

WHO European Healthy Cities Network Phase VII (2019-2024)

Application for Derry City and Strabane: Situational Analysis Report

The following report presents the situational analysis of the City of Derry and Strabane District in preparation for its application to Phase VII. The report reflects the information provided through a process of engagement by the Healthy Cities Partnership with representatives of public sector and voluntary/community organisations as well as government departments. During this engagement, a wide range of current and planned initiatives were highlighted. The Healthy Cities Partnership recognises that this is not a comprehensive picture of the full range of work taking place in the city and district which is relevant to the Phase VII themes, in particular by the very many community and voluntary organisations who are active in the area.

In preparing this report, the Healthy Cities Partnership initially identified the key stakeholders that shape health, well-being and social care delivery within the city. Following the identification of key personnel within each organisation or government department, a two-stage engagement process was undertaken:

Situational Analysis Questionnaire

Representatives from each of the organisations identified were asked to complete a brief questionnaire. Respondents were asked to describe the key issues and challenges under the six themes as well as current initiatives and priorities for action. This survey was distributed in February 2020 and a total of 24 responses were gathered.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic took effect. All efforts in relation to Derry City and Strabane District Council's application to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Phase VII (2019-2024) came to a halt. In March 2021, the application process was restarted along with the second stage of stakeholder engagement.

Healthy Cities Conference

On the 19th of May 2021, an online Healthy Cities Conference took place. The conference sought to gather the views and priorities of local civic, business and third-sector leaders on; People, Place, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Participation. The conference had a total of 90 organisations in attendance.

PHASE VII SITUATION ANALYSIS: DERRY CITY & STRABANE

Theme 1: investing in people

Challenges

- Between 2011-2017, the standardised prescription rate for mood and anxiety disorders has continually increased in DCSDC and NI. In the most deprived areas of DCSDC, the rate was 34% higher than LGD DCSDC average and 51% higher than the NI average.
- Between 2009-2018 the standardised admission rate for alcohol has steadily increased in DCSDC and NI. For the period 2015-2018 the standardised admission rate was 45% higher in DCSDC LGD than NI average and in the most deprived areas in DCSDC this was 250% higher than the NI average (2,426.5 admissions and 691.2 admissions respectively).
- For the period 2013-2017, the crude suicide rate in Derry City And Strabane LGD was 16.4 suicides per 100,000 population (Northern Ireland: 16.1 suicides per 100,000 population)
- Inadequate third-level educational provision with University places in the City at only 3 per 100 population (compared to 17 per 100 of population in Belfast and 12 per 100 of population in Coleraine.)
- The employment rate remains well below the N.I. average and demonstrates its ongoing considerable regional imbalance i.e. the employment rate for DCSDC is 61.6% compared to the NI average of 70%. Employment rate of 16-64 years old by deprivation quintile has seen growth in levels 2-4 but it still lags behind the Northern Ireland average and we need growth in our Level 1 Skills to Level 4 skills base to ensure local people are able to take up FDI and high sector growth opportunities.
- At 77.8 years for men and 81.4 for women, DC&S has the [second lowest life expectancy of any local government district in NI](#). Compared to the DCSDC average, life expectancy is 5.3 years lower for men and 2.9 years lower for women in the 20% most deprived areas.
- Alcohol specific mortality, elective inpatient admissions and primary 1 obesity were among 25 health outcomes in which DCSDC fared [worse than the NI average](#).
- In the Western Health & Social Care Trust, the [5 largest deprivation inequality gaps](#) are the: standardised death rate (sdr) for drug misuse; sdr drug related; sdr alcohol-related; sdr alcohol-specific; and the standardised admissions rate (sar) for self harm.
- In Derry City & Strabane, the [5 largest deprivation inequality gaps](#) are the: sar alcohol-related; sdr alcohol specific; sar self-harm; teenage birth rate; and sdr drug related.
- In Derry City & Strabane the most [notably widened deprivation inequality gaps](#) as of 2021 include obesity, male life expectancy, and the incidence of lung cancer.

Current initiatives

- [Integrated Care Partnerships](#) are playing a key role in how health and social care services in Northern Ireland are being transformed as part of the development of the new Integrated Care System. They are helping to change the way care is delivered.
- Continuation of [Community Crisis Intervention Service](#) funded by Derry City and Strabane District Council and delivered by charity Extern to reduce the incidence of self-harm and suicide
- The [City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund](#) is a £250 million investment to increase and realise the economic potential of the Derry City Region and to support a more prosperous, united community and stronger society. The investment will contribute to building a stronger, more resilient and inclusive economy, deliver higher paid jobs and contribute to creating a more regionally balanced economy over the coming years through innovation boost, and unlocking both local partner funding and the digital potential of the city.
- Derry City & Strabane District Council's [Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan](#) aims to deliver a thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and District with equal opportunity for all across 4 cross-cutting themes: equality and inclusive growth, good relations, sustainability, and rural development. The plan involves a new partnership between government, the third sector, and business.

- The North West Strategic Growth Partnership, in partnership with the Higher and Further Education and Training Institutions of the North West City Region, has announced a new agreement in education, training and innovation for the North West City region with the signing of a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) between education sector providers on both sides of the border to improve access to higher and further level education and training and retain local students for local employment opportunities
- Derry City and Strabane District [Civic Forum](#) is led by the presiding Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council and works to address issues relating to Alcohol, Drugs, Emotional Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention and Homelessness.
- Funded by Sport Northern Ireland, Derry City and Strabane District Council deliver [Everybody Active](#) 2020 to help increase quality of opportunities for targeted groups to increase participation in sport and physical activities
- [Derry & Strabane Local Assessment of Need](#) 2020-2023 identifies the inequalities facing children and young people including vulnerable groups whose needs are not currently being met and who experience poor educational, health or social outcomes. It identifies unmet needs and seeks to inform service planning and resource allocation to ensure improved outcomes for children and young people.
- A number of highly successful community-based programmes have been delivered to assist people who are unemployed, economically inactive or have a disability. These include [Steps to Success](#), [Access to Work](#) and European Social Fund Projects [Skills North West](#), [PROSPER 3](#) and Learning [NorthWest](#).
- Derry is a UNESCO Learning City. Learning cities enhance individual empowerment and social inclusion by mobilising resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning; revitalising learning in families and communities; facilitating learning for and in the workplace; extending the use of modern learning technologies; enhancing quality and excellence in learning; fostering a culture of learning throughout life.
- The [Supporting the Best Start in Life](#) Steering Group aims to ensure that all children have the best start in life by prioritising and supporting the development of positive health and well-being, social and emotional well-being; and includes the need to establish a local IMH Implementation Group to oversee the existing action plan and support the development of annual plans thereafter.
- The [Education and Skills Outcome Delivery Partnership](#) has a strategic role in setting the direction of skills development in Derry City and Strabane and has an operational role in leading, co-ordinating, and implementing the education and skills actions identified in the Strategic Growth Plan.
- The [RAPID \(Remove All Prescription and Illegal Drugs\)](#) project is a joint initiative between Derry City and Strabane Council PCSP, PSNI, PHA, and the Drug and Alcohol Coordination Team.
- The Western Health Trust's Project Life Implementation Group works to implement the Northern Ireland wide Protect Life 2 Strategy in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. The strategy aims to reduce the incidence of suicide and self-harm in NI.
- The [Healthy Living Centre Alliance](#) is an award winning network of 29 community-led health improvement organisations (6 of which area in the Western Health and Social Care Trust Aea). They are based in areas of high health inequalities, both rural and urban and are a key driver in connecting people up to services and linking the health sector and wider public sector up to working-class communities.
- [Compassionate Communities North West](#) is a partnership of organisations including the Foyle Hospice, the Health and Social Care Board, Derry City and Strabane District Council, CAW/Nelson Drive Action Group, Hillcrest Trust, Shantallow Community Centre, Ballymagroarty and Hazelbank Community Partnership and Apex Housing. It adopts a person-centred approach with the aim to improve end of life care by supporting those who wish to remain living in their own homes and engaged with their own communities as far as possible until the end of their lives.
- The [Ideas Fund](#) is a grants programme run by the British Science Association and funded by Wellcome, which enables the UK public in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Hull, North

West Northern Ireland, and Oldham to develop and try out ideas that address problems related to mental wellbeing.

Priority issues

- Improving the Mental health and Wellbeing of all citizens by implementing the implementation of the Protect Life 2 Strategy in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area to reduce the incidence of suicide and self-harm in NI for example.
- Revitalising Public Health Capacity through the delivery of the initiatives identified in the City Deal and Inclusive Futures Fund as well as the work of the Integrated Care Partnerships for example.
- Improving the City's Human Capital through skills development and the creation of better employment opportunities and pathways, particularly in our disadvantaged communities.

Theme 2: designing urban places that improve health and wellbeing

Challenges

- On census day 2011, 22.95% of people had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities
- By 2041, the number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 35,150 and make up nearly a quarter (24.1%) of the population.
- The total number of reported road traffic collision casualties for persons aged 60+ in Derry City and Strabane LGD2014 in 2018 was 97. Of these 13 were killed/seriously injured.
- 5,194 persons aged 65+ live alone (NISRA, 2016) and the the Excess Winter Mortality Index for Derry City and Strabane LGD2014 was 23.6 compared with 31.0 for Northern Ireland
- 29% of persons aged 65+ living in households without access to a car (NISRA, 2016) and 48% of persons aged 65+ in DCSDC have never accessed the internet (NISRA, 2016)
- In 2018/19, 38.1% of respondents to the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) aged 16+ living in Derry City and Strabane LGD2014 reported feeling 'more often lonely'. The comparative figure for Northern Ireland was 35.2%. Whilst a geographical breakdown by age is not available, at a Northern Ireland level, those aged 16-24 (46.3%) and those aged 75+ (43.2%) were 'more often lonely' than those aged 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and 55-64.
- 27% of DCSDC Super Output Areas are based within the 100 most deprived areas in NI. Neighbourhood Renewal Areas are those neighbourhoods that are within the 10% most deprived electoral wards and Enumeration Districts in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland has 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, 5 of which are within the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. These are Outer West, Outer North, Triax, Waterside and Strabane.
- 22% of the population are under the age of 16 and 34% are under 25.
- 54.7% of young people are living in the top 20% of the most deprived Super Output Areas (SOA) in Northern Ireland, more than double the NI average at 25.2%. Currently, this equates to approximately 23,500 young people living in areas of high levels of multiple deprivation. If local Government Districts are ranked in order of 1 to 11, with 1 being the area with the highest percentage of young people living in deprived areas, Derry and Strabane would be ranked number 1 with Belfast ranked number 2.
- Almost 40% of the youth population in Derry and Strabane live in rural areas compared to the Northern Ireland average of 34.5%. Currently, this equates to approximately 20,450 young people living in a rural community.
- Whilst we have approved the highest number of social housing units across Northern Ireland our social sector waiting list shows that, in the period between 2017/18 and 2018/19, there has been a 1.7% increase in applicants in housing stress (30 pts plus), and an overall 8.7% increase from 2014/15. Furthermore, in 2028/19 the % of applicants in housing stress (30 pts plus) in DCSDC was 75.4%, 5.7% higher than the NI average.
- Homelessness has increased by 9% in 2018/19. Private/Speculative dwelling completions have nearly doubled and whilst there have been some progress in social housing dwelling completions – and the completion rate is higher in Derry and Strabane than in Northern Ireland it is not enough to meet need. We are projected to need 12,000 additional households by 2037
- DCSDC has a significant urban and rural divide and disparity of services and transport provision between urban and rural dwellers
- The delays on the A5 Dublin- Derry road and the absence of a motorway/ dual carriageway between Derry and Belfast continue to accentuate the peripherality of the City and Region. There is a clear infrastructural deficit in the North West and the uptake of public transport is lower than average.

Current initiatives

- The [Regional Development Strategy](#) (2035) provides an overarching strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide the public and private sectors whilst complimenting other Department's strategies with spatial perspective. The strategy addresses the role of Derry City and

Strabane in the development of a strong North West as both are border regions and can provide a regional level of service into Donegal.

- Derry City & Strabane District Council's [Local Development Plan 2032](#) is under development and will inform the public, statutory authorities, developers, and other interested bodies of the policy framework and land use proposals of the Regional Development strategy and guide development decisions in the district until 2032.
- Derry City & Strabane Council have developed a [Green Infrastructure Plan](#) 2019-2032. The plan aims to improve green and blue spaces in the region and outlines that a new approach will require changes to the value we place in these spaces and how we think.
- The [Derry & Strabane Natural Capital Account of Outdoor Recreation Greenspaces](#) informs the understanding of public service providers of the benefits of accessible green and blue recreational spaces. The research behind this report was commissioned as an action from the Green Infrastructure Plan 2019-2032.
- The [North West Greenway Network](#) works to deliver infrastructure that will link people and places to provide choice in travel options. The Network aims to enhance cycling infrastructure in Derry, Donegal, and Tyrone to enable active travelling.
- The [North West Greenway Plan](#) provides a framework for the development of greenways in the North West. The plan will inform future route provisions with the benefits to health and wellbeing, physical activity, and active travel considered.
- The [Clooney Masterplan](#) is being developed by Derry City & Strabane Council in conjunction with the Department of Communities to achieve a number of aims for the Clooney area: Greenway connectivity; greenway links to Limavady Rd, St Columbs Park, and Kilfennan Valley Park; sports development; safe-guarding of future community developments at Heron Way; allotments; Glendermott Cricket Club enhancement; Radius Housing becoming part of the community.
- Derry is involved in the second phase of the [STARDUST project](#), a project with the objective of introducing low carbon, efficient, intelligent, citizen-oriented cities through green technical solutions and innovative business models to address the challenges identified by the city involved.
- We have significantly invested in the development of our parks and green spaces such as Brooke Park, Castlederg Castle and Gardens, St. Columb's Park and Culmore District Park. €8.96m of European Union PEACE IV funding has been secured to support a new cross-border park project called "[Riverine](#)". This project will develop 30 acres of shared community park space and infrastructure between Strabane and Lifford.
- [City Deal and Inclusive Future Fund](#)
- [Neighbourhood Renewal Programme](#) aims to reduce the social and economic inequalities which characterise the 6 most deprived areas in DCSDC working in partnership with communities to identify and prioritise needs and co-ordinating interventions designed to address the underlying causes of poverty.
- Derry City and Strabane District Council became members of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Network of [Age Friendly Cities & Communities](#) in January 2017, reaffirming its commitment to make Derry City and Strabane a great place to grow old in, enabling the inclusion of older persons to help make our region a more age-friendly place. Derry City and Strabane District Council are currently engaged in an involvement and consultation process which will inform the next strategy phase for Age Friendly in the area.
- Derry City and Strabane District Council's [Home Safety Service](#) focuses on home accident prevention for those Over 65, those who are vulnerable and families with children Under 5.
- [UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities programme](#) aims to create cities and communities in the UK where all children – whether they are living in care, using a children's centre, or simply visiting their local library – have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.
- Derry City and Strabane District Council (in partnership with PlayBoard NI) is working on the development of a [Play Strategy 2020 – 2032](#) for the area. The play strategy is important as it will help to guide the Council as it works to meet play needs over the coming years.

- [The North-West Transport Hub](#) marks a major new beginning for public transport in the North-West region, as well as providing the local community with an innovative new event space. The new bus turning area makes it easier to drop off and pick up passengers, while those that prefer to walk or cycle can easily use the new Greenway path linking the Hub to Foyle Street Bus Station and the city centre via the Peace Bridge. The ambitious cross-border project has the potential to transform travel across the North-West region, encouraging a modal shift in transport habits as we seek to build a ‘green recovery’ in the aftermath of COVID-19.
- The [Disability Action Transport Scheme](#) provides transport solutions for people with a disability living across Northern Ireland. DATS operates in and around large towns across NI and collects individuals from their home to bring them wherever they need to go in their designated local travel zone; this includes work, shopping, social visits, and attending health related appointments.
- [Easilink Community Transport](#) Rural Links to Health and Wellbeing supports people living in rural parts of Strabane & Derry who do not have access to public transport or their own private transport to attend hospital appointments and other health appointments across the Western Trust area
- The [North West Transport Plan](#) sets out an objective, evidence-based assessment of current and future transport issues in the Northwest of NI in the context of the Council’s growth ambitions.
- The Department for Communities is developing a new 10-year [Sport and Physical Activity Strategy](#) for NI. The new strategy will be cross-departmental and focus on linkages between sport and physical activity and other policies of the Executive.
- [Health@Work NI](#) offers health clinics, workplace health champions training, mental health workshops for management and health lifestyle information sessions to employers in Northern Ireland. The aim of the social enterprise is to support employers in creating a working environment that is supportive of positive wellbeing and a healthy and productive workforce.
- In partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Department for Social Development we are part of the Affordable Warmth Scheme
- The [Our Future Foyle Project](#) is a £25 million regeneration project which aims to transform the banks of the river Foyle and the Foyle bridge in Derry/Londonderry. The project includes the largest proposed sculptural installation in NI, riverside spaces to stimulate enterprise and job creation, an artist installation, and messaging around mental health and wellbeing throughout the area.
- [Eden Project International](#) is working with local partners ‘Foyle River Gardens’ to develop a transformational cultural, environmental, educational and recreational tourist attraction on the banks of the River Foyle. This project will draw on the work of the internationally acclaimed Eden Project Cornwall to drive economic growth and prosperity and the health and wellbeing of the people of Derry and Strabane.

Priority issues

- Creating Healthy Places and Settings by ensuring people of all ages are better able to reach their full health potential through Age Friendly and Child Friendly Cities initiatives for example.
- Promoting access to and uptake of Healthy Transport across the City by developing a multi modal transport hub through the green infrastructure plan for example.
- Promoting use of and protection of Green and Blue Spaces as prevention and pathway to recovery from physical and mental health

Theme 3: fostering greater participation and partnerships for health and wellbeing

Challenges

- Youth Service participation rates in the Derry and Strabane area have been maintained at 31% with over 7,000 young people of the 4-18 age groups participating in youth programmes. The most commonly occurring age range for participation in the Youth Service in the Western Region is 14-18, accounting for 12,684 young people of the overall membership, closely followed by the 9- 13 age groups which have 12,422 young people registered as members. Participation rates decline considerably in the 19-21 and 22-25 age bands. Only a very small proportion of the population over the age of 18 participate and those that do tend to be involved in leadership and volunteering roles or participate in accredited programmes.
- In 2015, 45% of the DCSDC population met the recommended levels of physical activity compared to the NI average of 53%, 8% less than the NI average.
- DCSDC has one of the lowest volunteering rates of all council areas (NISRA, 2011)
- The Department for Communities in NI found that in 2015/16, of those aged 60+ resident in NI, 28% participated in sport, 29% participated in arts activities, 59% attended arts events, 20% used the public library service and 35% visited a museum or science centre in the year prior. The factors which appear consistently as having the most influence on an older persons engagement across the culture, arts and leisure areas are their level of educational attainment, i.e. having a degree or higher qualification; their socio-economic classification, i.e. classified as being in managerial and professional occupations; and their use of the internet.
- A significant urban and rural divide and disparity of services and transport provision between urban and rural dwellers
- Community development capacity in our rural areas is not as well-resourced or supported as in our urban areas. There is parity of resource
- Need to utilise local health intelligence to ensure robust local data is available to understand population health needs and inequalities
- Opportunities to maximise resources and avoid duplication of funding/effort

Current initiatives

- The [Northern Sector Local Integrated Care Partnerships](#) brings together local providers and communities responsible for planning, managing and delivering care for the population of Derry, Limavady, and Strabane. Partnerships are formed with a shared focus on joining up services and investing in ways to prevent or manage illness and keep people out of hospital.
- [Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan](#)
- [UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities programme](#)
- [Age Friendly Cities & Communities](#)
- The statutory partners named our Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan have come together to form our Strategic Growth Partnership – our Community Planning Partnership and are joined by our Mayor, MEPs, MPs, MLAs, Councillors and nine Central Government Departments (they are required by the legislation to ‘have regard to’ the Community Plan) as well as other key public, private, academia and voluntary and community organisations. The outcomes and actions of this plan are aligned to the three domains of wellbeing, the Northern Ireland draft Programme for Government and the 6 P’s of Place, Planet, People, Prosperity, Peace and Participation.
- Outcome Delivery Partnerships have also been established to implement, deliver and report on the actions in the Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan in a way that contributes to their relevant outcomes. These partnerships have developed action plans, agreed timescales and identified lead partners and eight Area Based Growth Partnerships have been established to enable residents to give their views on how public services can be better provided in their own local areas. These partnerships will develop local plans which will reflect the outcomes in this plan and develop local actions to meet local needs, reduce inequalities and improve wellbeing.
- Holywell’s Leadership Programme - Future Leaders 2021 is a personal and professional development programme that seeks to upskill, increase the capacity and enhance the networks of individuals with the potential to take the lead within the Community and Voluntary Sector.

- The [Making Life Better Strategic Framework](#) for Public Health is designed to provide direction for policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of the people in NI and to reduce health inequalities. It provides an active travel demonstration project in Derry City and Strabane District Council area
- In line with the New Decade New Approach plan, the Department for Communities is developing a number of social inclusion policies which will serve the people of NI; anti-poverty; active aging; disability; inclusion and social change; gender; and sexual orientation.
- A partnership has been created with Eglinton Medical Practice to [provide physical activity referral](#) to Foyle Arena.
- Ulster University's Magee campus in Derry offers a [Sport, Physical Activity and Health](#) undergraduate degree. The degree was designed in collaboration with the School of Sport and School of Nursing to produce highly educated professionals with the knowledge and skills to organise and provide for the policy, planning, development, management and delivery of sport, physical activity and health initiatives.
- Ulster University's Magee campus in Derry offers a [Health & Wellbeing](#) final year course which extends the knowledge base necessary for practitioners to function at an advanced level and to develop into expert or advanced practitioners, advisers, managers or educators within their particular area of expertise.
- Ulster University's Magee campus in Derry offers degrees and qualifications through the school of Arts and Humanities. These subjects encourage students to explore their creativity. The school also holds events like the [Creative Arts Showcase](#) showcases and celebrates the creative talents of these students.
- Nerve Centre, in partnership with National Museums NI, to lead Northern Ireland Team of the [UK Wide Creativity Festival](#), including artists Oliver Jeffers and Die Hexen, Astrophysics Research Centre at Queen's University Belfast, Big Motive Microsoft and Taunt. Intended to bring people together and showcase creativity, the projects will reach every corner of the UK. They will include events, public engagement activities, participation opportunities and learning programmes reaching millions of children and young people, demonstrating the importance of creativity in people's lives and our collective future.
- The Lifestart Foundation provides a [Parenting Programme](#) in Derry which supports parents in creating the best environment for their child and educates on how children develop from birth up to five years.
- The development of a new [Cityside Health Hub](#) at the Fort George site in Derry will bring together GP and associated healthcare services onto the west bank of the city for the first time.
- A Health Improvement Hub has been proposed and is in development for Strabane. The aim of the project is to develop community based health & well-being programmes within the Strabane area that would address the growing health inequalities in the area.
- [Derry GAA](#) has a Health & Wellbeing committee which aims to promote positive health and well being in local clubs and communities. The committee is available to advise local clubs of key agencies and organisations who are available for support and advice.

Priority issues

- Transforming Services Delivery through the continuation of local community planning partnerships, integrated care partnerships, health hubs, neighbourhood renewal partnerships, and local growth partnerships
- Increasing physical activity by building the capacity of our local sporting and recreational organisations to become more sustainable and encourage higher levels of participation and proficiency in sport and recreational activities
- Promoting culture and health by working with our cultural partners to use engagement with arts and cultural heritage as a means of improving the health and wellbeing of our citizens.
- Increasing Health Literacy by delivering a health literacy programme focused on developing the capabilities of individuals to take control of their own health for example.

Theme 4: improved community prosperity and access to common goods and services

Challenges

- Both Executive and Legislative power in NI is concentrated in the higher levels of government meaning that Derry City and Strabane District Council has comparatively less power than it would possess if power was distributed better at lower levels.
- There is [a lack of regional balance](#) in NI across skill sets. In 2019 it was found that 43% of those possessing the middle skill level i.e., qualifications between the National Qualification Framework levels 3-5, progress into further study leaving a skill gap in the region.
- The location of the City and District on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland resulting in the fragmentation of its functional economic area, fluctuating currency levels and differing regulatory controls and environment.
- Its peripherality as the most westerly City within the UK and situated on an EU border
- The impact of the UK's departure from the EU has created uncertainty politically and socially and is affecting investment levels in Derry City and Strabane District Council area. The Council predicts that the [employment rate](#) will not see an increase until 2023 and by 2030 there will be 5000 less jobs in the area than if a 'soft' withdrawal deal had been arranged.
- There is a [high level of absolute and relative poverty](#) in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area which in the most recent data was found to have the lowest percentage of income from employment at 60% and highest rate of income from state support at 30%.
- The % of children living in low income families (0-15 years) is 10.4% higher than the NI average (2016)
- We have a higher percentage of people who are economically inactive due to a disability or long term illness.
- The employment rate remains well below the N.I. average and demonstrates its ongoing considerable regional imbalance i.e. the employment rate for DCSDC is 61.6% compared to the NI average of 70%. Employment rate of 16-64 years old by deprivation quintile still lags behind the Northern Ireland average and we need growth in our Level 1 Skills to Level 4 skills base to ensure local people are able to take up FDI and high sector growth opportunities.
- In August 2017, 25% of those claiming long-term unemployment benefit were young people aged under 25 (NI average of 19%).
- A much larger private sector is needed to increase local wealth levels, reduce vulnerability on external funding (be that EU, welfare payments or other forms of transfer) and drive prosperity. There is an over-reliance on the public sector for employment opportunities due to the decline of many traditional industries and the outflow of local talent.
- In 2018/19, there were 3,551 vacancies notified in Derry City And Strabane Local Government District to Jobs and Benefits Offices, Job Centres and Department for Communities.
- 7.7% of 16-24 year olds in Derry and Strabane are currently claimant count rates which is the highest in Northern Ireland. (NISRA 2021)
- The Gross Median pay gap has widened slightly against the Northern Ireland average and residents still have a significant differential in median pay i.e. the gross median annual pay for those residing in DCSDC during 2019 was £19,207, £19,373 for those working in DCSDC and £22,491 for NI.
- The Derry City and Strabane District Council area lacks [rural transport provisions](#) which poses difficulties to those using public transport for community, education, employment and for legislation.
- There is a lack of connectivity in the North West. The dual carriageway connection between Derry and Belfast is still under construction and there are no plans for a motorway passing by Ballymena. Bad road connections make it slower for goods to get to market, damage productivity and hinder competitive potential.

Current initiatives

- The [Regional Development Strategy](#) (2035) provides an overarching strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide the public and private sectors whilst complimenting other

Department's strategies with spatial perspective. The strategy addresses the role of Derry City and Strabane in the development of a strong North West as both are border regions and can provide a regional level of service into Donegal.

- Project Ireland 2040 is the Irish government's long-term strategy to improve Ireland for the benefit of its people. The plan adjusts how public investment is approached and supports businesses and communities to reach their potential. The plan includes investment in public transport for the Northwest which incorporates a cross-border network with Derry as well as support for the North West Strategic Growth Partnership between Derry and Donegal.
- The [North West Transport Plan](#) sets out an objective, evidence-based assessment of current and future transport issues in the Northwest of NI in the context of the Council's growth ambitions. The plan addresses Derry City in acknowledging the need for; the re-use of brownfield sites to reduce journey lengths; support for sustainable transport; a network of green and blue infrastructure; and the removal/reduction of traffic on sensitive links.
- The Department for Communities is developing an [Anti-Poverty Strategy](#) in line with the New Decade New Approach plan to address inequalities and obstacles that directly affect the everyday lives of the most vulnerable in NI. The strategy is important for the Derry City & Strabane District Council area as it had the lowest percentage of income from employment at 60% and highest rate of income from state support at 30% at last review.
- The [Anti-Poverty Group](#) advises the Department for Communities on the development and drafting of the new Anti-Poverty Strategy. The role of the group is to help the DfC understand the experience of, and issues faced by the people the strategy is aimed at.
- The [Advice North West](#) provides independent, free, impartial, and confidential advice to the people of the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. Advice can be delivered on benefits; debt; family; health; housing; immigration; law; employment; and tribunals.
- Derry-Strabane [Enterprise Week](#) offers a programme of free events for local businesses to access advice and support from industry experts across a range of sectors. The aim of the week is to inject inspiration, information, and networking into local business.

Priority issues

- Building and strengthening community resilience by empowering communities to make the most of their assets through the community asset strategy, investment package and neighbourhood renewal and designing and delivering a programme of improved community centres and facilities for example
- Delivering universal social protection floors at the local level by delivering the integrated care partnership and the anti poverty strategy recommendations which plan to address inequalities and obstacles that directly affect the everyday lives of the most vulnerable in NI.
- Healthy Urban Planning and Design by promoting access to and uptake of Healthy Transport across the City by developing a multi modal transport hub through the green infrastructure plan for example.
- Healthy Housing and regeneration through the delivery of the local development plan which aims to meet housing need for example.
- Improving the Mental health and Wellbeing by ensuring meaningful and rewarding employment is available to everyone
- Transformative economic models for equitable, sustainable development through the delivery of the integrated economic strategy for the district and the circular economy

Theme 5: promoting peace and security through inclusive societies

Challenges

- 2,000 residents in Derry City and Strabane District Council aged 3+ speak a language other than English or Irish as their main language. Of those whose main language is not English or Irish, 23% cannot speak English, or cannot speak it well.
- Crimes with a Racist/Homophobic & Sectarian Motivation have increased since 2017.
- There were 8,400 recorded crime offences in Derry City and Strabane LGD2014 during 2018/19, which accounted for 8.3% of recorded crime offences in Northern Ireland.
- Northern Ireland had 921 racially motivated hate crimes recorded in 2014/15. 110 attacks were in the 'G' District which covers the North West area. About 10% of these attacks were on children
- DCSDC has a number of areas where there are formal or informal interfaces and areas with continued interface barriers. These include, in the urban Derry/Londonderry interfaces at Fountain/Bogside, Tullyally/Currynierin and Gobnascale/Irish Street. It is in these areas that the number of offences recorded with a sectarian motive are highest.
- Segregation on a religious basis remains strong. The level of segregation and social division follows the geographic boundary of the River Foyle, with a largely Catholic population based on the Cityside (West Bank) and Protestant on the Waterside (East Bank). NI Census data 2011 indicates that 72% of the population of Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) were Catholic, with 25% Protestant. This segregation is filtered through the school system, community and sporting infrastructure. A Department of Education list of schools (2017) identified that there were 52 primary schools in Derry, 14 controlled, 3 Irish Medium and 35 Roman Catholic Maintained. 11 of the 14 controlled schools are in the Waterside and there are only three Catholic primary schools on the Waterside with a combined enrolment of about 1,000. In addition, Rugby, Hockey and Cricket (traditionally Protestant participation) have no presence on the Cityside whilst GAA and Hurling (traditionally Catholic participation) have almost exclusively Cityside presence.

Current initiatives

- [Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(PCSPs\)](#) have been established to address crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour through a range of projects and initiatives. There are 11 PCSPs in total including one in the Derry City and Strabane District Council Area.
- The Good Relations Team in the Derry City and Strabane District Council primarily works under the good relations legislation from Section 75 (2) of the NI Act 1998. This is about the promotion of Good Relations between people of different religious belief, race or political opinion. The team works on the delivery of Good Relations projects and initiatives across the Council area including Cultural Diversity, Challenging Sectarianism and Racism, Dealing with the Past, Shared Space/Contested Space, Interfaces, Bonfires and Alternatives, as well as work with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. The work of the Good Relations Team is aligned with the objectives of the ["Together: Building a United Community" strategy \(T:BUC\)](#) launched in 2013 by The Executive Office.
- ["World on your doorstep"](#) provides a list of BME community organisations that work across the Derry and Strabane District Council highlighting the diverse projects and initiatives that are being rolled out.
- The Derry-Londonderry [Urban Villages](#) Initiative is a headline action within the NI Executive's Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) Strategy, and is overseen by the Executive Office. It is designed to improve good relations outcomes and develop thriving places where there has been a history of deprivation and community tension. It is shaping and delivering in partnership with local people. The [Area Based Plans](#) map out the investment across capital projects, community led and cross cutting programmes in Derry-Londonderry and include information on the impact of the programme on people and places.
- DCSDC [Good Relations Strategy "A Sense of Belonging" for 2018-2021](#) seeks to make a seminal change in relationships between people from different backgrounds.

- The [Peace IV Programme](#) is an EU funded programme designed to support peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border region. DCSDC has been provided with the opportunity to develop a new PEACE IV Plan for the area and bid for €7.8m. Its vision is that by 2023, Derry and Strabane will be a peaceful and shared society where good relations are embedded, our communities inclusive and connected and where all cultures and traditions are respected.
- The [Women Involved in Community Transformation](#) project helps women develop the skills to work with community and voluntary groups. As part of this project DfC delivered the Engage project in conjunction with the Probation Board and Start 360, aimed at ensuring women in the criminal justice system are equipped with the resilience to withstand the pressure from paramilitary influence when they rehabilitate within their communities.
- The [Social Justice Hub on the Magee Campus of Ulster University](#) provides free legal advice on social security, employment, and aspects of family law to the local area.
- Derry City & Strabane District Council are working with Belfast City Council to develop a joint bid to become the UK's nominated host city for the [European City of Culture](#) in 2023.
- Work is underway in Derry's Waterside to develop the site of Clondermot High School into a new community hub and sports facility which will aim to unite the nationalist and unionist areas of the Waterside.

Priority issues

- Violence and Injury Prevention by reducing crime, disorder and intercommunity tensions by addressing interface and contested spaces issues and improve safety.
- Promoting peace through healthy places by fostering integration and inclusion within and between communities through animating shared spaces, services and facilities, the development of rural community clusters and fostering positive community identities for example.
- Improving mental health and wellbeing addressing the psychosocial elements of post-conflict reconciliation and strengthening inclusion, participation and social cohesion among those affected by the Troubles.

Theme 6: protect the planet from degradation, leading by example, including through sustainable consumption and production

Challenges

- Derry City and Strabane District Council have declared a [climate emergency](#)
- The [Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics Annual Report](#) for 2019/2020 found that the lowest household waste recycling rates in NI were recorded in Derry City & Strabane at 44.2% in the year 2019/2020
- In 2016 Derry was one of the worst urban centres in the UK for air pollution. Derry was the only city/town in NI listed by WHO a study that year and was found to have exceeded the WHO air pollution limit of 10 micrograms of fine particles per cubic metre with an estimated 11 micrograms. Since then, more recent data has found air pollution in the city to be [moderate or acceptable](#).
- Household waste recycling has increased by approximately 3% in 2017/18 yet remains lower than the NI average by 4.8%.
- We have very good recycling rates and landfill diversion rates but there is progress to be made in the treatment of food waste.
- 47% - 56% of households in the City and District have been recorded as living in Fuel Poverty in the most recent census (2011). This compares to a Northern Ireland average of 42%.
- Our CO2 emissions per head of population are currently on a par with NI as a whole; our challenge is to maintain this level or improve upon it as our economic prosperity increases.

Current initiatives

- Derry City & Strabane District Council and its Green Infrastructure (GI) partners have developed a [Green Infrastructure Plan \(2019-2032\)](#) for the district that aims to improve its green and blue spaces. This is the first in Northern Ireland and has a vision to assist with the delivery of actions under the three pillars of the [Community Plan 2017-2032](#) and the development of the [Local Development Plan 2032](#). It highlights that these areas provide a range of benefits including helping mitigate the impact of climate change, improving public parks, play areas, food growing opportunities and the development of greenways as well as protecting biodiversity and providing a range of ecosystem services.
- The Minister of Finance in 2017 supported the proposal for the establishment of a Social Value Act for NI. The Act would ensure NI's public bodies were legally obliged to consider social value in their service delivery.
- The [Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2020-2025](#) sets out our vision for a resilient council prepared for the effects of climate change. It outlines our vision and strategic priorities for adaptation action across Council over the next 5 years.
- As a Council we are working with the GAA to improve sustainability in our communities through the [GAA Green Clubs Scheme](#). The programme involves pilot clubs from within our District and across Ireland working with local agencies to tackle climate change and make local, practical environmental improvements.
- The Natural Capital Account aims to improve awareness of the value of access to local green and blue spaces within the district and across the province, will help to promote its use and will also encourage informed decision making for future investment into the development of green space and outdoor recreation facilities.
- The local authority has committed to abolishing single use plastics in all of its facilities by 2023 and is one of the first Councils in Europe to have a dedicated [Zero Waste Circular Economy Strategy](#), aiming to create jobs while reducing waste.
- Derry City and Strabane District Council in partnership with Donegal County Council have developed a [North West Regional Energy Strategy 2020](#) which aims to provide a strategic rationale and direction for the North West region to achieve its vision for a Net Zero emissions Energy sector by 2045.
- [The Life Project](#) is a joint initiative between Council and the Public Health Agency, focused on improving Air Quality in the region. The project provides tree saplings for every life event

registered in the Derry and Strabane area - Birth, Death, Marriage and Civil Partnership, to help reduce the effects of air pollution on Health and Well-being.

- Derry City and Strabane District Council have applied to the [Sustainable Food Places](#) network to become a Sustainable Food Place and create a more healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system. Work is underway to promote more sustainable and responsible approaches to food production.
- Derry City and Strabane District Council's [Planning Policy Statement – Renewable Energy](#) 18 considers current planning policies associated with renewable energy to determine their compatibility with Council objects and whether they need to be amended to take account of local circumstances.
- The [Foyle Eden Project](#) is a tourism and heritage led regeneration project opening access to landscape along the river Foyle and delivering a transformational vision for the Boom Hall and Brook Hall sites to turn them into visitor destinations and homes for research and learning.

Priority issues

- Climate Change mitigation and adaptation by analysing the region's energy consumption and developing a strategy to reduce energy use through the establishment of an energy sustainability forum, promoting energy efficiency, gas availability, improving air quality, appropriate planning and siting of renewable energy development and implementing a smart grid pilot project.
- Waste Water and Sanitation - ensuring our water is cleaner and more effectively managed by prioritising water investment, the promotion of urban sustainable drainage systems and protection from the risk of flooding and ensuring an integrated approach to waste management, developing a circular economy approach to meet landfill diversion targets and investing further in high quality waste facilities and infrastructure. times
- Protecting biodiversity and transforming urban places through greening our city and promoting new models of management of green spaces to support local ecosystems; strengthening local food systems; reducing chemical and pollutant exposure; reducing soil degradation; and requiring new developments to protect biodiversity.