

AGENDA ITEM 8.



Committee: Strategic Growth Partnership
Date: 24 May 2018
Agenda Item: Monitoring and Reporting
Officer presenting: Strategic Projects Officer

1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress in the development a monitoring strategy to capture the progress and impact of the Strategic Growth Plan.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires councils and community planning partners to make arrangements to monitor progress and effectiveness of Community Plans and the actions taken for the purpose of meeting the plan's objectives.
- 2.2 Sections 69-71 of the act outline the requirements in relation to review, reporting and monitoring of Community Plans. Specifically in relation to monitoring (70) the act states the following:

"(1) A council and its community planning partners must ensure that arrangements are made for monitoring—

- (a) progress made towards meeting the community plan objectives for the district contained in the current community plan; and*
- (b) the effectiveness of actions taken and functions exercised for the purpose of meeting those objectives.*

(2) A community planning partner's duty under subsection (1) extends only to matters connected with its functions.

(3) A council must at least once every two years publish a statement which describes –

(a) progress made and outcomes achieved in meeting the community plan objectives for its district; and

(b) actions taken and functions exercised for the purpose of meeting those objectives.

(4) It is the duty of each community planning partner of a council to provide such information as the council may reasonably require in order to enable it to comply with its duty under subsection (3).

(5) The first statement under subsection (3) must be produced within two years of the date on which a community plan is published under section 68(4)."

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Department for Communities Local Government Policy Division has established a working group to develop draft guidance for Community Planning Partnerships (Strategic Growth Partnership) specifically to address community planning monitoring and reporting requirements. In line with the legislation outlined above Community Planning Partnerships are required to publish their first statement on progress in relation to community plans in summer/autumn 2019 and while the current statutory guidance does address in broad terms the necessary monitoring and reporting requirements there is consensus that there is a need to provide more detail and focus.
- 3.2 The working group comprises representatives from DFC analytical support, the Executive Office, Local Government officers, and Statutory Community Planning Partners including Invest NI, NI Housing Executive, the Public Health Agency, the Education Authority, PSNI and NILGA.

- 3.3 Following a series of one on one meetings with DfC officials, the working group meet on a number of occasions most recently on 21st March. Draft guidance has been developed and issued to working group members for consideration. Following further refinement this draft guidance will be shared with NI Departments for comment and subsequently issued to Community Planning Partnerships (Strategic Growth Partnership) for final comment and agreement in summer 2018.
- 3.4 The aim of this guidance is to help ensure a consistent approach that will support delivery of Community Plans in line with Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes. The monitoring and reporting guidance will therefore be reviewed and updated as the arrangements for PfG reporting are developed.
- 3.5 As an interim measure and in the absence of formal monitoring and reporting guidance council officers have begun the process of inputting Strategic Growth actions into the '*Pentana (Covalent) Performance Management*' software system as an initial step in developing a monitoring strategy that will capture the progress and impact of the Strategic Growth Plan. Over the coming months officers and NISRA staff based within council will continue to meet with Outcome Delivery Partnerships, Statutory Partners and other Community Planning Support Partners to agree baselines and identify Performance Measures to assist in development of this monitoring system. The Partnership will be further updated on progress on this workstream at the next meeting.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Partnership note the content of this report and the progress in the development a monitoring strategy that will capture the progress and impact of the Strategic Growth Plan.