



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department für
Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk



DfC Business Plan 2022-23

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Foreword from the Minister

The Department for Communities delivers many important services to the public and our key responsibilities and functions are outlined in this Business Plan for 2022-23. The importance of the services we deliver has never been more apparent than over the last two years as we supported citizens and communities during the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, as we continue through the second year of the Department's Five Year Strategy: Building Inclusive Communities we are faced with an economic cost of living crisis, and again, the Department will play a key role in supporting citizens and communities. This Business Plan sets out just some of the Department's priorities and key activities that we will undertake and strive to deliver during the 2022-23 year.

The past 12 months have been extremely challenging and this Business Plan outlines just some of the key achievements of the Department and highlights the wide range of citizens and communities supported through the Department's policies and initiatives. None of this would be possible without the Department's staff who should be immensely proud of the dedication shown to deliver vital services to those who need them throughout these difficult times.

I am confident that the Department will work together and with our partners to deliver on this Business Plan and continue to provide excellent public services to support our citizens.



Deirdre Hargey MLA
Minister for Communities



Introduction from the Permanent Secretary

I am pleased to introduce the Department for Communities' Business Plan for 2022-23, the second Business Plan to support our Strategy: Building Inclusive Communities.

During the past year we have adjusted to new ways of working as we recovered from the COVID-19 crisis while continuing to provide excellent public services. This year's Plan outlines a snapshot of the key achievements of the Department throughout the 2021-22 reporting year. I would like to thank everyone in the Department for their commitment and endeavour to deliver on this programme of work during the year. We will continue to develop and engage with everyone in the coming year and some of the key details from our People Action Plan for the year ahead are included below.

This Plan sets out the key activities that we will undertake to deliver against our Strategic Objectives and the Strategy's four cross cutting themes of Anti-Poverty, Wellbeing & Inclusion, Sustainability & Inclusive Growth and Agility & Innovation. However, this Plan provides only an overview of the flagship work being undertaken by the Department, driven by our Strategy - each of the five Groups within the Department are also delivering on important work, and monitoring progress on an ongoing basis through their own Group Business Plans.

In these uncertain times the Plan must remain agile and adaptable as we respond to changing priorities. We will continue to scan the environment and refine our focus when necessary, particularly in response to the current cost of living crisis. The activities within the Plan will be delivered by working with Ministers, the Assembly and other Departments, and with the support of our Arm's Length Bodies, other Public Sector Organisations, and the Voluntary and Community sector.

I am certain that by working together to deliver this business plan for 2022-23 we will help ensure that we continue to support people, build communities and shape places.



Colum Boyle



SECTION 1: Our Responsibilities

2.1 The Department delivers a wide range of services to the public – both directly and through its Arm's Length Bodies – which will support people, build communities and shape places. In supporting and advising the Minister, the Department's main functions include:



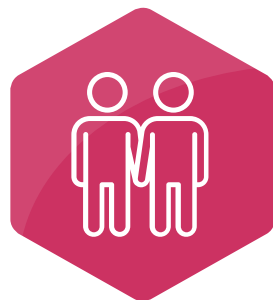
delivery of the social security system including child maintenance and pensions



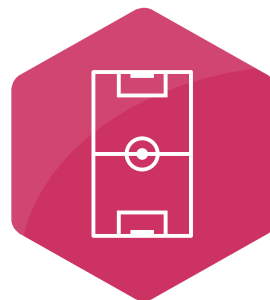
providing advice and support for those seeking employment and for those who are unable to work



ensuring the availability of good quality and affordable housing



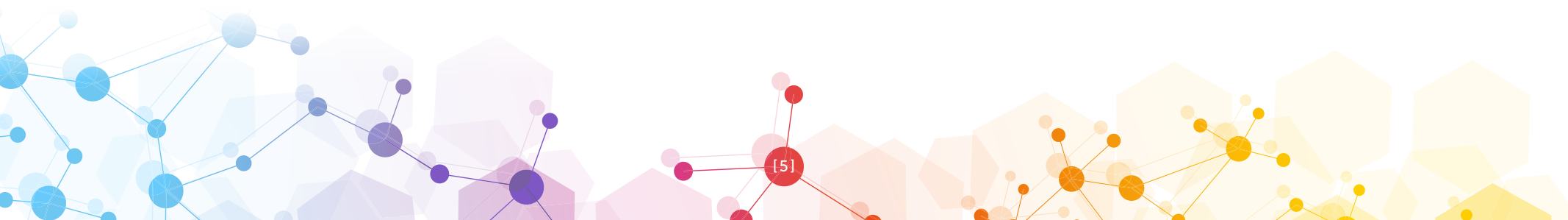
encouraging diversity and participation in society and promoting social inclusion



promoting sports and leisure within our communities

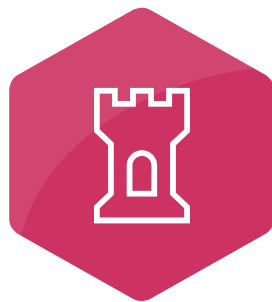


supporting the Voluntary and Community Sector





identifying and preserving records of historical, social and cultural importance to ensure they are available to the public and for future generations



realising the value of our built heritage



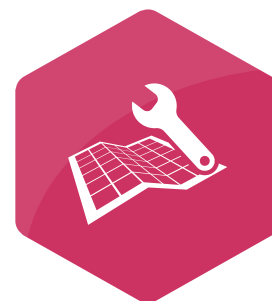
supporting creative industries, and promoting the arts, language and cultural sectors



providing free access to books, information, IT and community programmes through our libraries



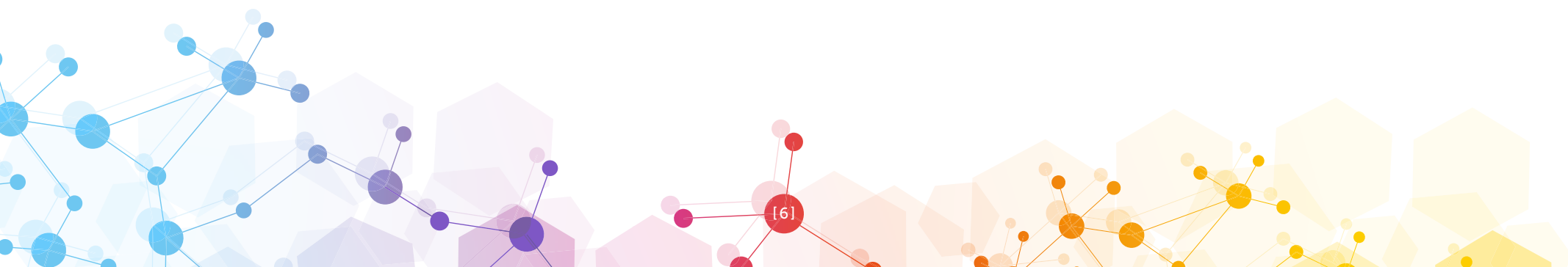
maintaining museums



revitalising town and city centres



supporting local government to deliver services

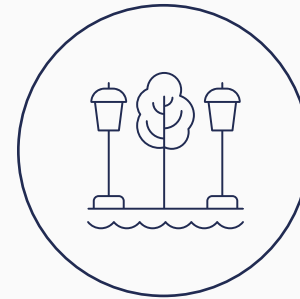


SECTION 2:

Our Key Achievements: **1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022**



The Department provided **£79 million** of grant funding to Councils.



The Department has invested **£14 million** in public realm, environmental improvement and revitalisation schemes.



The Department collaborated with DAERA and DfI to provide councils with **£23 million** towards the post-lockdown regeneration of smaller towns and villages.



The Department invested **£172 million** to deliver **1,713** new build social housing starts.



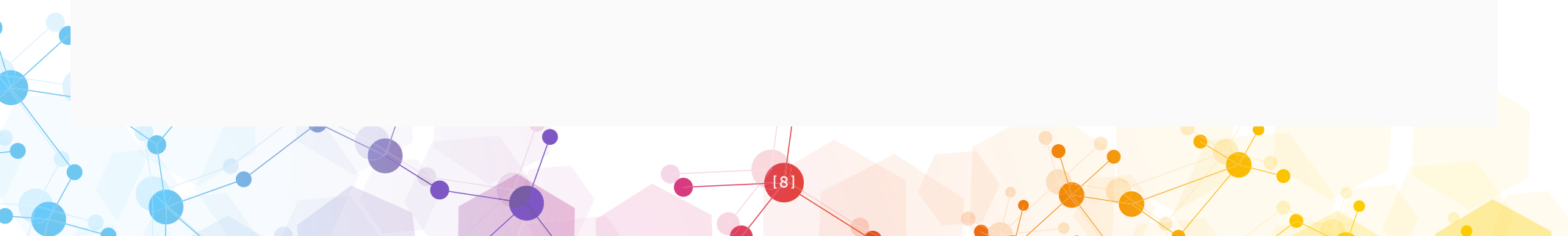
Over **19,000** people were provided with housing support through the Supporting People programme.



The Department provided **£8 million** in funding to Co-Ownership to pilot a new shared ownership product for the over 55's and delivered **877** shared ownership homes.

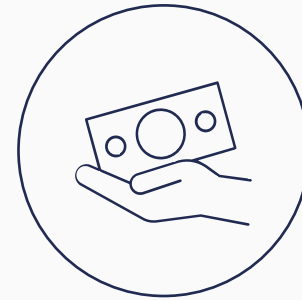


The Shared Housing Programme now delivering **58** shared schemes (**1,728** homes) across NI, with a Good Relations investment of approx. **£23 million**.





Made connections with and supported over **31,000** citizens through Make the Call.



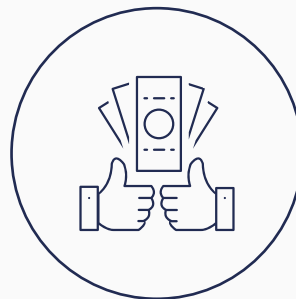
Child Maintenance Service collected and arranged **£23.1 million** in maintenance payments benefitting **19,161** children.



Delivered the **£55 million** Energy Payment Support Scheme providing a one-off payment of £200 to more than **272,000** people.



Implementation of a range of digital services including online new claims for simpler Carers Allowance applications.



Delivery of Pensions and Disability benefits to nearly **800,000** individuals amounting to **£4.3 million**



Launched 'Active Living a new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland'.



Delivered Charities Bill and Independent Review of Charities Regulation.



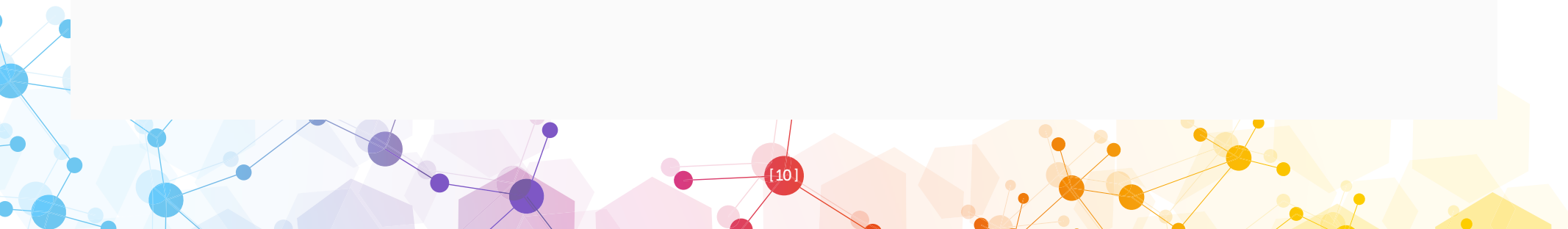
Delivered a range of funding programmes for the community, voluntary, sport, arts, culture and heritage sectors in response to impact of Covid totaling over **£105 million**.



Delivered a Programme of over **80 online events**, attended by over **4,500** participants through the Public Record Office.



Continued to pilot **5 Social Supermarkets** [with a rolling total of **300 participants at a time**].





The Department for Communities continues to lead on the development of the Executive's Social Inclusion Strategies.



The Department hosted an online event in partnership with Disability Sport NI to celebrate the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



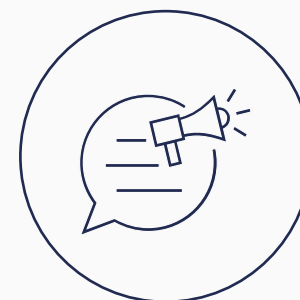
The Department published its Disability Action Plan (2020-24) and Equality Action Plan (2019-2022).



The Department issued **6,840** People Surveys with **3,397** responses received



130 Benefit training courses delivered to **1,587 staff**



Departmental campaigns provided information on a range of key supports with combined adverts seen over **68 million times.**



Over **1,300** young people commenced the JobStart Scheme. Around **60%** of those who have completed the scheme have found full time employment.



In Universal Credit, a further **62,600 new claims** were made during the year with a total of **1.2 million** payments issued.



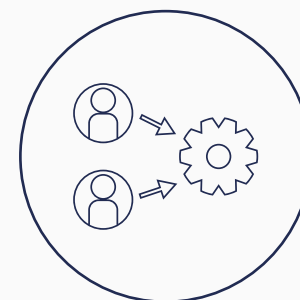
In Finance Support, there were more than **77,000** Discretionary Support grant and loan awards to people in urgent financial need totaling over **£28.1 million**.



The Department spent **£11.3 million** on employment programmes supporting **5,454** people enabling them to find and stay in work.



Just over **£7 billion** was spent on Social Security payments during 2021/22 and in addition **44,000** people were in receipt of Welfare Mitigations Extensions.



11 Local Labour Market Partnerships established within existing council areas, which aim to improve employability and wellbeing outcomes.

SECTION 3:

Our People, Resources and Governance

3.1 People

As at 31 March 2022 the Department employed 8,444 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff. This is made up of 6,807 FTE permanent staff and 1,637 FTE Agency staff.



Engaged Communities Group: **423**



Housing Urban Regeneration & Local Government Group: **367**



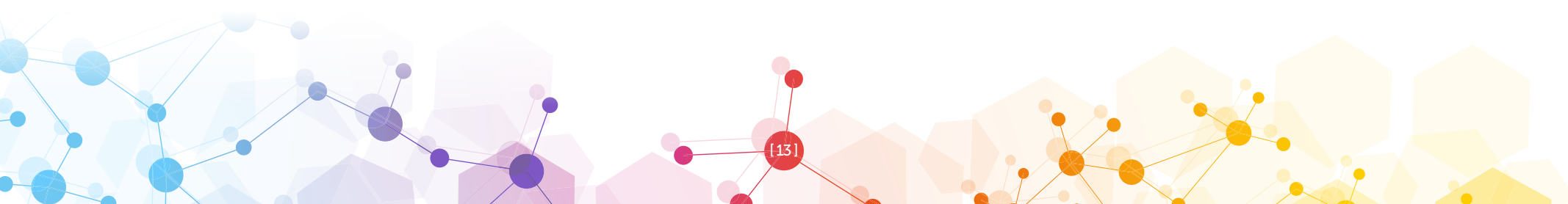
Strategic Policy & Professional Services Group: **455**



Supporting People Group: **4,016**



Work and Health Group: **3,183**

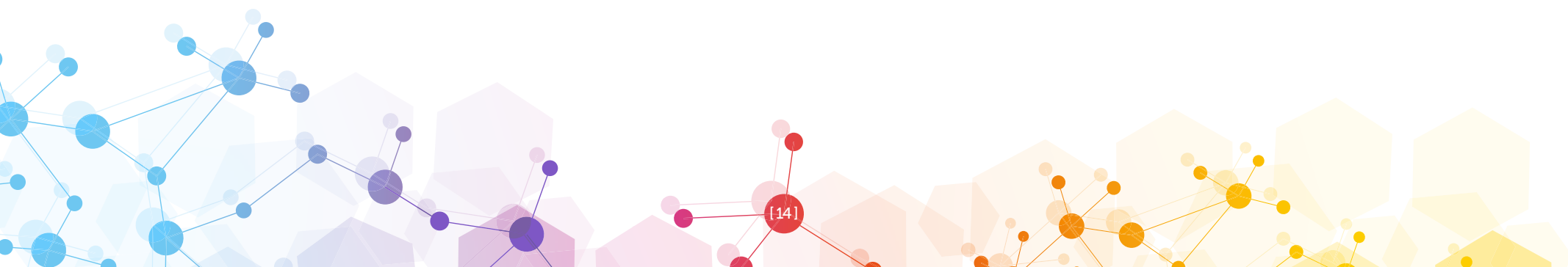


Our People Action Plan

The DfC People Action Plan has been updated in response to feedback from colleagues via the People Survey, engagement with partners in Investors in People, and the outturn from various internal project boards. In the year ahead our focus is on supporting our peoples' needs in the hybrid working environment, continually improving communications & engagement, and facilitating career and personal development.

This will be achieved through:

- Supporting NICS New Ways of Working Programme implementation
- Promotion of flexible and innovative ways of working and making better use of technology and agile working
- An expanded Departmental Workforce Strategy that includes regular focused training gap analysis and commencement of a succession planning process
- Expansion of the NICS Talent Management Toolkit and designing programmes that better harness and develop our people skills and talent
- Building on outputs from our Corporate Engagement Forums and focussed regular engagement with our workforce at all levels
- Expansion of reach and content of our Evolve Leadership programme
- Research, design and launch a DfC Mentoring/Coaching Framework
- Supporting the delivery of services by providing procedural guidance, Work Coach Accreditation and upskilling operational colleagues to engage with our customers
- Implementation of our DfC Wellbeing Strategic Framework focusing on Social, Physical and Psychological supports that ensure that Wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do
- Designing a recognition programme that contributes to a culture of acknowledgement and appreciation
- Expansion of our Diversity and Inclusion programme with key people initiatives



3.2 – Resources

Following the resignation of the First Minister on 3 February 2022, the 2022-25 Budget process was paused and the then Finance Minister announced that departments would have to rely on contingency arrangements in 2022-23 to allow spend to be incurred in the year ahead, ensuring that services are maintained.

In this context, a contingency planning envelope was proposed by Department of Finance officials to enable public services to be maintained, based on the assumption that departments would retain their baseline level of Resource funding. In addition, items that were provided on a ring-fenced basis by Treasury as part of the Spending Review and a number of previous Executive commitments would be met, including Welfare Mitigation payments and Special Rules for Terminal Illness.

The then Finance Minister also advised that, as Capital allocations are determined from a zero base, the Capital planning envelope would be based on funding for ring-fenced allocations including Flagship projects, Belfast Region City Deal Projects and Complementary Fund Projects. Non Ring-Fenced Allocations would include contractual commitments (as at 4 February), tails of existing projects and Capital for routine programmes/ maintenance.

In line with this approach, departments were advised not to make decisions to cease services where there is a reasonable expectation that further funding will be received later in the financial year when a Budget is in place. Conversely, departments were also advised not to commit to any new projects or expenditure which would increase the pressures faced or impede on the budget decisions of an incoming administration.

Following the provision of these contingency planning envelopes, the Department of Finance has retained Resource DEL funding pending Executive commitments when a budget is agreed.

On the basis of the DoF Contingency Planning proposals, DfC faces a constrained financial position in 2022-23. Engagement is ongoing with DoF in relation to the pressures the Department faces in 2022-23, with a view to securing additional funding.

The Department continues to review its existing budget to identify cash releasing savings, and whilst these would significantly impact on the Department's ability to deliver services, could be considered for implementation if no further funding is received in-year. These savings measures have been allocated a Red Amber Green (RAG) status based on deliverability and a number are being progressed to assist in managing the Department's pressures which are largely recurrent in future years.

As part of the ongoing review and cognisant of the risk of no additional funding being provided to the Department, an exercise to update the Department's potential efficiency savings is being taken forward over the Summer 2022.

In relation to Capital, an over planning approach has been taken forward, as it is more difficult to start-up capital projects and spend funding allocated during the financial year. However, if Capital funding agreed as part of a 2022-23 Budget is not sufficient, projects can be slowed down or stopped as the year progresses.

3.3 Governance

The functions of the Department for Communities are exercised at all times subject to the direction and control of the Minister (Article 4 of the Departments (NI) Order 1999). The Permanent Secretary as administrative head of the Department is responsible for strategic direction and advice to the Minister on Departmental policy making and implementation activities.

The Permanent Secretary is also Accounting Officer for the Department. This role carries with it personal responsibility for ensuring regularity and propriety, value for money and ensuring that a sound system of internal controls and high standards of financial management are operated within the Department.

The Accounting Officer is assisted by a Departmental Management Board (DMB) which meets on a six-weekly basis.

The key aspects of the Board's role include:

- setting the strategic direction for the Department
- advising on the allocation of financial and human resources to achieve strategic aims
- monitoring the overall financial position of the Department
- monitoring the achievement of performance objectives
- setting the Department's standards and values
- maintaining a transparent system of prudent and effective controls
- assessing and managing risk and establishing the Department's risk management framework
- leading and overseeing the process of change and encouraging innovation, to enhance the Department's capability to deliver

The Permanent Secretary is supported by five Deputy Secretaries, who each manage Business Groups within the Department to deliver effective public services to the community, and do so in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

The Department's Corporate Governance Framework specifies the organisation's governance structures and the roles and responsibilities of those charged with governance. This framework outlines the Department's system of internal controls, approach to risk management, governance and assurance arrangements which have been established to ensure proper and effective management of the Department's resources and the delivery of its programmes and priorities within available resources.

Governance arrangements include regular monitoring of the Departmental Business Plan, stringent financial management and control procedures, policies and procedures on managing risk, anti-fraud policies, whistleblowing arrangements and publication of the Department's Annual Report and Accounts.

DMB is supported in its role by four Sub-Committees. Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's (DARAC) role is to support the Board on issues of risk, control and governance through provision of independent advice, information and assurance to the Board and Accounting Officer on the operation of the Department's system of internal control and the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of available assurance.

The Policy and Strategy Sub-Committee ensures that the Department has a cohesive policy agenda, provides policy leadership and ensures the Department is well equipped to fulfil its policy responsibilities. It does this by ensuring policies are aligned to the five year strategy; monitoring, scrutinising

and challenging policy development; promoting collaborative policy making, good practice, innovative and evidence based policy making; and providing strategic direction to the Policy Excellence Group.

The People & Resources Sub-Committee provides assurance to the Accounting Officer and assists DMB by overseeing strategic resource planning in relation to the Department's staff headcount from a financial, HR, capability, staff engagement, accommodation and IT enabled perspective. The Committee's role in strategic resource planning also takes into account wider contextual issues alongside specific Departmental circumstances which have potential to impact on the Department's ability to achieve sustainable performance.

The Departmental Information Assurance Committee (DIAC) is a Committee of the Board whose role is to ensure that the Department has appropriate policies, management and governance systems to effectively protect the considerable volume of information held by the Department. DIAC is chaired by the Senior Information Risk Owner and assists the Board and Accounting Officer with responsibilities relating to the use, processing, storage, sharing and transmission of information or data and the systems and processes used for those purposes.

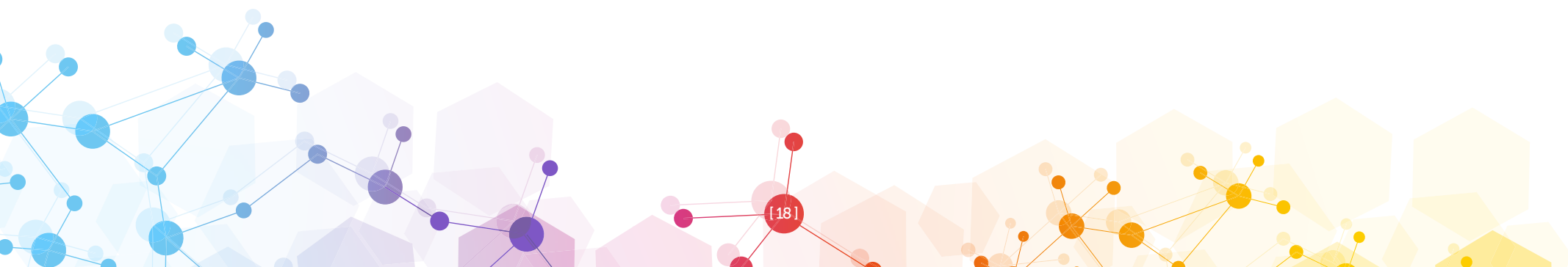
The Department will also implement its Equality Scheme to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The Department is committed to complying with its statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.



SECTION 4:

Our Strategic Objectives and Activities for 2022-2023

- 4.1** While the Strategy defines what we want to do, this Business Plan sets out how we are going to do it, setting out key activities and milestones to deliver against the strategic objectives and priorities until 31 March 2023. These activities and milestones have significant interdependencies to delivering on the objectives and priorities which will help support people, build communities, and shape places.
- 4.2** The Department's objectives, activities and supporting programme of work for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 is attached at Annex A. This represents a snapshot of our key activities with further detail captured at Group Business Plan level. The Business Plan has been developed with consideration for the outcomes and spirit of the previous Programme for Government and NICS Outcomes Delivery Plans. As a new Programme for Government Framework is developed, approved and published, an exercise will be undertaken to map the key activities against PfG outcomes to ensure robust alignment.
- 4.3** DMB will receive quarterly progress updates throughout the 12 month period of the Plan with assurance provided through the Policy and Strategy Sub-Committee review. Progress of the longer term strategic objectives will be measured through the quarterly monitoring of business planning activities, with a RAG rating assigned to each objective on a quarterly basis and agreed with deputy secretaries.
- 4.4** Our Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs), Councils and other Executive Departments perform many vital and significant functions and it is through the strategic alignment of objectives and working with these strategic partners that the Department will deliver much of its work. The Partners we work with are outlined below:





Arm's Length Bodies:

Armagh Observatory & Planetarium
 Arts Council for Northern Ireland
 Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
 Commissioner for Older People Northern Ireland
 Libraries Northern Ireland
 Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland
 National Museums Northern Ireland
 Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People
 Northern Ireland Housing Executive
 Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee
 Northern Ireland Museums Council
 North South Language Body – Ulster Scots Agency

North South Language Body – Foras Na Gaeilge

Sport NI

Ulster Supported Employment Limited

Advisory Committees:

Charity Advisory Committee

Historic Buildings Council

Historic Monuments Council.

Ministerial Advisory Group for Architecture and the Built Environment

Other:

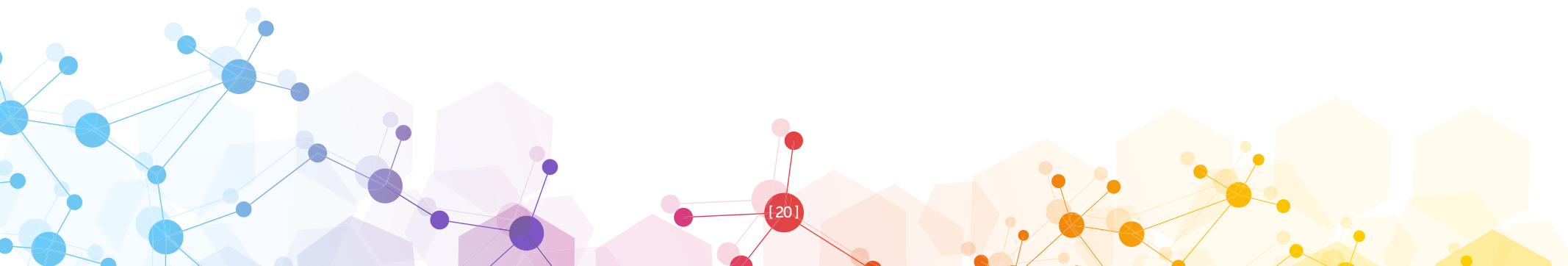
The Discretionary Support Commissioner

Vaughan's Charitable Trust

Local Government Boundaries Commissioner

Annex A:

Departmental Business Plan 2022-23



Theme



ANTI-POVERTY

Priority: Lead the co-design, development and delivery of a cross Department Anti-Poverty Strategy supported by evidence-based policy proposals to deliver targeted interventions based on need

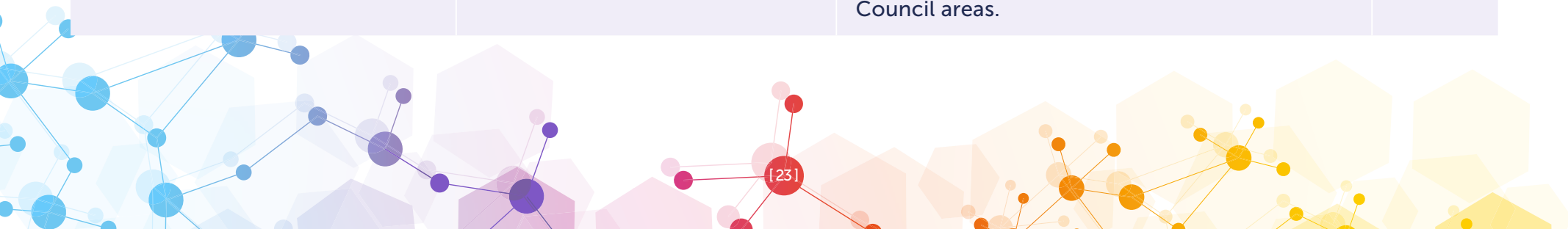
Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Deliver a co-designed, cross departmental Anti-Poverty Strategy to seek to address the causes and impact of poverty.	Develop and publish an Anti-Poverty Strategy to address poverty based on Objective Need.	By 31 March 2023, issue draft Anti-Poverty Strategy for public consultation (subject to Executive approval).	SPPSG

Priority: Through co-design and co-delivery, develop and implement services and policies that provide modern and progressive social security for citizens

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Deliver a Social Security System which supports the reduction of poverty.	To ensure the relevant legislation is in place for social security, child maintenance, pensions and Welfare Mitigations.	By 31 March 2023 to have taken forward the relevant legislation in relation to social security, Welfare Mitigations, child maintenance, pensions and the ongoing delivery of the Welfare Reform Programme through the legislative process within the prescribed timelines.	WHG
	Welfare Reform Mitigations and supporting legislation - develop detail of any new recommendations agreed in principle by the Executive.	By 31 March 2023 to have shared and progressed agreement on recommendations in respect of Welfare Reform Mitigations by the Executive.	
	Develop a plan and approach to implement the Move to Universal Credit (UC) in NI. [Subject to Ministerial approval]	By 31 March 2023 to have an agreed Plan to implement the Move to UC in NI. By 31 March 2023 for DoF to have given approval for a further addendum to be produced for the Outline Business Case (OBC) v2 providing for the Move to UC in NI.	
	Complete the transfer of The Appeals Service (TAS) to NI Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS).	By 31 March 2023 transfer TAS to NICTS.	HURLG

Priority: Collaborate with other Departments and delivery with partners on cross-cutting issues, including homelessness, place and deprivation-based approaches, and employability to deliver a sustainable and effective set of anti-poverty interventions

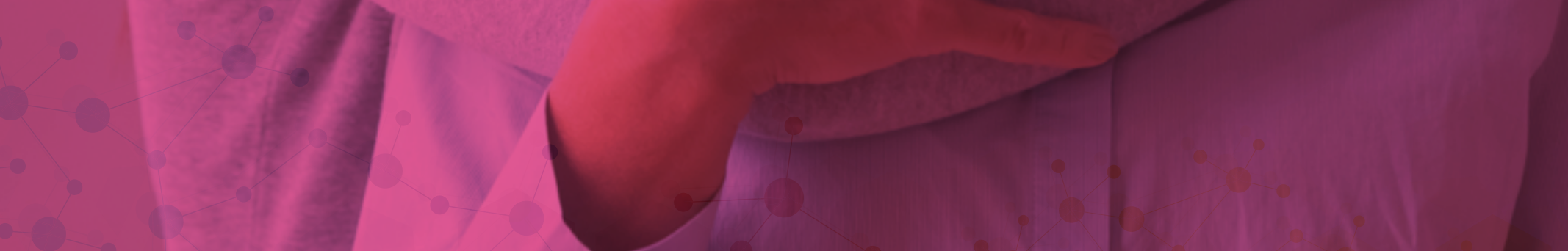
Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Work collaboratively towards sustainable anti-poverty interventions which build community wealth and address objective need.</p>	<p>Develop and promote interventions to address place-based deprivation and poverty and the hardship caused by food poverty and problem debt.</p>	<p>By 30 December 2022 to have brought forward policy proposals and scope of an Assembly Bill for a NI Debt Respite Scheme.</p>	<p>ECG</p>
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have initiated a consultation on draft policy proposals for a NI Debt Respite Scheme.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have completed and implemented a series of actions arising from the strategic review of place-based deprivation as part of the Anti-Poverty Strategy and action plan.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to have agreed a Departmental Action Plan, with agreed measures, for embedding Community Wealth Building into departmental policy and delivery.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to have begun implementation of a programme of tailored community wealth building capacity building interventions.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have funded 260 applications encompassing over 300 organisations under the People and Place Strategy, to the value of £18.06m across 65 geographical areas targeting a population of approximately 290,000.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to work collaboratively with statutory and third sector partners to deliver holistic responses to food insecurity across all Council areas.</p>	



Theme

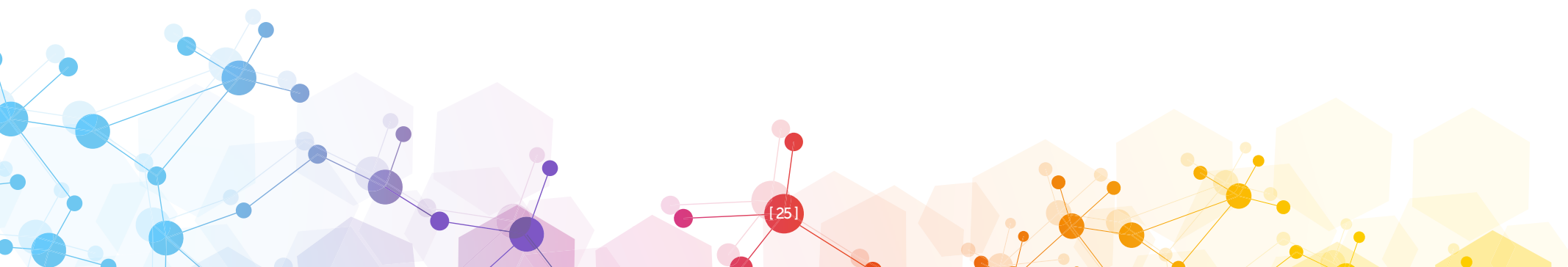


**WELLBEING
& INCLUSION**



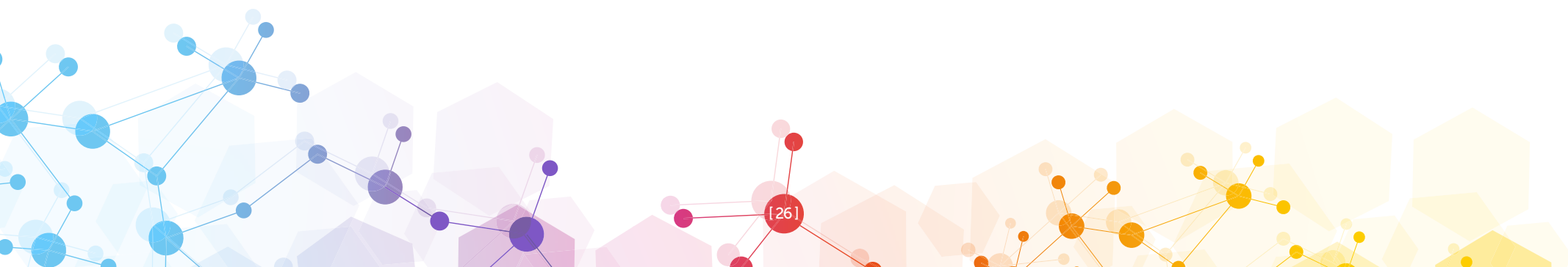
Priority: Increase and incentivise participation in labour market and wider society through targeted, sustainable interventions, delivering these alongside community-based partners and other sectors

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Continue the promotion of social inclusion in respect of disability; older people; gender; and sexual orientation through the delivery of co-designed policy and cross-departmental strategies.	Develop and publish: a Disability Strategy to promote social inclusion of disabled people; a Gender Equality Strategy to promoted equality and social inclusion between men and women; and a Sexual Orientation/ LGBTQI+ Strategy to promote social inclusion of LGBT people.	By 31 March 2023, issue draft Disability Strategy for public consultation (subject to Executive approval).	SPPSG
		By 31 March 2023, issue draft Gender Equality Strategy for public consultation (subject to Executive approval).	
		By 31 March 2023, issue draft Sexual Orientation / LGBTQI+ Strategy for public consultation (subject to Executive approval).	
	Develop and publish a new Active Ageing Strategy for post 2022 (subject to Ministerial approval) to promote the social inclusion of older people.	By 30 June 2022 deliver a virtual Strategic Insight Lab to provide strategic direction for the Active Ageing Strategy.	
		By 30 September 2022 hold a virtual Prioritisation Lab to prioritise key recommendations for the Strategy.	
Increase and incentivise participation in the labour market and wider society through targeted, sustainable interventions, delivering these alongside community-based partners and other sectors.	Deliver the Harkin Summit, building greater awareness of disability employment challenges and creating a legacy for NI.	By 30 June 2022 to have successfully delivered the Harkin Summit.	WHG
		By 31 March 2023 to have completed an evaluation of the Harkin Summit Project.	



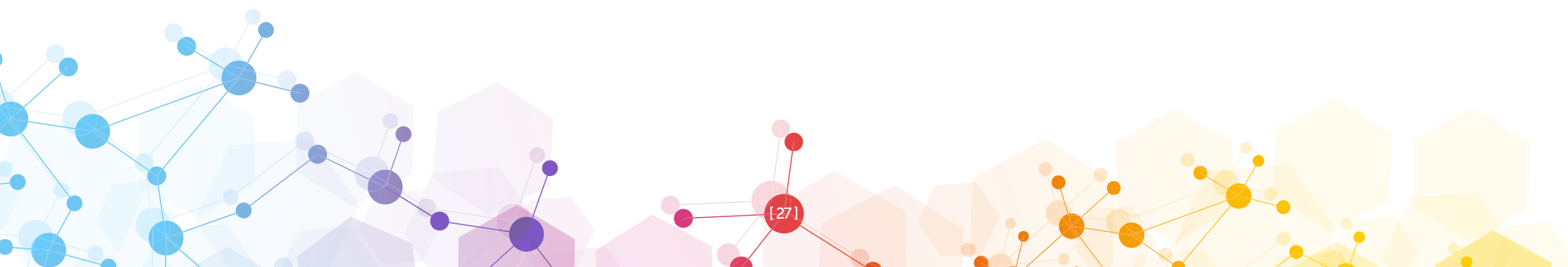
Priority: Increase and incentivise participation in labour market and wider society through targeted, sustainable interventions, delivering these alongside community-based partners and other sectors

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Increase and incentivise participation in the labour market and wider society through targeted, sustainable interventions, delivering these alongside community-based partners and other sectors.</p>	<p>Develop and co-design fresh policy, interventions and labour market provision that support those with disabilities to move closer, find, retain and progress in employment.</p>	<p>By 31 May 2022, to have extended Workable NI using a grant process and extended Access to Work NI contracts for 9 months.</p>	<p>WHG</p>
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have developed detailed design for new In Work Support provision to launch by April 2024.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to have launched a new Disability and Work Strategy, aligned to an overarching Disability Strategy for NI.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to develop an 'Employer Standard' for NI that encourages and supports inclusive employment practices.</p>	
	<p>Develop a range of labour market provision to help and support young people, long term unemployed and those with a health condition to get closer, find, retain and progress in employment.</p>	<p>By 30 June 2022, gain DoF approval for the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) OBC for operational delivery.</p>	
		<p>By 31 July 2022, present assessment of LMP performance for 21/22.</p>	
		<p>By 31 December 2022, present evaluation of LMP Test & Learn to Regional LMP.</p>	



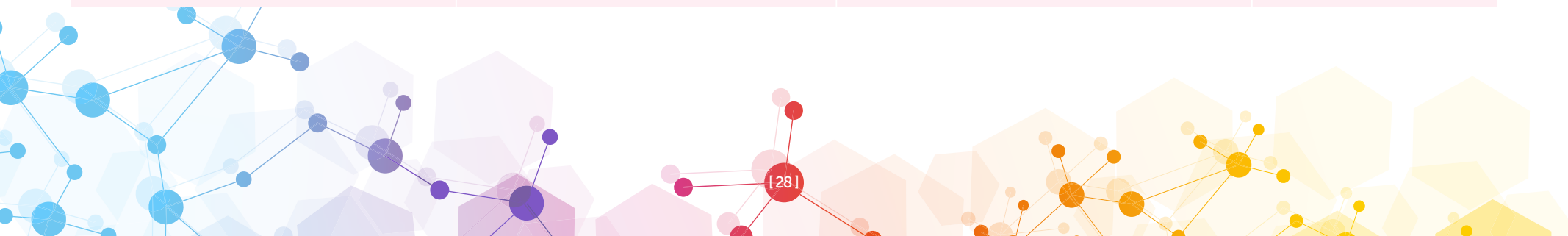
Priority: Increase and incentivise participation in labour market and wider society through targeted, sustainable interventions, delivering these alongside community-based partners and other sectors

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Deliver Minister's legislative priorities on social legislation.</p>	<p>Development and implementation of legislation on Liquor Licensing, Entertainment Licensing and Gambling.</p>	<p>By 26 August 2022 to have appointed an independent person to carry out a review of the licensing system in accordance with The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act 2021.</p>	<p>HURLG</p>
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have commenced all relevant provisions of the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (NI) 2021.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to complete Phase 1 of Gambling Reforms through the making and laying of outstanding Statutory Rules and Commencement Orders, updating of all guidance and publishing a report on the pre-design consultation on Code of Practice.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have delivered social legislative solutions in the areas of Liquor licensing, Entertainment Licensing and Gambling.</p>	



Priority: Support cultural and community confidence, participation and wellbeing through direction and support to the creative industries, museums, libraries, sport and arts, culture and heritage sectors

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Drive and lead a strategic approach to growing individual and community confidence, capacity, creativity, innovation and skills through sport, culture, museums, libraries, arts and heritage.</p>	<p>Develop a Culture Arts and Heritage Strategy that includes activity to raise aspirations, build skills and inspire people.</p>	<p>By 31 August 2022 to have published a way forward report for the strategy.</p>	<p>ECG</p>
		<p>By 28 February 2023 to have published a draft strategy for public consultation.</p>	
	<p>Ensure that our culture, heritage and sporting sectors and infrastructure contribute to economic prosperity, drive inclusive growth and address disadvantage.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2023, to progress the Carrickfergus City Deal project to the City Deal timetable.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 have an approved business case and detailed 10 year programme plan in place for the State Care Investment Programme.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 deliver actions in at least 5 villages through the dispersal of viability, development or delivery grants in the Village Catalyst Grant Scheme.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to complete research on market failure and the historic environment and on the condition of listed buildings in line with the ministerial commitment to the Culture Arts & Heritage Taskforce.</p>	
	<p>By 31 March 2023, to have an initial high level Delivery Action Plan developed to track progress against the six key themes in the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.</p>		



Priority: Support cultural and community confidence, participation and wellbeing through direction and support to the creative industries, museums, libraries, sport and arts, culture and heritage sectors

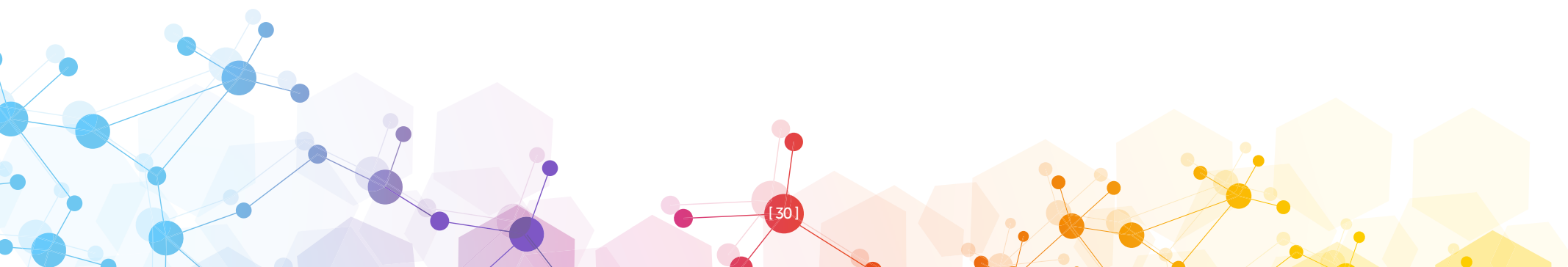
Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Drive and lead a strategic approach to growing individual and community confidence, capacity, creativity, innovation and skills through sport, culture, museums, libraries, arts and heritage.</p>	<p>Develop plans to progress the Regional and Sub-Regional Sports Stadia Programmes to completion.</p>	<p>By 30 June 2022 (subject to Court processes), participate in the defence of Judicial Review (JR) of the Casement Park Planning Permission with DfI, TEO and Ulster Council GAA (UCGAA), to support a JR ruling.</p>	<p>ECG</p>
		<p>By 31 July 2022, assist UCGAA to develop a range of Integrated Supply Team contract/ procurement strategy options.</p>	
		<p>By 30 November 2022, assist UCGAA in implementation of optimum Integrated Supply Team contract/ procurement strategy (subject to conclusion of JR ruling).</p>	
		<p>By 31 December 2022 to have identified structural needs for football stadia along with quantification of financial need through engagement with the Task and Finish Group.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have developed an OBC for each strand of the Programme and obtained appropriate approvals. [Subject to Ministerial approval and available budget]</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to have commenced roll-out and launch of the Programme. [Subject to Ministerial approval and available budget]</p>	

Priority: Promote, enhance and develop indigenous languages and their culture through collaboration with other Departments and key stakeholders

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Lead on the New Decade New Approach (NDNA) commitments to develop and deliver an Irish Language Strategy and an Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture Strategy and to lead on the NDNA commitment to introduce a Sign Language Bill to the Assembly to broaden the inclusion of communities.	Develop and publish an Irish Language Strategy and an Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture Strategy and progress Sign Language Legislation onto the Assembly Legislative Programme.	By 31 March, 2023 subject to Executive agreement to launch public consultation on the draft Irish Language Strategy and the draft Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture strategy.	ECG
		By 31 March 2023, subject to Executive agreement submit a Sign Language Bill to the Assembly Primary Legislation Programme.	

Priority: Incentivise, support and enhance community empowerment through an innovative and sustainable community and voluntary sector

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Continue to ensure citizens have access to good quality, affordable and sustainable homes that are appropriate for their needs.	Deliver a Housing Supply Strategy to ensure citizens have access to good quality, affordable and sustainable homes.	By 30 September 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the Strategy (subject to Executive approval) • Establish appropriate governance arrangements for Strategy delivery • Produce first Action Plan. 	HURLG
		By 31 March 2023, progress first Housing Supply Strategy Action Plan in line with established milestones outlined in the Action Plan.	



Theme



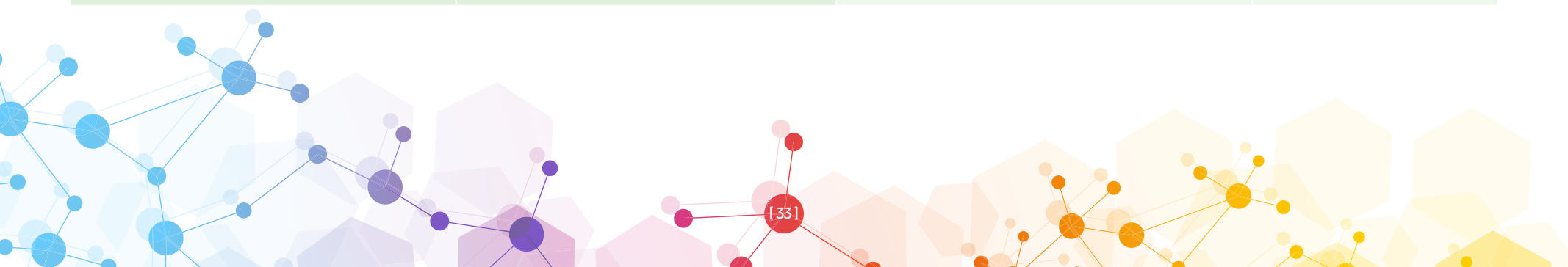
**SUSTAINABILITY &
INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

Priority: Develop and support sustainability & Green Growth in Northern Ireland

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>To ensure our approaches deliver a cohesive programme of activity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to show leadership in this regard.</p>	<p>Embed climate change considerations in all DfC activity.</p>	<p>By 31 January 2023, agree appropriate climate change clauses for all Engaged Communities Group grant letters of offer so that they can be implemented in all 2023-24 letters, and where possible enlarge this approach to all other Departmental and ALB grant programmes.</p>	<p>Chair, Climate Change Working Group (CCWG)</p>
		<p>By 31 March 2023, publish an awareness document / good practice guide on whole life carbon and understanding embodied and operational carbon issues when considering building interventions.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to establish a new DfC Division to deliver Departmental Climate Change objectives and residential decarbonisation.</p>	
		<p>Pilot by 31 March 2023 integrated climate change risk and vulnerability assessments as a key criterion for designing and implementing our urban regeneration interventions.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 NIHE to have completed monitoring of the RULET project as part of proofs of concept which test and refine approaches to retrofitting domestic properties.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 NIHE to have commenced onsite work in the delivery of a 3 year 300 unit low carbon retrofit programme to test energy efficiency, low carbon heating, tariff and behaviour change.</p>	

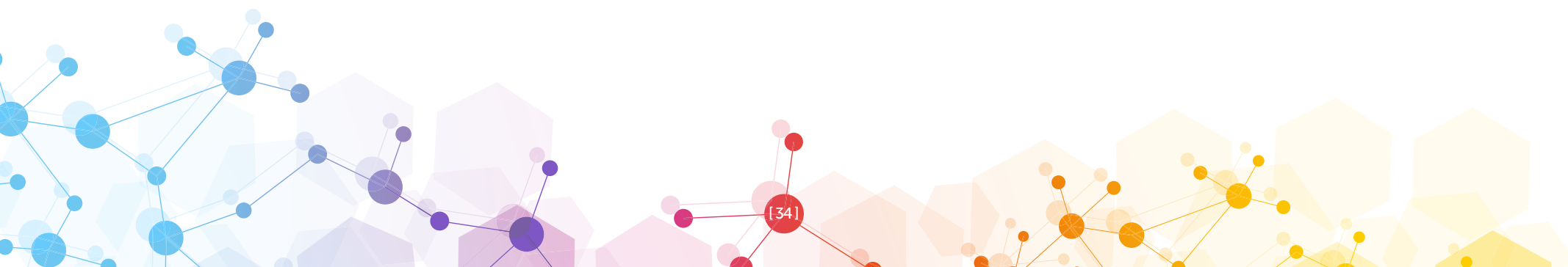
Priority: Develop and support sustainability & Green Growth in Northern Ireland

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>To ensure our approaches deliver a cohesive programme of activity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to show leadership in this regard.</p>	<p>Embed climate change considerations in all DfC activity.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2023, identify and create plans to embed key Green Growth skills in our employability programmes to support the development of necessary skills in a timely way and by means which address economic inactivity working in close collaboration with DfE to ensure alignment.</p>	
		<p>Complete Energy Efficiency Audits during 2022-23 for at least two DfC office building assets to help inform future estate decisions and improve our climate change data and insight programmes.</p>	
		<p>Build our staff engagement and literacy work, including for all ALBs and as appropriate for our funded and partner organisations, so that by 31 March 2023 staff are aware of climate change issues and how they can take steps inside and outside work to make a difference.</p>	
		<p>Implement the agreed Green Growth Test in all of our activities by 31 March 2023, thereby embedding climate, environmental and economic considerations – and the appropriate balance between them – in all of our decision making.</p>	



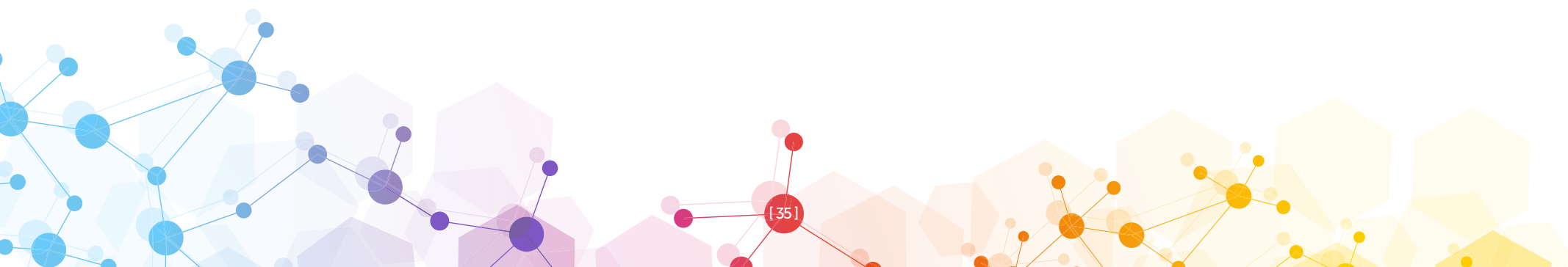
Priority: Invest in regeneration, community assets and all parts of our housing economy, including making best use of public land for housing, maximising social value and adopting a people-centred approach to investment in our towns and cities.

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Shaping inclusive places by strengthening their economic and environmental sustainability, improving our built environment, while maximising the social value of places for our citizens.</p>	<p>Progress a range of major regeneration projects in line with agreed Plans, and support the delivery of City and Growth deal projects.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2023, to progress regeneration schemes at the Department's key sites: Fort George, Grosvenor, Queen's Quay, St Patrick's, Girdwood Park and Queen's Parade.</p>	<p>HURLG</p>
		<p>By 31 March 2023, to work collaboratively with Councils in progressing City Deal projects.</p>	
	<p>To have progressed PEACE IV and PEACE PLUS implementation in accordance with Accountable Department responsibilities.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2023, working in partnership with Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB), to have commenced construction on site of all 8 PEACE IV projects.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 to have all call dates, processes and documentation for PEACE PLUS investment areas agreed.</p>	



Priority: Invest in regeneration, community assets and all parts of our housing economy, including making best use of public land for housing, maximising social value and adopting a people-centred approach to investment in our towns and cities.

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Drive new innovative solutions to increase total Housing Supply using capital grant and loan-finance, and by leveraging other sources of funding and assets including best use of public land.</p>	<p>Increase housing supply and affordable options across all tenures to meet housing need and demand.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2023 deliver 1,950 social home starts.</p>	<p>HURLG</p>
		<p>By 31 March 2023, provide a recommendation to Minister on the revitalisation of the Housing Executive and the commitment to tackle the investment challenge.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 provide 4,700 Energy Efficiency interventions in 3,100 homes through the Affordable Warmth Scheme.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023 deliver 1,000 intermediate homes.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, seek approval to publish Intermediate Rent policy.</p>	



Theme



**AGILITY &
INNOVATION**

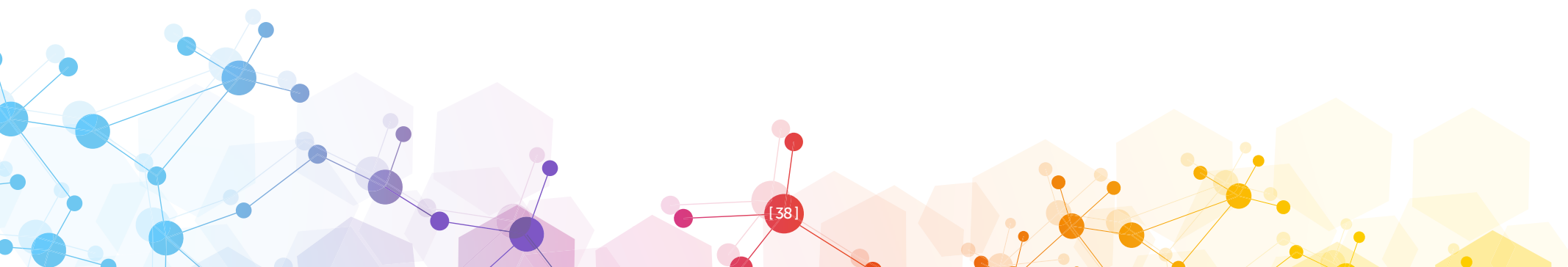


Priority: Transform service delivery by offering access to a range of channels collaborating with partners and leveraging technological solutions

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
<p>Deliver the Health Transformation Project (HTP).</p>	<p>To develop and deliver a transformed Health Assessment Service in NI from March 2024.</p>	<p>By 31 May 2022, support the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) procurement and award of contract to a new Functional Assessment Service (FAS) IT provider.</p>	<p>SPPSG</p>
		<p>By 31 January 2023, to work with DWP and support the FAS IT service provider to develop a minimum viable product which meets Northern Ireland's needs.</p>	
		<p>By 31 January 2023, complete a Gate 3 Gateway Review of the Department's investment decision for the procurement of the FAS.</p>	
		<p>By 31 January 2023, obtain Project Board and Investment, Modernisation and Innovation Board approval of the Full Business Case and agree contract extensions for the existing health assessment contracts.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, obtain Full Business Case approval for the new FAS.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, support DWP in the award of the new FAS contract to a single provider to deliver health assessments for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Work Capability Assessments (WCA).</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, develop the Benefits Management Plan of the Future Delivery of Service Full Business Case.</p>	
		<p>By 31 March 2023, work with DWP to support the roll out of 'Get Your PIP' (additional solution for citizen application for PIP).</p>	

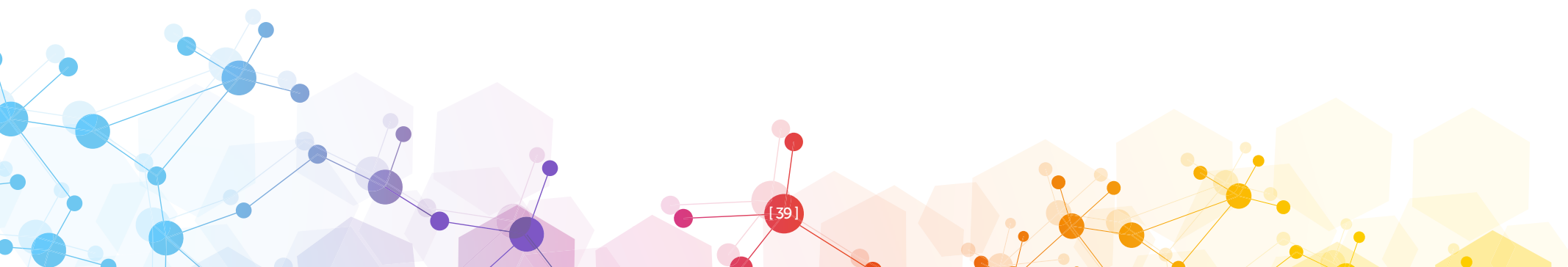
Priority: Transform service delivery by offering access to a range of channels collaborating with partners and leveraging technological solutions

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
		By 31 March 2023, commence the roll out of the Department's transition strategy to the new FAS provider for PIP and WCA to support transition and delivery from March 2024.	SPPSG
		By 31 March 2023, to have assessed and implemented (where possible, subject to affordability and value for money assessments) recommendations from a number of independent reviews on the Health Assessment Service including Strategic Investment Board Post Project Evaluations, 2nd Independent Review, Northern Ireland Audit Office Review and Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) Review.	
Deliver the IT and estates foundation for a transformed way of working.	Complete the development of the DfC Workplace Strategy and Y1 Workplace Action Plan.	By 30 September 2022 to have completed the development of the DfC Workplace Strategy and agreed Y1 Action covering the 22/23 business year.	SPG



Priority: Enhance citizen focused services and interventions through an ongoing process of customer insight, data analytics, research and analysis

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Drive evidence based decision making, integration of data analytics, and leverage greater value from data.	Develop a Data Automation and Visualisation Strategy to optimise quality and utility of analytical outputs.	By 30 June 2022 develop a strategy and action plan, to introduce Data Visualisation and Reproducible Analytical Pipelines.	SPPSG
		By 31 August 2022 ensure at least one established output employs automation and data visualisation techniques.	
		By 31 March 2023 all Professional Services Unit (PSU) business areas to have employed data visualisation/ automation and have a schedule in place to transition remaining outputs.	
Undertake a Customer Insight Programme to improve quality and mechanisms of service delivery.	Building on existing customer insight channels, to develop a programme of multi-source customer feedback for WHG and SPG.	By 30 September 2022 to have mapped existing customer insight & engagement channels and to have identified gaps.	SPG
		By 31 March 2023, to have a comprehensive programme of customer engagement and feedback mechanisms in place to inform continuous improvement.	



Priority: Transform how DfC operates by harnessing the collective potential and expertise of our people, empowering them to help shape and drive forward innovation

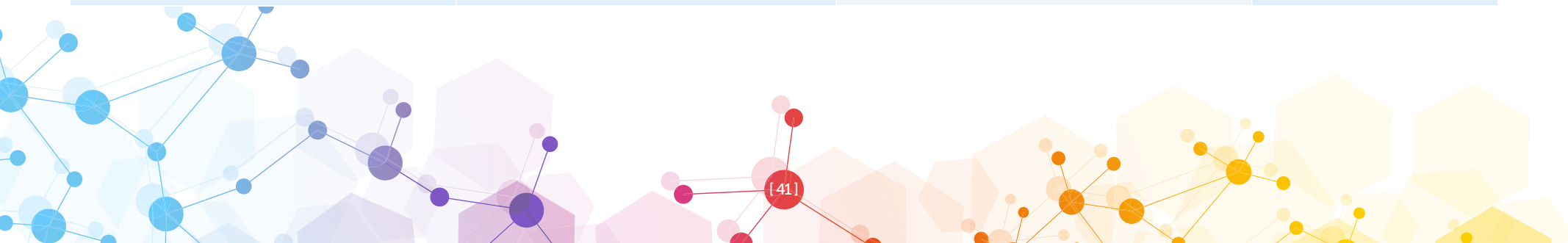
Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Develop and deliver a strategic resourcing model to support workforce capacity planning.	Develop a resourcing model incorporating dynamics and changing needs of business areas.	By 31 December 2022, to have designed and implemented processes to capture and maintain 5 year Departmental staff resource requirements to inform NICS and DfC Recruitment Planning and future Spending Reviews.	SPPSG

Priority: Utilise sustainable and effective structures for the delivery of services through collaboration and partnerships including our Arm's Length Bodies

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Support delivery of effective and sustainable structures through co-delivery and continued collaboration with our Arm's Length Bodies, key stakeholders and District Councils.	Progress arrangements and planning for the delivery of the 9 independent NDNA reviews, to allow Minister to deliver on her Executive commitment.	<p>By 31 August 2022, identify external reviewer(s) for the NI Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) NDNA Review.</p> <p>By 31 October 2022, submit reports and recommendations to Minister for Commissioner for Older People NI (COPNI) and NI Commissioner for Children & Young People (NICCY) NDNA reviews, following scrutiny by the DfC Challenge Panel.</p> <p>By 31 March 2023, submit report and recommendations to Minister for the NILGOSC NDNA review, following scrutiny by the DfC Challenge Panel.</p> <p>By 31 January 2023 develop a plan for the resourcing and delivery of the remaining DfC NDNA reviews.</p>	SPPSG

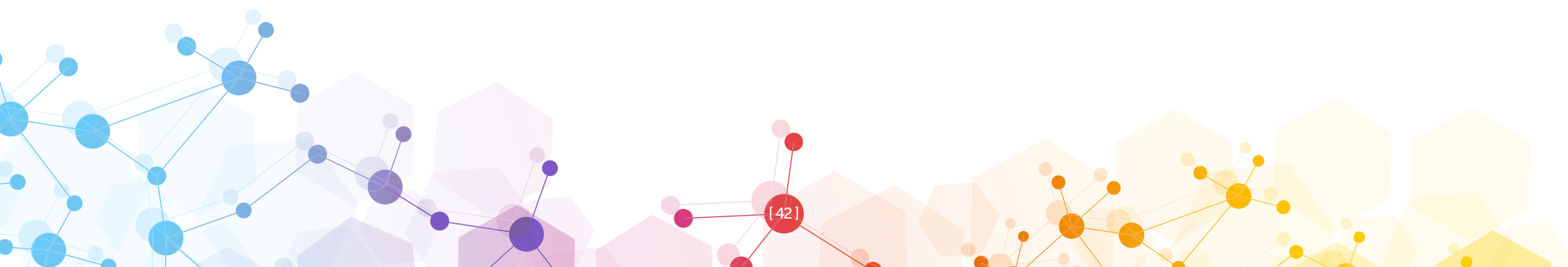
Priority: Utilise sustainable and effective structures for the delivery of services through collaboration and partnerships including our Arm's Length Bodies

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group	
Support delivery of effective and sustainable structures through co-delivery and continued collaboration with our Arm's Length Bodies, key stakeholders and District Councils.	Develop stronger, collaborative partnerships with our Arm's Length Bodies to deliver jointly on Executive and Ministerial priorities.	By 30 September 2022 to have Partnership Agreements in place for all relevant ECG ALBs supporting strategic engagement to deliver departmental priorities.	ECG	
		By 31 March 2023 to further embed strategic engagement with ALBs through established forums to identify enhanced opportunities to collaborate more effectively and add value to communities.		
	Maintain and develop the partnership and collaboration with the 11 NI district councils and ensure the legislative framework delivers effective local government for communities.		By 30 June 2022, support Belfast City Council and partners in an intervention in the Holylands and wider University and lower Ormeau area, with an intervention manager in post.	HURLG
			By 31 March 2023, hold 3 Partnership Panel meetings.	
			By 31 March 2023 facilitate 3 meetings of the Strategic Partnership Group.	
			By 31 March 2023 to develop policy and legislation in respect of local government in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote/Hybrid meetings • Local Government (LG) Cremations Regulations • LG Pension Scheme • LG Performance Improvement • Councillors Code of Conduct. 	



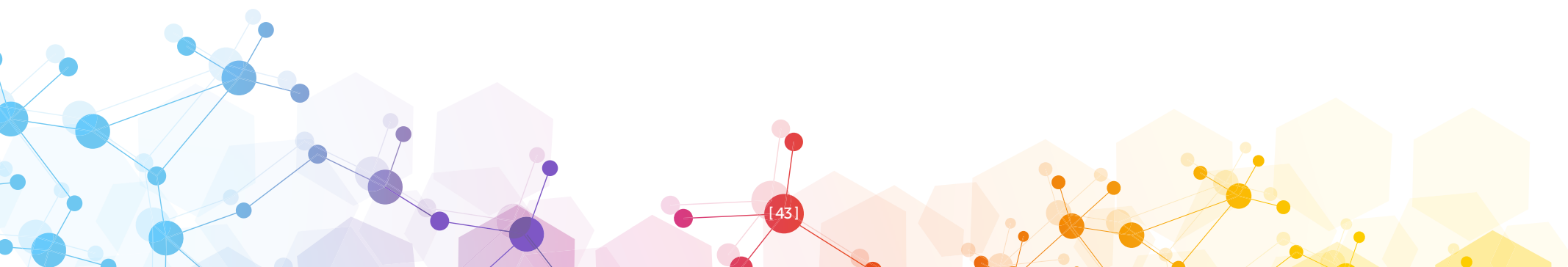
Priority: Utilise sustainable and effective structures for the delivery of services through collaboration and partnerships including our Arm's Length Bodies

	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Support delivery of effective and sustainable structures through co-delivery and continued collaboration with our Arm's Length Bodies, key stakeholders and District Councils.	Maintain and develop the partnership and collaboration with the 11 NI district councils and ensure the legislative framework delivers effective local government for communities.	By 31 March 2023 to investigate whether the accountability and intervention provisions in the local government legislative framework need to be updated and present a paper to the Minister for consideration.	HURLG
		By 31 March 2023, to have continued to co-design and deliver urban regeneration projects and interventions across the three Urban Regeneration Directorates in collaboration with other government departments and the 11 councils.	
		By 31 March 2023 to continue to provide necessary assurances to the Accounting Officer and Minister through effective engagement and collaboration with the NIHE, and through proportionate but robust governance and oversight arrangements.	



Priority: Enhance public trust and confidence in the charity sector through transparent and proportionate regulation.

Strategic Objective	Business Planning Activity	BP Milestone	Group
Update the policy and regulatory framework for charities.	Develop and implement policy changes following commitments made in the Charities Bill 2022 and recommendations in the Report on the Independent Review of Charity Regulation.	By 31 December 2022, to have consulted on a Scheme of Delegation to allow for the delegation of some regulatory decisions to staff of the Charity Commission NI.	ECG
		By 31 March 2023, to have implemented agreed Year 1 commitments in the Action Plan for addressing the recommendations of the Independent Review of Charity Regulation.	





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