



Derry City & Strabane
District Council

Comhairle Chathair
Dhoire & Cheantar
an tSratha Báin

Derry Cittyie & Strábane
Destríck Cooncil



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**

Donegal County Council

NORTH WEST CITY REGION IRELAND/NORTHERN IRELAND

STATEMENT OF REGIONAL PRIORITIES

**SUBMITTED AT REQUEST OF NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL
COUNCIL**

FEBRUARY 2021

NORTH WEST CITY REGION IRELAND/NORTHERN IRELAND

STATEMENT OF REGIONAL PRIORITIES (February 2021)

Executive Summary

Prepared at the request of the North South Ministerial Council following its plenary meeting in December 2020, this paper is a comprehensive statement of regional priorities for the North West City Region and places them in a governance and policy context. The paper also, importantly, sets out potential pathways to implementation and highlights the opportunity which now presents for a scaling up of innovative collaborative approaches by Central and Local Government which can optimise the North West Strategic Growth Partnership (NWSGP) as a delivery (and demonstration) vehicle for key Programme for Government objectives in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The NWSGP can facilitate joint working to mitigate risks and release positive potential in a way that cannot be done for border regions by a single jurisdiction working alone. This is particularly true in the context of balancing the challenges of Brexit and Covid-19 with opportunities for sustainable recovery.

Section 1.0 provides an overview and context for this paper, outlining the development and rationale which drove the establishment of the NWSGP. **Section 2.0** highlights the three thematic pillars of sustainable and inclusive growth for the region (economic growth and investment, physical and environmental development, social and community cohesion and wellbeing). **Section 3** sets out the progress enabled by the North West Regional Development Fund to date. **Section 4** sets the NWSGP and regional priorities in the context of international, European and national policy and draws connections to policy agendas which are likely to shape national programming for some time to come. **Section 5** sets out key current and emerging regional priorities. **Section 6** highlights potential implementation pathways of the priorities set out in Section 5, including the North West Regional Development Fund, NDNA, Ireland 2040 and related funds, the NI Regional Investment Strategy, and the Shared Island Fund.

In presenting regional priorities, this paper does so in a way that places the North West City Region's unique place-based governance arrangements for development, within a national/regional and international policy context as well as speaking to practical pathways to delivery. These arrangements present a generational opportunity for Local and Central Government to work together in an innovative framework for the benefit of all citizens of the region and both economies.

1.0 Overview and Context- The North West as a Net Contributor:

To date the achievements of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership and North West Regional Development Group (as linked governance structures for the development and growth of the North West City Region) are the following:

- Establishment of a partnership between Local and Central Government involving the Councils of the North West City Region, the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. This is a unique structure on the island of Ireland and a best practice model recognised throughout Europe, which allows for collaborative approaches to resourcing and co-ordination of activities to release the full potential of the North West City Region as a net contributor to the economy of both jurisdictions and provides the necessary arrangements for thematic working and investment.
- Following NSMC Plenary in July 2016, formal representation of Government Departments was established at senior level and representatives were nominated directly by Secretary-General/Permanent Secretary of each Government Department.
- These structures have been embedded within the overall governance framework for North South institutional Co-operation and provide an opportunity for territorial co-operation to make an overall contribution to the impact of North South Co-operation in one of the most historically challenges regions of the Ireland/Northern Ireland border which requires special arrangements to release growth.
- A programme of development activities and strategic co-operation has been resourced through the North West Regional Development Fund since 2016, focusing on three interconnected and interdependent growth pillars relating to the region's economy, its physical and environmental development, and its social and community cohesion.

The Councils of the North West City Region are presenting this regional statement of intent in order to clarify a range of options for scaling up co-operation and development which are now open to Government and Councils by virtue of the unique arrangements of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership. This includes replenishment of the North West Regional Development Fund and a range of other priorities which have the potential to support a

permanent shift away from economic instability and restricted growth towards a fully-functioning and fully-supported cross border functional economic area – driving innovation, job creation and sustainability- which has a significant role to play in delivering balanced regional and economic development on the island of Ireland.

The North West has been an important part of the agenda for North South Co-operation since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and the establishment of the North South Ministerial Council. Originating with the North West Gateway Initiative, this level of co-operation was further endorsed in 2015 through the Fresh Start Agreement, the subsequent endorsement of the North West Strategic Growth Plan by the North South Ministerial Council (July 2016), the establishment of the North West Regional Development Group and North West Strategic Growth Partnership, and continued participation of Government North and South in the NWSGP . The Partnership (NWSGP) is further referenced in the *New Decade- New Approach* agreement of 2019. As such, the active participation by Government in the North West Region Strategic Growth Agenda has been repeatedly committed to and endorsed by both Governments and successive administrations North and South.

The core objective of the establishment and continuation of collaborative working arrangements for the North West City Region is to release the region’s full potential as a net contributor to the economies of Ireland and Northern Ireland/UK and in doing so to add value as a cross-border functional economic area to the economy of the island of Ireland as whole.

1.1 Context of this Statement:

This statement has been prepared in response to the letter to the Chief Executives of Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council, from Joint Secretaries Mark Hannify and Tim Losty of NSMC 12th January 2021, which stated:

At the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Plenary meeting on 18 December 2020 the Council discussed the North West Development Fund (NWDF) in the context of New Decade, New Approach commitments.

You will be aware that under New Decade, New Approach, the Irish Government has indicated its commitment in principle to providing further funding to the NWDF in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Executive.

Following the Plenary discussion the Council agreed to invite Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council to develop a statement of updated strategic priorities for the North West Region. This will inform the ongoing engagement of both Administrations with the North West Strategic Growth Partnership.

We would therefore invite you to provide a statement as outlined above, to assist consideration of the potential for future support for the NWDF.

This invitation follows the Joint Communiqué issued by the North South Ministerial Council following an NSMC Plenary meeting which took place on 18th December 2020. In the section of the Communiqué which dealt with the New Decade New Approach Commitment, it was noted that the NSMC

-invited Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council to develop a statement of updated strategic priorities for the North West Region to inform the ongoing engagement of both Administrations with the North West Strategic Growth Partnership.

1.2 Purpose of this Statement:

Taking into account what is documented above, the purpose of this statement is therefore to indicate updated strategic priorities for the North West City Region to inform the ongoing engagement of both Administrations with the North West Strategic Growth Partnership on an overall basis.

Within this the statement will also highlight the specific activities which the Councils of the North West City Region who manage the fund expect that North West Regional Development Fund may support in the coming period.

In providing strategic priorities for the region to inform the ongoing engagement of both Administrations with the NWSGP on an overall basis, and since this statement represents the first time a formal document on priorities has been requested through NSMC plenary, the statement includes essential content which may be used to inform the overall engagement of administrations on a strategic basis. It also clearly distinguishes the various modes of support for the region which both or either administration(s) may explore as ways of implementing existing commitments. This content includes:

- a comprehensive overview of the framework within which the North West City Region growth model has been developed, recognising the institutional governance arrangements within which the NWSGP is located which place it under the aegis of the North South Ministerial Council and its related governance processes underpinning North South Co-operation. A copy of this framework is contained as **Appendix A**.

- a clear identification and differentiation between the potential Governmental financial (and non-financial) support arising from the existing commitments by both executives to the NWSGP either directly (such as contribution to the core resource of the North West Regional Development Fund) or in association with wider commitments such as

New Decade New Approach and the Shared Island Fund. Within this context the specific priorities for the North West Regional Development Fund are highlighted.

The statement also covers the issue of opportunities for support and collaborative working between the region and key government departments which do not arise from bespoke North South or National programme commitments, but which are made possible by the governance arrangements of the NWSGP which both administrations have endorsed and signed up to. This area of opportunity is best described as both administrations working to join up domestic programming where a co-ordinated approach to the North West City Region can release added value for domestic objectives of government, programmes for government, and for the overall deployment of public resources in respect of work in either jurisdictional part of the cross-border functional economic area that is the NWSGP.

2.0 The North West Pillars of Sustainable and Inclusive Growth:

The NWSGP is committed to working to deliver outcomes across three regional ‘pillars’ of growth. These are:

i) Pillar 1: Economic Growth and Investment:

In addition to ensuring strategic alignment, the proposed arrangement in the North West can facilitate the identification, planning, promotion, and monitoring and implementation of major public expenditure projects and growth and development initiatives impacting on the City region. This will provide an opportunity for enhancing risk management of major public expenditure initiatives, both capital and revenue-based, and for proactively driving best outcomes;

Having considered other economically functional areas where an international border is present, the ongoing arrangements for growing the North West are based on international good practice in place-based leadership. Effective and efficient planning and management of regional growth can lead to the Region being a net contributor to both economies, thus maximising its revenue potential in public fiscal terms;

The North West Strategic Growth Partnership provides for the normalisation of joint working on a specific territorial interface between the Northern Ireland and Ireland which can, in turn, deliver benefits relevant to the core development and post-Covid recovery agendas of both administrations while also tackling the problematic issue of managing growth and development in an international border region.

ii) Pillar 2: Physical and Environmental Development:

The NWSGP can facilitate the planning, promotion and monitoring and implementation of major initiatives aimed at providing physical and environmental enablers for growth, maximising the spatial and infrastructural connectivity of the region in both a domestic Northern Ireland/Ireland context and also in a European and Transatlantic/Atlantic Corridor context.

The North West Strategic Growth Partnership arrangements can facilitate the planning, development and implementation of approaches and measures aimed at maximising the potential for sustainable development, management and protection of shared environmental resources, and for innovative cross-border approaches to the management of environmental resources; this includes driving growth in the 'Green Economy', with an emphasis being placed on renewables and carbon emissions reduction, and the opportunities of a circular economy.

iii) Pillar 3: Social and Community Cohesion and Wellbeing.

The arrangement in the North West can facilitate a population-based approach to the crucial building blocks of social and community cohesion and wellbeing of those who live in the region - the population of the region being one of its most significant resources. This can include shared, scaleable approaches to healthcare investment across primary and secondary care, shared approaches to meeting social need and tackling disadvantage, health inequalities and a sustainable health economy - all of which underlie successful regional growth strategies. This pillar can also include cooperation on issues relating to civic participation, social inclusion and specific interventions focusing on targeted groups within the overall population. This pillar can facilitate area-based approaches to community and social wellbeing initiatives such as those focused on Early Intervention, and Peace and Reconciliation /post conflict transformation.

3.0 Progress enabled by the North West Regional Development Fund (NWRDF):

The North West Regional Development Fund was committed to by both the Irish Government and Northern Ireland Executive under the Fresh Start Agreement. It is a small 'enabling' fund designed to support and animate collaborative activity between Councils and other regional development stakeholders in order to achieve a collaborative approach to key regional development needs across the three pillars. Established in 2016, the fund to date has totalled €5m (€2.5m from Irish Government via Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and €2.5m from NI Executive via the NI Executive Office).

Decisions on funding awards are made by the North West Regional Development Group, which has formal legal status as a joint committee of both Councils (DCSD and DCC). The fund is managed through the North West Secretariat which is hosted by Derry City & Strabane District Council. The fund has therefore been managed in line with accountability and reporting standards and processes required by NI Department of Finance of all NI Public Bodies and drawing on the expertise of the NW Secretariat of managing recurrent cycles of ERDF and ESF funded initiatives since the late 1990s.

Since 2016, the North West Regional Development Fund has enabled the animation not only of key development activity across the region, but has also allowed for the establishment and deepening of co-operation via governance models which are in themselves central to this unique model of regional development and territorial cross-border co-operation. The North West arrangements represent a place-based model of governance which allows for fluid interaction between Central and Local government in order to effectively drive growth and development in this multi-jurisdictional cross-border location.

These forms of complementary governance for territorial development and cohesion (North West Regional Development Group and the North West Strategic Growth Partnership) have now been up and running for four years, and have deepened and matured despite an external environment characterised by deep uncertainty arising from Brexit, temporary absence of an administration in Northern Ireland, and the profound impact of a global pandemic on social, economic and political/administrative systems in both jurisdictions. As such the structures are a model of best shared practice which both Ireland and Northern Ireland can be proud of on an international basis.

The North West Regional Development Fund therefore has resourced the ongoing development of these governance models which are highly relevant for delivery of central and national programming and policy objectives, and which are described in further detail below.

3.1 North West Regional Development Fund Key Deliverables to Date:

3.1.1 North West Regional Development Group: The North West Regional Development Group is the mechanism whereby the NW place-based model links directly to the citizen through direct local democratic governance. The North West Regional Development Group has specific discrete delegated authority as a joint committee of Donegal County Council and Derry City & Strabane Council. It provides the governance for ongoing engagement by the Councils with each other, and with Government, and provides oversight of a collaborative platform for Council-to-Council cross border co-operation and the work of the Councils in jointly co-operating with key regional agencies with sectoral remits. In accordance with the structures and governance scheme endorsed by NSMC Plenary in July 2016, the North West

Regional Development Group also provides a decision-making function on allocations from the North West Regional Development Fund, in line with regional strategic priorities, and is supported by the North West Secretariat.

3.1.2 North West Strategic Growth Partnership: The North West Strategic Growth Partnership provides a governance model unique in a wider European context, in that it provides an interlocutory ‘soft space’ for Local and Central government to codesign shared solutions to regional growth. It is thus capable of addressing the needs of the regional population on the one hand and leveraging progress against national Irish and NI/UK objectives which by their nature require optimal delivery across the entire economic territory of Ireland and Northern Ireland and which can achieve added value in a cross-border context. The NWSGP was initiated in December 2016 and generally meets twice annually. Engagement with the NWSGP from Government Departments North and South has been consistent and has laid the basis for potentially high-impact responses to the emerging issues of Brexit, and post-pandemic recovery. The co-ordinating input of both the NI Executive Office, Department of an Taoiseach, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has been a key element of governmental support in animating departmental engagement, and the NWSGP arrangements themselves allow for individual line Departments to engage with regional stakeholders in a way that complements the formal engagement at the twice-yearly meetings of the NWSGP.

The North South Ministerial Council noted the significance of the NWSGP model at its plenary in December 2020; the NWSGP is also specifically referenced in relation to delivery of Governmental commitments the New Decade New Approach agreement. There is significant additional potential for the NWSGP to lever advances in regional growth and transformation, based on the principles of North South co-operation and the benefits of shared investment. It is hoped that this paper will assist in defining how Government will take forward the priorities of the region in delivering its commitments to the region contained in NDNA, Ireland 2040, NI Regional Investment Strategy, and the Shared Island Fund. It is also hoped that this paper will help inform shared approaches to key common challenges of both administrations in the coming years, including post-Covid sustainable economic recovery, balanced regional development, progress towards a carbon-neutral economy and net zero carbon emissions. In the latter sense, the NWSGP provides the facility for the North West City Region to provide a regional ‘laboratory’ or be a ‘demonstration region’ for at-scale innovations towards delivery of these agendas, and a net contributor to sustainability targets including those represented by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the European Green Deal.

3.1.3 Supporting Regional Co-operation Activities:

The North West Regional Development Fund has not only provided a platform for collaborative working as outlined above, but since its establishment in 2016 has enabled the delivery of specific initiatives at regional level including the following:

- Regional spatial planning
- Development of green infrastructure and shared spaces
- Impact analysis of Brexit on the NW cross-border functional economic area
- Export support programmes for start-ups/SMEs
- Joint FDI/Investment promotional collateral and trade missions
- Collaboration of the NW City Region Universities and FE Colleges
- Co-design and implementation of joint tourism events and initiatives
- Cross-border sports development programme
- Delivery of a youth engagement programme across the NW City Region
- Development of joint arts, cultural and heritage initiatives
- Initiation of a joint Climate change and mitigation policy and joint energy policy

4.0 International, European and National Drivers - Policy Context:

The Strength of the North West regional model is to successfully draw connections between the local mechanisms and EU/Global Agendas to drive development and source the funding required for that development. The strategic policies for the NW and the interventions arising will include target areas such as:

- The UN Sustainable Development Agenda & the EU Green Deal,
- EU Cohesion Policy - specifically in the context of the role of regions, removal of cross-border obstacles, and the five key priorities of cohesion policy,
- The Northern Ireland Programme for Government (High Level Outcomes),
- The Irish Framework for Government (2020) and Green Deal,
- Ireland 2040 - the Irish National Planning Framework and National Development Plan,
- Ireland & Northern Ireland strategies and policies for infrastructure and transportation,
- The Irish National Climate Action Plan and Northern Ireland Climate Adaptation Programme (and related individual Government Department Climate Action Plans (IR),
- The UK and Ireland National Economic Recovery Plans and regional equivalents (post Covid-19 Emergency),

- The Peace+ Programme Objectives (Submissions from the region to the Peace + Consultation).
- Commitments to the North West City Region by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government contained within the New Decade New Approach Agreement.
- The Shared Island Agenda and Fund established by the Irish Government. In particular, the North West City Region considers both the infrastructural commitments and the All-Island Research Agenda to have relevance for the NW growth agenda- the former as catalysts for growth, and the latter as a focus for pathways to impact for an all-Island research framework aimed at supporting sustainability, balance, health and socio-economic equality across the island. The NW City Region can therefore offer a regional, cross-border territorial 'lab' for applied research which acts to stimulate economic innovation activity, health and social wellbeing.
- The North West City Region Statement of Intent on Green Growth (for finalisation at NWRDG on 12th March 2021).

4.1 International Environment Drivers:

Brexit: The NWCR and associated structures (NWSGP), remain an opportunity for creative solutions to the many challenges facing the UK and Irish Economies which Brexit has presented in the context of future trade arrangements. In particular, the region stands to benefit from concerted promotion as an investment location which has a footprint within the UK and within the EU and due to NI's continued membership of the single market can offer significant opportunities to UK companies wishing to continue to trade with the EU.

Covid-19 Public Health Emergency and Post-Pandemic Recovery/Resilience: Adaptations have occurred with speed that have the potential to act as signposts and features of a Post Covid-19 economic recovery which needs to address sustainability and health issues in the longer-term. The North West City Region is ideally placed to deliver structural solutions in the areas of Medical and Health Sciences education, R & D and innovation ('MED/ED') via a regional cluster for industrial growth/adaptation, job creation and skills development, that can meet emerging needs for both economies and can endure in the medium and long term. An economic recovery plan will take account of the 'Green' benefits of post Covid-19 adaptations which can be sustained.

European Dimension - A Strong Euro Region: EU Cohesion Policy 2021-27 will emphasise the importance of strong regions in national economies and of regions as a key component of European integration and stability. The North West City Region proposes to develop a core approach to wider European engagement which is aligned with growth objectives for the region and promoting the best international practice that our unique model of co-operation represents. By investing further in relationships at EU and trans European

levels the region can take advantage of key opportunities relating to Cohesion funds that strong regions may be able to access. It will also promote its good practice in the context of international peace and security and transition from conflict. Far from moving away from an EU cross-border co-operation agenda the North West City Region will continue to engage with European networks, sharing and building its knowledge and connections as a model of best practice. It will undertake this in the context of wider European co-operation on EU External Borders, in acknowledgement of the value placed by the EU on territorial co-operation along all its borders as a feature of cohesion. It will also take account of the context for cross-border co-operation within the overall scope of the Council of Europe, of which both Ireland and the UK remain members. The principles of democratic governance which are represented in the design of the North West co-operation arrangements represent an international model of best practice in good governance for cross-border and transboundary co-operation.

5.0 Current and Future Regional Priorities:

Across the three regional growth pillars for the North West City Region, there are two key types of priority, both of which can be facilitated via the joint working platform offered by the NWSGP/NWRDG. These represent the totality of working relationships needed to release the region's full potential:

1. Those which need to be centrally/nationally driven (derived from mainstream exchequer, or other nationally-driven funding including SIF, EU Structural Funds) and which need to be locally/regionally supported in order for optimal implementation; and
2. Those which will be locally/regionally- driven and which need central/national support (including being funded through the North West Regional Development Fund if replenished) to respond to regional needs and implement central/national policy objectives.

As at February 2021, the North West Region's priorities, set out across the regional pillars, are to develop the projects and initiatives already under way and detailed in Section 3.1.3, and also to progress the following centrally/nationally-driven and locally/regionally-driven priorities across the three regional growth pillars:

Pillar 1: Economic Growth and Investment Priorities:

Centrally/nationally driven, locally/regionally supported:

- A focussed strategy and implementation plan for the urgent substantial expansion and development of University/third level provision, student numbers and courses in the North West City Region.
- Increased investment in skills / apprenticeship programmes linked to regional industry and business, existing and emerging.
- A co-ordinated strategy and action plan across the North West City region on job creation, FDI promotion, development of innovation networks and facilities, and industry support as catalysts to address regional imbalance, disparity of opportunity and high levels of economic inactivity and unemployment;
- Support and investment in key transformational tourism projects and initiatives;
- Regional Sustainability Scoping/Forecasting and Jobs Plan for a Green Economy – comprehensive and to cover existing and potential sectors either evolving or emerging, looking at value and supply chains, macro- enterprise and micro-enterprise sectors, and making recommendations as to collaborative pathways and best practice stimulator models to deliver the plan. Implementation of plan to be fully resourced;
- Support and interventions to effectively address deficits throughout the region relating to Broadband access and resilience, with particular focus on rural areas across the wider NW Region.

Locally/regionally driven, centrally/nationally supported:

- Ongoing development of export training and in-market support for businesses across the City Region;
- Joint promotion of the region, investment and tourism opportunities in key markets in the UK, Europe and the US;
- Development of a full suite of analytics of the cross-border functional economic area to support promotion, job creation, economic development initiatives and inward investment.

Pillar 2: Physical and Environmental Priority Enablers for Economic Growth:

Nationally/centrally driven, locally/regionally supported:

Investment in key connectivity infrastructure supporting regional access to underpin investment and growth. Priorities are:

- The A5/N2 road dualling including the TEN-T link to Letterkenny connecting Derry/Tyrone/Donegal and the wider North West to Dublin and the rest of the Island;
- City of Derry and Donegal Airports to ensure sustainability of vital air connectivity with Dublin, London and other key GB hubs;
- The connection of Derry/ Donegal to Galway/ Limerick/ Cork on the Atlantic Economic Corridor;
- Detailed feasibility of a rail connectivity corridor directly from the region to Dublin, including that of high speed rail connectivity to Belfast and Dublin, and that of the connection of Derry to Letterkenny and onwards along the proposed Western Rail Corridor;
- A strategic approach to the future sustainability and growth of the NW City Region's Ports, in context of sustainable development/Green Growth as well as the region's overall position as a maritime region.

Locally/regionally driven, centrally/nationally supported:

- Develop a Regional Spatial Strategy for the sustainable development of the region;
- Implement a Green Growth strategy for the Region;
- Continue to develop Green Infrastructure in the region (travel, energy, built environment) in the context of implementing the principles of the EU Green Deal and in line with the overarching statement of intent on Green Growth which the Councils of the North West City Region are currently finalising.
- Implement the North West Regional Energy Strategy and North West Climate Action Plan;
- Implement associated measures/activities including continued investment in Greenways in the region, sustainable and active transport connecting the region internally and externally;
- Implement associated sustainable development measures including conservation, promotion and access to natural, built, archaeological heritage and biodiversity as drivers for economy and wellbeing;
- Develop Land Use Plans to support a Low Carbon Economy and offer alternative incomes to landowners while providing food and energy security.
- Covid Recovery support for quick adaptation and digital enablement to support ongoing remote working across the region and react to the change in the future of work which has taken place as a result of the pandemic and which will be a key component

not only for Covid Recovery but for ongoing contribution to Carbon Emissions Targets for Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Pillar 3: Social and Community Cohesion and Wellbeing Priorities:

Nationally/Centrally driven, locally/regionally supported:

Following the best practice in cross-border health co-operation already demonstrated for secondary care co-operation in the NW City Region (including NW Cancer Centre and Cross Border PCI service), acknowledging documented barriers to health as a result of health inequalities across the region, and acknowledging both the impact and the learning of the Coronavirus pandemic, the region now requires a co-ordinated and increased investment in the primary care workforce baseline and primary care infrastructure of the region in order to improve population health and support healthy ageing, by improving timely access to care in terms of the patient's own health journey. Working on the basis of cross-border complementarity/critical mass in healthcare specialities, and key healthcare delivery and educational assets in the NW City Region, a reinforced primary healthcare sector based on a regional population health model must include cross border co-operation in building specialist knowledge and services in primary care, and integrated multidisciplinary specialist care closer to home for people with long-term conditions and people with disabilities.

- Acknowledging the additional barriers to mental wellbeing experienced by the population of the region which are linked to social and economic deprivation and those linked to intergenerational trauma arising from the conflict in NI and the Border Counties, the region requires sustained investment in primary /community care mental health services (including CAMHS) and specialist mental health provision including addictions and related family supports. Additional priorities include mainstreaming of a mental health recovery college on a cross-border basis, and further work to support the concept of a trauma-informed region.

Locally/regionally driven, centrally/nationally supported:

- Using WHO recommendations on the role of Local Government in addressing the social determinants of health (2014), explore and implement a social model of health through provision of healthy living infrastructure, developing 'upstream' community-based approaches to the specific population health and care needs profile of the North West City Region. Advocating for investment to meet the health needs of Region with a particular emphasis on Community Infrastructure, Youth, Sport, Wellbeing and Participation.

6.0 Implementation of Priorities:

In addition to a full commitment by Government to implementation of the priorities either as a driver or supporting stakeholder, an essential next step is to identify implementation pathways for each type of priority through the following immediate actions:

6.1 Replenishment of the North West Regional Development Fund:

Commitment to the fund in 2016 was €2.5m from each administration. Replenishment of this fund - on a basis which recognises the established regional priorities and existing governance arrangements for the fund- is required as an immediate and underlying enabler for the work of the North West co-operation arrangements in their entirety, and to support the further development of the multiple areas of work already underway and in development set out in previous sections of this report, particularly at 3.1.3 and at Section 5 across the three pillars of Economic Growth and Investment, Physical and Environmental Development and Social and Community Cohesion and Wellbeing.

6.2 Development of implementation pathways for priorities defined as Centrally/nationally-driven, locally/regionally supported:

The NWSGP can facilitate potential planning for larger financial contributions from one or both administrations to high-value key regional projects on the basis of alignment with:

- Commitments made in the New Decade New Approach Agreement;
- Wider objectives of the Irish National Capital Development Plan, National Recovery plan and Ireland 2040;
- Wider objectives of the NI Regional Investment Strategy;
- Shared Island Fund.

This area of work in relates in particular to the opportunity for the Irish Government to consider complementary investments to add value to the existing commitments to the City Deal for Derry & Strabane by UK Treasury and the Northern Ireland Executive.

This area of work also relates to opportunities where the Irish Shared Island Fund could be deployed to provide capital support as added value to Irish Government investment in the North West Region as a whole.

6.3 Development of implementation pathways for priorities defined as locally/regionally driven with central/national support:

As regards priorities to be driven locally/regionally with central/national support, the replenishment of the North West Regional Development Fund is an essential next step.

In addition, the NWSGP provides the framework for individual Government Departments - working with relevant stakeholders from the NW City Region - to focus existing and emerging resources in one or both jurisdictions on the needs of the region across a wide range of public programming areas (as distinct from and complementary to the types of investment outlined in Section 6.2 above). This area of work and the governance for collaborative regional development provided by the NWSGP present a unique opportunity for both Government Departments and Councils to co-design innovative and creative solutions which give expression to the principles of collaborative working contained within senior public leadership frameworks in both jurisdictions.

APPENDIX A:

Schematic Chart: North West Strategic Growth Partnership and Associated Governance:

Source:

North West Strategic Growth Plan (2016) as endorsed by NSMC Plenary July 2016.

