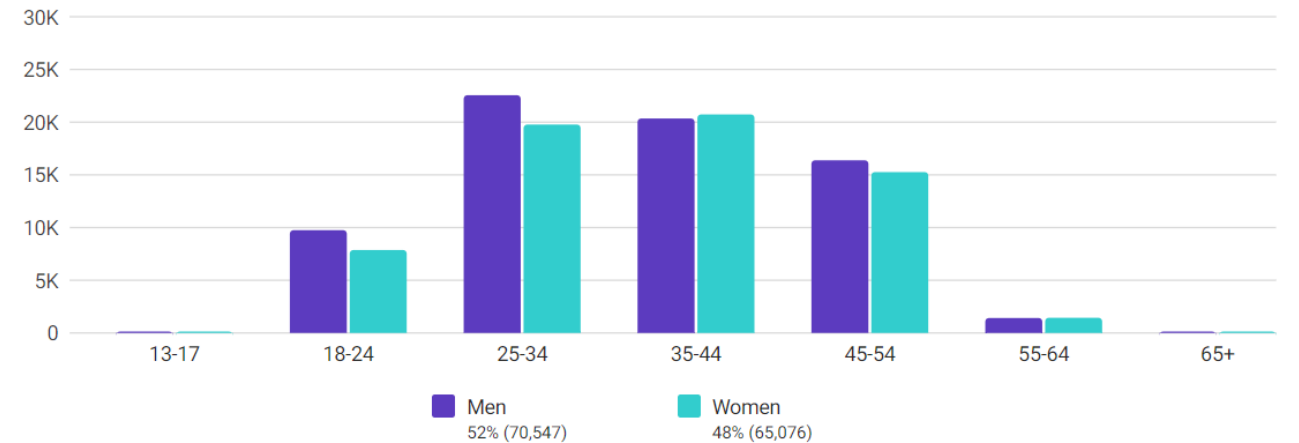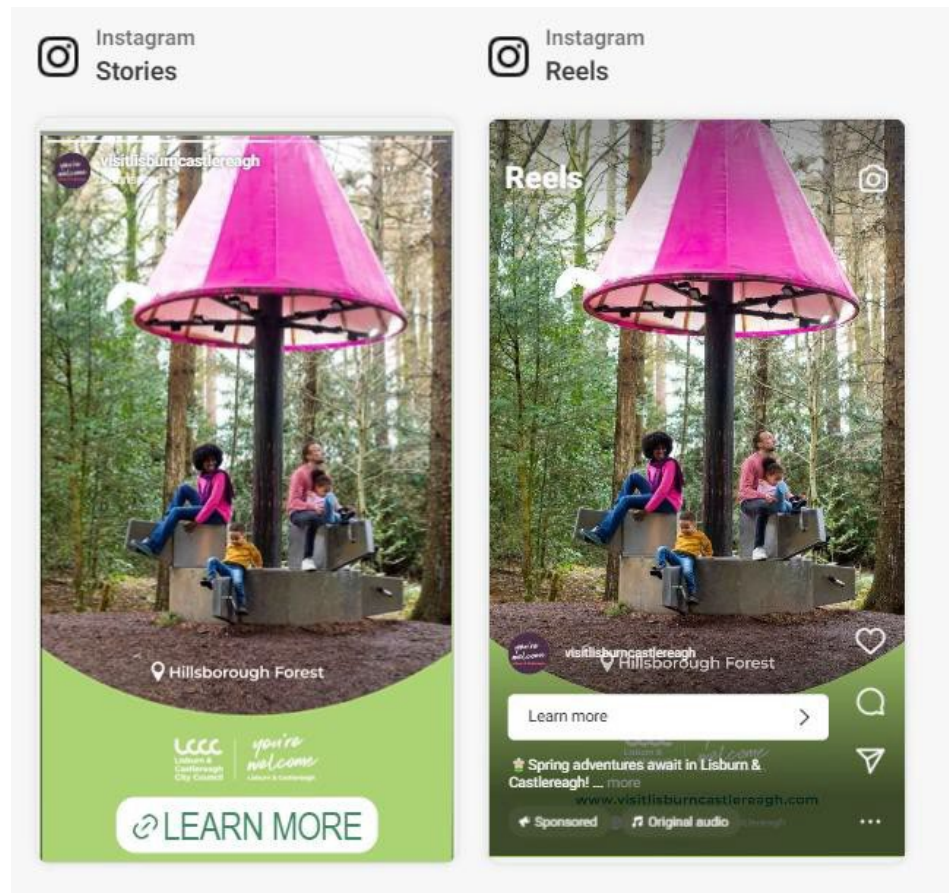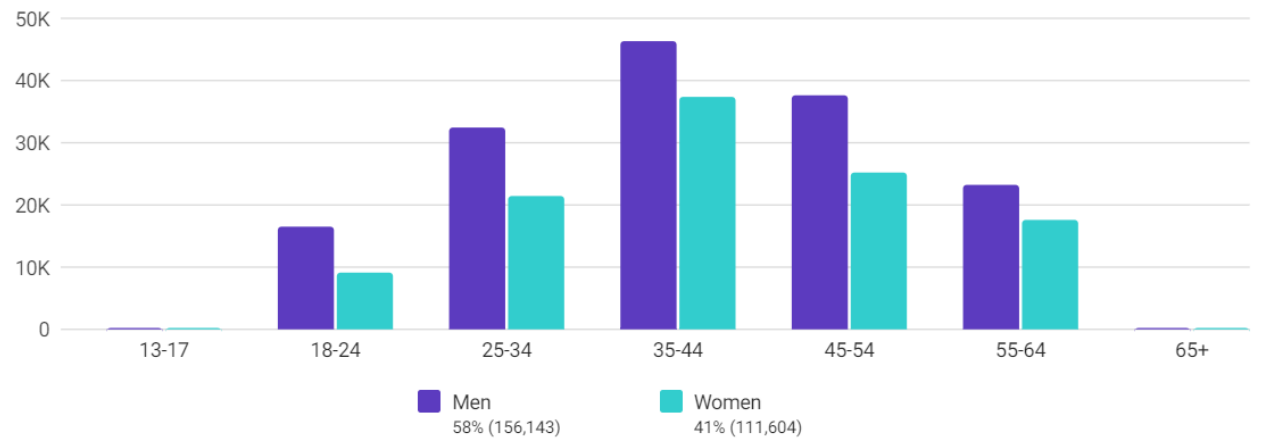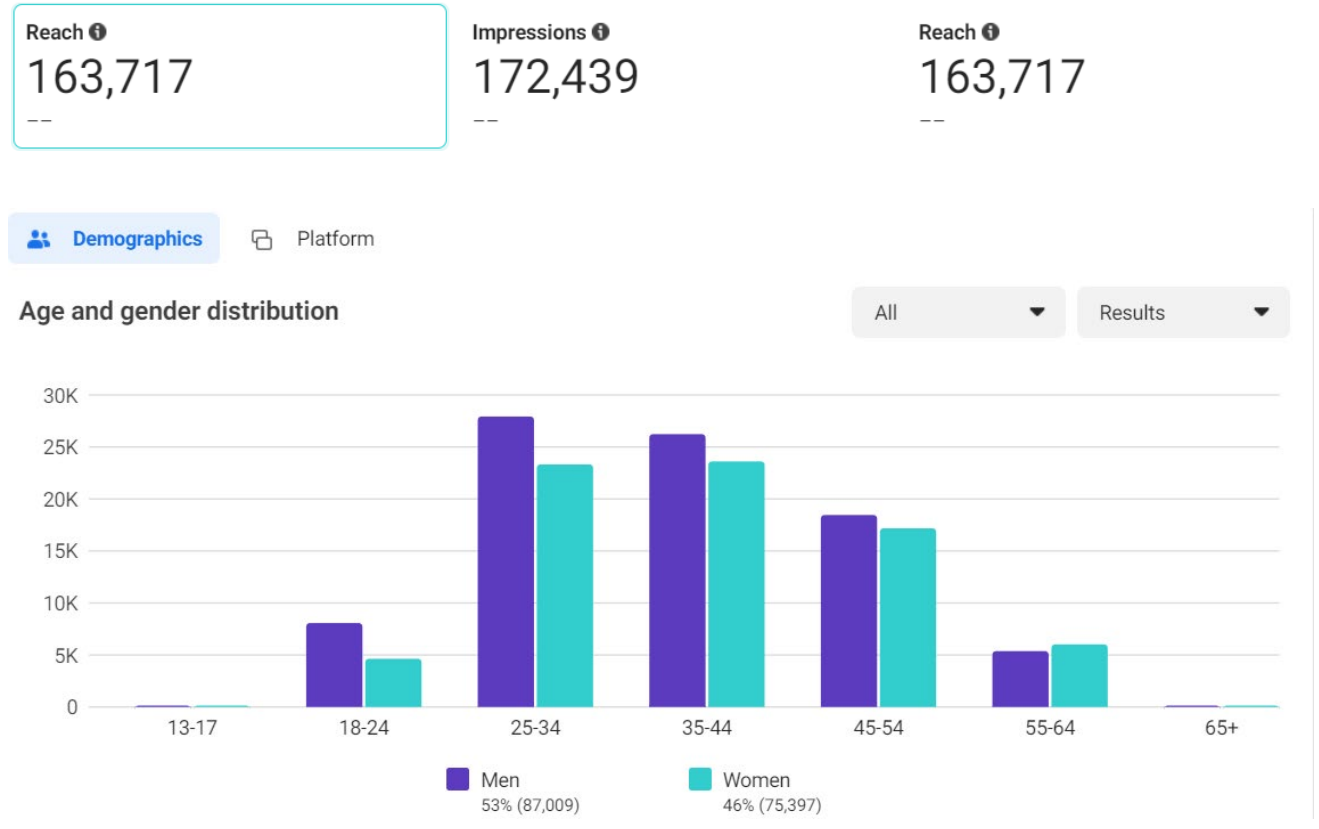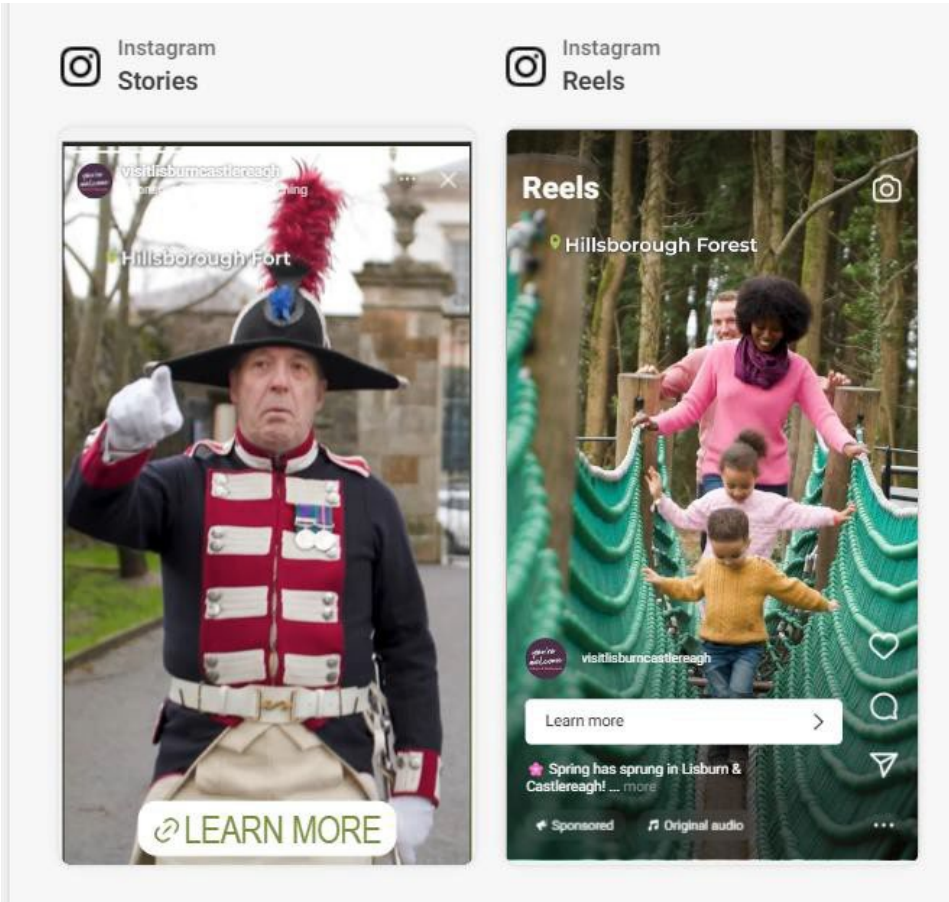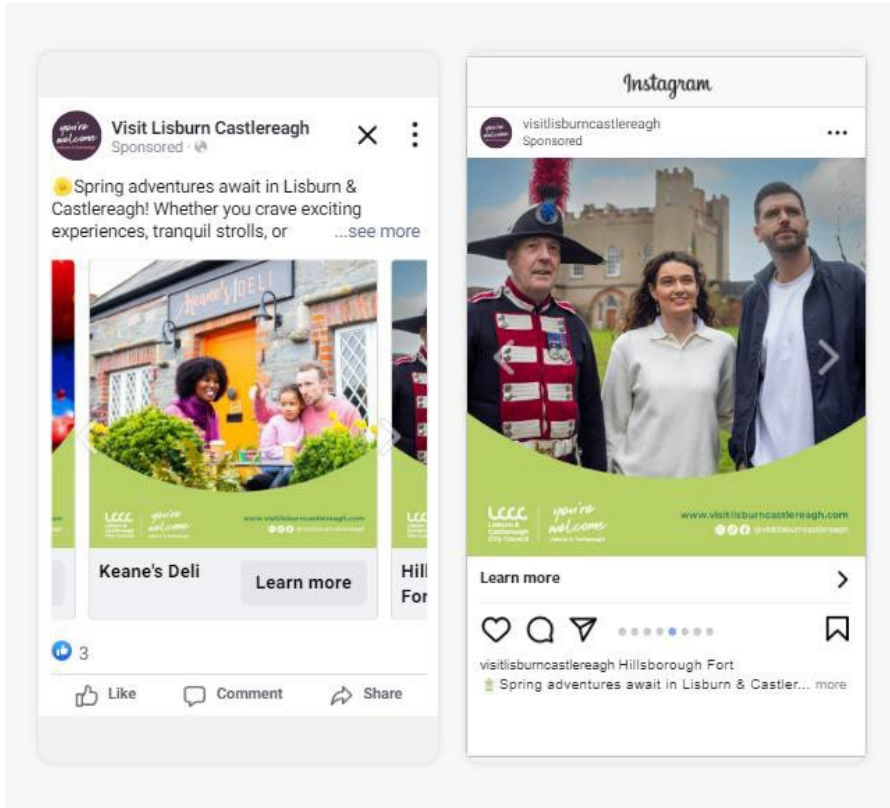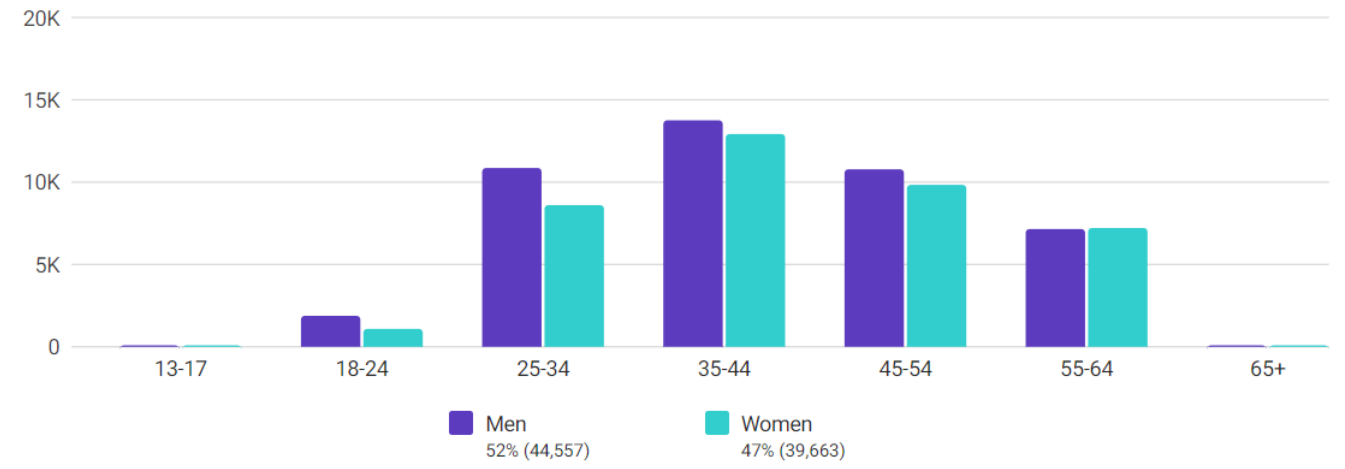
Outdoor Advertising

Overview

The Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh Spring 2024 campaign employed a robust outdoor advertising strategy to maximise visibility and engagement. A mix of strategic high-traffic and high-footfall locations were selected to ensure extensive exposure.

Outdoor Advertising Components

48 Sheet Billboards

    Sites: 9

    Duration: 4 weeks

    Locations: Key high-traffic areas, ensuring significant visibility.

6 Sheet Screens

    Sites: 7

    Duration: 4 weeks

    Locations: Positioned at Apple Green stations and other strategic spots to capture attention during commute and refueling stops.

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Outdoor Advertising

Westlink Lightbox
Location: Westlink, a critical artery in Northern Ireland.
• Impact: This high-visibility site captures a substantial amount of traffic, ensuring that the campaign reaches a large audience.

• Connolly Station Dublin
• Location: Connolly Station, Dublin
• Impact: A highly prominent ad targeting travelers from Dublin to Northern Ireland, encouraging tourist influx and awareness.

Summary
The outdoor advertising for the Visit Lisburn & Castlereagh Spring 2024 campaign was strategically designed to cover a wide array of high-traffic and high-footfall locations. With a mix of 48 sheet billboards, 6 sheet screens, bus shelter ads, city centre placements, the Westlink Lightbox, and the prominent Connolly Station advertisement, the campaign achieved extensive exposure. Each component was chosen to target different segments of the commuting and traveling public, ensuring the campaign's message reached a broad and diverse audience effectively. The use of prominent and well-placed outdoor advertisements greatly contributed to the campaign's overall visibility and impact, driving awareness and interest in visiting Lisburn & Castlereagh.

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BILLBOARDS

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LIGHTBOX - WESTLINK, BELFAST

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DIGITAL 6 SHEET SCREENS

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LCCC Christmas Campaign 2023 Summary

LCCC
Lisburn &
Castlereagh
City Council

MEDIUM	LENGTH	TIMEFRAME	COST	RESULTS	NOTES
UTV	30 seconds	2 weeks, Nov 27 - Dec 10	£ 16,000.00	Average Frequency 4.5 689,020 Adults saw the commercial at least once 1.2 million impressions	Around 38% of NI adults saw the commerical at least once which is extremely high performing. Overall the audience saw the ad on average around 4 - 5 times
Sky Adsmart	30 seconds	3 weeks, Dec 1 - 21	£ 3,000.00	Average frequency - 3.5 98,651 saw the ad at least once 350K Impressions	Sky Adsmart has a smaller viewership than UTV however the views and impressions are high versus their average viewing figures.
		delivering 350,001 impressions			
TV SUBTOTAL			£ 19,000.00		
ITV X	30 seconds	3 weeks, Dec 1 - 21	£ 4,000.00	Average frequency - 2.7 45,678 saw the ad atleast once 104, 766 impressions	49% saw the on demand ITVX ad on their TV set, 38.8% on mobile and 11.3% on desktop PC.
VOD SUBTOTAL			£ 4,000.00		
Cool FM, Downtown and Downtown Country	20 seconds	2 weeks Nov 27 - Dec 10	£ 4,500.00	Total Impacts: 2,055,796 Audience reached: 617,184 adults Reach: 39.62%	Around 39.62% of the NI population were reached hearing this radio ad at least once. The impact of 2million represents potential audience opportunities to hear the ad including car, home (with large families, public spaces and more.
		132 spots			
RADIO SUBTOTAL			£ 4,500.00		
48 sheet billboards	23 Sites	4 weeks, Nov 20 - Dec 17	£ 10,100.00	23 billboard sites across NI for a 4 week period	All sites were strategically selected based on their cost, availability, proximity to the area and more. We ensured we selected ample sites in towns and cities that are visible and experience high footfall or traffic going past.
Digital 6 sheet screens (Shopping Centres)	15 panels	4 weeks Nov 20 - Dec 17	£ 3,900.00	15 digital screens placed across various NI shopping centres over a 4 week period	As above
Adshel Live	15 panels	2 weeks, Nov 20 - Dec 10	£ 5,400.00	15 6 sheet bus shelter ads across a 2 week period across NI	As above
OUTDOOR SUBTOTAL			£ 19,400.00		
Google Advertising		Adwords / Display Advertising	£ 1,000.00	Youtube Ad (Via Google Adwords) - 24k video views. 41.7k impressions	Based on a budget of £1,000, receiving 24k views is above average for this type of spend as is 41.7k impressions. A spend of 1k in NI would usually average around 20k views and 39.8k impressions
Social media Advertising		Tik Tok advertising / Facebook Ads / Instagram Ads	£ 3,000.00	Facebook + Instagram Average Link Clicks – 600+ Average Reach – 160k Average Impressions – 270k	The budget of 3k was split over several ads and formats across Instagram, Instagram Stories, Reels, Facebook Posts and Videos. All posts performed extremely well in impressions, reach and click throughs when compared with their budget.
ONLINE/DIGITAL TOTAL			£ 4,000.00		
Direct Costs		Management of account / PR / Social Media / Media Buying / Graphic Design	£ 8,000.00		
Indirect Costs		Content Creation / TV Production Costs / Experiential Activity	£ 15,000.00		
DIRECT / INDIRECT COSTS TOTAL			£ 23,000.00		

LCCC Spring Campaign 2024 Summary

MEDIUM	LENGTH	TIMEFRAME	COST	RESULTS	NOTES
WestLink	1 Site	2 weeks,	£ 2,800	1 prominent site at the West Link bypass over a 2 week period	This large and prominent advertising site strategically selected based on their cost, availability, proximity to the area and more. We ensured we selected ample sites in towns and cities that are visible and experience high footfall or traffic going past.
48 sheet billboards	10 Sites	4 weeks, March 11 – April 7	£ 5,000	10 billboard sites across NI for a 4 week period	All sites were strategically selected based on their cost, availability, proximity to the area and more. We ensured we selected ample sites in towns and cities that are visible and experience high footfall or traffic going past.
Digital 6 sheet screens (Shopping Centres)	15 panels	4 weeks March 11 – April7	£ 3,840.00	7 digital screens placed across various NI shopping centres over a 4 week period	As above
OUTDOOR SUBTOTAL			£ 11,640.00		
Social media Advertising	8 Social Ads	Facebook Ads / Instagram Ads	£ 2,000.00	Highest Performing Ad: Impressions: 271,000 Reach: 292,000 Average Impressions: 110k Average Reach: 100k	The budget of 2k was split over several ads and formats across Instagram, Instagram Stories, Reels, Facebook Posts and Videos. All posts performed extremely well in impressions, reach and click throughs when compared with their budget.
Influencer Advertising	2 Influencers	**Campaigns with Love Belfast/Jackie Gendron and Caroline O'Neil** **Love Belfast's Instagram:** 108,000 followers **Caroline's Instagram:** 78,900 followers **Jackie's Instagram:** 23,200 followers **Jackie's TikTok:** 128,000 followers	£ 3,300.00	Caroline O'Neil Video Views: 108,000 Jackie Gendron/Love Belfast Video Views: 55,000 (Instagram) View Views: 22,400 (TikTok)	With a follower base of 78,900, Caroline O'Neill's campaign video garnered 108,000 views. This view count represents approximately 137% of her total followers, indicating that the video reached well beyond her immediate follower base, likely through shares and Instagram's algorithm favouring the content. Jackie's TikTok, with a follower count of 128,000, saw 22,400 plays on the campaign video. This translates to around 17.5% of her followers viewing the video. Given that average TikTok engagement rates for views typically range from 5-15%, the campaign video outperformed standard expectations
ONLINE/DIGITAL TOTAL			£ 5,300.00		
Print Advertising		WhatsOn NI Partnership NI4Kids Partnership The Irish News News Letter Group	£ 3,000.00	Ads placed in Irish News and Newsletter based on their circulation figures Irish News: 23,615 per issue News Letter: 6,623 per issue Derry Journal: 2,719 per issue Larne Times: 1,000 per issue Mid Ulster Mail: 1,418 per issue Newry Reporter: 2,347 per issue Portadown Times: 1,562 per issue	The "What's On NI" banner advertising campaign achieved an impressive 158,000 impressions, indicating significant visibility. Additionally, the Ni4Kids ezine campaign boasted an open rate of 11.5%, substantially higher than their average open rate of 7.9% for similar campaigns. These metrics demonstrate effective engagement and reach, suggesting successful promotion of the area to the target audience.
PRINT ADVERTISING			£ 3,000.00		
Direct Costs		Management of account / PR / Social Media / Media Buying / Graphic Design	£ 6,380.00		
Indirect Costs		Content Creation / TV Production Costs / Experiential Activity	£ 3,680.80		
DIRECT / INDIRECT COSTS TOTAL			£ 10,060.00		
TOTAL			£ 30,000		

Lisburn Christmas Events

Visitor surveys - November/December 2023

Report: January 2024

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••• Background

Research objective: to explore engagement with LCCC Christmas events and Lisburn City Centre in the run up to Christmas 2023.

- Onsite intercept interviews were carried out on Bow Street, Market Square and in Castle Gardens.

- Sampling took place from 23 November to 21 December 2023.

- Sampling days were scheduled to cover at least one iteration of all Christmas events and performances.

- 503 responses were received producing a robust sample with a margin of error of $\pm/-4.36\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

Visitors to Lisburn City Centre: Distance travelled

Distance to home

72%

12%

16%

| Up to 5 Miles | 6-10 Miles | 10 miles + |

Drivetime

75%

20%

5%

| Up to 15 Mins | 16-30 Mins | 30 mins + |

Repondents by Council

Newry, Mourne and Down	3.2%
Mid Ulster	0.2%
Mid and East Antrim	0.2%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	78.9%
Fermanagh and Omagh	0.2%
Belfast	10.0%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	5.6%
Ards and North Down	0.4%
Antrim and Newtownabbey	1.2%
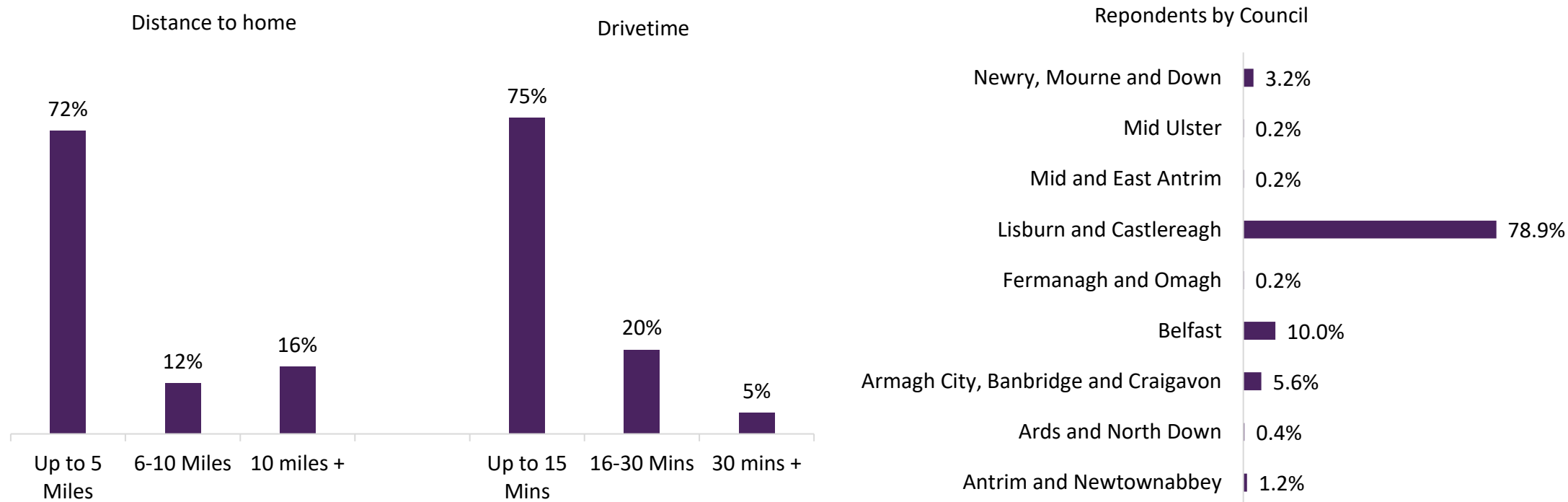
99% of respondents were NI residents, with the remaining 1% split between ROI, GB and elsewhere.

Not including the international visitors (n=2), the average distance travelled from home to Lisburn City Centre was 6.2 miles, and the average drivetime was 13 minutes.

More than 20% of visitors came from Council areas other than Lisburn and Castlereagh.

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Visitors to Lisburn City Centre: Mode of transport

How did you travel to Lisburn City Centre today?
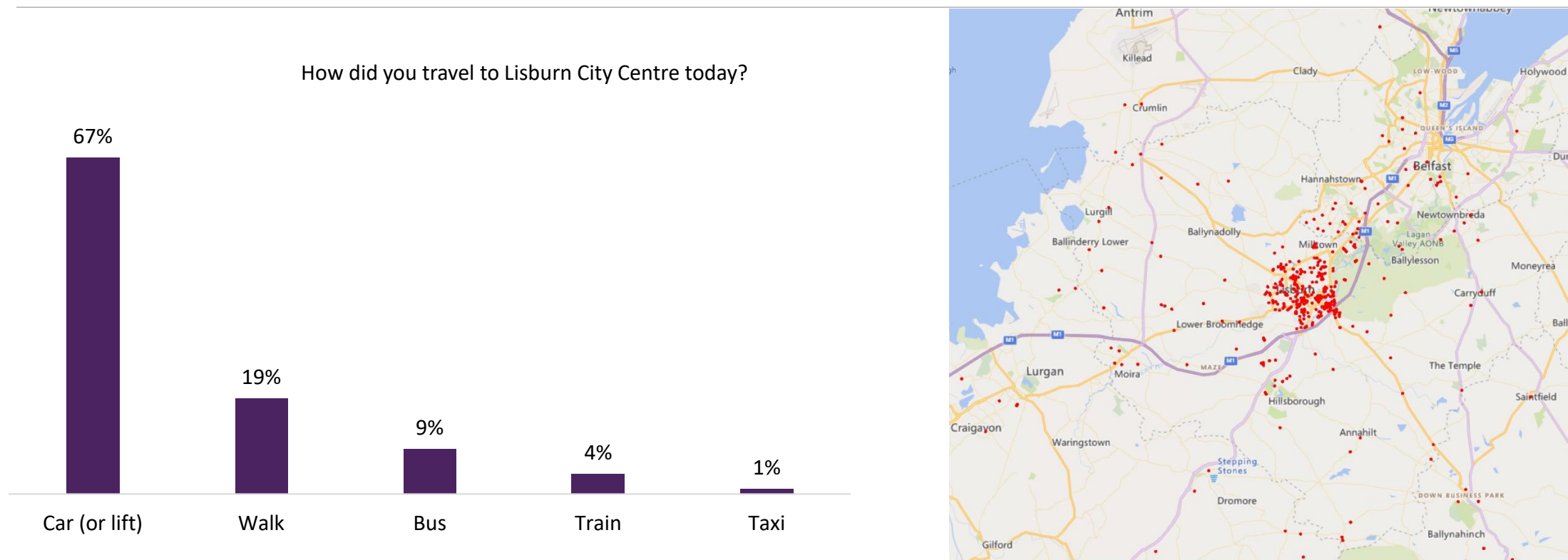
The majority of respondents travelled by car, while one fifth lived close enough to walk.

Visitors to Lisburn City Centre: Demographics
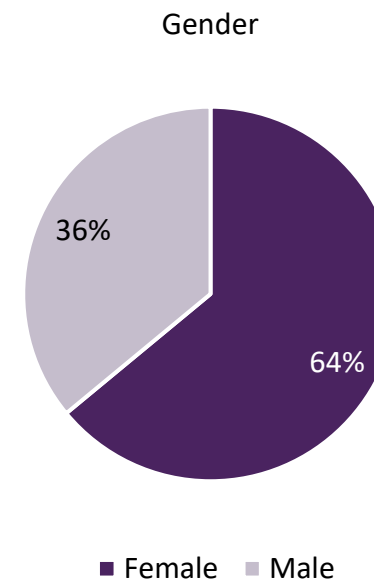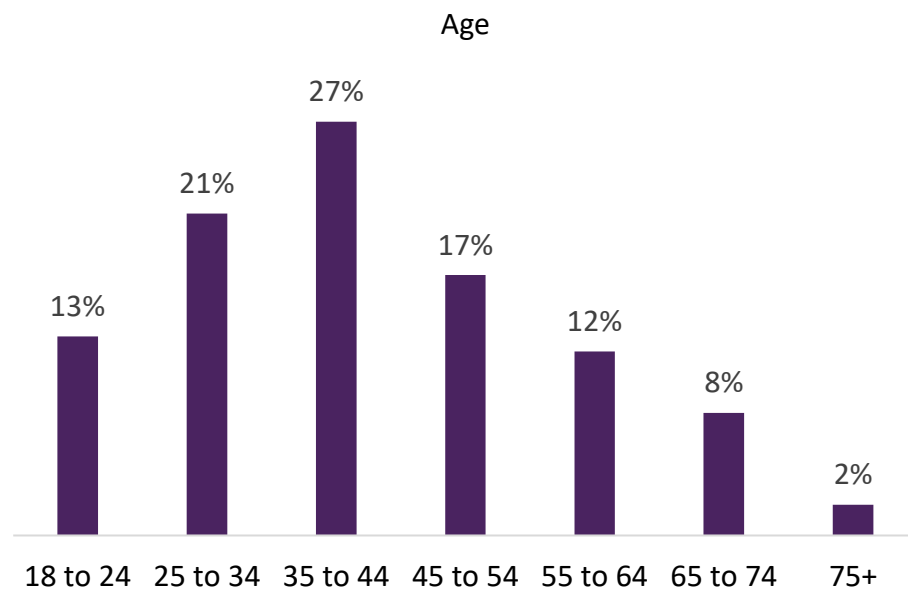
The average visitor age was 42 years old. Almost two thirds of visitors were female.

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Visitors to Lisburn City Centre: TREADS

CARD Group uniquely categorises visitors using six categories: Tourist, Resident, Employee, Access-only, Destination visitor and Student (TREADS).

Bar chart showing: Tourist 2%, Resident 69%, Employee 4%, Access 1%, Destination visitor 15%, Student 9%.
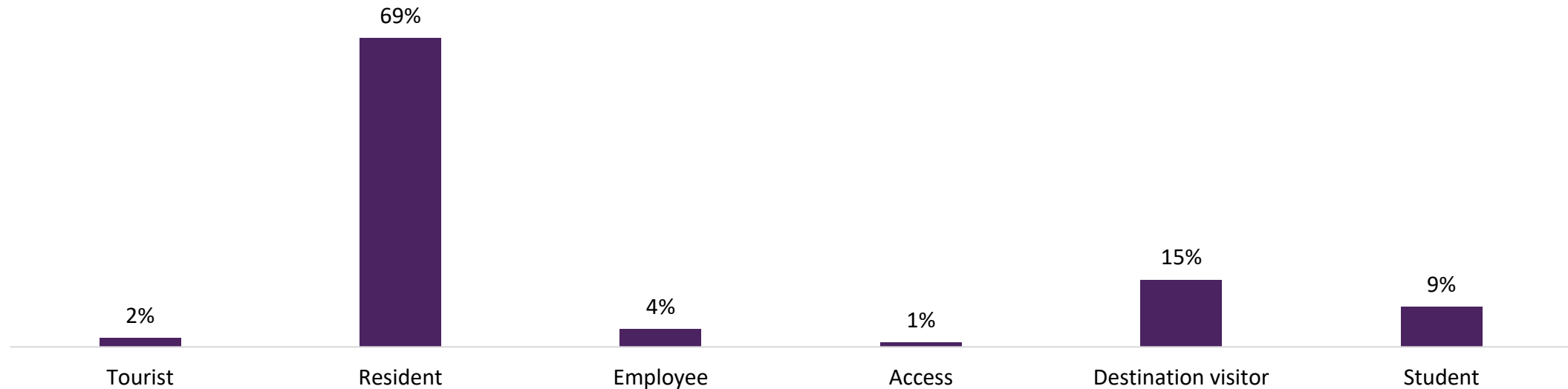
Most respondents were classed as residents – those who live within 15-minutes travel distance of the City Centre.
Destination visitors represent 15% of attendees. This group live more than 15 minutes away and come to interact with the city offer.
9% of visitors were aged 18+ and in full time education. Tourists include everyone who travelled from more than 45 minutes away, including day trippers.
Access-only visitors were passing through the city with no intention to interact with the offer.

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Reason for visiting Lisburn City Centre

26% of visitors came to Lisburn City Centre to attend Christmas events. Out of 24 different events, the seven listed below were the only ones that respondents said they had come <u>specifically</u> to visit.
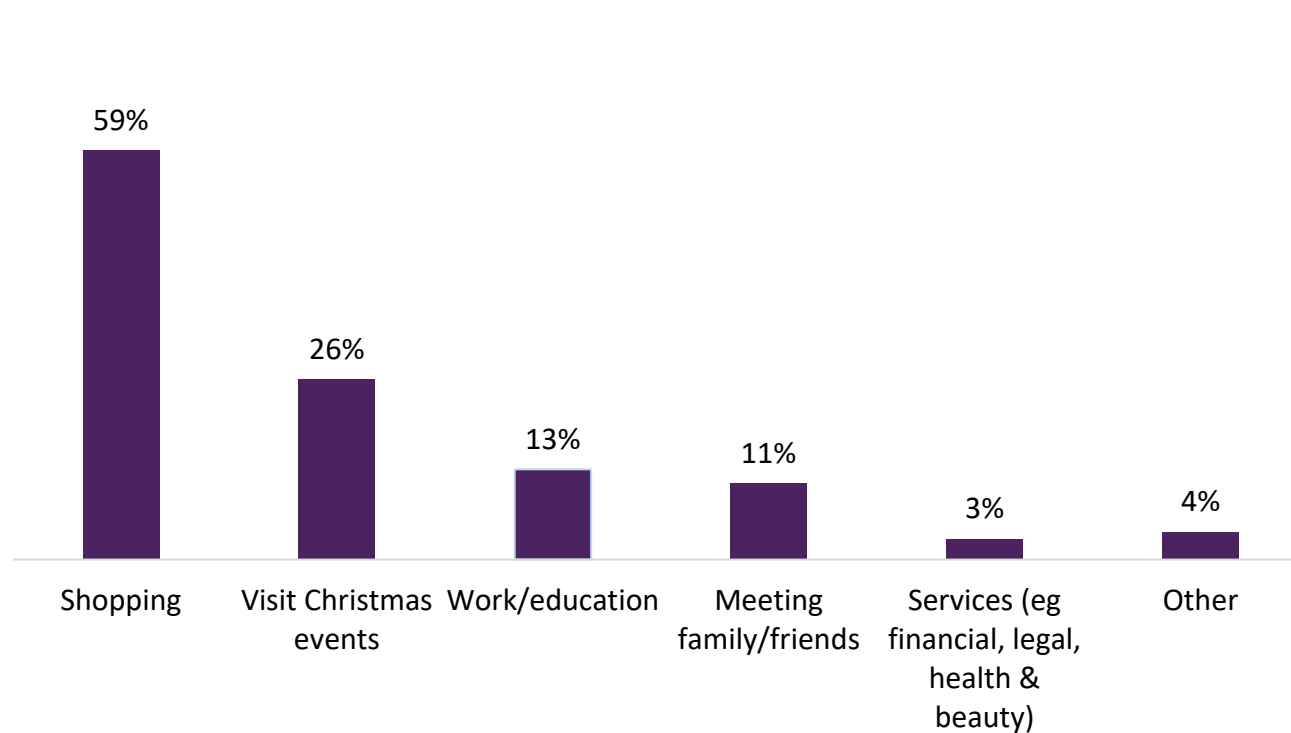
Of those who came to Lisburn City Centre in order to visit Christmas events:

Event	Visited
Christmas Garden Light Trail	74%
Light Festival – Christmas tree/canopy shows	43%
Christmas Light Switch-On	15%
Lapland to Lisburn – Elfie Tour	2%
Bumping Carz	2%
Santa John	2%
Sensory Night	1%

Bar chart — Reason for visiting:
- Shopping: 59%
- Visit Christmas events: 26%
- Work/education: 13%
- Meeting family/friends: 11%
- Services (eg financial, legal, health & beauty): 3%
- Other: 4%

Those who selected "other" were mostly out for a walk (often with a dog) or on their way to or from somewhere, for example to drop off or pick up their children.

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Awareness of Christmas events

How did you hear about the Christmas events?

Word of mouth	31%
Facebook	30%
Local newspapers	9%
Radio	5%
Billboards/buses	5%
Info in Lisburn retailers	5%
LCCC website	3%
Instagram	3%
Digital ads	3%
Other	6%
I haven't	22%
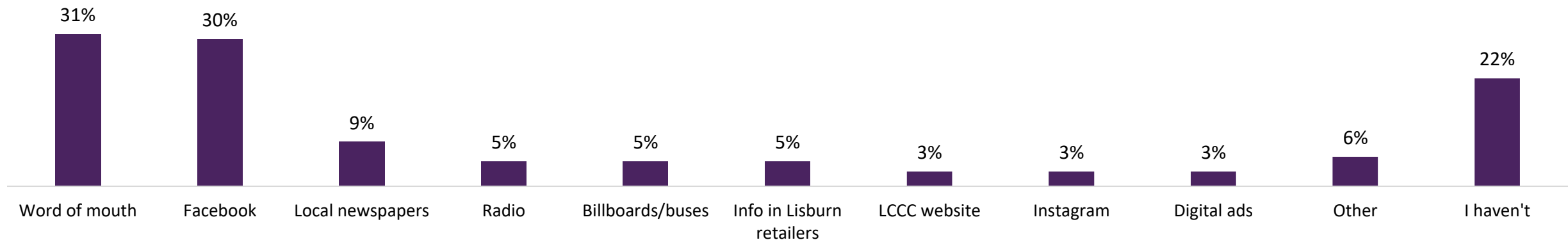
78% of people had heard about the Christmas events prior to their visit to Lisburn City Centre.

Almost one third had heard about the Christmas events from other people (word of mouth) and 30% had heard about them on Facebook.

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Awareness of LCCC Christmas advertising

Have you seen the LCCC Christmas advertising campaign?

41%	6%	8%	50%
Yes, on TV	Yes, on the radio	Yes, elsewhere	No
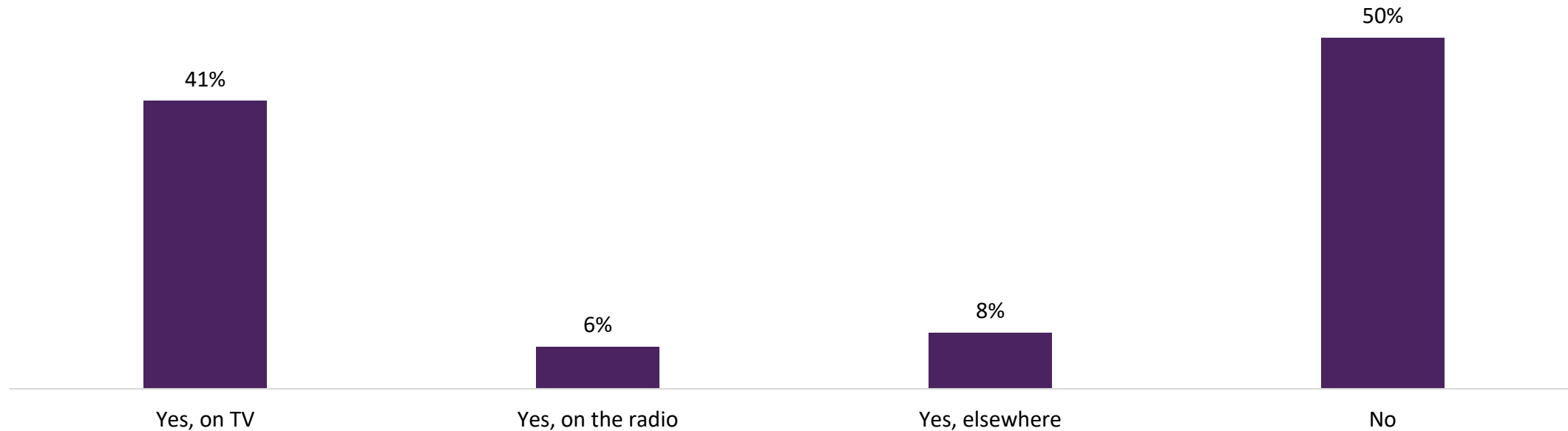
Half of respondents had seen the LCCC Christmas advertising campaign, and half had not seen any advertising.

More respondents saw the campaign on TV than heard it on the radio. Other options given by respondents included having seen the campaign on social media, on billboards and online. Some could recall having seen advertising but not where they had seen it.

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Frequency of visit

How often would you normally visit Lisburn City Centre…?

Average rate of
visit per month

For retail and shopping — Several times a week 22% | Weekly 28% | 2-3 times a month 15% | Monthly 13% | Once every few months 7% | Less often 11% | Never 4% — 3.85

For dining out — Several times a week 3% | Weekly 10% | 2-3 times a month 9% | Monthly 12% | Once every few months 14% | Less often 27% | Never 25% — 1.08

For meeting friends — Several times a week 5% | Weekly 5% | 2-3 times a month 4% | Monthly 6% | Once every few months 10% | Less often 18% | Never 52% — 0.87

Legend: ■ Several times a week ■ Weekly ■ 2-3 times a month ■ Monthly ■ Once every few months ■ Less often ■ Never

People visit Lisburn most frequently for retail and shopping, with 50% visiting at least once a week for this reason, and 78% visiting at least monthly.

34% said they dine out in Lisburn at least once a month while 20% said they meet friends in Lisburn once a month or more.

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Current perception of Lisburn City Centre

How would you rate the following in Lisburn City Centre?

Positive responses

Category	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	Positive
Level of civic pride	16%	57%	22%	4%	1%	73%
Vibrancy and vitality	19%	48%	26%	6%	1%	67%
Overall perception	17%	57%	22%	4%		74%

■ Very good   ■ Good   ■ Average   ■ Poor   ■ Very poor
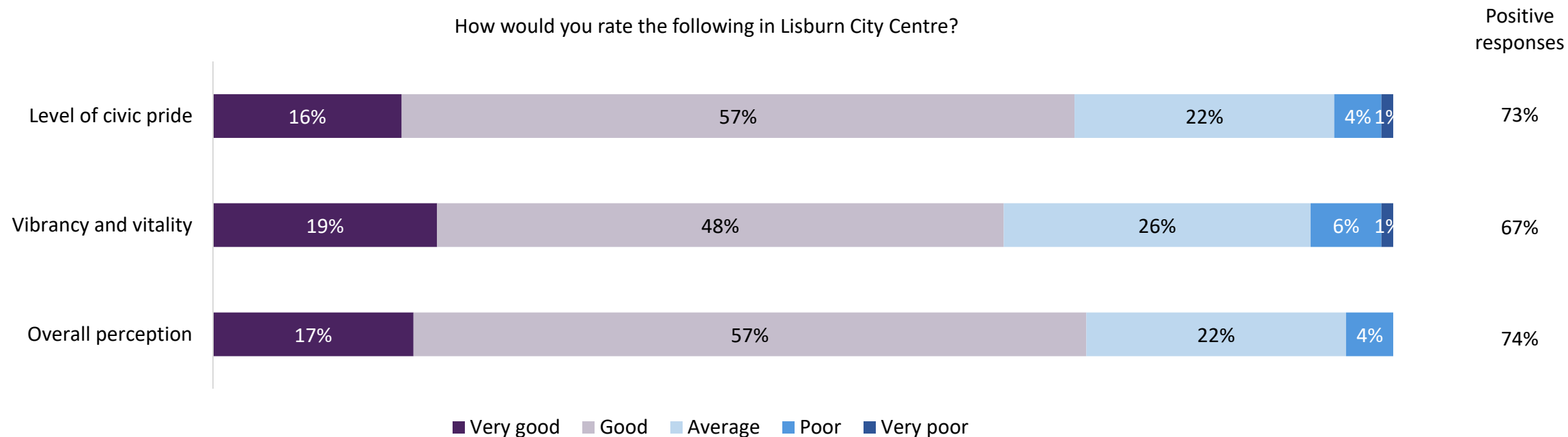
73% of respondents gave a positive rating (very good or good) to the level of civic pride in Lisburn City Centre currently, while 67% gave a positive rating to the level of vibrancy and vitality in the City Centre. Overall, 74% of respondents have a positive perception of Lisburn City Centre.

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●●● Experience of those who visited events

Of those who came to Lisburn City Centre in order to visit Christmas events:

Event	Visited	Positive experience
Christmas Garden Light Trail	74%	96%
Light Festival – Christmas tree/canopy shows	43%	100%
Christmas Light Switch-On	15%	100%
Lapland to Lisburn – Elfie Tour	2%	100%
Bumping Carz	2%	100%
Santa John	2%	100%
Sensory Night	1%	100%

97% of those who came to Lisburn City Centre to attend Christmas events rated their visit as a positive experience.
96% of visitors who came to see the Christmas Garden Light Trail had a positive experience.
100% of visitors who came to see any of the other events listed above had a positive experience.

Note: there is a small sample size (<100) for each of these events.

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Overall experience in Lisburn City Centre

Has your visit been a positive experience?

3%

97%

■ Yes   ■ No
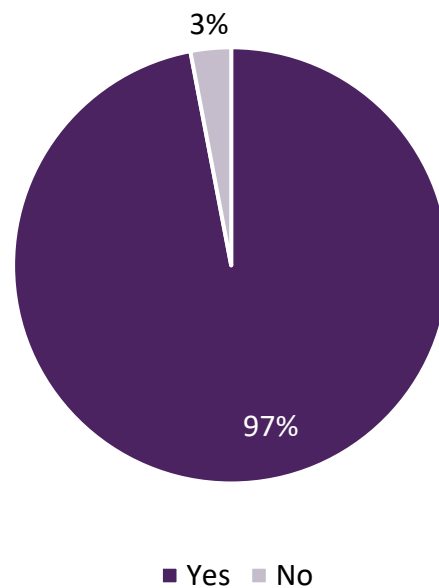
Would your positive experience make you…

	More likely to visit	As likely to visit	Less likely to visit
For retail	9%	90%	1%
For dining out	6%	93%	1%
For evening entertainment	6%	93%	1%

97% of respondents said their visit had been a positive experience. Of those, the positive experience of their most recent visit resulted in 9% saying they would be likely to visit more often for retail, and 6% likely to visit more often for dining out and for evening entertainment. A majority of respondents said they would be likely to visit the same amount as before.

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⚫⚫⚫ Net Promoter Score

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is the proportion of people who would recommend a visit to Lisburn City Centre (Promoters) minus the proportion who would recommend elsewhere instead (Detractors). The NPS can range from -100 to +100. Scores between -10 & +10 are seen as 'Average'.

24%	48%	28%

NPS: -4

■ Promoter ■ Passive ■ Detractor
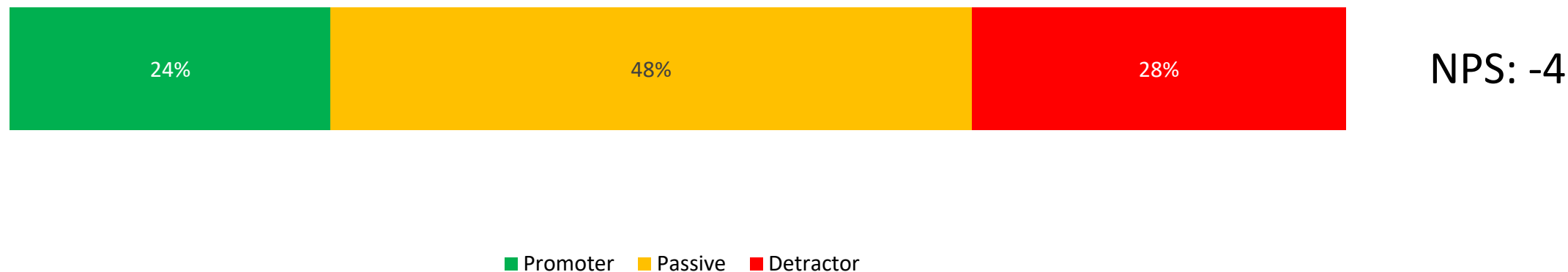
Respondents were asked how likely they would be to recommend a visit to Lisburn City Centre to someone they know who has never been, on a scale of 0 to 10.
For Lisburn City Centre, the number of detractors outweighs the number of promoters, giving a minus NPS.

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Spend in Lisburn City Centre

- 70% of visitors had already spent something on their visit to Lisburn City Centre, with an average spend of £79.00.

- 22% of visitors were planning to spend, or to spend more on their visit, with an average planned spend of £36.09.

- 23% of visitors had not spent, and had no plans to spend, in Lisburn City Centre.

- The average projected overall spend was:

  - £82.40 for spenders only, that is visitors who had already spent and / or were planning to spend

  - £63.24 for all visitors, including those not spending.

For details of rate of spend and average spend across specific locations in Lisburn City Centre see Appendix 1.

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●●● Christmas shopping

How likely are you to carry out some Christmas Shopping in Lisburn city?

- ■ I don't expect to at all
- ■ I expect to make one or two visits
- ■ I expect to visit a few times
- ■ Most of my Christmas shopping
- ■ All of my Christmas shopping
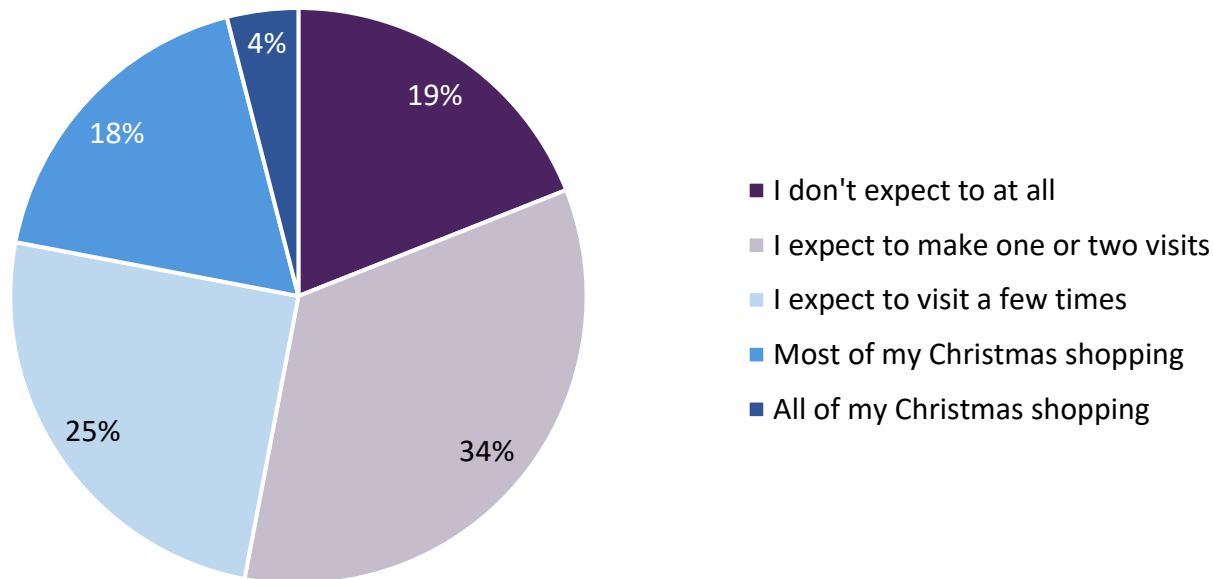
Where else do you expect to carry out some Christmas shopping?

Location	Percentage
Belfast City	49%
Sprucefield	23%
Boucher Retail Park	8%
Craigavon (Rushmere)	8%
The Boulevard (Banbridge)	6%
Lisburn Road area	5%
Other	36%

22% of respondents expected to carry out all or most of their Christmas shopping in Lisburn City.

The table shows other locations where respondents planned to carry out some Christmas shopping. In the table, 'other' includes towns and cities such as Ards, Armagh, Newry, Ballymena, Banbridge, Derry, Dublin, Lurgan, Portadown and venues including Junction One and Yorkgate (Cityside). A large proportion of those selecting other did so as they either don't plan to shop anywhere else or will only shop online.

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Reasons for visiting other places

What encourages you to visit other places for Christmas shopping?
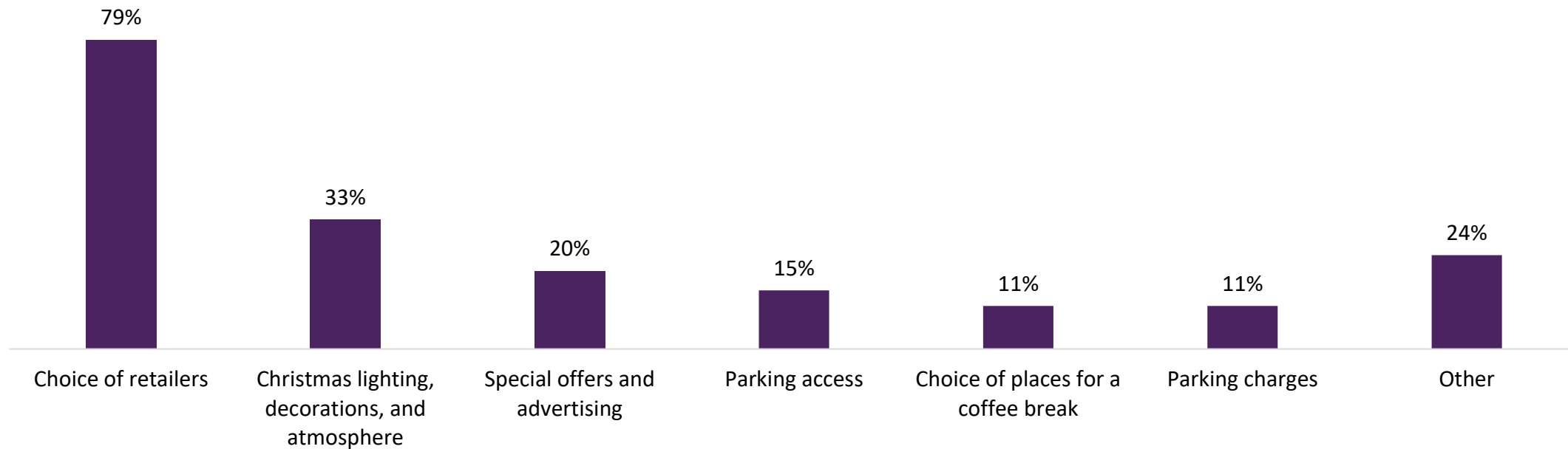
A majority of respondents are attracted to visit other places for Christmas shopping by the choice of retailers.

Other here includes convenience, distance to travel, presence of independent retailers, influence of friends or family, and whether there is a specific attraction (such as the Christmas market in Belfast).

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••• Evenings out

How likely are you to visit Lisburn City Centre for some evenings out leading up to Christmas?

- ■ I don't expect to
- ■ Occasional evenings out
- ■ Some evenings out
- ■ All of my evenings out
- ■ Most of my evenings out
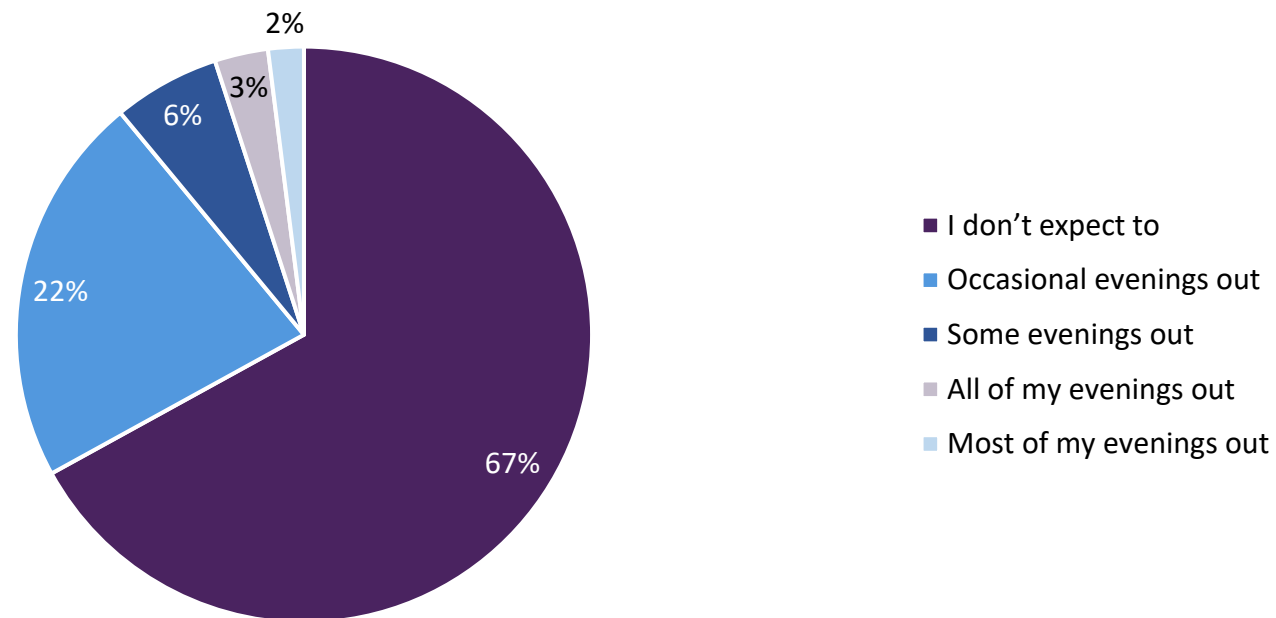
33% of respondents expected to visit Lisburn City Centre for evenings out in the run up to Christmas.

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••• Comments from visitors

Positive comments

Castle gardens really good for family

Grandkids loved the lanterns

I love Lisburn and come every year for the lights

Like that it's free parking for December - this helps

Santa was good with my son as he has autism (in Castle Gardens)

Lisburn is great for my electric scooter - that's why I come here and not Belfast

Suggestions for improvement

Disabled parking is very poor

I didn't know Santa was only here on certain nights and that the huts were closed

I would have like a few stalls or shops to walk round as there was a lot of waiting about

Lisburn could do with more shops

More cycle paths, more pedestrian areas, too many vacant shops

Not enough shops here

There are too many empty units which makes it look rundown

Would have liked the traders huts to be open

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Appendix 1: Detailed spend in Lisburn City Centre

Location	Spend so far on their visit				Planned spend on their visit			
	Rate of spend: all visitors	Rate of spend: visitors who have already spent	Average spend: all spenders	Average spend: have spent in that location	Rate of planned spend: all visitors	Rate of planned spend: visitors who plan to spend	Average planned spend: all planned spenders	Average planned spend: plan to spend in that location
Bow Street	52%	74%	£34.39	£46.42	14%	37%	£16.49	£26.24
Market Square	12%	18%	£7.76	£43.90	3%	12%	£7.93	£64.00
Bridge St	2%	2%	£1.21	£53.00	0.2%	1%	£0.22	£25.00
Castle St	4%	5%	£1.84	£33.95	1%	3%	£0.46	£17.33
Smithfield St	1%	2%	£0.50	£29.00	0.2%	1%	£0.44	£50.00
Market Place/Chapel Lane	3%	4%	£1.54	£38.64	0.4%	2%	£0.66	£37.50
Antrim St	7%	10%	£4.25	£41.47	1%	5%	£1.21	£22.83
Bachelor's Walk	1%	2%	£0.75	£44.17	0.4%	2%	£0.40	£22.50
Bow St Mall	25%	36%	£26.77	£75.18	4%	16%	£8.27	£51.94

In the table above:
- The **rate of spend** is the proportion of visitors who had spent, or planned to spend, in each location. This is shown both as a proportion of all visitors to Lisburn City Centre and as a proportion of spenders.
- The **average spend** is the average amount spent, or planned to be spent, in each location. This is shown both as an average of all spenders, and as an average of those who have spent, or plan to spend, in each location.

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Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Name of the activity/policy/project

Marketing and Communication (Tourism)

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?

Revised – previous EQ Screening took place in July 2020.

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

Tourism Development is part of Economic Development within Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. Economic Development is involved in a number of distinct areas of operation aimed at developing prosperity throughout the Lisburn and Castlereagh area.

Promoting the LCCC area through a strategic marketing campaign and using all media platforms to showcase the wealth of products and services on offer will assist in the economic growth of the area. Tourism Development are responsible for both the Integrated Marketing Campaign which covers the marketing and promotion of the LCCC tourism product offering and smaller marketing campaigns on digital platforms as well as promotions in local and national press.

Through the Marketing and Communication Policy, LCCC Tourism Development section aim to effectively disseminate information about the activities, products, services and events to local, national and international audiences. It is also anticipated that feedback on how these promotions are received and appreciated will be collated for future decision making. This monitoring will also help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which will help with future marketing and communication planning and policy development and support fairness across all categories of section 75.

The aim of this policy is to offer a framework to support the Tourism Development section in marketing and communication within the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area. These promotions tend to be via digital platforms, TV, radio and traditional platforms such as outdoor and newspaper advertising. Examples of previous Marketing and Communication include:-

- Marketing and Promotion of small and major events through social media platforms and websites; advertising in the local and national press and producing promotional flyers;
- Newsletter distribution via hard copy and e-newsletter on social media platforms;
- Integrated Marketing Campaign to promote tourism across the whole council area;
- Billboard promotion for major events such as Balmoral Show and seasonal marketing campaigns such as Christmas Lights Festival;
- Advertising events in the local press and printed travel journals and magazines.
- More emphasis will be dedicated to digital promotions, especially on social platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly twitter), and Tic Tok.

The Marketing and Communication Policy will facilitate effective promotional communication within LCCC. This will be achieved through key themes of ensuring compliance, equality and delivering value for money through a commercial approach and supporting the local economy.

The marketing promotion is aimed at domestic and non-domestic tourists, visitors and local residents, and businesses with the aim to improve the economic growth with all sections of LCCC community by improving the process of marketing and communication. A third-party marketing and promotion agency will be appointed providing strategic direction and accessing value for money media promotional spend. They will also support the seasonal campaigns that use a mix of media. The appointment will be procured through the Council's robust procurement process with it likely to be a 3-year contract with yearly break clause subject to evaluations.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels and therefore all sections may stand to benefit directly and indirectly from this policy.

The larger marketing and communication campaigns within the Tourism Development section will be delivered by a 3rd party delivery agent who will act on behalf of LCCC. This appointment will be conducted through the appropriate procurement process.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Tourism Development Unit in LCCC

2

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

Owned by LCCC Service Transformation Directorate; implemented by the Tourism Development Unit

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project?

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial - The delivery of Tourism Marketing and Communications activity will be reliant on adequate financial and human resources.

Legislative: Tourism development is a non-essential service.

Other: Tourism Development supports economic development, generating jobs and economic wealth to the local area.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon? Delete if not applicable

Staff - all LCCC staff involved in the delivery of Tourism.

Service users - wide range of local and out of state visitors, local businesses, retailers, and local schools.

Other public sector organisations - Tourism NI, Business Community, and local residents.

Voluntary/community/trade unions All local V&C bodies within LCCC area.

Other – including Elected Members

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Hillsborough Master Plan	LCCC
LCCC Corporate Plan 2024-28	LCCC
Visit Belfast Tourism Strategy 2024-2027	Visit Belfast
Tourism Strategy for NI 10 year plan	Tourism NI
Forest Service NI Business Plan	DAERA
NI Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030	Department for the Economy
LCCC Equality Scheme and associated equality action plans and policies	LCCC
Use of Social Media, Professional Networking & Blogging Policy employees	LCCC
Management of Council Social Media	LCCC
Photographic & Public Relation Protocol	LCCC
Photography Guidance for images of Children & Adults at Risk	LCCC
Procurement Policy	LCCC

Available evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

The LCCC Corporate and Community Plans set out the vision for LCCC – 'building on the many reasons to live, visit and invest here'. Through the means of positively marketing the Council area, its tourism products, and the many attractions this will in turn support economic growth in the area.

The Tourism section of the Council operates the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) social media platforms along with the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh website. The aim of these online platforms is to assist with the economic growth of the Lisburn and Castlereagh area by attracting international and day visitors, who in turn may stay overnight, and spend in the local economy. The Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area consists of approximately 140,205 residents, with 58,868 homes covering an area of 200 square miles.

As 55% of the population of NI is under the age of 40 their engagement with social media will be high and it is therefore important that we have a strong presence in this area to engage with people and encourage visitors to the area.

Evaluations from recent events co-ordinated by LCCC show that social media and digital marketing are the most effective means of generating awareness such as the

Food and Drink events delivered by a third party delivery agent on behalf of LCCC. (see appendix 1)

Attached at Appendix 2, is the Council's 2023 Integrated Marketing Campaign Evaluation. This campaign was used to support and promote the Lisburn Light Festival which ran over the Christmas period in Lisburn City Centre. The campaign used a range of different media platforms to collectively encourage footfall and awareness to this unique and colourful event. From the findings it is clear that all Section 75 groups will have had opportunity to witness the marketing and promotions efforts. Evidence from CARD Research presented to Development Committee showed awareness levels at over half of those attending the Christmas events as a result of Christmas promotional campaign attracting shoppers and the visitors attending the Lisburn Light Festival.

NI Statistics and Research Agency estimates the value of tourism (2019), from out-of-state visitors to the Lisburn and Castlereagh area, to be approximately 194,860 trips per annum (up 3% on previous year), 636,210 nights (down on previous year), and £20.2m spend (also down on previous year).

From NIRSA 2019 Fact card (see appendix 5) we know:

- There are estimated to be 4,816 tourism jobs in the LCCC area;
- 1.6m visits to visitor attractions in LCCC area;
- LCCC attracts the fourth highest proportion of GB visitors.

From statistics collated from the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh website, we have been able to establish the increase in users on the web page and social media platforms:

- In the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 the visitlisburncastlereagh.com website saw a total of 80,365 users.
- For the same period the following year up to 31st March 2024 the site saw a total of 102,601 users, an increase of 26.1%.
- The number of sessions (individual visits to the site) also increased significantly going from 103,000 from 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 to 132,000 in the same period the following year, an increase of 26.7%.
- For the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 user acquisition to the visitlisburncastlereagh.com website can be broken down as follows:
  - Organic Search: 74,054
  - Organic Social: 14,242
  - Direct: 10,871
  - Referral: 3,087
  - Paid: 311
- Presently the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh social media followers are as follows:
  Facebook: 18,548   Twitter: 3,400   Instagram: 6,258
- The most common age groups following the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh Facebook page are:
  25-34: 15.4%   35-44: 35.5%   45-54: 26.8%

- The most common age groups following the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh Instagram account are:
  25-34: 28.2%   35-44: 41.3%   45-54: 17.8%

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Political Opinion	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Racial Group	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Age	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Marital Status	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Sexual Orientation	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Men & Women Generally	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Disability	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
People with and without Dependants	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.

Needs, experiences, and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

The different needs of each of the Section 75 categories will continue to be recognised and reflected in the delivery of the Marketing and Communication Policy. The dynamics of each category will continue to be recognised within the policy and evaluated through the post event evaluation of each large marketing campaign. These evaluations identify value for money, dynamics of the audience reached and how successful the campaign has been to the area from a tourism and economic perspective.

It is difficult to effectively communicate with everyone in the same manner, for example; the younger age group focus on communicating through social media whereas the older age groups may find it easier to gain information through more traditional methods of newspaper and visual advertisements. Our aim, as a Council area is to engage with all categories of section 75 to promote the tourism, hospitality and event offering in the LCCC area.

Tourism collateral marketing material will continually be monitored to ensure that all material is available to different audience needs. LCCC will endeavour to support people across multiple Section 75 groupings and of various abilities. LCCC procures and uses professional graphic designers who understand and adhere to the latest guidelines keeping text and imagery concise, jargon free and clearly formatted. For example; the material is currently available in hard copy format, alternative languages, as well as in digital format online leaflets and information through the two Visitor Information Centres that are serviced by highly trained LCCC staff or alternatively digitally provided through our website and social media channel.

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group.
Political Opinion	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of section 75 group
Racial Group	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available in different formats such as online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Age	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group. The younger age group focus on communicating through social media whereas the older age groups may find it easier to gain information through more traditional methods of newspaper and visual advertisements.
Marital Status	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Sexual Orientation	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Men & Women Generally	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online/ hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Disability	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information will be available in different formats such as online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
People with and without Dependants	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group

Part 2. Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this activity/policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

The revised Marketing and Communication policy will support equality of opportunity to each category. It will promote a transparent approach to the work of staff and elected members of LCCC around Marketing and Communication with reference to the Tourism Section.

Provision is currently made for information to be available to international visitors whose 1st language is not English. Hard copies of the Lisburn & Castlereagh Information guide is available in other languages such as French, German and Spanish.

For other alternative formats such as large print and braille, requests will continue to be processed as necessary.

The Visit Lisburn Castlereagh website has the "Recite" plugin which allows the user to hear the text read aloud if they have difficulty reading, and also allows them to change the contrast and appearance of the text for accessibility.

Tourism marketing material will continually be monitored to ensure that all material is available to as wide a number of audiences as viable. We will endeavour to support people with a wide range of disabilities to access our marketing information. We use trained graphic designers who understand the importance of keeping text and imagery concise, jargon free and clearly formed. The material is available in hard format through our Visitor Information Centre and Tourism Exhibition Trailer that are serviced by highly trained LCCC staff or through our digital platforms including website (word and PDF format).

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - major or minor* - see guidance below
Religious Belief	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Political Opinion	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and	None

	cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	
Racial Group	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Age	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Marital Status	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Sexual Orientation	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Men & Women Generally	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Disability	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and	None

	cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	
People with and without Dependants	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None

2(a) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

This Policy represents an opportunity to benefit all users. If any further opportunities were to arise to continue to promote equality of opportunity then these would be given consideration in due course. For example; advertisements for events or marketing campaigns are currently published within local press, which would be read by a cross section of the community but from the recent evaluations of events and marketing campaigns it is apparent that the population is now opting to communicate more electronically. Council and Tourism websites and other social media platforms are now also being heavily used to promote events and marketing campaigns to ensure that all categories of the population and community are being engaged with. The Policy will be reviewed annually.

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
All		Activities conducted under this policy are available to all, regardless of Section 75 category.

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025?   Yes/No   If yes, specify which action.

No, however the policy will be kept under review to ensure that requests for information in various formats are monitored and provided across the Council.

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

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- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

No, activities conducted under this policy are available to all, regardless of Section 75 category. Some activities will however be highlighted to have additional facilities for disabled people, including places to stay, where to eat, and various attractions and experiences to visit. Through consultation exercises disabled people will be targeted proactively for their feedback.

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

The all-inclusive nature of the policy will support a positive impact on good relations. With each marketing campaign conducted an evaluation of impact is provided and can be assessed in accordance with the categories below to ensure that the level of impact remains at none.

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group	Activities conducted under this policy will be available to people of different religious beliefs. Such access should provide opportunities for all groups to engage in the marketing and communication activity.	Minor - positive

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

The Marketing and Communication Policy has been designed to support a positive impact on all users.

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details

Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group		No, there are no further opportunities to better promote good relations between these groups. All opportunities are currently being addressed.

Multiple identity

Provide details of any data on the impact of the activity/policy/project on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

LCCC recognises that all individuals are not exclusive to just one designated group. "Multiple identity" has been given consideration within this screening exercise in order to ensure benefit to all groups.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project. There are 3 possible outcomes:

1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.

2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.

3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
Option 1	

Screen out – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	
Option 2 **Screen out with mitigation** – some potential impacts could be identified in the eight-week consultation, and they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	LCCC does not anticipate that the Marketing and Communication Policy will hinder equality of opportunity for any Section 75 group, but instead, through open and transparent marketing and communications across all media platforms and channels it will aspire to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The decision is to screen out with no mitigation at this time. The reason for this decision is due to the following: • The nature of marketing and communication is inclusive to all sections of the community; • Currently none of the categories have been identified as being at risk of an adverse impact; • The policy is reviewed on an annual basis or per marketing campaign and would therefore highlight any issues.
Option 3 **Screen in** for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	

Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

None

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

If the activity/policy has been **'screened in'** for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No.   If yes, please provide details.

Not applicable

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The Tourism team will be responsible for monitoring of this policy that will involve logging feedback and concerns from stakeholders, community and the public when required. The Council will proactively seek feedback on the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan by way of consultation questionnaires for an eight-week period following agreement from Committee.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by:	Andrew Kennedy Tourism Development Manager	8.8.24
Reviewed by:	Annie Wilson Equality Officer	8.8.24
Approved by:	Paul McCormick Head of Economic Development	9.8.24

Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

1B. 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.

Marketing and Promotions

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Adopting a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Implementing a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Revising a	Policy	☐	Strategy	☐	Plan	☐
Designing a Public Service		☐				
Delivering a Public Service		X				

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Marketing and Promotions

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The key aim of this campaign is to promote the LCCC area as a visitor destination across N. Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland and also support the promotion of Lisburn City Centre and its commercial offering (mainly retail and hospitality).

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A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities
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1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).	X
Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).	
A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.	

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

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SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes [X]   No [ ]   If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The Marketing and Promotions (including Integrated Marketing Campaign and Visit Belfast) will impact on people in the rural area and it will promote economic investment by:-
- Increasing tourism footfall
- Increasing spend in rural areas
- Increase visitor dwell time in rural areas
- By offering a holistic "end to end" tourism offering to locals and visitors from further afield

The campaign will impact on people in rural and urban areas. The Council are aware that attracting more visitors to these areas will require mitigating any negative impacts this may have. Negative impacts will be considered as part of the collaborative process and mitigated as early as possible in the programme.

The rural share of the NI population is growing. Over the years 2001-2011 the number of people living in rural areas of NI increased by 15% in comparison to a rise of only 4% in urban areas. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

2C. 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.

Tourism is an expanding area and is being increasingly recognized for its overall contribution to the Northern Ireland economy.

The Marketing and Promotions campaigns will promote all tourism businesses across the whole LCCC area. The campaign will also help build businesses up after the temporary closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The sustainability and stability of businesses is very important in a rural context as these businesses sustain the local community.

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2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	X
Rural Tourism	X
Rural Housing	
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	X
Education or Training in Rural Areas	X
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	
Poverty in Rural Areas	X
Deprivation in Rural Areas	X
Rural Crime or Community Safety	
Rural Development	X
Agri-Environment	
Other (Please state)	

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. 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 [X]   No [ ]   If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. 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.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders [X]   Published Statistics [ ]

Consultation with Other Organisations [X]   Research Papers [ ]

Surveys or Questionnaires [ ]   Other Publications [ ]

Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below). [ ]

3C. 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.

- Draft Northern Ireland Programme for Government (2016-2021)
- Northern Ireland Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030
- Tourism NI- Operating Plan
- Tourism NI – Northern Ireland Tourism Priorities for Growth
- Forest Service NI Business Plan 2014-15
- OFMDFM – Together; Building a United Community (TBUC)
- OFMDFM – Lifetime Opportunities – Government's Anti-Poverty & Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2020
- Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act
- Hillsborough Tourism Master Plan. 2015
- Hillsborough Forest Economic Appraisal. 2017
- Public consultation and survey in Hillsborough Forest. 2016
- Visit Belfast Strategy 2024-2026

The Socio-economic profile and forecast, Lisburn & Castlereagh (2018-2032) identified the LCCC area as showing marked distinctions between the rural and urban populations. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas and the population forecast is set to grow by 8,300 residents between 2018-2032 (0.4% per annum, twice that of the NI equivalent). L&CCC's population growth outlook between 2018-2032 on average will be 1.65% making it the third highest across NI districts and 0.35 points above the NI rate.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

The Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016) has identified the following as key areas:

- Rural Businesses
- Rural Tourism
- Jobs or employment in rural areas
- Education or training in rural areas
- Poverty in rural areas
- Rural development
- Agri-Environment

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

The Scheme proposed will have a positive impact on the local rural business community and the Council area as a whole.

According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the LCCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

In Northern Ireland 58% of businesses are based in rural areas. The business base in the region as a whole is predominantly small to medium enterprises with a dominance of micro businesses. In terms of businesses located only in rural areas, 94% are defined as micro (having less than 10 employees). Agriculture plays a more important role in the economy of NI than is the case in the rest of the UK, it generates a higher proportion of total GVA (Gross valued added) in the economy and accounts for a higher proportion of our employment. Furthermore 78% of the total NI land area is in agricultural use. Rural businesses located in NI have particular challenges and need specific solutions. The slow uptake of agriculture and rural enterprises in NI with regards to innovation, the fact that only 67% of rural areas have superfast broadband coverage (98% in urban areas) and 14% of tourism expenditure takes place in rural areas (compared with 86% in urban) are further examples of challenges facing the small rural businesses in Northern Ireland.

In 2018 there were 4,755 VAT/PAYE registered businesses in the L&CCC area (NISRA). The close proximity to Belfast puts the L&CCC area in an advantageous position whereby the population density is a way to generate an increase in sales and revenue.

Considering that almost half of the L&CCC district is rural, the regeneration of the LCCC area, is a key priority for the Council whom over the next 10 years will continue to invest in regeneration initiatives. Economic development initiatives such as the Integrated Marketing Campaign and the marketing carried out by Visit Belfast on the Council's behalf will benefit the local rural population and visitors to the area as well as the urban areas. These projects will contribute towards the Council's overall strategic objective of increasing economic development in the L&CCC area for the benefit of all citizens.

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SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes X   No ☐   **If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

The synopsis of the programme has been identified in Section 2B, fully considering the needs of the rural population. There have been no detrimental impacts identified.

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled. X

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Margaret McAvoy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Officer
Division/Branch	Economic Development
Signature:	MARGARET MCAVOY
Date:	08/08/2024
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Andrew Kennedy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Manager
Division/Branch:	Economic Development
Signature:	ANDREW KENNEDY
Date:	8/8/24

Committee:	Regeneration & Growth
Date:	5 September 2024
Report from:	Head of Economic Development

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Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Regional Tourism Partnership - Visit Belfast Annual Service Level Agreement

1.0   **Background**

1. Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council joined the Greater Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership (RTP) in 2006, with the purpose of marketing and promoting the tourism product across the Greater Belfast region (including Lisburn and Castlereagh) to international markets. The relationship with Visit Belfast is governed by an annual service level agreement (**see Appendix**).

2. Since 2015, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Ards and North Down Borough Council have remained local authority partners, along with Belfast City Council. Other local authorities who were RTP members prior to the reform of local government, have chosen to 'purchase' other sales opportunities or services on an ad-hoc basis only eg specific advertising on relevant platforms.

3. The cost per annum for local authority membership has remained at £30,000 since 2015. In addition, the Gold Welcome Centre presence has cost a further £6,000 per year, with a slight increase for 2024 to £6,500.

Key Issues

1. The Committee has previously been reminded that Visit Belfast had confirmed that the price for membership was not negotiable as another Council has the same Service Level Agreement at the same cost.

2. The draft Council LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029 recommends to remain a member of Visit Belfast going forward, with '*an opportunity for Lisburn and Castlereagh to leverage Belfast's brand recognition as a tourist destination and Northern Ireland's capital city to a) achieve measurable promotional and revenue-generating opportunities for tourism and hospitality businesses and b) increase dwell time in the Lisburn and Castlereagh district'*.

3. The summary view of the emerging Tourism Strategy is to 'continue to partner with Visit Belfast, while additionally maximising opportunities at a local, regional, and national level.

4. An evaluation report (**see Appendix**) provides a detailed breakdown of all activity for the 2023/24 financial year. All targets have been met from the outgoing service level agreement. Visit Belfast is targeting an annual growth of 6.25%, from £125 million in economic impact (target) in the year 2023/24 to £150 million in 2026/27. Over the course of the three-year strategy Visit Belfast will deliver 20% growth and a cumulative economic impact of £424m to the Greater Belfast region, that includes Lisburn and Castlereagh. This represents a return on

investment of £30:1 (i.e. for every £1 of investment made a return of £30 is generated).

5. During 2023, Excursions Ireland (largest cruise ship provider to Belfast), had 90,282 passengers coming through the port. Data provided shows that 4,640 passengers were booked on a shore excursion to LCCC, representing 5.14% of all shore excursions. Excursions to LCCC include Hillsborough Castle and Hinch Distillery. Officers believe this is a good return given the competing experiences on offer throughout Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that future programmes will develop experiential tourism opportunities within the Council area that could then be promoted for cruise ship excursions such as Ulster Aviation Society and Hillsborough Fort Guard tours.

6. Some of the highlights included in the evaluation are:

    *   LCCC products & events featured in Visit Belfast blog articles and e-zines,
    *   dedicated pages in Belfast and City Region Guide (50,000 Summer edition, 30,000 Autumn/ Winter edition and 30,000 Spring editions),
    *   listings of LCCC products on the new visitbelfast.com website including all events (attracts over 2.2m visits p.a.),
    *   17,890 LCCC literature racked in Belfast Welcome Centre, 7,300 LCCC literature racked at BIA, and 650 LCCC literature racked at GBBCA, and 1,000 literature racked at Belfast Cruise Hub,
    *   industry briefings, and part of weekly concierge e-zine,
    *   LCCC specific enquires handled for LCCC destination across the 3 VICs (Belfast Welcome Centre, George Best Belfast City Airport, and Belfast International Airport) and cruise hub were 15,590 (up 9% on year before).

7. For the last 6 years, the Council has also agreed to purchase the additional Gold Sponsorship Package for a further £6,000 per year. There has been no price increase for 5 years. However, there is a small increase for 2024 to £6,500 that will include an even higher profile wrap-around graphic display on the island that sits within the Belfast Welcome Centre. The package continues to include:

    *   Headline image or video on 42" screen looped during Visit Belfast Welcome Centre opening hours
    *   Business profile on 42" screen
    *   A highly visible display compartment to hold artwork or 3D artefacts
    *   On screen images and product information displayed in a headline position on a themed pod
    *   Sponsors receive up to 20 times more traffic to their product profile.
    *   Visitors will have added bonus of instantly being able to add your brand or product information to their own bespoke itinerary
    *   Exclusive literature racking

    The Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council tourism product is one of the top viewed products in The Welcome Centre out of a possible 500+ profiles meaning having commercial presence in the Centre continues to represent excellent value for money. There are 4 islands, and each island offers 4 enhanced profiling opportunities, 16 positions in total. LCCC currently occupy one of these. Gold island positions provide a flexible advertising space, where content can be changed throughout the year in line with events, seasons or visitor needs.

	8. A key objective and priority for Visit Belfast over the next 3–5-year period will be to champion the development of a new and updated Regional Tourism Partnership scheme and agreement. There is likely to be a stepped-up membership investment ask over the coming years from 2025 onwards. 9. There are opportunities for Members to directly engage with the Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership in terms of the Annual Industry Forum which would normally fall to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.		
2.0	**Recommendation** It is recommended that the Committee considers and: 1. Agrees that Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council continues its long-standing membership of Visit Belfast, at a cost of £30,000 plus a further £6,500 for the 'Gold' promotional package for a further year. 2. Nominates the Chair and Vice Chair to participate in the Annual Industry Forum. Members are encouraged to take advantage of this facility to seek to influence the future delivery of the partnership.		
3.0	**Finance and Resource Implications** The total contribution (£36,500) from the Council will be met from within the existing Economic Development Budget Estimates.		
4.0	**Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**		
4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	Yes	
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out It is not anticipated that the membership of Visit Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership will impact adversely on any Section 75 group (**see Appendix**)		
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	Yes	
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out. Membership of Visit Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership benefits all the tourism and hospitality industry from both rural and urban areas of the Council area (**see Appendix**)		

Appendices:	Appendix 4a - 2024/2025 Service Level Agreement Appendix 4b - 2023/2024 Visit Belfast Evaluation Appendix 4c and 5d – Equality and Rural assessments

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Visit Belfast
Regional Tourism Partnership Agreement 2024-25

1. The Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership was first set up in 2006. The purpose of the partnership is to facilitate, collaboration, communication and integrated working between Regional Tourism Partner (RTP) councils with regards to tourism promotion, marketing and visitor servicing, and through Visit Belfast's role as a Destination Marketing Management Organisation (DMMO), for Visit Belfast to create stronger and efficient and effective framework to maximise value of the visitor economy to the wider Belfast City Region to represent value for money for each of the RTP council areas.

2. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's investment in Visit Belfast's activity is £30,000 for the financial year 2024-25, payable in 2 annual instalments; by 1st September 2024 and 1st March 2025. Visit Belfast has not increased the RTP Membership contribution since 2015 though it is acknowledged that the support, remit and activities from Visit Belfast have substantially increased over the period, specifically post pandemic. Given the steep rise in business operating costs and channel marketing costs, it is important to note Visit Belfast's intention to evaluate and develop with our RTPs, a more innovative, as well as economically viable model, for future years, and one which may extend the RTP membership to other neighbouring Councils.

3. Partnership has been an integral foundation of Visit Belfast operations since it was set up 25 years ago; and the strength of relationships with strategic stakeholders, including our Regional Tourism Partner Councils, continues to provide an important and relevant delivery framework, enabling sustained collaboration that will significantly contribute to a regionally balanced net zero economy while supporting the achievement of the city and region's full tourism growth potential. Tourism has seen continuous improvement, and the development of new and unique tourism experiences has helped shape the city and region into a destination of choice, a place people really want to live, work, study and visit.

4. Visit Belfast's **New Horizons for Belfast City Region,** Strategy and Business plan 2024-2027, builds on the significant progress and on-going transformation of Belfast as a thriving gateway city and international destination for leisure, business and cruise tourism. Over the past three years our successful sales, marketing and visitor servicing activity has ensured that the city's visitor economy has re-emerged stronger and more dynamic, innovative and competitive in a market context that has been characterised by strong headwinds and challenging trading conditions. Visit Belfast is targeting an ambitious annual growth of 6.25% supporting the strategic aim to increase the value of tourism to economy by 50-75% (compared to 2019) as outlined in the Department of Economy's draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland.

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5. Visit Belfast is Focused on spreading the benefit of the city's growing visitor economy to its neighbourhoods and the wider city region, our new strategy will utilise the strength of its gateway position to promote regional balance, to grow and collaborate with LCCC and other key regional tourism organisations to strengthen and promote the 'neighbourhood' and 'region' experiences, increasing visitor participation and duration of stay, as well as utilising key themes such as food and drink, outdoor experiences and adventures, capitalising on the unique and authentic offerings in our city region and neighbourhood areas.

6. Visit Belfast's Strategic Aims include:
   - Growing the value of Tourism to the Belfast City Region and its communities
   - Positioning the Belfast City Region as a front of mind destination for leisure visits, business events and day excursions
   - Enhancing the experience for visitors by showcasing Belfast City Region as a diverse and welcoming destination with unique neighbourhood and city region offers.
   - Sustaining its approach to championing a net zero economy
   - Supporting smaller businesses and tourism providers
   - Maximising social as well as economic opportunities

7. Visit Belfast will continue to align, support and collaborate with key RTP's Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Ards and North Down, and through collaboration, develop an agreed future approach regarding the scope and geographical remit of Belfast's Regional Tourism Partnership scheme and ways in which it will support the Belfast City Region Deal.

8. A key objective and priority for Visit Belfast is to champion the development of a new and updated RTP scheme and agreement to maximise the opportunities to align our respective Strategies and Plans, so together we can demonstrate increased impact, value for money, visible and measurable success, through focused and collaborative working over the next 3–5-year period. This will be achieved through strategic collaboration and the co-design and co-creation of a new updated and strategic RTP framework for 2025 and beyond.

9. The agreed **Schedule for Marketing, Sales and Visitor Servicing** activities and related platforms for 2024-25 are as set out below. These have been identified as prioritised promotional opportunities for tourism products and experiences within the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area. These are not limited and may be subject to change, and Visit Belfast is committed to providing added value and additional platforms as and when appropriate to our RTP partners.

Marketing and Visitor Servicing Activity and Promotional Platforms 2024-25

Initiative / Platform	Activity / Outputs
Belfast Plus – enhanced activity 30k print run Distributed between councils. 150K possible readership 1m Consumere-zine communications per annum Consumer E-zine database 76,000+ 28% Average Open rate	Develop dedicated regional partnership marketing for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, promoting specific activities/itineraries/ products/events etc. This will take a themed experience approach across digital platforms. **Belfast Plus** web pages **Belfast Plus** content blogs to be included in up to 4 e-zines. - Visit Belfast to update RTP on content plans and maximising all #BelfastPlus activity on Visit Belfast's social-media accounts: - Facebook / Twitter – including reposting as relevant, LCCC experiences and activity. - Instagram stories – resharing content and capturing content for use on Instagram stories. - Inclusion in social media video content throughout the year where appropriate - Digital update of **Experience Belfast Plus** guide **Belfast Plus** featured on Visit Belfast Welcome Centre map.
Belfast City & Region Guide 110K print run City and region guides 550k readerships 10k print run per edition for Student guide 50k readership	**Belfast & City Region Guide** focussed on themed products and experiences. The Belfast & City Region guide will provide a double page spread in the body of content for promotion of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council attractions, products and experiences including advertising placement: - Produce 3 editions of Belfast City & Region Guide: Summer 2024, Autumn/Winter 2024 & Spring 2025 plus a student edition for university students. Print and digital versions supported by web/social media and e-zine promotion. - Distribution reviewed with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and extended as appropriate. - Production of digital version, supported by web and social media promotion.

Main Visitor Guide – inc city & region approach	**The Annual Visitor Guide** will continue to prioritise a City & Region approach, redesigned for incorporating sections for each RTP Council area. • Digital and print edition supported by social / digital marketing promotion.
Marketing Campaigns 180m+ opportunities to see promotional advertising £60m spend to the local economy	Visit Belfast's marketing and digital campaigns will focus on the domestic, ROI and GB markets. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, experiences and themes will be included in campaign plans (where appropriate). Inclusion of Belfast Plus within Visit Belfast's campaign website and related activity (where appropriate).
Website: 2.3m visits p.a. Social Media Followers 431,000 53 million impressions per year 5.6 million engagements per year	Development of main visitor portal to include and reflect the Belfast City Region within its branding and include a dedicated homepage navigation to provide links to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council visitor websites and dedicated sections, pages and blogs. **visitbelfast.com** will provide: • Listings for up to 20 key Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council properties in relevant sections e.g. visitor attractions. – Lisburn and Castlereagh Council to update Twenty listings to reflect increased neighbourhood and region offerings if update is required • Key RTP events/activities listed in 'What's On' section. **visitbelfastpartners.com** will provide: • Showcase RTP product and itineraries for the group travel market development (within Travel Trade section) • Promotion of press releases and RTP product news In addition, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council profile with links on conference, cruise and corporate websites (as appropriate).

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Visitor Servicing – Visit Belfast Welcome Centre, Belfast International Airport. George Best Belfast City Airport self-serve local info point. 766,000 Visitor Enquiries 495,000 visitors through VBWC and BIA airport desk 247,000 gateway visitors **September 2024, plans for joint Travel and Visitor Information Desk at New Belfast Grand Central station.** Circa 20m passengers per year Travel Advisory Service Literature Distribution Event Information Ticketing Service Accommodation Booking	Provision of a daily gateway visitor information and travel advisory service for both locals and visitors, available seven days a week by: - Telephone - Email - Online at visitbelfast.com hello@visitbelfast.com and Live/Quick Chat service through visitbelfast.com - Promotion of press releases and RTP product news Visitor Servicing team to provide accurate and reliable visitor and travel information on behalf of tourism businesses, services and RTP Councils across the **Belfast Plus** area. RTP promotional platforms will include: - Wide range of RTP imagery digitally showcased in VBWC: main screens, screens behind desks, NI Gateway screens and 9 screen video wall. - Dedicated **Belfast Plus** branding within VBWC self service area **Belfast Plus** and RTP literature racked at BIA airport visitor information desk, Cruise Hub. Literature available at new desk at Grand Central Belfast. - RTP product featured on self-serve screens in VBWC, BIA, GBBCA (self-serve point), Cruise Terminal, Europa Bus Station, Great Victoria St Rail Station (TBC), Lanyon Place Station, Titanic Belfast, Applegreen M1 and M2 stations, Eastside Visitor Centre, An Cultúrlann, Stena Line Cairnryan, Stena Line Liverpool, on board 2 P&O Ferries plus P&O Cairnryan terminal). Regional promotional opportunities utilising VBWC member desk – up to 4 days p.a. - Dedicated enquiry and literature monitoring across the VIC's. - Promotion of Belfast Plus products at off-site events and conferences
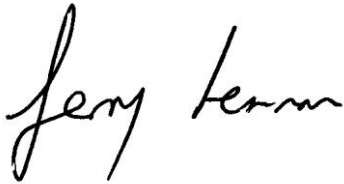
Reserved Marketing opportunities platforms External Screen min 508 views a day Islands minimum 150 views a day	Gold package VBWC island and BIA airport package promotion reserved at agreed discounted cost to LCCC.
Visit Belfast Industry Engagement Programme – enhanced RTP profile	Avail of opportunities to participate in Visit Belfast's Industry Engagement Programme, aimed at promoting products and experiences across Belfast City and Region to front of house staff: • 4 x In person Industry Briefings – dedicated LCC speaker's slot • 3 x Super Fam events to showcase new tourism products and increase staff product knowledge across the Belfast neighbourhoods, with 1 dedicated Fam of the LCC area every two years. Option to assist with recruitment for a dedicated LCC fam in 2024-25 if LCC wish to deliver and fund. • 'Pop-in and See' events open to LCC tourism staff to enhance product knowledge.
NEW – VIC Training Programme	Develop and deliver VIC Training Programme for Visit Belfast, RTP VIC staff and relevant VB/RTP Front of House staff as required. Share visitor servicing / VIC best practice findings from Visit Belfast staff attendance at European City Destinations Network Alliance (CDNA) conference and meetings. VIC Best Practice across a range of needs e.g. • Volunteer Programmes • Industry Engagement Programmes Any additional training as deemed necessary.

Partnership Regional partnership B2B promotion and information 11,000 concierge/Front of house email communications 313+ Database 51% avg open rate	Weekly Concierge/Front of House E-zine • Key LCCC events to be included in concierge e-zine's (where appropriate.) • Update content relating to What's On / Experiences/ Activities across the Belfast City Region (where appropriate). • Work with the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in order to increase partnership participation of businesses in their area.
Cruise Belfast – enhanced marketing and sales activity 136 ships 275,000k+ Visitors	Cruise Belfast will continue to promote the **Belfast Plus** region by including the relevant RTP products and experiences: • within Cruise-Belfast website • within the Cruise Belfast brochure (digital/ print versions) • during sales calls inc. attendance at Seatrade (USA and Europe) • Feature relevant RTP themed experiences, within sales calls and presentations to cruise itinerary planners and executives. Deliver cruise updates/ briefings to RTPs, stakeholders and product providers, as appropriate, during the 2024 Cruise season and ahead of the 2025 cruise season.
Cruise Terminal-Visitor Servicing/ Promotion Platforms 163,485 enquiries at Cruise Hub desk	VBWC will provide welcome/information service on arrival/departure: • 136 cruise calls booked bringing a potential 275,000 visitors between March and October 2024. Please note variations can occur across the season. The Cruise Welcome Terminal features a range of imagery across the Belfast Plus Region, including: • Hillsborough Castle • Irish Linen Centre • Mount Stewart • Ulster Folk Museum

Travel Trade and Leisure Exhibitions
 	
200 buyer engagements
175 referrals
	Travel Trade and consumer promotion will showcase relevant RTP product across relevant platforms, including:
	
	• Travel trade itineraries for 2024-25
	• Promotion and opportunity to attend (at an additional cost) of RTP products and experiences at key sales and marketing platforms including:
	  - World Travel Market
	  - Meet The Trade Dublin
	  - ETOA workshops
	  - Tourism Ireland platforms

Conference/Business Events
 	
34,000 delegates
 	
95,200 bed nights
 	
94% increase in business events 2021-2024
 	
£511m leads general 2021-2024
	2024 is set to be another busy year for business events in the city region, with 119 inbound conferences welcoming an estimated 31,000 delegates and 76,000 bed nights.
	
	The dedicated Business events website https://businesseventsbelfastandni.com/ hosts LCC Experience Belfast plus guide under our planners' toolkit where we direct all organisers and delegates to. https://businesseventsbelfastandni.com/bochures-downloads/
	LCC product is included under delegate offers which are refreshed on a quarterly basis https://businesseventsbelfastandni.com/exclusive-delegate-offers/ and any new relevant delegate offers should be sent to aoifemcveigh@visitbelfast.com
	A new 2025-2026 conference guide will be produced in 2024 with dedicated pages to Lisburn and Castlereagh. This printed and online guide is used extensively with event organisers across Association, Corporate and Agency segments and will be sent to the Tourism Ireland in-market teams around the globe.
	Visit Belfast Business events team will be active in-market all year round and will be able to:
	• Promote relevant RTP products and experiences, as appropriate, through a co-ordinated and strategic calendar of face-to-face sales activity.
	• Promote RTP products and experiences at key sales and marketing platforms including:
	
	  • The Meetings Show London
	  • IMEX Frankfurt
	  • IMEX America
	  • EIBTM
	  • Tourism Ireland showcases and events
	  • Visit Belfast in- market dinners

Destination Sustainability Index and programmes	Include RTP assets and professional input in a range of destination sustainability tourism projects including the Global Destination Sustainability Index and Sustainable Belfast plans. Include relevant RTP Visit Belfast partners that seek to develop the green/ sustainable tourism products/ experiences in sustainability promotional activity and initiatives during the year. RTPs will be required to provide content and updates to Visit Belfast to facilitate this.
RTP PR Support Corporate X/Twitter 3596 Followers Linkedin 10,035 followers	Provide ongoing RTP PR support: - Publish press releases/ photography within 'latest news / press area' section of Visit Belfast corporate website, content to be provided by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council as appropriate. - Where possible, extend press fam itineraries to include RTP attractions and experiences. - Share relevant insights/data sourced from Tourism Sentiment Index (Visit Belfast subscribing to new destination and tourism sentiment analysis)
Strategic Development of RTP Partnership	Develop new Strategy and Plans: Establishment of working group to collaborate, co-create and co-design the next level and next generation city region tourism partnership strategy and framework, key objectives, branding approach, priority themes and actions, collaborative remit, outputs, outcomes and defined measurables.
Belfast Region City Deal- priority positioning of Royal Hillsborough (£26m investment)	VB and LCCC Marketing Operational Group will work collaboratively to ensure prioritised promotion and support as appropriate, to raise the profile of the Royal Hillsborough, Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, alongside other top ranked signature tourism attractions and those that are unique to this destination.

Engagement and Administration	Facilitate on-going and regular **Strategic Group Meetings**, including **Marketing and Operational Group Meetings:** • **Industry Partnership Events** – provide opportunities for enhanced RTP attendance and engagement, to enable industry stakeholders to network and exchange information, and gain an understanding of the wider strategic activity for planning purposes. • Twice-yearly **Visit Belfast SMT / RTP Strategic Group** meeting - focus on tourism development projects that will enhance the product portfolio in the wider city region (agenda/format to be agreed in advance of each meeting). • Regular **Marketing and operational Team Meetings** (to include social media content planning, scheduled, marketing activity and upcoming projects) quarterly or when appropriate • 1:1 meetings with each RTP Council partner to be arranged on a regular basis as appropriate. Peadair Meenan will be the Visit Belfast's administrative lead for the Regional Tourism Partnerships. • An annual schedule of meetings will be co-ordinated by Visit Belfast and communicated in advance.

Regional Tourism Partnership Agreement 2024-25

Signed on behalf of Visit Belfast: **Signed on behalf of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council:**

Name:	Gerry Lennon		**Name:**	Andrew Kennedy
Title:	Chief Executive,		**Title:**	Tourism Development Manager,
	Visit Belfast			Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Date:			**Date:**	

REGIONAL TOURISM PARTNERSHIP 2023-24

YEAR END EVALUATION

Marketing and Visitor Servicing Activity and Promotional Platforms 2023-24

Initiative / Platform	Activity / Outputs

Belfast Plus – enhanced activity	Develop dedicated regional partnership marketing for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, promoting specific activities/itineraries/ products/events etc. This will take a themed experience approach across digital platforms.
	
	 • **Belfast Plus** web pages
	 • **Belfast Plus** content blogs to be included in up to 4 e-zines.
	 • Sharing of content plans and maximising all #BelfastPlus activity on Visit Belfast's social-media accounts:
	     ○ Facebook / Twitter – including reposting as relevant, LCCC experiences and activity.
	     ○ Instagram stories – resharing content and capturing content for use on Instagram stories.
	     ○ Pilot the creation of video content by Visit Belfast that will be used to support social media marketing of the LCC area. As a pilot this will be monitored and reviewed.
	 • Digital update of **Experience Belfast Plus** guide
	 • **Belfast Plus** featured on Visit Belfast Welcome Centre map.
	 • **Belfast Plus** featured in advertising in BCA concourse

Belfast City & Region Guide	Belfast & City Region guide focussed on themed products and experiences. The Belfast & City Region guide will provide a double page spread in the body of content for promotion of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council attractions, products and experiences including advertising placement: • Produce 3 editions of Belfast City & Region Guide: Summer 2023, Autumn/Winter 2023 & Spring 2024 plus a student edition for university students. Print and digital versions supported by web/social media and e-zine promotion. • Distribution reviewed with RTP Council and extended as appropriate. • Production of digital version, supported by web and social media promotion.

	12 Month Update: Lisburn and Castlereagh 4 page spread in both the Summer 23, Autumn/Winter 23 and Spring 24 City Guides. Promotion of LCCC products in 2023 Student Guide with mentions of Lets Go Hydro In Adrenaline Junkies section as well as promotion of Xtreme Bowling at Dundonald Ice bowl in the student guide
Main Visitor Guide – inc city & region approach	The main visitor guide for 2024 will continue to contain a City & Region approach, incorporating sections for each RTP Council area. • Digital and print edition supported by social / digital marketing promotion. 12 Month Update: Currently being worked through with the aim that this will be ready in digital format from the end of April / early May 2024.
Marketing Campaigns	Visit Belfast's marketing and digital campaigns will focus on the domestic, ROI and GB markets. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, experiences and themes will be included in campaign plans (where appropriate). Inclusion of Belfast Plus within Visit Belfast's campaign website and related activity (where appropriate). 6 Month Update Royal Hillsborough Castle and Gardens used in Summer 23 Campaign 12 Month Update Qtr 4 Expedia Campaign:

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	Visit Belfast partnered with Tourism Ireland and Expedia from 1st – 31st March to run a campaign through Expedia and Hotels.com platforms. The objective of this campaign was to promote Belfast and beyond as a destination. We included Lisburn & Castlereagh in the Belfast & Beyond section of this campaign. This consisted of a click through from the Expedia / Hotels.com platform to our bespoke Belfast Plus landing page on the VB website. We are awaiting evaluation results for this campaign
Website: 2.2m visits p.a.	visitbelfast.com will provide: • Listings for up to 20 key Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council properties in relevant sections e.g. visitor attractions. **6 Month Update:** Visit Belfast has provided Listings for key Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council properties e.g. visitor attractions: • Dundonald International Ice Bowl, • Dundonald Touring Caravan Park, • Xtreme Bowling at Dundonald International Ice Bowl, • Information Centre, • Island Arts Centre, • Lagan Valley Leisureplex, • Lagan Valley Regional Park, • Hillsborough Forest, • Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, • Eikon Exhibition Centre, • Castlereagh Hills Golf Course, • Down Royal Park Racecourse Ltd, • Let's Go Hydro, • Hinch Distillery, • Moira Demesne • High Rise. • Wallace Park These were discussed and alterations can be changed at Lisburn and Castlereagh's Discretion.

LCCC products continued to be featured in the following evergreen blogs:

- Amazing Outdoor Spaces (Hillsborough Castle Gardens, Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Top Golfing Trips in Belfast and Beyond (Castlereagh Hills Golf Course)
- Road Trips in Northern Ireland (Hillsborough Castle, High Rise, Hillsborough Forest, Hinch)
- Day Trip to Lisburn and Castlereagh (Hillsborough Castle, Irish Linen Centre, Dundonald Ice Bowl, Lagan Valley Leisureplex, High Rise, Castlereagh Hills Golf Course and more)
- Urban Adventures (Let's Go Hydro)
- Belfast Plus Family Fun (We Are Vertigo/Dundonald International Ice Bowl/Hillsborough Castle & Gardens/Lagan Valley Leisureplex/Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum/High Rise/Hillsborough Forest/Moira Demesne/Lagan Valley Island/Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Whiskey Tours and Experiences (Hinch)
- Gin Experiences (Hinch)
- Art Venues in Belfast (Island Art Centre)
- Museums in Belfast (Irish Linen Centre/ Museum at the Mill)
- 10 Things To Do in Belfast for £10 or less (Dundonald Ice Bowl / Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Explore Royal Hillsborough and Lisburn (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens/Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum/High Rise/Lagan Valley Leisureplex/Island Arts Centre/Hinch/Hillsborough Forest/Wallace Park/Moira Demesne)
- Summer Family Fun in Belfast (High Rise/Let's Go Hydro)
- Things to do indoors (Xtreme Bowling at Dundonald International Ice Bowl / High Rise / Dundonald International Ice Bowl / Lagan Valley Leisureplex)
- Historic Houses and Stately Homes (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Free Things to Do (Wallace Park)

LCCC products were featured in the following blog articles from 1 April to 30 September 2023:

- Autumn Walks (Lagan Valley Regional Park, Hillsborough Forest/Moira Demesne/Lisburn Castle Gardens)
- Autumn Events and Festivals (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, Let's Go Hydro)
- Autism Friendly Attractions in Belfast (High Rise/Dundonald Ice Bowl/Lagan Valley Leisureplex)

- Summer Walks (Hillsborough Forest/Hillsborough Castle & Gardens/Moira Demesne/Lisburn Castle Gardens/Wallace Park/Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Spring Walks (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens/Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Hillsborough Castle and Gardens (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Top Glamping Experiences in Belfast and Beyond (Let's Go Hydro)
- Easter in Belfast (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens/High Rise/Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Things to do this Spring Bank Holiday (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Things to do this August Bank Holiday (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Father's Day in Belfast (Let's Go Hydro)

LCCC products were featured in the following blog articles from **1 October to 31 March 2024**:
- Autumn Walks (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens / Hillsborough Forest / Lagan Valley Regional Park / Moira Demesne)
- Halloween in Belfast (Let's Go Hydro)
- Scariest Things to do this Halloween (Let's Go Hydro)
- Autumn Half Term Break (High Rise / Xtreme Bowling at Dundonald International Ice Bowl)
- Festive Family Fun (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Christmas Music Events (Island Arts Centre)
- Best Places to meet Santa (Hillsborough Castle & Garden)
- Best Places to see Christmas Lights & Displays (Hillsborough Castle & Garden)
- Winter Walks (Hillsborough Castle & Garden / Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- What's on this Half Term (link to multiple blogs)
- Things to do on a Sunday (Hinch Distillery / link to Family fun – Belfast Plus)
- Mother's Day (Hillsborough Castle & Garden)
- St Patricks Day in Belfast (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Spring Events in Belfast & Beyond (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Easter in Belfast (Hillsborough Castle & gardens)

Key RTP events/activities listed in 'What's On' section of the website:

	• Great Rabbit Runaround at Hillsborough Castle • Spring Spectacular at Hillsborough Castle • Coronation Weekend Party at Hillsborough Castle • Royal Hillsborough Farmers Market • Life Through a Royal Lens • National Balmoral 2023 • Summer Music in the Gardens at Hillsborough Castle • Honey Fair • Moira Specialty Food Fair • Halloween at Hillsborough • Halloween at Let's Go Hydro • Walking with the Snowman at Hillsborough Castle & Gardens • Island Arts Centre • Hillsborough Spring Spectacular • Hillsborough Easter Hunt **visitbelfastpartners.com** will provide: • Showcase RTP product and itineraries for the group travel market development (within Travel Trade section) • Promotion of press releases and RTP product news In addition, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council profile with links on conference, cruise and corporate websites (as appropriate).
Belfast Plus e-zines	**Belfast Plus** e-zines (either independent or integrated based on content as provided and agreed.) Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council products and events were included in a number of seasonal emails to our consumer databases during 1 April to 30 September 2023. These included: • Spring Escapes (NI & ROI), 14 April - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505335 • Coronation Weekend in Belfast (NI), 05 May - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/january-blues-ni-505419

	• Hillsborough Sponsored Ezine (NI & ROI), 09 May - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/hillsborough-castle-and-gardens • Belfast Festivals This Summer (NI & ROI), 16 June - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505548 • Your Guide to Summer Holidays in Belfast (NI & ROI), 23 June - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505576 • Find the Ultimate Belfast Staycation (NI & ROI), 30 June - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505596 • Festivals not to be Missed (NI & ROI), 04 August - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505668 • Road Trips Belfast and Beyond (NI & ROI), 18 August - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505688 • Events Not To Be Missed This Autumn (NI & ROI), 22 September - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-from-home-ni-505780 Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council products and events were included in a number of seasonal emails to our consumer databases during **1 October to 31 March 2024**. These included: • Spooktacular Celebrations This Halloween (NI & ROI), 27 October - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/belfast-halloween-ni-505880 • Belfast Christmas Campaign (NI, ROI, GB, Rest of Europe, Rest of World, 16 November - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/embrace-the-christmas-spirit-ni-505928 • Festive family Fun (NI & ROI), 7 December - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/festive-family-fun • February Half Term (NI & ROI), 15 February - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/february-half-term-506180 • St. Patricks Day in Belfast (NI, ROI, GB, Rest of Europe, Rest of World), 4 March - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/stpatricks-day-in-belfast-506220 • Mother's day in Belfast (NI & ROI), 6 March - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/mothers-day • Easter in Belfast (NI & ROI), 27 March - https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast/easter-in-belfast
Visit Belfast Social Media	Maximising all #BelfastPlus activity across Visit Belfast's social-media accounts:

Facebook / Twitter – including reposting as relevant, LCCC experiences and activity:

Facebook – 1 April – 30 September 2023:
- Event – Moira Speciality Food Fair
- Blog – Road Trips – Hinch Distillery, Hillsborough, High Rise and GOT Studio Tour
- Video – Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Competition Post – Lets Go Hydro & Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Blog – Glamping Experiences
- Blog – Belfast Staycation Guide
- Blog – Urban Adventure Blog
- Blog – Summer Family Fun – High Rise
- What's On this Weekend – Life Through A Royal Lens – Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Event – Life Through A Royal Lens – Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Event – Hillsborough Coronation Farmers Market

1 October – 31 March 2024:

- Blog - Autumn Walks (Moira Demesne, Lagan Valley Regional Park, Hillsborough Forest, Lisburn Castle Gardens)
- Blog - Indoor Activities (High Rise Indoor Adventure Centre, Lagan Valley LeisurePlex)
- Blog - Pumpkin Patches (Let's Go Hydro Pumpkin Patch and Spookfest, Lisburn & Castlereagh Pumpkin Patches)
- Event - Halloween at Hillsborough (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Video - Hillsborough Snowman Trail - (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - 12 Days of Christmas Competition - Day 1 - (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - 10 things to do for £10 or less (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - What's on this half term (Links to Belfast Plus Blog)
- Blog - Galentine's Day Ideas (Hinch Distillery)
- Blog - Winter Walks (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Bl;og - Top things to do on a Sunday (Hinch Distillery Tours, Belfast Plus blog linked)
- Blog - Mother's Day in Belfast (Hinch Distillery)

- Event - Hillsborough Spring Spectacular (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - Spring in Belfast Landing Page (Link s to multiple RTP blogs)
- Event - Hillsborough Lindt Gold Bunny Hunt (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - Easter Events (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - Autumn Half Term (High Rise, Links to Belfast Plus Blog)

Twitter – 1 April – 30 September 2023:
- Event – Moira Speciality Food Fair
- Blog – Road Trips – Hinch Distillery, Hillsborough, High Rise and GOT Studio Tour
- Video – Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Competition Post – Lets Go Hydro & Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Blog – Glamping Experiences
- Blog – Belfast Staycation Guide
- Blog – Urban Adventure Blog
- Blog – Summer Family Fun – High Rise
- What's On this Weekend – Life Through A Royal Lens – Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
- Event – Life Through A Royal Lens – Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

1 October – 31 March 2024:
- Reshare - LCCC Digital Sculpture Trail
- Reshare - Mums go free offer at Hillsborough (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Reshare - Spring Spectacular (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Blog - Belfast Plus (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum, Lagan Valley LeisurePlex, High Rise Indoor Adventure Centre, Hillsborough Forest, Moira Demense, Airtastic Ultimate Challenges, Lagan Valley Island, Lagan Valley Regional Park)
- Reshare - NI Science Festival at Hillsborough Castle
- Reshare - UGC of Hillsborough Castle
- Reshare - Event for NI Science Fair at Hillsborough Castle

- Blog - Autumn Walks (Moira Demesne, Lagan Valley Regional Park, Hillsborough Forest, Lisburn Castle Gardens)
- Blog - Indoor Activities (High Rise Indoor Adventure Centre, Lagan Valley LeisurePlex)
- Blog - 12 Days of Christmas Competition - Day 1 (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)

Instagram (content integrated into Instagram wall posts) - **1 April – 30 September 2023:**
- Reel- Explore Hillsborough Castle and Gardens- Sponsored Video (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Reel- Outdoor Adventure Activities in Belfast and Beyond (Let's Go Hydro)
- Reel- Distilleries and Breweries in Belfast and Beyond (Hinch Distillery, Hilden Brewery)

1 October – 31 March 2024:
- Reel- Spooky Season is Here (Let's go Hydro)
- Reel- Walking with the Snowman Trail (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
- Reel- Part 1: A Family Christmas in and Around Belfast (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Dundonald Ice Bowl)
- Reel- 2023 Compilation (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Let's Go Hydro)
- Reel- Indoor Activities Around Belfast (High Rise)
- Reel- 10 things to do in Belfast this Spring (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)

*All events featuring in the weekly concierge e-zine are shared on our Instagram stories every Thursday as well.

TikTok (capturing content for individual videos or integrated with other partner video content on TikTok) **- 1 April – 30 September:**
- Hillsborough Castle and Gardens- Sponsored Video (Hillsborough Castle and Gardens)
- Outdoor Adventure in Belfast and Beyond (Let's go Hydro)
- Distilleries in Belfast and Beyond (Hinch Distillery, Hilden Brewery)

1 October – 31 March 2024:

- Hillsborough Digital Sculpture Trail (Hillsborough Forest)
- Halloween in Belfast and Beyond (Let's Go Hydro)

	- Halloween Drive in Cinema (Let's Go Hydro) - Walking with the Snowman Trail (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens) - Part 1: A Festive Family Christmas Around Belfast (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Dundonald Ice Bowl) - 2023 Compilation (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Let's Go Hydro) - Rainy Day Activities Around Belfast (High Rise Lisburn) - High Rise Clip n Climb (High Rise Lisburn) - Come Ice Skating with us (Dundonald Ice Bowl) - 10 Things to do in Belfast this Spring (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens) - Lindt Gold Bunny Trail (Hillsborough Castle & Gardens)
	Provision of a daily gateway visitor information and travel advisory service for both locals and visitors, available seven days a week by: - Telephone - Email - Online at visitbelfast.com hello@visitbelfast.com and Live/Quick Chat service through visitbelfast.com - Via social-media enquiry service #AskVisitBelfast Visitor Servicing team to provide accurate and reliable visitor and travel information on behalf of tourism businesses, services and RTP Councils across the **Belfast Plus** area. RTP promotional platforms will include: - Wide range of RTP imagery digitally showcased in VBWC: main screens, screens behind desks, NI Gateway screens and on our recently upgraded 9 screen video wall. - Dedicated **Belfast Plus** branding within VBWC self service area - **Belfast Plus** and RTP literature racked at BIA airport visitor information desk, GBBCA local info point (becomes self-serve in June '23) and the Cruise Terminal.

- RTP product featured on 19 self-serve screens in VBWC, BIA, GBBCA (self-serve point), Cruise Terminal, Europa Bus Station, Great Victoria St Rail Station (TBC), Lanyon Place Station, Titanic Belfast, Applegreen M1 and M2 stations, Eastside Visitor Centre, An Cultúrlann, Stena Line Cairnryan, Stena Line Liverpool, on board 2 P&O Ferries plus P&O Cairnryan terminal). Note ferries, their terminals and GVS rail are additional locations for 2023.
- Regional promotional opportunities utilising VBWC member desk – up to 4 days p.a.
- Dedicated enquiry and literature monitoring across the VIC's.
- Promotion of Belfast Plus products at off-site events and conferences

Gold package VBWC island and BIA airport package promotion at additional cost to LCCC.

12 month update
- Across the 3 VIC's, Cruise Hub and offsite events / conferences VB has handled 681,818 enquiries in 2023-24, an increase of 18% (from 577,818 in 22/23). Please note our VIC services at GBBCA ceased in June so figures at this site represent 2 months only (April and May.) Footfall at 459, 947 is up 13% from 405, 292 last year.
- The proportion of gateway enquiries has increased to 212,400 (+30% from 22/23). Growth was strongest at Cruise and off-site. Yearend figures indicate we have handled 15, 590 (+8.5%) across the 4 sites for LCCC which is up on the same period last year (14, 358), despite the closure of GBBCA VIC desk.
- Relocated desk at BIA to a much larger, and more visible space, end of August 2023. Enquiries have increased on last year by 48%.
- A new suite of design focused curated content is now live across 19 offsite digital touch screens. This collection of inspirational ideas is broken into Belfast and Northern Ireland content. LCCC content sits within the County Down category.   The information is most effective when people have dwell time, so visitors can seek out ideas for things to see and do in any given area. It is not a replacement for websites or pre-planning tools. By highlighting the top experiences in each region visitors will be enthused to explore more of the city / wider region. The functionality of the screens also gives visitors the mechanisms to book experiences on arrival.   There are currently 11 products and experiences from Lisburn & Castlereagh on the off-site touchscreens listed above.

LITERATURE RACKED IN BELFAST WELCOME CENTRE

Belfast Plus	7900
LCC Visitor Information Guide	3300
LCC Map	630
Hillsborough Castle	1700
Hinch Distillery	1220
Dundonald Touring Caravan site	540
Dundonald Ice Bowl	600
Others	2000

Total 17,890 (+29% on last year)

LITERATURE RACKED IN BIA

- Belfast Plus –5900
- LCCC Visitor Guide Map –1, 400(shortage in supplies noted.)

Total 7, 300

LITERATURE RACKED IN GBBCA (April/May only)
- Belfast Plus – 500·
- LCCC Visitor Guide Map – 150

Total 650

Cruise – 1000

The total LCCC literature distributed across all 4 sites is 26,840 (-9%) on last year's figure (29,505).
The impact of GBBCA'S closure is reflected in these figures.

Specific enquiries handled for LCCC destination are broken down as follows:
- BWC – 9600
- BIA - 4800
- GBBCA -340 (April & May only)
- Cruise 850

TOTAL 15, 590
This represents a 9% increase on last year (14,358), despite the closure of GBBCA.

Holiday World 2024
Two members of the team attended Holiday World 2024 which took place in 26th to 28th January at the RDS in Dublin. Our Belfast stand had a strong presence, with Regional Tourism Partners Ards and North Down and Lisburn and Castlereagh had a space over the 3 days, and we were joined on various other days by partners Titanic Belfast, Titanic distillers, The new Belfast Distillery, Central Belfast Apartments, Creative Tours Belfast and James Connolly Centre.

Throughout the weekend, we received a total of 3,942 inquiries, showcasing the event's popularity and effectiveness and that we were successful in promoting Belfast as a destination. The Press Day on the Friday was particularly strong for press, influencers, and bloggers.

Visitors to the stand were interested in transport information, getting to Belfast / NI, accommodation and things to do. Many had already visited Titanic Belfast and so were keen to better understand what else the city had to offer. There were high levels of interest in the wider region, especially attractions along the Causeway Coastal Route and Derry~Londonderry.

	12 Month Update: **VBWC Promotional Platforms** External Screens with average of 500 views a day Internal Screens average of 250 views a day The external facing screen and event Island takeover was used to promote Lisburn and Castlereagh events/marketing campaigns: Hillsborough Farmers Market – May, June, December Moira Speciality Food Fair Nutbrown Hare Trail LCCC images on internal screen LCCC Spring campaign
Visit Belfast Industry Engagement Programme – enhanced RTP profile	Avail of opportunities to participate in Visit Belfast's Industry Engagement Programme, aimed at promoting products and experiences across Belfast City and Region to front of house staff: • 4 x Face to Face Industry Briefings – dedicated LCC speaker's slot • 3 x Super Fam events to showcase new tourism products and increase staff product knowledge across the Belfast neighbourhoods, with 1 dedicated Fam of the LCC area every two years. Option to assist with recruitment for a dedicated LCC fam in 2023-24 if LCC wish to deliver and fund. • 'Pop-in and See' events open to LCC tourism staff to enhance product knowledge. **6 month update:** • Industry briefings x2 have been delivered; one per quarter. LCCC update presented by Emma McGinn 15th June and 14th September to 38 and 42 guests respectfully.

	• Super Fams of Maritime Mile and North /West Belfast Neighbourhoods were delivered 30th May and 6th June respectively. Two representatives from Lisburn VIC and 1 from Hinch Distillery attended the Maritime Mile FAM which included Lady of Lagan Boat Tour, walking tour along Maritime Mile, the refurbished Gallery 4 at Titanic Belfast, Titanic Distillers, HMS Caroline and a session on the Lagan Hydro Bikes. No LCC representatives were available for the Belfast Neighbourhood Fam. • As the dedicated LCCC Fam is a bi-annual event, delivered last year, no activity is planned for the current Q4. However, if LCCC wish to deliver and fund this fam, Visit Belfast can assist with recruitment. • Due to the delivery of 2 Fams and high season demands no Pop in and Sees were scheduled in Q1 & Q2. **12 month update:** In addition to the above the following activity has been delivered: • Industry briefings x 2, one per quarter. Emma McGinley presented on behalf of LCCC at the Q3 briefing (15th Nov) and Linda Murray in Q4 briefing on 13th March. Turn out at both events was 50 and 36 respectively. • A Pop In and See Visit to the new Room2 Hometel gook place immediately after the Q3 briefing. • The Q4 briefing included a Living Library event to promote Accessibility and Inclusiveness. We are happy share VB and BCC insights and learnings in this area. • A Super Fam of the East and South Belfast Neighbourhoods took place on 6th March. 2 x LCCC staff attended the trip which included tours of Templemore Baths, Stormont Parliament Buildings, C.S. Lewis Square, National Football Stadium and bus tours of both areas. A total of 35 industry staff attended.

NEW – VIC Training Programme	Develop and deliver VIC Training Programme for Visit Belfast, RTP VIC staff and relevant VB/RTP Front of House staff as required. Share visitor servicing / VIC best practice findings from Visit Belfast staff attendance at European City Destinations Network Alliance (CDNA) conference and meetings. VIC Best Practice across a range of needs e.g.
	    • Volunteer Programmes
	    • Industry Engagement Programmes
	
	Any additional training as deemed necessary.

	6 month update: Requested dates / topics / requirements for this aspect of the agreement which will be delivered in Q4. Jen & Emma emailed 23rd Nov. **12 month update:** VB retail supervisor visited Lisburn VIC on 26th February to meet with staff and discuss opportunities. A list of observations / recommendations was provided by email and a follow up visit with Jeff at VBWC took place in March. Information and registration link to a TNI webinar on volunteers was provided to LCCC staff. Discussion panel of industry experts on 27th February included Jayne O'Neile from Visit Belfast. Jayne's contribution was specific to Visit Belfast's volunteer programme.
Partnership Regional partnership B2B promotion and information	Weekly Concierge E-zine • Key LCCC events to be included in concierge e-zine's where appropriate. • Update content relating to What's On / Experiences/ Activities across the Belfast City Region (where appropriate). Lisburn & Castlereagh events included in the weekly concierge e-zine during **1 April – 30 September** include: 7 April https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505323 • Great Rabbit Runaround Trail at Hillsborough Castle • Egg Hunt and farmfest at Let's Go Hydro 13 April https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505339 • Spring spectacular at Hills borough Castle • Some like it hot at Hinch Distillery 20 April https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505359 • Preparing the piece: an evening with colin Davidson and Glenn Patterson at Hillsborough Castle 27 April https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505399 • Coronation Weekend Party at Hillsborough Castle

4 May https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505411

- Coronation Weekend Party at Hillsborough Castle

11 May https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505431

- Spring planting at Hillsborough Castle

25 May https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505479

- Royal Hillsborough Farmers Market

1 June https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505499

- Life through a Royal Lens at Hillsborough Castle

22 June https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505564

- Royal Hillsborough Farmers Market
- Let's Go Hydro Festival

29 June https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505588

- Good Friday Agreement at Hillsborough Castle
- Egyptian Hieroglyphics: Unlock the Mystery at Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum
- High Rise first birthday family fun day

6 July https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505604

- National Balmoral 2023 at Eikon Exhibition Centre
- Summer music in the gardens at Hillsborough Castle
- Autism tailored sessions at high rise

13 July https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505620

- Good Friday Agreement at Hillsborough Castle
- Egyptian Hieroglyphics: Unlock the Mystery at Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum

20 July https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505632

- Down Rally at Market Square Lisburn

27 July https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505656

- Honey Fair at Hillsborough Castle

3 August https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505672

- Honey Fair at Hillsborough Castle

10 August https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505692

- Life through a Royal Lens at Hillsborough Castle

17 August https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505704

- Moira Specialty Food Fair

31 August https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505748

- 'Guess how much I love you' Public Art and Literature Trail – Lisburn

14 September https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505772

- Edenderry evening trail at Lagan Valley Regional Park

21 September https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505784

- Special interest tours at Hillsborough Castle

28 September https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505800

- Lagan Woodland Walk at Mary Peters Track

Events included in the concierge e-zine during **1 October – 31 March 2024** include:

5 October https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505836

- Tidal Shores Exhibition – Lisburn City Library
- Fungal Foray at Lagan Valley Regional Park
- Autumn Fair at Ballance House

12 October https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505848

- Wonder Weekends at Hillsborough Castle
- Let's Go Hydro Pumpkin Patch

19 October https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505856

- Let's Go Hydro – drive in cinema horror week

26 October https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505876

- Halloween at Hillsborough Castle
- Spooky Saturday at Dundonald Ice Bowl

2 November https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505892

- Special Interest Tours at Hillsborough Castle
- Spooktacular Halloween Fun at Lagan Valley Leisureplex

16 November https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505932

	• Walking With The Snowman Hillsborough Castle 23 November https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505972 • Christmas at the Ballance House • Studio Symphony Orchestra Christmas Concert at Island Arts Centre 30 November https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-505984 • Royal Hillsborough Christmas Market 7 December https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506012 • Royal Hillsborough Christmas Market • Brunch with Santa at Hillsborough Castle 14 December https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506044 • Lisburn Castle Gardens Light Trail 21 December https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506068 • Brunch with Santa at Hillsborough Castle 28 December https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506076 • Walking With The Snowman Hillsborough Castle • Holly Hike at Lagan Valley Regional Park 4 January https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506088 • Walking With The Snowman Hillsborough Castle • Holly Hike at Lagan Valley Regional Park • Autism Friendly Clip 'n Climb and Soft Play Sessions at High Rise Lisburn 11 January https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506104 • Winder Wander – Lagan Valley Regional Park 1 February https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506152 • Winter discovery morning – Lagan Valley Regional Park 8 February https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506168 • Autism Friendly Clip 'n Climb and Soft Play Sessions at High Rise Lisburn 29 February https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506224 • Spring Spectacular at Hillsborough Castle 7 March https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506260

	• Mums go free to Hillsborough Castle 14 March https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506272 • Geppetto Evening at Lagan Valley Island • Bluegrass St Patricks Day – Down Royal Racecourse • Lindt Gold Bunny Hunt at Hillsborough Castle 21 March https://mailchi.mp/visitbelfast.com/whats-on-506300 • Lindt Gold Bunny Hunt at Hillsborough Castle • Easter Egg Hunt and Funday – Let's Go Hydro • Spring Forage in the forest – Lagan Valley Regional Park *All events featuring in the weekly concierge e-zine are shared on our Instagram stories every Thursday as well.*
Cruise Belfast – enhanced marketing and sales activity	Cruise Belfast will continue to promote the **Belfast Plus** region by including the relevant RTP products and experiences: • within Cruise-Belfast website • within the 2022-24 Cruise Belfast brochure (digital/ print versions) • during sales calls inc. attendance at Seatrade Miami/ Sea Trade Europe • Feature relevant RTP themed experiences, within sales calls and presentations to cruise itinerary planners and executives. • Deliver cruise updates/ briefings to RTPs, stakeholders and product providers, as appropriate, ahead of the 2024 cruise season.
Cruise Terminal- Visitor Servicing/ Promotion Platforms	VBWC / Cruise teams provided a welcome/information service on arrival/departure: • 159 cruise calls carried out this season from March 2023 – October 2023 The Cruise Terminal features a range of imagery across the Belfast Plus Region, including: • Hillsborough Castle • Irish Linen Centre

	QR code on Display at Cruise links directly through to VB Website, in addition daily "What's on" today sheet profiling 2 key products in LCCC area available for Cruise Guests. Additionally we rack Belfast Plus literature and handle enquiries for LCCC as well as ticketing for Hillsborough Castle. **Cruise update:** • 159 ships (25th March – 2 November 2023) • 14 Overnight stays • 31 Double Days • 6 Treble Days • 2 Large Turnarounds • 7 Partial Turnarounds • 14 Inaugural Calls • 57 different vessels from 32 different cruise lines • 323,924 passengers and crew • 95.7% occupancy • £20m into the local economy. The 2023 season spanned an eight-month period from April through to November. It is weighted in terms of ships as follows: (March 1 ship,) April 9 ships, May 29 Ships, June 24 ships, July 29 ships, August 30 Ships, September 29 ships and October 7 ships, November 1 ship. A breakdown of cruise shore excursions that visited the LCCC area during 2023 was shared with the RTP in Q4.
Travel Trade and Leisure Exhibitions	Travel Trade and consumer promotion will showcase relevant RTP product across relevant platforms, including: • New travel trade itineraries for 2023-24 https://visitbelfastpartners.com/travel-trade/itineraries/ • Promotion and opportunity to attend (additional cost as previous arrangement) of RTP products and experiences at key sales and marketing platforms including: • World Travel Market (6th – 8th November) • Holiday World Dublin (Visitor Servicing, additional cost, invitation extended) • Meet the Trade Dublin (10th October) • ITOA Workshop (15th November)

- Tourism Ireland platforms
  - BeNe Workshops 11th-12th September
  - Flavours of Ireland 5th October
- ETOA Britain and Ireland Marketplace - 18th January
- Scottish Sales Calls with Hastings Hotels - 27th-29th February
- Tourism Ireland Nordics Workshop in Copenhagen - 14th March
- TI Barcelona event - Belfast 2024 presentation to Spanish Market - 21st March

FAM February 2024
Visit Belfast supported the Tourism Development Manager for Lisburn & Castlereagh Council with a dedicated travel trade fam in Q4. Visit Belfast recruited 6 large volume travel trade companies and DMC's as well as a 2 Cruise shore excursion companies.

- Adams & Butler – Luxury Tour Operator
- Specialized Travel Services – Cruise Shore excursion company and tour operator
- Excursions Ireland – cruise shore excursion company
- Abbey Group – high volume international DMC
- Euro Welcome – UK & Ireland DMC
- JAC Travel – DMC
- MIKI Travel – Large Volume Group Company
- Newmarket Holidays – UK Tour Operator

Products Included:
- Hillsborough Castle & Royal Hillsborough
- Irish Linen Museum
- Larchfield Estate
- Ulster Aviation Society
- Hinch Distillery
- Hilden Brewery

Conference/Business Tourism	2023 has been a very strong year for business events, with 93 inbound conferences welcoming and estimated 33,000 delegates, 98,000 bed nights. The business events team also had a very strong year for new business wins in the conference, meetings and event market with £42.1m economic impact equating to £122k bednights and £42k delegates confirmed for future years. 100% of organisers surveyed in 2023 are likely or very likely to recommend Belfast & NI as a conference destination The new Visit Belfast dedicated business events website has been live since March 2023 and performing well with 5k Visitors on monthly basis and 150 -200 users per day on average https://businesseventsbelfastandni.com/ The team have ramped up e- marketing since Summer 2023 with bi-monthly e-zines hitting 6.5k conference organisers across association, corporate and Agency. The February Ezine had a 26.7% open rate with 1421 unique opens. The 2023-2025 conference guide was launched in May 2023 with a dedicated page to LCC. This printed and online guide is used extensively with event organisers across Association, Corporate and Agency segments. You can download the guide here: https://businesseventsbelfastandni.com/bochures-downloads/ LCC Belfast plus guide is hosted on our planner's toolkit where we direct all organisers and delegates to (same link as above) Any relevant new delegate offers should be sent to @Aoife McVeigh. https://businesseventsbelfastandni.com/exclusive-delegate-offers/ (see Hillsborough Castle offer in appendix C) The team have been very busy in market with the resumption of full face to face sales activity including tradeshows, workshops, presentations and platforms, promoting relevant RTP products and experiences as appropriate. With an increased focus on the corporate and agency market, there are also a number of virtual presentations ongoing with venue find teams across the UK. (April-March) • MICE meetup Dublin 11th April • BNC Show London 19th April 2023 • ABPCO Festival of learning 24th April 2023

	- CPI FAM 26th April - DETS Dubai28th April 2023 - MCOCO expo 15th May - ICC Belfast Dublin Embassy event 16th May 2023 - BCD time to thrive 19th May 2023 - Fluency FAM 22ND May - IMEX Frankfurt 23rd May 2023 - MICEBOOK awards London 29th June - The Meetings show London + Dinner 28th June - Ireland meets the midland 10th July - Moulden Marketing 24th August - Investment conference September 2023 - All Ireland sustainability awards October 2023 - C&IT awards October 2023 - One young world FAM October 2023 - MIA Awards October 2023 - STR/ Lufthansa FAM with Tourism Ireland/TNI October 2023 - IMEX America October 2023 - The Business of Events Policy Forum, London, November 2023 - The Power of Events NI launch, Belfast, November 2023 - ICC Belfast FAM / Scalex Summit November 2023 - IBTM Barcelona November 2023 - USA Tourism Ireland event Minneapolis, November 2023 - Ireland meets the west end November 2023 - ABPCO awards December 2023 - SITE sustainability event, Dublin, December 2023 - London client reception (ICC Belfast event) December 2023 - Virtual presentation with ICC Belfast (Fresh group, Agency) January 2024 - Oireachatas na Samhna Site visit (Jan 2024) - UK Trefoil Guild Site visit (Jan 2024) - MIA Dinner (Jan 2024)

	• CWT virtual presentation with ICC Belfast (Jan 2024) • Fintech corridor site visit (Jan 2024) • Irish thoracic society site visit (Jan 2024) • BAOMS site visit (Jan 2024) • Visit Britain Business events Association conference (Edinburgh, Feb 2024) • Tech found her Site visit (Feb 2024) • Legal Island site visit (Feb 2024) • Ajito virtual presentation with ICC Belfast (Feb 2024) • Reimagine FAM with TNI (Feb 2024) • ICCA UK & IRL chapter conference, Belfast (Feb 2024) • C&IT Agency forum, London (Feb 2024) • VB London agency dinner (Feb 2024) • BAGP Site visit (March 2024) • ABPCO roundtable on legacy and impact, led by Jac Callan (March 2024) • BASL site visit (March 2024) • SMU New york (March 2024) • Moulden Marketing St Patricks event, Manchester & London (March 2024) • Honeywell virtual presentation with ICC Belfast (March 2024) • Digital DNA Awards (March 2024) **Ambassador activity** • MITS Conference dinner April 2023 • Killeavy castle event with Newry Chamber April 2023 • British Ambassador event May 2023 • NI Chamber energy forum June 2023 • Digital DNA June 2023

	• Fintech meeting June 2023
	• Newry Chamber event June 2023
	• PA Network event June 2023
	• GEMX North West Manufacturing Steering Group event July 2023
	• Ulster Rugby event August 2023
	• Dunadry ambassador summer party August 2023
	• September Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce Festival of Business
	• September Investment Conference Senior management attendance
	• September NI Space Cluster meeting discussion on wider benefits of UK Space
	• September Attendance at the Homecoming Dinner
	• September Newry SME Conference (Panel discussion on the Ambassador Circle and benefits of business events)
	• One Young World Opening Ceremony and dinner at Titanic Hotel October 2023
	• All Ireland Sustainability Awards October 2023
	• UK Space activities including UKSA Lunch Monday 20th November invite via Robert Hill and ESA discussion during Invest NI's drink reception on stand November 2024.
	• Northern Ireland vs the Republic of Ireland event December 2024
	• December Ambassador Christmas engagement event December 2024
	• NI Chamber, A morning with Joe Kennedy Jan 2024
	• Food and drink export council, peer to peer programme Jan 2024
	• IFEX Food and drink event Jan 2024
	• IFA Business event and NI match Feb 2024
	• Aerospace technology institute site visit, Feb 2024
	• Belfast business event March 2024
	Images for LCC in Conference Guides:
Destination Sustainability Index and programmes	Include RTP assets and professional input in a range of destination sustainability tourism projects including the Global Destination Sustainability Index and Sustainable Belfast plans.

	Include relevant RTP Visit Belfast partners that seek to develop the green/ sustainable tourism products/ experiences in sustainability promotional activity and initiatives during the year. RTPs will be required to provide content and updates to Visit Belfast to facilitate this. 12 Month Update Visit Belfast has a dedicated section of the website to promote all green accredited partners of Visit Belfast: https://visitbelfast.com/article/green-tourism-accredited-belfast. A 15% Green Tourism / Green Meetings discount was secured for all Visit Belfast partners outside of Belfast City Council area to complete their accreditation, and this was communicated out through partner communications. No businesses in LCCC applied during the 23/24 year. Visit Belfast arranged a call to discuss this with Hillsborough Castle and Gardens but they did not apply.
RTP PR Support	Provide ongoing RTP PR support: • Publish press releases/ photography within 'latest news / press area' section of Visit Belfast corporate website. • Where possible, extend press fam itineraries to include RTP attractions and experiences. • Share relevant insights/data sourced from Tourism Sentiment Index (Visit Belfast subscribing to new destination and tourism sentiment analysis) • Media Trip from Glasgow Journalists on 7&8 November. Two journalists (The National and The Scotsman) visited Hillsborough Castle as a major part of their 24 hours in Belfast itinerary promoting the Glasgow Emerald Airlines link. • Spring Spectacular event at Hillsborough Castle included as an activity in the Spring press release issued to local press in April 2024. • Press release for Hillsborough Castle Coronation Weekend Hillsborough Castle and Gardens to Host Special Coronation Weekend to Mark Historic Occasion - Corporate Visit Belfast (visitbelfastpartners.com) • Press release for Hillsborough Castle - Preparing the Piece Event

	[Preparing the Piece: An Evening with Colin Davidson and Glenn Patterson at Hillsborough Castle - Corporate Visit Belfast (visitbelfastpartners.com)](#) • Press release and social post on Twitter for the Guess How Much I Love You public art and literature trail [Visit Belfast News on Twitter: "A fantastic celebration of lifelong Lisburn resident Sam McBratney's international bestseller Guess How Much I Love You ▢ 🐇" / Twitter](#) [World-famous children's book by Lisburn author inspires new public art and literature trail - Corporate Visit Belfast (visitbelfastpartners.com)](#) • Press release to support the British Museum Touring Exhibition [Visit Lisburn and unlock the mystery of Egyptian hieroglyphs at A British Museum Touring Exhibition - Corporate Visit Belfast (visitbelfastpartners.com)](#)
Administration	Facilitate on-going and regular meetings, inc. Forum & Officer's Group meetings: • **Annual Industry Partnership Event** – provide enhanced RTP attendance and engagement, to enable industry stakeholders to network and exchange information, and gain an understanding of the wider strategic activity for planning purposes. Invitation to AGM on 21st November, unable to attend. Invitation to Launch of 2024-27 Business Plan on 23rd May • Twice-yearly **RTP Strategic Group** meeting - focus on tourism development projects that will enhance the product portfolio in the wider city region (agenda/format to be agreed in advance of each meeting) - Meeting on 29th November 2023 with Lisburn and Castlereagh, Andrew and Jen in attendance • **Officer's Operational Group** meetings (twice a year or as and when required) to discuss and agree individual marketing platforms and projects. • Quarterly marketing meetings (to include social media content planning)

	• Peadair Meenan will be the Visit Belfast lead for the Regional Tourism partnerships - 1:1 meetings with each RTP Council partner to be arranged on a regular basis.

Appendix A

EXPLORE AND EXPERIENCE

Lisburn & Castlereagh

Your next trip starts here...
From romantic stays, historic day trips, autumnal walks, award-winning eateries, spooktacular Halloween events, Christmas light shows, great shopping and festive markets, there is something for everyone in Lisburn & Castlereagh.

Royal Hillsborough

BELFAST CITY & REGION

Digital Sculpture Trail, Hillsborough Forest

DISCOVER OUR PICTURESQUE GEORGIAN VILLAGES

The beautiful village of **Royal Hillsborough** offers a relaxing day out. Enjoy a walk around the lake at Hillsborough Forest and explore the historic Fort and the stunning St Malachy's Church. There are a number of artisan cafés scattered throughout the village including

Arthur's Mimi's and Karibu or pick up some delicious bakery treats at Tori's, Kin & Folk or the Roundhouse. Grab lunch to go from Keane's Deli, sit in and enjoy brunch, lunch or cocktails at recently opened Joxer or grab a seat by the fire for tasty gastro pub dishes at the Plough Inn, Hillside or Parson's Nose. There's a great selection of lovely gift stores to browse including InKlover and Bluebell & Willow as well as a selection of boutiques and local businesses.

The historic village of **Moira** is the perfect place to enjoy a scenic walk through the Demesne with friends and family. Afterwards, enjoy the extensive range of shopping scattered along the Main Street offering everything from homeware and gifts at Jacksons, Willow and Bluebell Cottage to award winning butchers and delis including McCartney's or simply catch-up with friends in one of the many excellent restaurants, cafes or gastro pubs including Wine and Brine, Carthago, Origin 101, The Stillhouse and Pretty Mary's.

TAKE A TRAIL

It's a great time of year to get wrapped up and enjoy the outdoors with a scenic walk, so why not discover and learn something new while you're there by following one of our experiential trails.

HILLSBOROUGH FOREST DIGITAL SCULPTURE TRAIL

Spend time outdoors and experience the new Digital Sculpture Trail within Hillsborough Forest! Launching mid-October,

visitors can explore 10 sculptures along the trail with an exciting augmented reality App that takes you through the forest leading you from one sculpture to the next. Witness the journey of the sculptures from inception to completion, with a detailed description of the internationally gathered artists, their inspiration and history of the development of each sculpture. The Digital Sculpture Trail is based on themes inspired by Hillsborough Forest and the surrounding area which include: childs-play, reflection, motion, science, fantasy, heritage,

hope & inspiration, nature and flight. At each sculpture, scan the QR code to discover another world that comes alive! Once you complete the Hillsborough Forest Digital Sculpture Trail, check the 'village discounts' section to avail of various offers in the village of Royal Hillsborough, be it a treat at one of the award winning restaurants, a discount at one of the cafés or maybe a little retail therapy. Use the App to follow the additional Royal Hillsborough Village Trail to discover unspoilt secrets and the history of this beautiful village.

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'Guess How Much I Love You' art & literature trail

Halloween at Let's Go Hydro

Let's Go Hydro has a packed programme of events on offer including Pumpkin Patch and Spookfest, drive-in cinema horror week and a fantastic fireworks display over the lake on Halloween night.

'GUESS HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU' ART AND LITERATURE TRAIL

Author and lifelong Lisburn resident, Sam McBratney wrote the international bestseller 'Guess How Much I Love You' in 1994. The heart-warming story went on to sell more than 55 million copies worldwide and has been translated into 57 languages. The new Guess How Much I Love You Public Art and Literature Trail in Lisburn city centre is free for the public to enjoy. It can be accessed via a digital App or followed on a map collected from the local Visitor Information Centre in the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum. One version of the trail is suitable for 'little hares' and another for 'big hares'– there is something for kids of all ages to develop their observational

and navigational skills on this journey of discovery.
lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/ guess-how-much-i-love-you-trail

EVENTS

HALLOWEEN

There's lots of spooktacular fun for all ages taking place this Halloween, so get your costume ready and get out to enjoy the fun! Enjoy the atmospheric illuminated after dark experience at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, go pumpkin picking, lantern making and explore the creepy maze at Laganvale Farm or check out the pumpkin patch, maze, tractor rides and disco at Streamvale Farm.

A DAY AT THE RACES

A day out at the Down Royal Racecourse is a great, action-packed day out with friends and family. Experience the two-day famous Festival of Racing 3-4 November which launches the Jump Season and round up the end of the year by attending the popular National Hunt Boxing Day races. Coach travel is available from Belfast, for further information and tickets visit: **downroyal.com**

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BELFAST CITY & REGION

Royal Hillsborough Christmas Market

Christmas in Lisburn

Lisburn Light Festival

CHRISTMAS IN LISBURN
23 November – 22 December, 4-8pm
Lisburn City Centre is the perfect place to get in the festive mood, with twinkling lights and seasonal sounds filling the air, you'll be sure to have festive fun. Lisburn will again be lit up this year with the return of the fabulous Lisburn Light Festival. Enjoy the illuminating captivating light installations across the city, including light shows at the light canopy along Bow Street and the Enchanting Christmas Tree in Market Square. The Christmas Garden Light Trail in Castle Gardens also returns on 23 November with live music adding to the festive

atmosphere every Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights at the new Lisburn Light Festival Stage. Browse the stalls in the Traders Village in Castle Gardens and enjoy an array of delights from hot chocolate to sweet treats and delicious hot food. Santa will return again this year to meet the excited children with a full events programme to be launched, taking place in Market Square.

ROYAL HILLSBOROUGH CHRISTMAS MARKET
8 December
Experience a truly festive Christmas market as you stroll through the stalls along

The Dark Walk, and enjoy a hot drink and bite to eat against the floodlit backdrop of Hillsborough Fort. Over 60 traders will fill The Dark Walk and Hillsborough Fort on Friday 8th December from 3pm-9pm for an evening of festive fun. Enjoy a showcase of locally produced artisan food, flowers, treats and lots of handmade arts and crafts which will delight visitors this year looking for a unique experience and special locally handcrafted gifts.

Full details and dates available at: **visitlisburncastlereagh. com/whats-on**

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summer in Lisburn & Castlereagh

If you're planning a summer break or getting ready for the weekend, Lisburn & Castlereagh offers award winning attractions, beautiful walks and first-class food. It is the perfect destination to create long-lasting memories while enjoying a vast range of experiences, attractions and accommodation.

Let's Go Hydro

Moira Demesne

Hillsborough Castle & Gardens

Streamvale Open Farm

Summer Fun

HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE & GARDENS
Immerse yourself in rich heritage in the official residence of the Royal Family in Northern Ireland. With its fascinating history and glorious gardens, it offers a memorable glimpse into the village's history. On your visit you will hear stories of celebration, entertainment, diplomacy, and negotiation as you explore Hillsborough Castle's fascinating history and stunning State Rooms. This summer visitors can experience 'Discover Life Through a Royal Lens'. Hillsborough Castle's first ever exhibition featuring a unique collection of Royal photography. Make sure to allow ample time to explore and enjoy the glorious gardens, developed from the 1760s onwards, including ornamental grounds, peaceful woodland, meandering waterways and picturesque glens.

LET'S GO HYDRO
For a day of water based fun then Let's Go Hydro is a must see and do experience. The impressive outdoor attraction, including an inflatable floating obstacle course, provides fun for all the family. The course features an XXL Tower, slides, climbing wall, hurdles, wiggle disks, ramp, podiums and a floating trampoline. You can even stay overnight at the resort's Glampsite, with 40 fabulous glamping pods, including a Boat House and Floating Lake Pods.

STREAMVALE OPEN FARM
More than just a farm, Streamvale is the ideal spot for families to learn and play together. You will experience the sights and smells (you've been warned) associated with a working farm and have opportunities galore to feed the animals. There is a full spectrum of farm animals - from chicks to dairy cows, baby bunnies to massive pigs and lots of fun thrown in as well.

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BELFAST CITY & REGION

Moira Speciality Food Fair

Hinch Brasserie

Haslem Hotel

The Stables

The mini farmer areas give kids lots of space to burn off energy pedalling around on toy tractors. Streamvale Farm is also a commercial dairy farm where you can watch the 300 dairy cows being milked every afternoon. Make sure to end the day at the Ice Cream & Coffee Cabin to enjoy their delicious ice-cream, made from free-range milk and cream from the farm's own cows.

Hillsborough Forest Play Park

Outdoor Eateries

HINCH BRASSERIE

Relax in the sumptuous surroundings of Hinch Distilleries restaurant, bar and courtyard. Enjoy lunch or dinner with friends, family or work colleagues or simply enjoy a drink from the bar of award winning Hinch Irish Whiskey, Ninth Wave Irish Gin or wines from Château De La Ligne. The menu showcases what is best about County Down. With care and passion, they source the finest meats, poultry and seasonal fruit and vegetables from local farmers, as well as seafood from local fisheries.

THE STABLES AT HILDEN DISTILLERY

Adjacent to the Hilden Brewhouse is The Stables coffee shop where you can

sit outside to enjoy delicious tea, coffees, tray bakes, light lunches and afternoon tea. Also on offer are monthly Tap Rooms for visitors to enjoy a selection of local beers and sample delicious pub grub, not forgetting their Gentlemen's Tea and Boozy Brunch. Just a three minute walk from Hilden Halt train station and a short walk from the towpath, The Stables is also dog-friendly, so bring along your four-legged friend!

HASLEM HOTEL

The Haslem Hotel, with both indoor and outdoor seating, is the perfect spot in the city for catching up over coffee, enjoying a light lunch or relaxing with a drink. The carefully crafted menu uses ingredients from the best local producers, from hearty

beef burgers to veggie risotto, there's something for everyone. The drinks list includes an extensive selection of handpicked Irish gin serves, along with all your favourite cocktails, craft beers and more.

Walks

HILLSBOROUGH FOREST

Set in the picturesque Georgian village of Royal Hillsborough, Hillsborough Forest is a popular choice among dog walkers, photographers, nature lovers and bird watchers. The forest lake trail features a unique Digital Sculpture Trail, with 10 sculptures each with a specific theme reflecting the rich history, heritage and culture of Royal Hillsborough. Tire out the little ones at the state-of-the-art woodland-themed

playground, or relax and enjoy the tranquil surroundings at one of the lakeside viewing platforms. With 200 acres of forest land and waymarked walking routes waiting to be explored, there's a woodland trail to suit everyone.

THE WALLACE WALKING TRAIL

Wallace Park provides a green oasis in an urban landscape enjoyed by visiting dog walkers, families, cyclists and local workers on a lunchtime stroll. A monument to Sir Richard Wallace, who gifted the land for the park, was erected in 1892 by the people of Lisburn in 'grateful recognition of his generous interest in the prosperity of the town'. It stands in Castle Gardens, the most historically significant open space in Lisburn, opposite Castle House which was built by Wallace in 1880.

The Wallace Walking Trail leaflet is available from the Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum or Lisburn Visitor Information Centre, and will take you around the different locations in Lisburn City Centre where Sir Richard left his mark.

MOIRA DEMESNE

Moira Demesne is located in the picturesque village of Moira, providing a quiet retreat from the bustling village. Comprised of over 40 acres of parkland, it offers areas of amenity grassland which incorporates beautiful walkways and picnic sites for everyone to enjoy. Numerous events take place in the Demesne during the summer months, including the popular Moira Speciality Food Fair.

LAGAN TOWPATH

The Lagan Towpath takes you along the river and canal system through a variety of wetland, riverside meadows and mixed woodland from Lisburn to Belfast. Home to a variety of wildlife, the canal system dates back to the late 18th century and many features still give an insight into the majestic era of the 'Lighter' – the horse-drawn boats that originally travelled on the Lagan Canal.

Moira Speciality Food Fair

19 August, 10am-6pm
Returning to Moira Demesne this summer, the Moira Speciality Food Fair showcases the vibrancy of the local food scene. Come and meet food producers at the top of their game, including farmers committed to sustainable farming methods and heritage breeds, vegetable growers working with the seasons and artisan producers using the best locally sourced ingredients. The day long festival of food-themed events includes interactive demos and talks from the region's top chefs, with plenty of opportunity for audience participation and opportunity to taste some of the finest food Northern Ireland has to offer. With a selection of tasty food trucks, the customary tented bar, eating areas and live music, it's a great day out with a fantastic atmosphere to be enjoyed with friends and family.

For more ideas:
visitlisburncastlereagh.com

Adrenaline Junkies!

Don't waste your weekends lounging in your student flat, wouldn't it be more fun to get out and about for some high-octane laughs? If you're looking for something a bit different... a bit of an adventure... Belfast has it by the bucket-load!

Colin Glen
Just a short drive from Belfast city centre, Colin Glen is perfectly placed for a fun-filled, action-packed adventure. Choose from a range of fun activities including the Black Bull Run, Ireland's first Alpine Coaster, the Forest Flyover zipline, Ireland's longest 700m zipline, or River Rapid. Other activities include: the SKYTrek high/low ropes climbing course, archery, laser tag, 9-hole golf course, TopTracer driving range and 3G pitches.
colinglen.org

Axe Yard
Urban Axe Throwing is a really fun activity where you get to enjoy throwing axes at wooden targets. It's a group activity where you will play fun games

and enjoy some friendly competition, so the more the merrier! All bookings include a dedicated coach to teach you all you need to know – we aim to have you sinking axes in no time! *Eligible for yLink discounts: 15% off code yLink15*
axeyard.co.uk

Let's Go Hydro
This water sports resort offers a range of activities including an inflatable aqua park, stand-up paddleboarding, wakeboarding, kneeboarding, kayaking, open water swimming, aqua rugby and yoga & swim experiences. Glamping pods, café, BBQ pods, pizza restaurant and drive-in movie nights are also available.
letsgohydro.com

BLOODY FUN FOR THE HORROR FANS

let's go AT **hydro** RESORT

HORROR WEEK AT THE DRIVE IN | **STARTS 20TH OCT**

HOCUS POCUS • INSIDIOUS • THE WITCHES • THE SHINING
PARANORMAL ACTIVITY • I STILL KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER
ANNABELLE • SCREAM • THE CONJURING • THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT
THE EXORCIST • HALLOWEEN • SCARY MOVIE • TWILIGHT • E.T
GHOSTBUSTERS • SAW • TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

letsgohydro.com

Splash Outdoor Waterpark
Fancy spending the day with a few mates bouncing, sliding, jumping and splashing your way around an AquaPark of inflatable slides and obstacles? Thought so. Then head out of town to Splash in Moneymore. And prepare to get wet!
splashni.com

Prison Island Belfast
Gather a team of your family or friends to solve exciting challenges in our themed Prison Cells. We have 25 Cells that require a combination of intellectual, technical & physical skills. It's not an escape room, you are free to leave a cell at any time. *Eligible for yLink discount: 15% off code yLink15*
prisonisland belfast.com

The Jungle NI
Just a 45 minute drive from Belfast, awaits a daring adventure unlike any other. Adrenaline-packed activities include zorbing, paintball, high-wire tree-top adventure courses, clay pigeon shooting, laser tag, and llama trekking. *Eligible for yLink discounts: 10% off Paintballing bookings using code yLink10*
thejungleni.com

Xtreme Bowling
Are you brave enough to play in the dark? Enjoy all the fun of tenpin bowling with glow balls, pins and ultra violet lights for the ultimate bowling experience. You can also party while you bowl with DJ entertainment, prize competitions, disco lighting and smoke effects. Sessions run on Fridays & Saturday evenings and Saturdays & Sunday afternoons.
theicebowl.com

Lagan Adventures
Head down to the River Lagan to go Hydrobiking, for a water sport where you don't get wet! Get the workout you want depending on how fast you pedal! It's an ideal way to soak up the city sights, take some cool photography and it's dog friendly. Single and tandem bikes available. *Eligible for yLink discounts: 10% discount using code TRANSLINK*
laganadventures.com

Surf Belfast
Experience the thrill of catching a wave indoors on Northern Ireland's first ever indoor surf simulator! Pumps fire a constant 5 metre wide wave sheet to challenge riders. Designed for a variety of age groups and skill levels, Surf Belfast has four different performance settings to ensure that the ride can be enjoyed by just about everyone.
better.org.uk/surf-belfast

Limitless Adventure Centre
Calling all thrill seekers... If you're up for a challenge then this is definitely for you! Head up to the Causeway Coast and choose from an array of experiences including hovercrafts, powerturn buggies, laser tag, target archery and football golf.
limitlessni.com

Strangford Lough Activity Centre
SLAC offers a unique combination of fun and exciting water and land-based activities, ranging from paddleboarding, kayaking and the latest craze, E-foiling, to laser tag, archery and wet bouldering. You can even try your hand at some traditional bush crafts. All activities supervised by trained and experienced instructors.
strangfordlough activitycentre.com/

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Appendix B

Appendix C

Belfast Plus Guide

One of the great things about Belfast is that within a short drive from the city you can discover a region filled with lush valleys, a stunning coastline, country parks, magnificent estates, wonderful wildlife and historic attractions. Download the Guide and find out more.

Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

Offer description

20% off up to 2 adult tickets for the Castle and Gardens Tour

How to book

No need to pre-book. Present your valid Conference Delegate badge on arrival you will be given tickets for the next available tour.

Terms and Conditions

Subject to availability and opening hours. Opening time vary – for more info. click here

Lisburn and Castlereagh

Conference Facilities
You will find a wide range of conference, meeting and event venues in Lisburn & Castlereagh to suit a range of requirements. Lagan Valley Island is a striking purpose-built venue in the heart of the city of Lisburn, catering for meetings and corporate events for up to 400 people. Hillsborough Castle is the official residence of the Royal Family in Northern Ireland, and its illustrious history and picturesque surroundings make it a perfect backdrop for conferences or stunning gala dinners. Larchfield is a private walled estate situated in the heart of the County Down countryside, specialising in creating memorable and unique events for up to 400 people and Hinch Distillery offer meetings and dinner events for up to 150 people and can provide social programme feelings or outdoor courtyard events.

Explore
Discover the beautifully restored Castle Gardens in the city's Historic Quarter, learn about our industrial heritage at the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum or explore a unique array of historic aircrafts and exhibits at the Ulster Aviation Society

museum. Stroll through picturesque historic villages with art galleries, forests, parks and unique shops, enjoy a round of golf at one of the stunning parkland golf courses or enjoy an action packed day at the races at Down Royal Racecourse.

Taste
Discover the magic of traditional brewing by visiting Ireland's oldest independent brewery at Hilden House or take a trip to Hinch Distillery to gain an appreciation for the skills and craftsmanship required to make world renowned Irish whiskey. Savour the true taste of the region in vibrant restaurants, gastropubs, cafés and farmers markets, featuring quality local produce from some of the area's award-winning growers and producers.

Stay
Stay a while longer and explore the variety of accommodation in the area. From luxury boutique hotels to cosy B&Bs, or self-catering apartments to glamping - you'll find your home-from-home right here!

To find out more, see: visitlisburncastlereagh.com

Set in the beautiful Lagan Valley and Castlereagh Hills, Lisburn & Castlereagh offers unique conference and event venues, award winning attractions, fantastic food, fun activities and great shopping. Just 20 minutes from Belfast, you can explore the city of Lisburn or immerse yourself in the rich heritage of our stunning historic villages.

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Appendix D

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Expedia Campaign – March 2024

Sponsored content by

Fill your heart with
Ireland **visitBelfast**

Discover Belfast and beyond

They say good things come in small packages and Belfast is no exception. It's full of creative characters, award-winning restaurants, famous pubs (where you might catch a trad session or two) and of course, a Titanic history. Looking for something more adventurous? Jump in the car (or on the train) and discover stunning coastlines, country parks and wonderful wildlife all within minutes of Belfast city.

Discover local delicacies

Explore Belfast and taste your way around the city, from well-loved classics to modern delights.

Learn more

Explore the city

Food tours, music tours, cycling tours - there's a perfect way for everyone to discover the city.

Learn more

Exploring Belfast and beyond

Take a trip outside the city and explore lush valleys, magnificent coasts and stunning country parks.

Learn more

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Appendix E

Belfast City Airport Advertising

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Name of the activity/policy/project

Marketing and Communication (Tourism)

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?

Revised – previous EQ Screening took place in July 2020.

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

Tourism Development is part of Economic Development within Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. Economic Development is involved in a number of distinct areas of operation aimed at developing prosperity throughout the Lisburn and Castlereagh area.

Promoting the LCCC area through a strategic marketing campaign and using all media platforms to showcase the wealth of products and services on offer will assist in the economic growth of the area. Tourism Development are responsible for both the Integrated Marketing Campaign which covers the marketing and promotion of the LCCC tourism product offering and smaller marketing campaigns on digital platforms as well as promotions in local and national press.

Through the Marketing and Communication Policy, LCCC Tourism Development section aim to effectively disseminate information about the activities, products, services and events to local, national and international audiences. It is also anticipated that feedback on how these promotions are received and appreciated will be collated for future decision making. This monitoring will also help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which will help with future marketing and communication planning and policy development and support fairness across all categories of section 75.

The aim of this policy is to offer a framework to support the Tourism Development section in marketing and communication within the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area. These promotions tend to be via digital platforms, TV, radio and traditional platforms such as outdoor and newspaper advertising. Examples of previous Marketing and Communication include:-

- Marketing and Promotion of small and major events through social media platforms and websites; advertising in the local and national press and producing promotional flyers;
- Newsletter distribution via hard copy and e-newsletter on social media platforms;
- Integrated Marketing Campaign to promote tourism across the whole council area;
- Billboard promotion for major events such as Balmoral Show and seasonal marketing campaigns such as Christmas Lights Festival;
- Advertising events in the local press and printed travel journals and magazines.
- More emphasis will be dedicated to digital promotions, especially on social platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly twitter), and Tic Tok.

The Marketing and Communication Policy will facilitate effective promotional communication within LCCC. This will be achieved through key themes of ensuring compliance, equality and delivering value for money through a commercial approach and supporting the local economy.

The marketing promotion is aimed at domestic and non-domestic tourists, visitors and local residents, and businesses with the aim to improve the economic growth with all sections of LCCC community by improving the process of marketing and communication. A third-party marketing and promotion agency will be appointed providing strategic direction and accessing value for money media promotional spend. They will also support the seasonal campaigns that use a mix of media. The appointment will be procured through the Council's robust procurement process with it likely to be a 3-year contract with yearly break clause subject to evaluations.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels and therefore all sections may stand to benefit directly and indirectly from this policy.

The larger marketing and communication campaigns within the Tourism Development section will be delivered by a 3rd party delivery agent who will act on behalf of LCCC. This appointment will be conducted through the appropriate procurement process.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Tourism Development Unit in LCCC

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

Owned by LCCC Service Transformation Directorate; implemented by the Tourism Development Unit

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project?

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial - The delivery of Tourism Marketing and Communications activity will be reliant on adequate financial and human resources.

Legislative: Tourism development is a non-essential service.

Other: Tourism Development supports economic development, generating jobs and economic wealth to the local area.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon? Delete if not applicable

Staff - all LCCC staff involved in the delivery of Tourism.

Service users - wide range of local and out of state visitors, local businesses, retailers, and local schools.

Other public sector organisations - Tourism NI, Business Community, and local residents.

Voluntary/community/trade unions All local V&C bodies within LCCC area.

Other – including Elected Members

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Hillsborough Master Plan	LCCC
LCCC Corporate Plan 2024-28	LCCC
Visit Belfast Tourism Strategy 2024-2027	Visit Belfast
Tourism Strategy for NI 10 year plan	Tourism NI
Forest Service NI Business Plan	DAERA
NI Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030	Department for the Economy
LCCC Equality Scheme and associated equality action plans and policies	LCCC
Use of Social Media, Professional Networking & Blogging Policy employees	LCCC
Management of Council Social Media	LCCC
Photographic & Public Relation Protocol	LCCC
Photography Guidance for images of Children & Adults at Risk	LCCC
Procurement Policy	LCCC

Available evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

The LCCC Corporate and Community Plans set out the vision for LCCC – 'building on the many reasons to live, visit and invest here'. Through the means of positively marketing the Council area, its tourism products, and the many attractions this will in turn support economic growth in the area.

The Tourism section of the Council operates the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) social media platforms along with the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh website. The aim of these online platforms is to assist with the economic growth of the Lisburn and Castlereagh area by attracting international and day visitors, who in turn may stay overnight, and spend in the local economy. The Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area consists of approximately 140,205 residents, with 58,868 homes covering an area of 200 square miles.

As 55% of the population of NI is under the age of 40 their engagement with social media will be high and it is therefore important that we have a strong presence in this area to engage with people and encourage visitors to the area.

Evaluations from recent events co-ordinated by LCCC show that social media and digital marketing are the most effective means of generating awareness such as the

Food and Drink events delivered by a third party delivery agent on behalf of LCCC. (see appendix 1)

Attached at Appendix 2, is the Council's 2023 Integrated Marketing Campaign Evaluation. This campaign was used to support and promote the Lisburn Light Festival which ran over the Christmas period in Lisburn City Centre. The campaign used a range of different media platforms to collectively encourage footfall and awareness to this unique and colourful event. From the findings it is clear that all Section 75 groups will have had opportunity to witness the marketing and promotions efforts. Evidence from CARD Research presented to Development Committee showed awareness levels at over half of those attending the Christmas events as a result of Christmas promotional campaign attracting shoppers and the visitors attending the Lisburn Light Festival.

NI Statistics and Research Agency estimates the value of tourism (2019), from out-of-state visitors to the Lisburn and Castlereagh area, to be approximately 194,860 trips per annum (up 3% on previous year), 636,210 nights (down on previous year), and £20.2m spend (also down on previous year).

From NIRSA 2019 Fact card (see appendix 5) we know:

- There are estimated to be 4,816 tourism jobs in the LCCC area;
- 1.6m visits to visitor attractions in LCCC area;
- LCCC attracts the fourth highest proportion of GB visitors.

From statistics collated from the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh website, we have been able to establish the increase in users on the web page and social media platforms:

- In the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 the visitlisburncastlereagh.com website saw a total of 80,365 users.
- For the same period the following year up to 31st March 2024 the site saw a total of 102,601 users, an increase of 26.1%.
- The number of sessions (individual visits to the site) also increased significantly going from 103,000 from 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 to 132,000 in the same period the following year, an increase of 26.7%.
- For the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 user acquisition to the visitlisburncastlereagh.com website can be broken down as follows:
  o Organic Search: 74,054
  o Organic Social: 14,242
  o Direct: 10,871
  o Referral: 3,087
  o Paid: 311
- Presently the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh social media followers are as follows:
  Facebook: 18,548   Twitter: 3,400   Instagram: 6,258
- The most common age groups following the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh Facebook page are:
  25-34: 15.4%   35-44: 35.5%   45-54: 26.8%

- The most common age groups following the Visit Lisburn Castlereagh Instagram account are:
  25-34: 28.2%   35-44: 41.3%   45-54: 17.8%

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Political Opinion	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Racial Group	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Age	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Marital Status	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Sexual Orientation	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Men & Women Generally	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
Disability	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.
People with and without Dependants	All proposed marketing initiatives are open to all participants, businesses and organisations across all forms of marketing and communications channels.

Needs, experiences, and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

The different needs of each of the Section 75 categories will continue to be recognised and reflected in the delivery of the Marketing and Communication Policy. The dynamics of each category will continue to be recognised within the policy and evaluated through the post event evaluation of each large marketing campaign. These evaluations identify value for money, dynamics of the audience reached and how successful the campaign has been to the area from a tourism and economic perspective.

It is difficult to effectively communicate with everyone in the same manner, for example; the younger age group focus on communicating through social media whereas the older age groups may find it easier to gain information through more traditional methods of newspaper and visual advertisements. Our aim, as a Council area is to engage with all categories of section 75 to promote the tourism, hospitality and event offering in the LCCC area.

Tourism collateral marketing material will continually be monitored to ensure that all material is available to different audience needs. LCCC will endeavour to support people across multiple Section 75 groupings and of various abilities. LCCC procures and uses professional graphic designers who understand and adhere to the latest guidelines keeping text and imagery concise, jargon free and clearly formatted. For example; the material is currently available in hard copy format, alternative languages, as well as in digital format online leaflets and information through the two Visitor Information Centres that are serviced by highly trained LCCC staff or alternatively digitally provided through our website and social media channel.

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group.
Political Opinion	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of section 75 group
Racial Group	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available in different formats such as online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Age	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group. The younger age group focus on communicating through social media whereas the older age groups may find it easier to gain information through more traditional methods of newspaper and visual advertisements.
Marital Status	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Sexual Orientation	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Men & Women Generally	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online/ hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
Disability	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information will be available in different formats such as online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group
People with and without Dependants	The marketing and communication programme will be delivered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories. LCCC Tourism information is available online and hard copy to all regardless of Section 75 group

Part 2. Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this activity/policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

The revised Marketing and Communication policy will support equality of opportunity to each category. It will promote a transparent approach to the work of staff and elected members of LCCC around Marketing and Communication with reference to the Tourism Section.

Provision is currently made for information to be available to international visitors whose 1st language is not English. Hard copies of the Lisburn & Castlereagh Information guide is available in other languages such as French, German and Spanish.

For other alternative formats such as large print and braille, requests will continue to be processed as necessary.

The Visit Lisburn Castlereagh website has the "Recite" plugin which allows the user to hear the text read aloud if they have difficulty reading, and also allows them to change the contrast and appearance of the text for accessibility.

Tourism marketing material will continually be monitored to ensure that all material is available to as wide a number of audiences as viable. We will endeavour to support people with a wide range of disabilities to access our marketing information. We use trained graphic designers who understand the importance of keeping text and imagery concise, jargon free and clearly formed. The material is available in hard format through our Visitor Information Centre and Tourism Exhibition Trailer that are serviced by highly trained LCCC staff or through our digital platforms including website (word and PDF format).

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - **major or minor*** - see guidance below
Religious Belief	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Political Opinion	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and	None

	cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	
Racial Group	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Age	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Marital Status	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Sexual Orientation	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Men & Women Generally	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None
Disability	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and	None

	cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	
People with and without Dependants	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The Marketing and Communications is trying to target as many audiences and cover as many Section 75 groups as possible.	None

2(a) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

This Policy represents an opportunity to benefit all users. If any further opportunities were to arise to continue to promote equality of opportunity then these would be given consideration in due course. For example; advertisements for events or marketing campaigns are currently published within local press, which would be read by a cross section of the community but from the recent evaluations of events and marketing campaigns it is apparent that the population is now opting to communicate more electronically. Council and Tourism websites and other social media platforms are now also being heavily used to promote events and marketing campaigns to ensure that all categories of the population and community are being engaged with. The Policy will be reviewed annually.

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
All		Activities conducted under this policy are available to all, regardless of Section 75 category.

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025?   Yes/No   If yes, specify which action.

No, however the policy will be kept under review to ensure that requests for information in various formats are monitored and provided across the Council.

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

No, activities conducted under this policy are available to all, regardless of Section 75 category. Some activities will however be highlighted to have additional facilities for disabled people, including places to stay, where to eat, and various attractions and experiences to visit. Through consultation exercises disabled people will be targeted proactively for their feedback.

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

The all-inclusive nature of the policy will support a positive impact on good relations. With each marketing campaign conducted an evaluation of impact is provided and can be assessed in accordance with the categories below to ensure that the level of impact remains at none.

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group	Activities conducted under this policy will be available to people of different religious beliefs. Such access should provide opportunities for all groups to engage in the marketing and communication activity.	Minor - positive

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

The Marketing and Communication Policy has been designed to support a positive impact on all users.

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details

| Religious Belief

Political Opinion

Racial Group | | No, there are no further opportunities to better promote good relations between these groups. All opportunities are currently being addressed. |

Multiple identity

Provide details of any data on the impact of the activity/policy/project on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

LCCC recognises that all individuals are not exclusive to just one designated group. "Multiple identity" has been given consideration within this screening exercise in order to ensure benefit to all groups.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project. There are 3 possible outcomes:

1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.

2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.

3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
Option 1	

Screen out – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	
Option 2 **Screen out with mitigation** – some potential impacts could be identified in the eight-week consultation, and they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	LCCC does not anticipate that the Marketing and Communication Policy will hinder equality of opportunity for any Section 75 group, but instead, through open and transparent marketing and communications across all media platforms and channels it will aspire to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The decision is to screen out with no mitigation at this time. The reason for this decision is due to the following: • The nature of marketing and communication is inclusive to all sections of the community; • Currently none of the categories have been identified as being at risk of an adverse impact; • The policy is reviewed on an annual basis or per marketing campaign and would therefore highlight any issues.
Option 3 **Screen in** for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	

Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

None

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Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

If the activity/policy has been **'screened in'** for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No.   If yes, please provide details.

Not applicable

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The Tourism team will be responsible for monitoring of this policy that will involve logging feedback and concerns from stakeholders, community and the public when required. The Council will proactively seek feedback on the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan by way of consultation questionnaires for an eight-week period following agreement from Committee.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by:	Andrew Kennedy Tourism Development Manager	8.8.24
Reviewed by:	Annie Wilson Equality Officer	8.8.24
Approved by:	Paul McCormick Head of Economic Development	9.8.24

Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities
(Revised) April 2018

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Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

1B. 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.

Marketing and Promotions

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy ☐	Strategy ☐	Plan ☐
Adopting a	Policy ☐	Strategy ☐	Plan ☐
Implementing a	Policy ☐	Strategy ☐	Plan ☐
Revising a	Policy ☐	Strategy ☐	Plan ☐
Designing a Public Service	☐		
Delivering a Public Service	☒		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Marketing and Promotions

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The key aim of this campaign is to promote the LCCC area as a visitor destination across N. Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland and also support the promotion of Lisburn City Centre and its commercial offering (mainly retail and hospitality).

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1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).	X
Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).	
A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.	

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes [X]   No [ ]   If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The Marketing and Promotions (including Integrated Marketing Campaign and Visit Belfast) will impact on people in the rural area and it will promote economic investment by:-

- Increasing tourism footfall
- Increasing spend in rural areas
- Increase visitor dwell time in rural areas
- By offering a holistic "end to end" tourism offering to locals and visitors from further afield

The campaign will impact on people in rural and urban areas. The Council are aware that attracting more visitors to these areas will require mitigating any negative impacts this may have. Negative impacts will be considered as part of the collaborative process and mitigated as early as possible in the programme.

The rural share of the NI population is growing. Over the years 2001-2011 the number of people living in rural areas of NI increased by 15% in comparison to a rise of only 4% in urban areas. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

2C. 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.

Tourism is an expanding area and is being increasingly recognized for its overall contribution to the Northern Ireland economy.

The Marketing and Promotions campaigns will promote all tourism businesses across the whole LCCC area. The campaign will also help build businesses up after the temporary closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The sustainability and stability of businesses is very important in a rural context as these businesses sustain the local community.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	X
Rural Tourism	X
Rural Housing	
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	X
Education or Training in Rural Areas	X
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	
Poverty in Rural Areas	X
Deprivation in Rural Areas	X
Rural Crime or Community Safety	
Rural Development	X
Agri-Environment	
Other (Please state)	

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. 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 ☒   No ☐   If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. 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.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders ☒   Published Statistics ☐

Consultation with Other Organisations ☒   Research Papers ☐

Surveys or Questionnaires ☐   Other Publications ☐

Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below). ☐

3C. 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.

- Draft Northern Ireland Programme for Government (2016-2021)
- Northern Ireland Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030
- Tourism NI- Operating Plan
- Tourism NI – Northern Ireland Tourism Priorities for Growth
- Forest Service NI Business Plan 2014-15
- OFMDFM – Together; Building a United Community (TBUC)
- OFMDFM – Lifetime Opportunities – Government's Anti-Poverty & Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2020
- Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act
- Hillsborough Tourism Master Plan. 2015
- Hillsborough Forest Economic Appraisal. 2017
- Public consultation and survey in Hillsborough Forest. 2016
- Visit Belfast Strategy 2024-2026

The Socio-economic profile and forecast, Lisburn & Castlereagh (2018-2032) identified the LCCC area as showing marked distinctions between the rural and urban populations. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas and the population forecast is set to grow by 8,300 residents between 2018-2032 (0.4% per annum, twice that of the NI equivalent). L&CCC's population growth outlook between 2018-2032 on average will be 1.65% making it the third highest across NI districts and 0.35 points above the NI rate.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

The Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016) has identified the following as key areas:

- Rural Businesses
- Rural Tourism
- Jobs or employment in rural areas
- Education or training in rural areas
- Poverty in rural areas
- Rural development
- Agri-Environment

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

The Scheme proposed will have a positive impact on the local rural business community and the Council area as a whole.

According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the LCCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

In Northern Ireland 58% of businesses are based in rural areas. The business base in the region as a whole is predominantly small to medium enterprises with a dominance of micro businesses. In terms of businesses located only in rural areas, 94% are defined as micro (having less than 10 employees). Agriculture plays a more important role in the economy of NI than is the case in the rest of the UK, it generates a higher proportion of total GVA (Gross valued added) in the economy and accounts for a higher proportion of our employment. Furthermore 78% of the total NI land area is in agricultural use. Rural businesses located in NI have particular challenges and need specific solutions. The slow uptake of agriculture and rural enterprises in NI with regards to innovation, the fact that only 67% of rural areas have superfast broadband coverage (98% in urban areas) and 14% of tourism expenditure takes place in rural areas (compared with 86% in urban) are further examples of challenges facing the small rural businesses in Northern Ireland.

In 2018 there were 4,755 VAT/PAYE registered businesses in the L&CCC area (NISRA). The close proximity to Belfast puts the L&CCC area in an advantageous position whereby the population density is a way to generate an increase in sales and revenue.

Considering that almost half of the L&CCC district is rural, the regeneration of the LCCC area, is a key priority for the Council whom over the next 10 years will continue to invest in regeneration initiatives. Economic development initiatives such as the Integrated Marketing Campaign and the marketing carried out by Visit Belfast on the Council's behalf will benefit the local rural population and visitors to the area as well as the urban areas. These projects will contribute towards the Council's overall strategic objective of increasing economic development in the L&CCC area for the benefit of all citizens.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes ☒   No ☐   **If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

The synopsis of the programme has been identified in Section 2B, fully considering the needs of the rural population. There have been no detrimental impacts identified.

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.   X

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Margaret McAvoy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Officer
Division/Branch	Economic Development
Signature:	MARGARET MCAVOY
Date:	08/08/2024
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Andrew Kennedy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Manager
Division/Branch:	Economic Development
Signature:	ANDREW KENNEDY
Date:	8/8/24

	Committee:	Regeneration and Growth Committee	**382**
	Date:	05 September 2024	
	Report from:	Head of Planning and Capital Development	

Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Council Validation Checklist Requirements

1.0	**Background**
	1. In January 2022 the Department for Infrastructure published its first Review of the Implementation of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (the Review). It contained 16 recommendations aimed at improving the planning system.
	2. The Review considered that validation checklists, which are part of the planning legislation framework in other jurisdictions, could be an important tool in improving the quality and completeness of planning applications coming into the system.
	3. The Department stated in the review report:
	The Department will bring forward proposals to introduce 'validation checklists' and will seek to advance policy development at the earliest opportunity.
	4. The need to improve the quality of planning applications coming into the system was further highlighted in the findings of a joint report published on 1 February 2022 by the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Local Government Auditor in relation to the Northern Ireland Planning System (Planning in Northern Ireland).
	5. It mentioned that the issue of poor-quality applications was highlighted by the Audit Office in a report on Planning in 2009 and that the Department indicated at that time, that it intended to take forward legislative changes to better manage application validation through the Planning Forum and the Review of the Implementation of the Planning Act.
	6. Further reports on the Northern Ireland Planning System by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) in February 2022, and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in March 2022, both referenced the need for, and benefits of, the introduction of validation checklists.
	7. Whilst no date for the legislative changes to take effect have been confirmed by the Department, progress is being made in the drafting of the legislation.
	8. The Department did previously seek views on its proposals to revise the information requirements for the submission of planning applications in November 2022. The Department has also written to Councils encouraging them to prepare local validation checklists in advance of any legislative changes. In anticipation of

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the legislation coming into effect in the Autmn of 2024 a draft checklist is proposed for this Council area.

Key Issues

1. The need for a checklist is an agreed objective of the Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2024/25. It is also part of a wider programme of improvements which are to be delivered in accordance with a Service Improvement Programme which is identified in the Plan to be implemented by end of the 2024/25 business year.

2. The Corporate improvement plan is available to view via the following link Performance Improvement - Lisburn & Castlereagh (lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

3. The purpose of the proposed Council Validation Checklist Requirements is to:
   ▪ assist in ensuring that an application is valid when submitted;
   ▪ ensure that all applications can be dealt with effectively and efficiently;
   ▪ respond positively to best practice advice issued by government; and
   ▪ ensure that Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council complies with legislation in relation to planning applications.

4. This Council Validation Checklist Requirements document will provide detail on the following:

   ▪ Legislative requirements that underpin the requirement to make a checklist;
   ▪ The Council Validation Requirements on receipt of an application;
   ▪ What information is required when submitting an application;
   ▪ What the minimum standard for plans and drawings is;
   ▪ How to describe the proposal;

5. In accordance with Best Practice, the Council Validation Checklist Requirements should be reviewed every two years.

2.0   **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members consider and agree:

1. The attached draft Council Validation Checklist Requirements document and associated validation matrix.
2. That the document is published to the Council website and implemented with effect from [the date the proposed legislation takes effect].

3.0   **Finance and Resource Implications**

No finance or resource implications are identified.

4.0   **Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**

4.1   Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?   No

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4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out This is a report that seeks agreement from Members on an operational matter pertaining to Council Validation Checklist Requirements. It is not a new policy. EQIA is not required.	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	No
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out. This is a report that seeks agreement from Members an operational matter pertaining to Council Validation Checklist Requirements. It is not new policy. RNIA not required.	

Appendices:	Appendix 6 – Council Validation Checklist Requirements – Final Draft

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Council Validation Checklist Requirements [Draft]

[From date Direction takes effect following publication of statutory rule]

Contents

1.0   Introduction

2.0   Legislative Requirements

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4.0   Submitting a Planning Application

5.0   Plans and Drawings

6.0   Describing your Proposal

7.0   Review

Appendices

Appendix 01 - Checklist Matrix

Appendix 02 - Justification/Advice

1.0 Introduction

1.1   There is a responsibility under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 to set improvement objectives and have arrangements in place to secure their achievement.

1.2   Performance improvement is a general duty of improvement that the Council is required to undertake. The Council must have regard in particular to improvement in the exercise of its functions in terms of:

- strategic effectiveness;
- service quality;
- service availability;
- fairness;
- sustainability;
- efficiency; and
- innovation.

1.3   The legislation also sets out that for each financial year, the Council must set and work to achieve 'improvement objectives' relating to the areas outlined above.

1.4   The Council's Performance Improvement Plan sets out what we will do in the year ahead to deliver on our statutory responsibility referenced above. These 'duties' relate to sections 84(1), 85(2) and 89(5) of the Act, whereby we must make arrangements to:

- secure continuous improvement
- secure achievement of its improvement objectives
- exercise its functions so that any central government departmental specified standards are met

2.0 Legislative Requirements

2.1   The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (NI) 2015 sets out the minimum information that must be submitted with a planning application to make it 'valid'. If not submitted the Council cannot legally deal with your application.

2.2   These legislative requirements set out what information or evidence must be submitted with applications for planning permission or other consents to make an application 'valid' before it can be considered by officers. An application for planning permission is to contain:

- a written description of the development;
- an address or location of the land;
- the name and address of the applicant;
- a plan sufficient to identify the land;

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- such other plans and drawings necessary to describe the development;
- a design/access statement, where required;
- a certificate under Article 9; and
- any fee.

2.3   Whenever a planning application becomes 'valid' the timeframe for processing the application commences. It is against this timeframe that performance is measured, and is the date used for the purposes for appeals against 'non-determination' of an application.

2.4   However, many applications when submitted do not contain all the information needed to determine them. This can result in further request(s) to the applicant which can subsequently lead to processing delays with a consequent negative impact on resources and efficiency.

2.5   The Council may under the GDPO 2015 (as amended) issue a Direction setting out the information and evidence which could reasonably be expected to be provided in support of the various types of planning applications for different types of development.

2.6   The purpose of the new validation arrangement is to:

- provide applicants and their agents with certainty as to the information and other evidence that is required to accompany different types of planning applications;
- ensure the council has all of the necessary information from the outset to enable it to determine an application efficiently and in a timely fashion; and
- minimise the need to request the submission of further additional information, thereby avoiding delay in determining applications.

3.0 Council Validation Checklist Requirements

3.1   This Direction is prepared in writing and the checklist of information requirements published on the Council website, in accordance with the GDPO 2015 (as amended).

3.2   In addition to the legislative requirements, the details outlined in the Local Checklist must be submitted with your application to allow it to be accepted as a valid planning application. Failure to submit any of the requirements will render your application invalid. Processing of your application will not commence until all relevant information is submitted.

3.3   Where an application is not accompanied by the Validation Checklist requirements, a written justification must be produced by a suitably qualified person(s) giving reasons why it is not appropriate in that circumstance. The Council will consider the justification and where it is agreed, the application will be registered as valid. If insufficient justification is provided, the Council will

declare the application invalid and provide written reasons for the decision in a 'notice of non-validation'.

3.4   The Validation Requirements set out in the Councils Validation Checklist are not exhaustive and the Council reserves the right to request further information post validation. A valid planning application may still be refused on the grounds of inadequate information.

3.5   Where provision is made for a notice of non-validation to issue is appealed to the Planning Appeals Commission, the Council will identify what information, documents, evidence or materials are absent from the submission.

3.6   The checklist matrix at **Appendix 01** identifies the information required and the justification/advice is provided at **Appendix 02**.

4.0 Submitting a Planning Application

4.1   The simplest and preferred way for an application to be submitted is online via the Planning Portal. Registration is easy and you can complete your application form, upload supporting documents and pay fees online.

4.2   A planning application cannot be progressed until all the necessary supporting information required by legislation and local checklist is received. Online submissions are paid via GOVPAY or by BACS upon submission on the Planning Portal. The details for each of these payments are explained at the time of submission.

4.3   The Planning Portal includes an online fee calculator that will estimate the fee due when you submit your planning application online. Planning fees for Northern Ireland are set by the Department. The current planning fees are stipulated in legislation, links to which are provided on the Department's Planning Legislation webpage.

4.4   The Department has also produced an explanatory note for applicants which sets out the current planning fees and helps to clarify when reduced fees or exemptions may be applicable Planning Fees Explanatory Note for Applicants.

5.0 Plans and Drawings

5.1   Plans and drawings submitted with your planning application must be clear, legible, and accurate. If the plans and drawings that you send us do not contain the necessary information or are not of a standard to allow your application to be assessed properly, your planning application will not be registered.

5.2   The quality of any plans / drawings needs to be clearly defined so that they are capable of being scanned and displayed electronically, particularly if they are submitted in paper form.

5.3 For minor proposals, such as those seeking householder planning permission, the best way to present proposals is to limit the number of separate plans and if possible, display existing and proposed elevations side by side on the same plan / drawing at the same scale so that they can be viewed together.

5.4 Whilst drawings and plans can be hand drawn, these must be done by someone who is competent at drawing. The Council will not accept poor quality / inaccurate drawings.

5.5 It is also important to make sure that your site location plan is correctly edged red to accord with the lawful planning unit (i.e. lawful curtilage) with any other land owned by the applicant edged blue.

5.6 Clear, legible, and accurate drawings will assist with the smooth validation and publication of an application. It also assists both officers and third parties to quickly identify those documents relevant to their interests and provide comments accordingly.

6.0 Describing your Proposal

6.1 The description of proposed works is a key part of your planning application and defines the scope and nature of the proposal. It should be accurate, clear and concise so as to bring home to the mind of the reader what the application is for.

6.2 Descriptions should identify the key elements of the proposal for which planning permission is being sought and should not include unnecessary or irrelevant information.

6.3 The description of development will appear on the Planning Portal and on any subsequent decision notice to describe and define the application.

6.4 Where a description of development does not accurately reflect what is being applied for, the Council will reserve the right to amend and clarify descriptions of development prior to registering the application.

7.0 Review

7.1 The Council will review its Validation Checklist Requirements [Local Checklist] every two years.

Appendix 01 - Checklist Matrix

	Householder Application	Full Application	Outline Application	Reserved Matters	Demolition in Conservation Area [DCA]	Listed Building Consent	Non Material Change	Discharge of Condition
Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement		X						
Affordable Housing Statement		X						
Air Quality Impact Assessment [AQIA]		X						
Application Form	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Application Fee	X	X	X	X				
Archaeological Assessment		X	X	X				
Biodiversity Checklist		X	X	X				
Certificate of Ownership	X	X	X	X				
Climate Change Statement		X	X	X				
Contaminated Land Assessment		X	X	X				
Construction Environmental Management Plan		X	X	X				
Design and Access Statement/Concept Master Plan		X	X	X				
Design Concept Statement		X	X	X				
Drainage Assessment		X	X	X				
Ecological Reports		X	X	X				
Economic Statement		X	X	X				
Environmental Statement		X	X	X				
Flood Risk Assessment		X	X	X				
Landscape Analysis	X	X	X	X				
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment		X	X	X				

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	Householder Application	Full Application	Outline Application	Reserved Matters	Demolition in Conservation Area [DCA]	Listed Building Consent	Non Material Change	Discharge of Condition
Lighting Assessment		X	X	X				
Noise Impact Assessment		X	X	X				
Nutrient Management Plan		X	X	X				
Odour Report		X	X	X				
Planning Agreement		X	X	X				
Parking Standards/Survey		X	X	X				
Planning Statement	X	X	X	X				
Preliminary Ecological Assessment [PEA]		X	X	X				
Pre-Application Community Consultation Report [PACC]		X	X	X				
Plans and Drawings – Site Location Plan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Plans and Drawings – Site Layout Plan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Plans and Drawings - Elevations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Plans and Drawings – Existing and Proposed Levels	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Plans and Drawings – Cross Sections	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Sequential Test		X	X	X				
Structural Engineers Report		X	X	X	X	X		
Retail Impact Assessment		X	X	X				
Transport Assessment Form		X	X	X				
Transport Assessment		X	X	X				
Travel Plan		X	X	X				
Waste Management Plan		X	X	X				

Appendix 02 – Information Required including justification/advice

Information Required	Justification/Advice
Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement (including a Tree Survey Report) and Development Impact Drawing	Where an application has the potential to impact on existing trees included protected trees, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement and Development Impact Drawing **must** be provided to include: ▪ TPO trees to be retained ▪ TPO trees to be felled to facilitate works ▪ TPO trees to be felled due to poor health ▪ Non TPO trees to be retained ▪ Non TPO trees to be felled to facilitate works ▪ Non TPO trees to be felled due to poor health Each tree should be identified and numbered as per the TPO. Any additional trees located on site that are not identified in the TPO should also be identified.
Affordable Housing Statement	Where an application is submitted for housing on a site of more than 0.5 hectares or comprising five residential units or more, a statement should be provided to demonstrate how the proposed development satisfies the Policy requirement associated with policy HOU10 of Part 2 of the Plan Strategy of the LCCC Local Development lan.
Application Form	All applications **must** be accompanied by a Planning Application Form. You must: ▪ Complete all parts of the form ▪ Provide the name and address of the applicant even where there is an agent. ▪ Provide a concise and accurate description of the proposed development.
Application Fee	The correct planning fee must be submitted with each application unless an exemption applies. Applications accompanied by and Environmental Statement are subject to an additional planning fee.
Biodiversity Checklist	A fully completed Biodiversity Checklists and any supporting ecological information **must** be submitted with all local development planning applications. The questions in Part 1 and Part 2 of the checklist can be answered by any applicant or their agent who has knowledge of the site and proposed development. If YES has been answered to any questions in Part 1 or Part 2 the applicant **must** seek advice from an ecologist

Information Required	Justification/Advice
	or other suitably qualified person to carry out an evaluation of the proposed development and complete the Ecological Statement in Part 3 of the checklist. The checklist and any other identified surveys must be submitted to the Council when the application is submitted. In completing the Biodiversity Checklist, regard must be had to guidance contained in the published NI Biodiversity Checklist document. NI Biodiversity Checklist - Version 2 - April 2017.pdf (daera-ni.gov.uk)
Certificate of Ownership	All applications much be accompanied by an Ownership Certificate. Certificate A, B, C or D should be completed as appropriate. The certificate must be signed.
Design and Access Statement	A Design & Access Statement is a single document that explains the design thinking behind a planning application. It provides a framework for applicants to explain and to justify how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its settings. A planning application **must** be accompanied by a D&AS where: ▪ It relates to a major development; or ▪ any part of the development is in a designated area, the development consisting of – (i) the provision of one or more dwelling houses, or (ii) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space 2 created by the development is 100m or more. The Design and Access Statement **must** explain ▪ the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development how issues relating to the access of the development have been dealt with. ▪ demonstrate how the proposed development's context has influenced the design. ▪ the policy or approach adopted regarding access to, from and within the development ▪ how policies relating to access in the relevant local development plan have been taken into account ▪ how the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the works take account of—

Information Required	Justification/Advice
	(i) the special architectural or historic importance of the building; (ii) the particular physical features of the building that justify its designation as a listed building; and (iii) the building's setting. The statement must be prepared having regard to guidance set out in Development Management Practice Note 12 – Design and Access Statements Development Management Practice Note 12 Design and Access Statements (infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)
Design Concept Statement/Concept Master Plan	A Design Concept Statement or where appropriate a Concept Masterplan, must accompany all applications for residential development including single dwellings in the open countryside. The amount of information and level of detail required will depend on the nature, scale and location of the proposed development. The statement will be prepared having regard to the justification and amplification of Policy HOU6 of the Plan Strategy or the guidance in the Building on Tradition document for single dwellings in the open countryside.
Drainage Assessment	A Drainage Assessment must be submitted for development proposals the exceed any of the following thresholds a) a residential development of 10 or more units b) a development site in excess of 1 hectare c) a change of use involving new buildings and/or hard surfacing exceeding 1,000 square metres in area A Drainage Assessment must also be submitted for any development proposal [with the exception of minor development] where: ▪ It is located in an area where there is evidence of historical flooding; ▪ Surface water run-off from the development may adversely impact on other development or features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or historic environment features.
Ecological Reports	Where a bio-diversity checklist and PEA identifies that specific ecology surveys are required, these **must** be submitted with your application. Regard **must** be had to advice on Habitat and species survey specifications and survey seasons.

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Information Required	Justification/Advice
	Publications	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)
Environmental Statement	An Environmental Statement is a legislative requirement for applications for certain types of development. The statement is required to set out the likely significant effects of the new development on the environment, whether positive or negative. Applications accompanied by and Environmental Statement are subject to an additional planning fee.
Flood Risk Assessment	DfI Rivers flood maps give information on areas that are prone to flooding in Northern Ireland. Flood Maps NI	Department for Infrastructure (infrastructure-ni.gov.uk) Where a development proposal falls within a 1 in 100 year climate change flood plain the application **must** be accompanied with a Flood Risk Assessment.
Landscape Analysis	A Landscape Analysis must accompany all development proposals in Areas of High Scenic Value. The analysis must include consideration of: ▪ Location of the site within the landscape 7 positioning of the proposal within the landscape; ▪ Undue prominence, particularly in more open and exposed landscapes; ▪ Integration of development into the landscape including degree of nature enclosure and relationship with surrounding buildings; and ▪ Design, including form, scale and massing.
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Where a new development has the potential to have an adverse impact on the landscape, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment may be required. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment must address the following two components ▪ Landscape effects assessment- deals with changes to landscape as a resource ▪ Visual effects assessment – concerned with how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by change in landscape.
Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan	Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan sets out how a development will maintain the retained landscape

Information Required	Justification/Advice
	and existing ecology of the site. It should include plans to ensure the designed landscape fulfils its roles, including providing habitats and recreational space. The plan must include ▪ management details, ▪ maintenance details; and ▪ accompanying plans The accompanying plans must include a planting schedule with existing and proposed planting clearly shown.
Nutrient Management Plan	A Nutrient Management Plan **must** be provided for development proposals which involve the spreading of digestate/manure/ slurry/litter on the land. Regard **must** be had to guidance provided by DAERA as to the information required to be included in a Nutrient Management Plan Nutrient Management Plan	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)
Odour Assessment	An Odour Assessments **must** accompany all applications for agricultural development and those that may produce substantial odour emissions, such as industrial, restaurants/hot food bars, and chemical facilities.
Planning Agreement	Where an application for development involves a planning agreement, a draft agreement will be required to be provided at an appropriate point in the planning process. Regard must be had to the Councils Procedure for dealing with Section 76 planning agreements for affordable housing.
Parking Standards/Survey	The precise amount of car parking will be determined according to the specific characteristics of the development and its location having regard to parking standards or any reduction provided for in an area of parking restraint designated in a development plan. Proposals should not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. Development proposals **must** be designed having regard to published guidance contained with the Parking Standards document Parking Standards (infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Information Required	Justification/Advice
	Where there is an identified parking need that cannot be accommodated with a proposed development, a parking survey **must** accompany the application to demonstrate alternatives and/or parking capacity elsewhere.
Planning Statement	A Planning Statement a key part of any successful planning application. The statement **must** demonstrate: ▪ Local context; ▪ The need for the proposed development; ▪ How the proposed development accords with relevant regional and local planning policies; ▪ Whether emerging policies should be taken into consideration; and ▪ Other material considerations that should be taken into consideration
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal [PEA]	A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is an important baseline survey for planning applications. It will establish the conditions of the site and determine the importance of any ecological features. It will also establish the need for any further survey work, and identify any potential mitigation measures as far as possible. Regard **must** be had to advice provided by NIEA when preparing an ecological appraisal Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey specifications | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)
Pre-Application Community Consultation Report [PACC]	All major planning applications must be accompanied with a Pre-Application Community Consultation Report. The report must be in accordance with guidance set out in Development Management Practice Note 10 – Pre-Application Community Consultation (and Pre-Application Discussions) Development Management Practice Note 10 Pre-Application Community Consultation (and Pre-Application Discussions) (infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)
Plans and Drawings – Site Location Plan	All applications for development must be accompanied with a Site Location Plan scale 1:2500 or 1:1250 on an up to date Ordnance Survey base. The plan must: ▪ Identify clearly the application site in red

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Information Required	Justification/Advice
	- Comprise an up-to-date Ordnance Survey map showing surrounding properties must be provided. - Include the North point - Outline any other neighbouring land controlled by the applicant using an unbroken blue line
Plans and Drawings – Site Layout Plan	All applications must be accompanied by an existing site plan which is based on a topographical survey and includes as a minimum the position of all the features within the site, spot levels and contours of a minimum scale of 1:500 All applications for development must be accompanied with a proposed Site Layout Plan of a minimum scaleof 1:500 and including all the proposed works (detailed in the description of development) and proposed ground and finished floor level
Plans and Drawings - Elevations	Applications for new developments must provide a technical drawings scale 1:50 or 1:100 to include - both existing and proposed elevations - orientation of the elevations [labelled] You must ensure that the elevation drawings match the floor plans
Plans and Drawings – Floor Plans	Applications for new developments must provide a technical drawing that shows the internal layout of the building scale 1:50 or 1:100 to include - both existing and propose floor plans - label the floors You must ensure that the floor plans match the elevations
Plans and Drawings – Existing and Proposed Levels	Applications for new developments **must** provide technical drawings that show existing and proposed level to include - Specific datum point - Good spread of levels across the site - Include levels on adjacent land impacted by development
Plans and Drawings – Cross Sections	Applications for new developments that involve a change to existing ground level **must** include a technical drawing that shows the extent of any cut and fill scale 1:50, 1:100 or 1:200 to include Existing and proposed sections

Information Required	Justification/Advice
	▪ Levels on adjacent land impacted by the development.
Plans and Drawings – Landscape Plan	Applications for new developments **must** include a landscape plan. The landscape plan **must** include a planting schedule with existing and proposed planting clearly shown.
Transport Assessment Form	A Transport Assessment Form (TAF) must be completed in conjunction with all planning applications. The form should be completed having regard to guidance contained within the published Transport Assessment Guidelines for Development Proposals in Northern Ireland. Transport Assessment: Guidelines for Development Proposals (infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Committee:	Regeneration and Growth Committee
Date:	05 September 2024
Report from:	Head of Planning and Capital Development

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Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Procedure for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements for affordable housing

1.0	**Background**

1. Members will be aware that the Plan Strategy of the Lisburn and Castlereagh Local Development Plan (subsequently referred to as the Plan Strategy) published in September 2023 includes a new operational policy to secure affordable housing on sites in settlements that comprise five or more dwellings or larger than 0.5 hectares in size.

2. Policy HOU10 of Part 2 of the Plan Strategy states that:

   Where the need for Affordable Housing is identified through the Housing Needs Assessment, on sites of more than 0.5 hectares or comprising of 5 residential units or more, proposals will only be permitted where provision is made for a minimum 20% of all units to be affordable.

3. Where this provision is required, it is secured through a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

Key Issues

1. It is officers' experience that the drafting and approval processes for Section 76 Planning Agreements adds significantly to processing times for planning applications.

2. The main reasons for the delay post Committee relate to securing a draft agreement from the applicant and full title documents at an early stage that include all the parties with an interest in the land.

3. To improve the timeliness of the process and to ensure the responsibilities of the relevant participants are clearly understood, a draft procedure has been developed setting out the obligations of the applicant for preparing the draft agreement and associated title information.

4. It also highlights the actions the Council will follow on receipt of the agreement and the timescales for responding.

5. The attached procedure provides detail and timescales in relation to the following:

   ▪ Requesting information for applicant/agent
   ▪ Receipt of draft agreement
   ▪ Post Planning Committee

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	6. Draft emails are included with the procedure to assist officers with the effective and timely management of these agreements.
	7. A copy of the procedure will be provided to the applicant/agent at the earliest possible stage of the application process for proposals that meet the policy thresholds described above.
2.0	**Recommendation** It is recommended that Members consider and agree: 1. The attached procedure for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements; and 2. that the procedure is published at the 'Planning' Section of the Council website.
3.0	**Finance and Resource Implications** The planning applicant is required to cover all reasonable legal costs associated with the negotiation and preparation of a Section 76 Planning Agreement. The Council will not agree to a cap on this figure in any circumstance and the draft procedure will allow planning applicants to understand and plan for any costs incurred in drafting an agreement. The Council's legal costs will not be vouched as they are commercial in confidence. The Council will also require the payment of a monitoring fee. A Value Added Tax (VAT) invoice or receipt will not be provided in respect of any amount payable under the Section 76 Agreement where that figure attracts VAT.
4.0	**Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**
4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	No
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out This is a report that seeks agreement from Members on an operational procedure for dealing with HOU10 – Section 76 Agreements. It is not a new policy. EQIA is not required.	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	No
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out. This is a report that seeks agreement from Members on an operational procedure for dealing with HOU10 – Section 76 Agreements. It is not new policy. RNIA not required.	

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LCCC Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Procedure for dealing with Section 76 planning agreements for affordable housing

August 2024

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this document is to outline a procedure for obtaining draft agreement information and engaging with legal prior to an application being presented to the Planning Committee.

2.0 Policy Context

2.1 Policy HOU10 states that:

Where the need for Affordable Housing is identified through the Housing Needs Assessment, on sites of more than 0.5 hectares or comprising of 5 residential units or more, proposals will only be permitted where provision is made for a minimum 20% of all units to be affordable.

2.2 This provision is required to be secured and agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

2.3 Where the policy tests associated with Policy HOU10 are engaged and a Legal Agreement is required, applications ***must*** be presented to the Planning Committee for determination in accordance with the Councils Scheme of Delegation.

3.0 Requesting information from applicant/agent

3.1 The case officer should advise the applicant/agent (without prejudice) at the earliest possible stage of the application process that the threshold for the policy is reached and that a recommendation to approve will be subject to a planning agreement. The officer should outline the information that will be required to allow an agreement to be processed.

3.2 It should be emphasised that the applicant takes legal advice at an early stage. They will need to instruct solicitors.

3.3 If agreement is reached in principle to the general layout and arrangement of the buildings the applicant/agent should be asked to provide (without prejudice) to the planning authority:

- a draft planning agreement;
- full up-to-date title for the lands comprised within the application site; and
- a current OS map that clearly shows the proposed development site with land registry folio(s) overlayed onto it also. This will be used to identify any boundary discrepancies between the application site and title for the lands.

3.4 A draft email is provided for at **Annex A**. The email when issued must also be copied to the general account so that an officer from the business support team can log that a request for a draft agreement has been sent.

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Please note: The Council will not share the contact details of their solicitors with the applicant/agent. Officers will only instruct our solicitors when the draft agreement, full title and overlay map referenced at paragraph 3.3 above is received.

4.0 Receipt of draft agreement

4.1 On receipt of the draft agreement, title and overlay map from an applicant, an officer from the business support team will acknowledge receipt.

4.2 Our solicitors will be instructed, and the documents shared by an officer from the business admin team. It takes approximately eight weeks to clear the draft and check the title. Only at this stage should there be solicitor to solicitor engagement.

4.3 The application will be scheduled for the next available planning committee meeting.

4.4 The Council will seek to revert with comments to the applicant through our solicitors within two weeks of the date of the receipt of the agreement. This again is without prejudice to any decision by the committee.

4.5 The conclusion of the processing of the legal agreement is subject to the agreement of the planning committee and it normally takes approximately six weeks to review the title, raise queries thereon and/or amend the agreement. The Council requires an equal level of commitment from the planning applicant's solicitor to ensure these timescales can be broadly adhered to. It is unlikely that a draft agreement can go to full Council in the same calendar month.

5.0 Post Planning Committee

5.1 Once a recommendation is agreed at Planning Committee the planning officer's report and any record of the decision-making process will be shared with our legal advisors to allow the solicitors to check that the draft agreement is in accordance with the decision. A draft email is provided for at **Annex D.**

5.2 Legal will provide notification to the Principal Officer when the agreement is finalised so that arrangements can be made for it to be included in papers for Full Council. Typically, this should be the Friday of first full working week of the next calendar month following the relevant Planning Committee meeting.

Please note: it is our intention to take the section 76 agreement to the Full Council meeting the next calendar month after the Planning Committee meeting. If full title and supporting documents is not received, then this may delay the agreement being presented to the elected members for agreement. Please also note that the Council's appointed solicitors will obtain up to date statutory charges, EJO and Bankruptcy searches against the proposed site and

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applicant. This is to check whether any other third party involvement is required. The outlay costs associated with those additional searches will be passed onto the planning applicant.

5.3   Legal will make arrangements for an electronic copy of the final agreement and related plans to be made available to the Council at this time. The hard copy agreement signed by the applicant and other interested parties will be made available to officers of the Council in advance of the Full Council meeting. At the same time, the applicant will be required to provide any completion sums due pursuant to the Section 76 Agreement in advance of execution by the Council.

Please note: the Council will require the planning applicant to cover its legal fees associated with the negotiation and preparation of the Section 76 Agreement and will not agree to a cap on this figure in any circumstance. This figure will not be required to be vouched. The Council will also require the payment of a monitoring fee. A Value Added Tax (VAT) invoice or receipt will not be provided in respect of any amount payable under the Section 76 Agreement where that figure attracts VAT.

5.4   Once the agreement is signed and sealed, the decision notice will be called by the case officer for signing and issuing. The decision will include the following informative:

This decision is subject to a Section 76 Agreement.

The date on the Decision Notice will be the same as the date of the Section 76 Planning Agreement.

5.4   Administrative officers will arrange for the decision to issue in the normal way. Paper associated with the section 76 agreement process will then be uploaded to the Planning Portal and a copy associated with the application file for completeness. The section 76 papers are not required to be published to the Portal.

5.5   The signed Section 76 agreement will be returned to our solicitors for circulation to the applicant/agents appointed solicitor. An original signed copy will be retained by the Council.

5.6   Administrative officers will arrange for the section 76 to be registered as a Statutory Charges Register in the Land Registry. A copy of the agreement will be made available to the Land Registry as part of this process.

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Annex A – Draft Email to Applicant/Agent

[name]

Without prejudice to the decision-making process, grateful if you could make arrangements with the applicant for their solicitor to provide the following documents:

- a draft section 76 agreement in relation to the provision of affordable housing for consideration by our legal team;
- full up-to-date title for the lands comprised within the application site; and
- a current OS map that clearly shows the proposed development site with land registry folio(s) overlayed onto it also. This will be used to identify any boundary discrepancies between the application site and title for the lands.

The Council will be carrying out its own review of title and will require the consent of all those holding an estate in the lands to be evidenced within the Agreement. Such parties may include but may not be limited to joint owners and any Funder(s).

Please arrange for this information to be submitted asap but no later than **[insert date two weeks from date of email]**. Solicitor contact dates should also be provided to allow direct engagement on receipt.

Please note: we will only begin to engage with our Legal team on receipt of all information.

In addition, it should be noted that:

- the Council will require a Monitoring Fee to be made pursuant to the Section 76 Agreement; and
- the Council will require a contribution towards its legal costs and ancillary outlays arising from the Section 76 Agreement. All work completed in relation to the Section 76 Agreement (i.e. either side of any Planning Committee meeting and not just post planning committee) will be included in this cost calculation; however, where the Members of the Planning Committee require significant additional work to be carried out following any Planning Committee meeting, the additional legal costs arising from same will also be the responsibility of the Developer.

Please arrange for the information to be submitted as a complete package to the planning@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

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Annex B – Draft Email to Application/Agent – incomplete information

[name]

Thank you for your email and the attached [insert details].

You are also required to provide copy title information in relation to all of the lands intended to be subject to the Section 76 Agreement along with an overlay map. Solicitors details are also required.

Please note: we will only begin to engage with our Legal team on receipt of all information.

Annex C – Draft Email to Legal on Receipt of Section 76 Agreement

[name]

Please find attached following information in relation to the above section 76 Agreement

- draft agreement
- copy title [and overlay map]
- *[anything else provided]*

The solicitor dealing with this matter on behalf of the applicant is *[insert solicitor details].*

Grateful if you could confirm where possible within two weeks of the date of this email whether the narrative contained in the agreement is suitable for inclusion in the DM officers report or advise if a meeting is required.

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Annex D – Draft Email to Legal Post Planning Committee

[name]

As you will be aware, a recommendation to approve the following application subject to 76 agreements was agreed at the Committee on *[insert date]*.

▪ [insert reference, description and location]

The case officer report and minutes of the meeting are attached. The draft agreement and title deed information was provided on *[insert date].*

Please check that the agreement as drafted is in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee and provide notification to the Principal Officer when the agreement is finalised so that arrangements can be made for it to be included in papers for Full Council.

Typically, this should be the first week of the next calendar month. The agreed document and associated plans should be made available.

The signed agreement must be with the Principal Officer in advance of the Full Council meeting.

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Annex E – Final Chase to Agent

[insert name]

I refer to my emails below. The Council is disappointed that information in relation to title/agreement is not yet settled/provided despite this application having been presented to Planning Committee in [insert date]. The Council is not able to issue a decision without the signed agreement and we cannot proceed to have the agreement signed until title checks are complete. Any delay associated with the conclusion of this application process sits with the applicant and their appointed advisors.

I would appreciate if your client would treat this matter with urgency to allow the Council to conclude the application process.

If the title is not settled within the next [insert period of time] the only alternative available to officers is to return this application to the [insert date of next Committee] Committee with an opinion to refuse on the basis that the applicant is not able to fulfil their obligations in relation to Policy HOU10.

The applicant's co-operation is much appreciated.

Committee:	Regeneration and Growth
Date:	05 September 2024
Report from:	Head of Planning and Capital Development

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Item for:	Noting
Subject:	Local Development Plan 2032 Quarterly Update

1.0 **Background**

1. Members will note that the Local Development Plan (LDP) 2032, Revised Timetable was agreed with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in May 2024, in accordance with regulation 7 of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has been published on the Council's website.

2. In accordance with regulation 6 the timetable provides indicative dates (Q3 2025 – Q3 2026) for the publication (in draft) and adoption (Q3-Q4 2028) of its Local Policies Plan (LPP).

Current Work

Members should be aware, in view of the above timetable dates, of the following:

- Assessment continues of the evidence base required to support the site-specific policies, proposals, zonings and designations in relation to housing, employment, retailing, natural and built environment, and infrastructure.

- Procurement briefs to appoint appropriate experts to assist the Council in its site-specific policies, proposals, zonings and designations are complete and, subject to approval, tender invites are due to issue in mid-September 2024.

- The Head of Planning and Capital Development has written to DfI (25 July 2024) seeking engagement on Section 14 Direction on Sprucefield that was an action arising out of the Adoption of Plan Strategy of the Local Development Plan. A response is awaited.

- DfI Roads continue to draft the Eastern Transport Plan (ETP 2035) which is integral to the Council's LPP. The ETP aims to provide attractive and viable alternative modes of transport to reduce unnecessary car journeys, creating safer, healthier communities by reducing carbon emission and improving air quality. The Plan Team continue to have regular meetings with DfI Roads, first commenced in February 2024, on matters relevant to the Council area as DfI Roads progress with drafting their ETP.

- The Plan Team has been involved in a pilot programme on Forward Planning and Monitoring, organised by DfI and Terraquest, to establish such procedures within the Mastergov planning portal. The aim is to capture monitoring data on the amount and type of developments approved in the Council area. Such data capture is legislatively necessary (Regulation 25 of the LDP Regulations 2015) to produce annual monitoring reports, necessary to ensure correct implementation of the LDP.

Following the pilot programme, data input for forward planning is due to commence in October 2024.

- In addition, the Plan Team continue to provide consultation response to Development Management on matters concerning conservation areas and natural heritage (trees and their protection).

Other Matters

- NI Water (NIW) wrote to the Council on 30 July 2024 (**see Appendix**) advising that within its 2024/25 budget allocation, and with a likely budget allocation in 2025/26, it will have limited ability to increase capacity for new connections to the wastewater system.

- NIW approximates there are 37,000 units (housing, commercial and public buildings) across Northern Ireland that may wish to connect. Of these, 19,000 units will require upgraded NIW assets. Even if NIW was to receive its full capital budget requirement, rather than the current and likely budget allocations, only 4,500 of those 19,000 units could be accommodated. A solution to these capacity constraints will take several fully funded Price Control periods to resolve.

- NIW has not indicated how many of affected units may be within the Council area, or how this may impact on growth forecasts, especially housing, over the lifetime of the LDP.

- However, in June 2024, NIW has provided its annual summary of wastewater capacity in the Council area (**see Appendix**). This includes a traffic light system as a clear visual representation of current wastewater capacity and future capacity based on growth. This indicates that relatively few of the treatment works are beyond, or nearing capacity. This may offer some surety for future developments.

2.0	**Recommendation**	
	Members are asked to note the above and the appended documents.	
3.0	**Finance and Resource Implications**	
	There are no finance or resource implications.	
4.0	**Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**	
4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	No
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out	N/A
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	No
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out.	N/A

Appendices:	Appendix 8a – Letter from NI Water (July 2024) Appendix 8b – NI Water Wastewater Treatment Works capacity June 2024

Agenda 4.3 / Appendix 8a CEO Lisburn Castlereagh - NI Water Developmen...

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Northern Ireland Water
PO Box 1026
Belfast
BT1 9DJ
www.niwater.com

Tel: 0345 7440088

Mr David Burns
Chief Executive Officer
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Civic Centre Lagan Valley Island
1 The Island
Lisburn
BT27 4RL

30th July 2024

Email: david.burns@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

Dear Mr Burns,

Re: NI Water Economic Constraints

We are writing to inform you that NI Water has received its budget allocation for the 2024/25 financial year, together with an indication of a likely capital budget through to 2026/27 and beyond. The current budget allocation means there is limited ability to increase capacity to accommodate new connections in areas that are currently constrained by a lack of wastewater capacity.

Based upon enquiries from customers and discussions with stakeholders, NI Water are aware of approximately 37,000 units across Northern Ireland that may want to connect to the wastewater system over the next number of years. We have completed an assessment of the 37,000 units and estimate that approaching 18,000 units may still be able to connect to the wastewater system, with the majority requiring a developer funded zero detriment solution such as storm water offsetting, as long as this option remains viable.

The remaining 19,000 units are constrained by existing NI Water assets that are currently high polluting. These units are also currently outside the scope of developer funded solutions and would require a full capital upgrade before further new connections can be made to the wastewater system. These units include homes in private and social ownership schemes, commercial and public buildings. The current budget allocation means that at present, NI Water will not be able to make the necessary investments to enable connections for these units. In a scenario where NI Water's PC21 programme was fully funded, it would still only be possible to address 4,500 of these 19,000 units, as the solution to the capacity constraints will take several fully funded Price Control periods to resolve.

Agenda 4.3 / Appendix 8a CEO Lisburn Castlereagh - NI Water Developmen...

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I appreciate this information will be unwelcome, and NI Water are aware that this may have implications not only for planning applications that are currently within the system but may also impact the Council aspirations within your Local Development Plan.

However, we would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council of the communications that are taking place. Currently Senior Managers within NI Water Developer Services are engaging with the top 20 key developers whose development proposals will be most impacted by these constraints and the communications will shortly be rolled out to smaller developers as well as developers' agents.

We will continue to work closely with the Council Planning and LDP teams to provide the Council with as much information as possible regarding these constraints and the effect on proposed investments.

Yours sincerely

Gary Curran
Director Engineering & Sustainability

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
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Settlement	Wastewater Treatment Works	WwTW Data				WwTW Network / Catchment	Comment
		WwTW Current Planning Status	Estimation of Capacity based on Growth Factor			Network Current Planning Status	
			10%	15%	20%		
Lisburn	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Lisburn Greater Urban Area	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Castlereagh Greater Urban Area including Dundonald	Kinnegar	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Kinnegar catchment includes flows from Castlereagh/Dundonald area, Crossnacreevy & Ryan Park. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 3 & 4 below.**
Carryduff	Newtownbreda	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber	Newtownbreda (located within Belfast City Council Area) catchment includes flows from Saintfield / Carryduff area. Also, includes Ballylesson & Purdysburn. **See Network Issue Notes 1 & 3 below.**
Hillsborough & Culcavy	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Moira	Moira	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	**See Network Issue Notes 1 & 3 below.**
Aghalee	Aghalee	Green	Green	Green	Green	*	**See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Annahilt	Annahilt	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber	Annahilt catchment includes Annahilt & Magheraconluce. **See Network Issue Note 1 & 3 below.**
Dromara	Dromara	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber	**See Network Issue Note 1, 3 & 4 below.**
Drumbeg	Drumbeg	Red	Red	Red	Red	*	Drumbeg catchment includes Ballyauglis, part of Ballycarn & Ballyskeagh, Drumbeg & Drumbo. **See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Drumbo	Drumbeg	Red	Red	Red	Red	*	Drumbeg catchment includes Ballyauglis, part of Ballycarn & Ballyskeagh, Drumbeg & Drumbo. **See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Glenavy	Glenavy	Red	Red	Red	Red	Amber	**See Network Issue Note 1 & 3 below.**
Lower Ballinderry	Lower Ballinderry	Green	Green	Amber	Red	*	**See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Maghaberry	Maghaberry	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	**See Network Issue Note 1 & 3 below.**
Milltown	Dunmurry	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber	Dunmurry catchment includes Lambeg, Milltown & Tullynacross. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Moneyreagh	Moneyreagh	Amber	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	**See Network Issue Note 1 & 3 below.**
Ravernet	Ravernet	Red	Red	Red	Red	*	**See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Stoneyford	Stoneyford	Green	Green	Green	Green	*	**See Network Issue Note 3 below.**

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Settlement	Wastewater Treatment Works	WwTW Data				WwTW Network / Catchment	Comment
		WwTW Current Planning Status	Estimation of Capacity based on Growth Factor			Network Current Planning Status	
			10%	15%	20%		
Upper Ballinderry	Upper Ballinderry	Green	Green	Green	Green	*	See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Ballyaughlis	Drumbeg	Red	Red	Red	Red	*	Drumbeg catchment includes Ballyauglis, part of Ballycarn & Ballyskeagh, Drumbeg & Drumbo. See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Ballycarn	Drumbeg	Red	Red	Red	Red	*	Drumbeg catchment includes Ballyauglis, part of Ballycarn & Ballyskeagh, Drumbeg & Drumbo. See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Ballylesson	Newtownbreda	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber	Newtownbreda (located within Belfast City Council Area) catchment includes flows from Saintfield / Carryduff area. Also, includes Ballylesson & Purdysburn. See Network Issue Notes 1 & 3 below.
Ballynadolly	Ballynadolly	Green	Green	Green	Green	*	See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Ballyskeagh	Drumbeg	Red	Red	Red	Red	*	Drumbeg catchment includes Ballyauglis, part of Ballycarn & Ballyskeagh, Drumbeg & Drumbo. See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Crossnacreevy	Kinnegar	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Kinnegar catchment includes flows from Castlereagh/Dundonald area, Crossnacreevy & Ryan Park. See Network Issue Notes 1, 3 & 4 below.
Drumlough Road	Drumlough	Green	Green	Green	Green	*	See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Dundrod	Dundrod	Green	Green	Green	Amber	*	See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Duneight	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.
Feumore	Feumore	Green	Amber	Red	Red	*	See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Halftown	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.
Hillhall	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.
Kesh Bridge	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green		Red		Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.
Lambeg	Dunmurry	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber	Dunmurry catchment includes Lambeg, Milltown & Tullynacross. See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.
Legacurry	Legacurry	Green	Green	Green	Green	*	See Network Issue Note 3 below.
Long Kesh	Lisburn (New Holland)	Green	Amber	Red		Amber	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. See Network Issue Note 1 & 2 below.

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Settlement	Wastewater Treatment Works	WwTW Data				WwTW Network / Catchment	Comment
		WwTW Current Planning Status	Estimation of Capacity based on Growth Factor			Network Current Planning Status	
			10%	15%	20%		
Lower Broomhedge	Lisburn (New Holland)	[green]	[amber]	[red]	[red]	[amber]	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Lurganure	Lisburn (New Holland)	[green]	[amber]	[red]	[red]	[amber]	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Morningside	Lisburn (New Holland)	[green]	[amber]	[red]	[red]	[amber]	Lisburn (New Holland) catchment includes Lisburn, Lisburn Greater Urban Area, Hillsborough & Culcavy, Duneight, Halftown, Hillhall, Kesh Bridge, Long Kesh, Lower Broomhedge, Lurganure & Morningside. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Lurganville	Lurganville	[green]	[green]	[green]	[green]	*	**See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Magheraconluce	Annahilt	[green]	[green]	[green]	[amber]	[amber]	Annahilt catchment includes Annahilt & Magheraconluce. **See Network Issue Note 1 & 3 below.**
Mullaghglass	Mullaghglass	[green]	[amber]	[red]	[red]	*	Mullaghglass catchment includes Mullaghglass & St James. **See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Purdysburn	Newtownbreda	[green]	[green]	[green]	[amber]	[amber]	Newtownbreda (located within Belfast City Council Area) catchment includes flows from Saintfield / Carryduff area. Also, includes Ballylesson & Purdysburn. **See Network Issue Notes 1 & 3 below.**
St James	Mullaghglass	[green]	[amber]	[red]	[red]	*	Mullaghglass catchment includes Mullaghglass & St James. **See Network Issue Note 3 below.**
Tullynacross	Dunmurry	[green]	[green]	[green]	[amber]	[amber]	Dunmurry catchment includes Lambeg, Milltown & Tullynacross. **See Network Issue Notes 1, 2 & 3 below.**
Ballyknockan	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
Carr	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
Boardmills	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
Drumlough	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
Halfpenny Gate	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
Lurgill	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
The Temple	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.
Upper Broomhedge	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	No public sewerage network available.

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Key to Current WWTW and Network Planning Status	**Key to WWTW Status based on Local Development Plan Growth Factors**
🟩 Development permitted - Capacity Available	🟩 Works has 'Reasonable Capacity'
🟧 Restriction on new Development - Capacity Limited	🟧 Works is 'At or reaching Capacity'
🟥 New Development refused - No Capacity	🟥 Works has 'Insufficient Capacity'
* Drainage Area Plan Model does not exist for this small settlement. Status based on high level network screening tool, Operator experience and current performance data.	

Network Issue Notes

Note 1:

NI Water's sewerage network capacity mapping tool and sewer network modelling activities have identified capacity issues in parts of the wastewater networks.

Wastewater networks affected include Lisburn, Moneyreagh, Annahilt, Dromara, Dunmurry, Raverent, Glenavy, Newtownbreda, Maghaberry and Kinnegar.

As a result, negative planning responses may be provided by NI Water in parts of these catchments. NI Water has identified parts of the network where Storm Overflows (SOs) are classified as Unsatisfactory Intermittent Discharges (UIDs). These SOs act as safety valves to prevent out of sewer flooding during rainfall events which may cause internal flooding of houses and business and environmental pollution. When SOs are operating more frequently than they should they are classified as UIDs.

NI Water can consider the provision of positive planning responses where developers can demonstrate (including calculations):
1. Like for like development
2. Extant previously approved development (where NI Water has given a positive response)
3. Where the development will offer a reduced loading on the sewer network, which may include storm separation and/or attenuation (may be subject to Article 154). In areas where there are constraints within the wastewater network, but there is still capacity at the WwTW it may still be possible to find a bespoke drainage solution to accommodate development. This would be identified by NI Water's solution engineering team working with the developer through the Wastewater Impact Process, and any solutions identified would be developer led and funded.

Note 2:

Drainage Area Plans (DAPs) are planned for delivery in the second half of PC21 and the outputs will be used to inform capital works solutions. The delivery of any capital works solutions will be considered for future business planning (i.e. for PC27), and will be subject to prioritisation. This prioritisation process is undertaken with NIEA and other key stakeholders, and the delivery of specific projects during PC27 is dependent on a successful outcome from this process, and funding availability.

DAPs planned for delivery in the second half of PC21 include Dunmurry, Lisburn and Maghaberry.

Note 3:

Status based on analysis of existing Area Plan settlement boundaries. Should any the settlement boundaries change as a result of the Local Development Plan (currently under development), headroom capacity status will be re-assessed and could be subject to change.

Note 4:

NI Water WwTW upgrades Scheduled for PC21 delivery.
Upgrades of the Dromara and Kinnegar Wastewater Treatment Works are included within our PC21 investment programme.

Delivery of these projects is subject to all statutory approvals being in place, land acquisition (where appropriate) and the availability of funding.   NI Water is working closely with the Department for Infrastructure on the funding required to facilitate the delivery of our capital investment programme for the remainder of the PC21 Price Control period (2024 – 2027).

General Notes:

Quality assurance/Quality control checks are conducted on NI Water corporate wastewater data sets to ensure accuracy. The Wastewater Headroom Capacity spreadsheet is compiled using information obtained from Annual Information Returns and is the best available information at this time, but it may change and will be revised annually. Changes may occur as the result of network modelling activities, planned WwTW and network upgrades or compliance issue arisals. Any significant changes occurring between the annual updates will be notified directly to the Council.

Developing a Drainage Area Plan involves two stages: the Drainage Area Study (DAS) and the Needs and Options stage.
• The DAS typically takes 2-3 years to complete and involves constructing a calibrated and validated sewer network model using CCTV survey work and flow monitoring surveys.
• The Needs and Options stage involves assessing various sewer upgrade options and running scenarios for different design rainfall events.

The sewer network model simulates a 25-year design horizon and takes into account growth, urban creep, and climate change.

The model outputs are reviewed by NI Water's environmental regulator, NIEA, and discharge consent standards must be met via capital works network upgrade solutions. Capital work identified through this process will be put forward to the prioritisation process for inclusion in NI Water's Business Plans for the PC27 period (2027/28 – 2032/33).

The DAS sewer model serves several essential purposes, including identifying areas where sewers are operating above their design capacity, developing appropriate solutions to address capacity issues, assessing the effectiveness of various options for informing capital works, as well as assessing the current capacity of the sewer network for serving new developments.

Committee:	Regeneration & Growth
Date:	5 September 2024
Report from:	Director of Regeneration and Growth

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Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Rescheduling of date of February 2025 Regeneration and Growth Committee

1.0 **Background**

1. To finalise the annual Estimates process and the setting of the District Rates, officers are currently scheduling special Council and Corporate Services meetings in January and February 2025.

2. Consequently it has been requested that the Regeneration and Growth Committee considers the rescheduling of our February 2025 meeting.

Key Issues

1. Within the Standing Orders the determination of date and time of Committee is for the Committee to determine.

2. Members are therefore asked to consider rescheduling the Committee to the following Thursday, 13 February 2025 at the normal time of 6pm in order to allow for scrutiny and debate if required on the setting of the annual rates.

2.0 **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee considers and agrees to rescheduling the Regeneration and Growth Committee to Thursday 13 February 2025.

3.0 **Finance and Resource Implications**

No additional finance or resource implications.

4.0 **Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**

4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	N/A
4.2	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **or** rationale why the screening was not carried out This report is in relation to a change of Committee date.	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	N/A

| 4.4 | Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions **<u>or</u>** rationale why the screening was not carried out.

This report is in relation to a change of Committee date. | | **422** |

| **Appendices:** | N/A |