

Title of Report:	Local Development Plan: Project Management Team Annual Monitoring Report (2023/24)
Committee Report Submitted To:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	25th September 2024
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Our elected members work collaboratively and make decisions on an evidence led basis and in line with its policies.
Lead Officer	Principal Planning Officer

Budgetary Considerations	Not applicable in this case
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	Not applicable in this case
Input of Legal Services Required	
Legal Opinion Obtained	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) Project Management Team (PMT) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the 2023/24 reporting period.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Council's Development Plan team is currently preparing an LDP for the Borough. The Council must provide a 15-year plan framework to support the environmental, economic and social needs of the Borough in line with regional strategies and policies, and with the objective of furthering sustainable development¹.

2.2 The LDP is prepared in three stages, as follows:

- Preferred Options Paper (POP);
- Plan Strategy (PS); and
- Local Policies Plan (LPP).

2.3 We are currently preparing a draft Plan Strategy (dPS).

2.4 The LDP is subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to assess any potential environmental, economic or social impacts of the Plan against a range of sustainability objectives. This iterative process is carried out at all three stages of LDP preparation.

2.5 In line with the Council's published 'Statement of Community Involvement in Planning' (SCI) the PMT was established, comprising senior council officers, plan manager and key government departments, to facilitate key consultee co-operation in the plan-making process (see TOR at Appendix 1).

2.6 The invite to participate in the PMT also extends to all party leads (or a nominee) and Council Directors. The objective is to secure expert input (in an advisory role) into the plan making process.

2.7 At Preferred Options Paper (POP) stage the PMT provided information and expert advice on a range of key strategic planning issues that the LDP should seek to address. At draft Plan Strategy stage the team provides comment on our LDP draft policy approach covering a range of topic areas.

2.8 The AMR is set out at Appendix 2 (attached).

¹ "Sustainable development" was defined in the World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987 Brundtland report 'Our Common Future' as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

- 2.9 It is important to note that Northern Ireland has a new LDP process, and although it was anticipated that the new regime would take some time to settle down it has been a much steeper learning curve than was originally anticipated, for all of the 11 councils (both officers and elected members) as well as the key consultees and stakeholders, and the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) in its oversight role.
- 2.10 Dfi has, during the LDP process to date, issued a number of guidance documents which the Council has taken account of during its LDP preparation. However, the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 is also now a consideration, as will any regional policy and guidance updates (including the Marine Plan for NI and the Programme for Government) which must be taken into account as we continue through this process.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Committee note the attached LDP Project Management Team Annual Monitoring Report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: LDP Project Management Team Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: LDP Project Management Team: Annual Monitoring Report (01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024)

Appendix 1: LDP Project Management Team Terms of Reference



Local Development Plan Project Management Team (SA Group)

Terms of Reference

NAME

The name of the group will be the 'Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Local Development Plan Project Management Team (SA Group)'.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Project Management Team, in line with the Council's published 'Statement of Community Involvement in Planning' (SCI), is to facilitate key consultee co-operation in the plan making process. This team will be consulted on and act as the screening and scoping group for the LDP Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and any other necessary assessments and appraisals.

OBJECTIVES

- Engagement by key stakeholders (in an advisory role), senior council officers and elected members in the Plan process.
- To secure the necessary expert input into the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) process.
- To seek agreement on the final input to inform the Plan documents to be presented to Council for approval.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

In line with Council's published "Statement of Community Involvement in Planning" (SCI) the LDP Project Management Team will comprise of:-

- Senior Council Officers;
- Plan Manager; and
- Key government departments

All Council directors will be invited to participate in the Project Management Team meetings.

The Head of Planning will chair the Group.

The Plan Manager will act as Secretary to the Group.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members of the Project Management Team should declare **any** personal interest that may exist, or may be perceived to exist, in relation to any decisions or recommendations made by the group.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality must be maintained at **all** times.

In the conduct of their duties, members of this group will be privy to material that is confidential, or which should reasonably be regarded as being of a confidential nature. This material must **not** be distributed outside of the group.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Project Management Team will normally meet on a quarterly basis. However, there may be occasions when an ad hoc meeting is required to ensure that we meet our published LDP Timetable. In this instance at least one week's notice will be given (via e-mail).

The Project Management Team shall take minutes of all meetings. These may be open to public scrutiny.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated to all attendees within one week of the meeting being held.

REPORTING STRUCTURES

The Group (through the secretary) will supply an annual monitoring report to inform Council on its progress in meeting the Plan timetable and identifying the causes of any significant delay.

The Group will be required to complete its objectives within the timescale for the adoption of the Plan, as per the Plan Timetable.

SIGNATURES

1. Chairperson in group: DERISE DICKSON (CHAIR)

Signed: [REDACTED] 02/08/2017

2. Name and Position in group: SHARON MULHERN: SECRETARY

Signed: [REDACTED] 2/8/17.

APPENDIX 2:

Local Development Plan (LDP) Project Management Team: Annual Monitoring Report (01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024)

1.0 Annual Monitoring Report

- 1.1 In preparation for and following a series of party group meetings and member workshops (see table 1 below) consultation with the Project Management Team was undertaken as and when required, throughout the reporting period, to ensure expert input, in an advisory role, in the preparation of the dPS.

Table 1: Party Group Meetings & Member Workshops

Group Party Mtg - PUP	29/08/23
Group Party Mtg – DUP	31/08/23
Group Party Mtg - SF	05/09/23
Group Party Mtg - Alliance	12/09/23
Member Workshop	07/12/23
LDP Working Group	19/03/24

2.0 Impact on LDP Timetable

- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement for a council to prepare, and keep under review, a timetable for the preparation and adoption of its LDP. The timetable must include indicative dates for each stage of LDP preparation and the publication of the POP and development plan documents (Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan) as well as accompanying documents such as the SA. The LDP must be prepared on the basis of robust and sound evidence.
- 2.2 The initial timetable was published on 29th November 2016. It has been revised on several occasions since, as follows:
- Revision 1 - December 2017
 - Revision 2 - November 2019; and
 - Revision 3 - May 2021.
- 2.3 Each revision was approved by Council prior to notifying the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) and seeking agreement with DfI, prior to formal publication, as required.
- 2.4 The current published LDP Timetable (Revision 3) sets out an indicative date for publication of the dPS in spring/summer 2022. Members will be aware of the work being undertaken by planning officials in its preparation. A chronology of important events relating to this is set out at Table 2, below:

Table 2: Chronology of events relating to dPS Preparation

Date	Event
24th August 2022	dPS publication document presented at Planning Committee. Members resolved to proceed to Full Council for dPS ratification prior to publication and public consultation.
1st November 2022	dPS publication presented at Full Council Meeting. Council resolved to defer for further consideration and discussion with Party Groups.
November - December 2022	Series of Party Group Meetings held. This resulted in further evidence gathering and consequential updates to the Council's evidence base were also carried out.
August - September 2023	Further series of Party Group Meetings held following Local Government Elections. This resulted in further evidence gathering and consequential updates to the Council's evidence base were also carried out.
7th December 2023	All-Member Workshop held. Agreed to set up a LDP Working Group. Requested a paper on this to be brought before the Planning Committee for agreement.
24th January 2024	Paper presented to Planning Committee seeking agreement to set up the LDP Working Group. Members resolved to proceed.
19th March 2024	LDP Working Group Meeting held. Members agreed to officers preparing a paper for CP&R Committee to procure independent research to inform the LDP preparation.
24th March 2024	Paper presented to Planning Committee seeking agreement on revised LDP Timetable. Members resolved to agree.
4th April 2024	Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) consulted on revised LDP timetable.
10th April 2024	Response received from PAC on revised LDP Timetable.
11th April 2024	Member comment sought on the procurement Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1) prior to presentation of the proposal at the 23 rd April 2024 Corporate Policy and Resources (CP&R) Committee.
23rd April 2024	Paper presented at CP&R Committee seeking agreement on the procurement of consultant/s. Members resolved to agree.

24th May 2024	Tender advert issued.
2nd July 2024	Revised LDP Timetable sent to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) for agreement.
10th July 2024	Tender process closed. The Council received no submissions in response to the advert.
28th August 2024	Paper outlining the outcome of the procurement exercise presented to Planning Committee. Members resolved that planning officials make contact with Ulster University to discuss housing research to inform the Plan preparation.

- 2.5 As requested by Members at the 28th August 2024 Planning Committee, planning officials are in discussion with Ulster University regarding independent housing research to inform the Plan preparation.

Revised LDP Timetable

- 2.6 Given the additional series meetings and workshops (at Members' request), that have taken place since officials presented, for agreement, the dPS at the November 2022 Council meeting, and the ongoing research, evidence gathering and key consultee consultations, a timetable review was necessary.
- 2.7 Revision 4, agreed at the 27th March 2024 Planning Committee, sets out a revised date of autumn/winter 2026 for dPS publication. It is currently with DfI for agreement.
- 2.8 The Council's Development Plan team continues to update the evidence base to inform a draft LDP policy approach to be presented for discussion at the ongoing LDP Workshops, prior to agreement with the LDP Steering Group.
- 2.9 The LDP timetable will be kept under review and the Planning Committee provided with regular progress updates.