



Title of Report:	Local Development Plan – 6-month Indicative LDP Work Programme (Jun-Dec 2026)
Committee Report Submitted To:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	24th June 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Plan (2026-2031)	
Strategic Priority No.4	Sustainability and Managing Our Natural and Built Environment
Outcomes	A Local Development Plan that balances growth, environmental protection, and community needs.
Lead Officer	Principal Planning Officer

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

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. Not applicable in this case.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present, in line with the Council’s current published Local Development Plan (LDP) Timetable, the 6-month, high level, indicative LDP Work

Programme (see Appendix 1 attached) which outlines the range of work to be carried out by the Council's Development Plan team within this programme¹ (Jun-Dec 2026).

2.0 Background

2.1 Members will be aware of the suite of LDP Workshops, Steering Group and Project Management Team meetings that brought us to the stage of presenting a draft Plan Strategy (dPS) at the 24th August 2022 Planning Committee, at which members resolved to take the dPS forward to Full Council for ratification.

2.2 At its 1st November 2022 Full Council Meeting the Council resolved to defer the dPS. Discussions on this remain ongoing (see Table 1 at Appendix 2, below).

Independent Housing Research Study (2025)

2.3 Ulster University, at the request of members, carried out independent housing research to inform the preparation of the LDP. UU presented the Interim Findings Report at the LDP Steering Group Workshop held on 28th August 2025 and the Final Report at the 17th November 2025 LDP Steering Group Workshop.

2.4 Subsequently, a Notice of Motion, requesting that the Council asks that the UU Housing Study Report be presented to a meeting of the Full Council, was supported at the 6th January 2026 Council Meeting. UU presented the Housing Study at a Deputation Workshop held on 3rd February 2026.

Retail and Commercial Leisure Capacity Study (2025)

2.5 Members will be aware that the Council engaged Nexus Planning to undertake a Retail & Commercial Leisure Capacity Study for the Borough. The final Study and accompanying LDP Policy Briefing Note were presented and agreed at the 28th January 2026 Planning Committee.

2.6 The Study was made available to view on the Council's website on 4th February 2026. The LDP Policy Briefing Note will inform the LDP Town Centre & Retail Planning Policies. The Study was presented, at the request of the Planning Committee Chair, at a pre-Leisure & Development Committee meeting held on 21st April 2026.

LDP Project Management Team & LDP Steering Group

2.1 Consultation with the LDP Project Management Team (key consultees and stakeholders) on our draft policy approach closed with the presentation of the dPS to the 1st November 2022 Full Council Meeting. However, given the

¹ Please note that dates may be subject to change. Additional, ad hoc meetings may be required during this programme, and due to ongoing policy review/discussions, consultation with statutory bodies and key stakeholders may be required.

deferral of the dPS for further consideration and ongoing discussions, this consultation process may need to be reopened.

2.2 The LDP Steering Group (Planning Committee) continues to be updated on Plan-making progress via:

- Quarterly updates;
- 6-month indicative work programmes; and
- Annual Monitoring Reports.

Working Groups/Collaborative Working

2.3 Collaborative work will be undertaken on the following, as and when required:

- Development Plan Working Group.
- NI Coastal Working Group;
- NI Minerals Working Group;
- Cross-Border Development Plan Group;
- Cross-Boundary Working Groups (adjoining councils); including Sperrin AONB Planning Officers Meetings.

Sustainability Appraisal

2.4 A Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) of the LDP is an iterative process, continuing throughout the entire Plan-making programme. The Council employed SES to carry out the LDP SA/SEA on its behalf. Any update to the dPS throughout this work programme will require an updated SA/SEA Report, Scoping Report and HRA.

Annual Monitors

2.5 Work will continue on the Council's annual retail, employment and housing monitors within this work programme.

Building Preservation Notices (BPNs)

2.6 Ad hoc requests for BPNs will be processed throughout the work programme, as and when required.

Trees

2.7 Officers will continue processing TPO and Works to Trees requests, as well as working through the key recommendations arising from the NIPSO 'Strengthening Our Roots' Report.

Community Planning

2.8 Given its statutory link, senior planning officials attend the Council's Community Plan Strategic Partnership Board and continue to participate in

the community planning process, working collaboratively with our council colleagues and other key partners.

Other work

- 2.9 Officers will continue to assist our development management colleagues on a range of matters including planning application, LDP and Conservation Area consultation responses.
- 2.10 Officers will continue to work, collaboratively, with our colleagues from other council departments.
- 2.11 Consultations received from other NI councils, central government departments, and any other ad hoc papers will be processed and/or presented as and when required throughout this programme.
- 2.12 Attendance at other councils' Independent Examinations (IEs) will continue in line with the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) timetable as this is a crucial learning resource on the evolution of the Northern Ireland Plan-making process.

Evidence Base Update

- 2.13 Members are aware that the LDP must be prepared using robust and up to date evidence base. Following the 11th March 2026 LDP Workshop work remains ongoing to update the suite of topic-related evidence papers, and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) that will inform the dPS.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Committee note the content of this report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: LDP 6-month Work Programme (Jun-Dec 2026) (attached).

Appendix 2: Chronology of key events.

Appendix 2:

Table 1: Chronology of key events.

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

2 nd July 2024	Revised LDP Timetable sent to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) for agreement.
10 th July 2024	Tender process closed. The Council received no submissions in response to the advert.
28 th August 2024	Paper outlining the outcome of the procurement exercise presented to Planning Committee. Members resolved that planning officials make contact with Ulster University (UU) to discuss housing research to inform the Plan preparation.
3 rd September 2024	Planning Officials initiated contact and discussions with UU.
8 th October 2024	Planning Officials held scoping meeting with UU.
9 th October 2024	LDP Working Group Meeting held. Agreed to officers preparing a paper for CP&R Committee seeking agreement for a Direct Award Contract (DAC) to UU to undertake independent research to inform the LDP preparation.
24 th October 2024	Planning Officials met with UU to discuss detail of research to be undertaken.
11 th November 2024	SLT approval of award of DAC to UU.
26 th November 2024	CP&R Committee Agreement on award of DAC to UU.
3 rd December 2024	Full Council ratification of award of DAC to UU.
4 th December 2024	Agreement reached with DfI on Revised LDP Timetable (4).
10 th December 2024	Award of DAC to UU.
8 th January 2025	Revised LDP Timetable (4) Published
24 th March 2025	Revised Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) published
28 th August 2025	LDP Steering Group Workshop: UU Presentation – Housing Study: Interim Findings.
17 th November 2025	LDP Steering Group Workshop: UU Presentation – Housing Study: Final Findings.
6 th January 2026	Notice of Motion requesting that UU present the Housing Report to Full Council was accepted.
28 th January 2026	Retail & Commercial Leisure Capacity Study presented to Planning Committee.
3 rd February 2026	Deputation Workshop – UU Housing Study presented.
4 th February 2026	Retail & Commercial Leisure Capacity Study published on website.
11 th March 2026	LDP Workshop – Housing Allocation & Distribution, and Rural Policies.
21 st April 2026	Retail & Commercial Leisure Capacity Study presented at pre-Leisure and Development Committee Meeting

APPENDIX 1: Local Development Plan 6 Month (Indicative) Work Programme* (Jan-Jun 2025)

Week Commencing	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: 8px; color: red;"> Planning Committee 28th Planning Committee 25th Planning Committee 25th Planning Committee 22nd Planning Committee 27th Planning Committee 24th </div>																																																						
	05/01/26	12/01/26	19/01/26	26/01/26	02/02/26	09/02/26	16/02/26	23/02/26	02/03/26	09/03/26	16/03/26	23/03/26	30/03/26	06/04/26	13/04/26	20/04/26	27/04/26	04/05/26	11/05/26	18/05/26	25/05/26	01/06/26	08/06/26	15/06/26	22/06/26	29/06/26																													
Draft Plan Strategy Preparation	Deferred at 1st November 2022 Full Council Meeting - updates to evidence base and member discussions ongoing																																																						
Revised LDP Timetable	Revision (4) Published 8th January 2025																																																						
LDP SA/SEA & HRA	Iterative process - update required - to continue throughout LDP preparation																																																						
LDP Steering Group Meetings	Quarterly Updates and 6-month Indicative Work Programmes provided to the Steering Group (Planning Committee). Meetings to be arranged as and when required throughout this work programme.																																																						
Evidence Updates	The document library to accompany the Draft Plan Strategy publication will be updated throughout this reporting period as and when required																																																						
Independent Housing Research Study (Ulster University)	Housing Study completed. Presented to Full Council (Deputation Workshop) on 3rd February 2026																																																						
Retail & Leisure Capacity Study	Study Complete. Presented to 28th January Planning Committee and 21st April Pre-Leisure & Development Committee Workshop																																																						
Research Study - Short term holiday lets	Informing the LDP Preparation																																																						
CC&GBC Landscape Character Study	Informing the LDP Preparation																																																						
LDP Project Management Team (consultees/stakeholder input)	As required throughout this programme																																																						
Member Workshops/Working Group Meetings - LDP Draft Policies																												As required throughout programme																											
Cross Border Working Group	As required throughout programme																																																						
Cross Boundary Working Group	As required throughout programme																																																						
Sperrin AONB Working Group	Meeting Scheduled for 30th June																																																						
NI Minerals Working Group	Meeting Scheduled for 17th June																																																						
NI Development Plan Working Group	Meeting Scheduled for 6th August																																																						
Community Plan Strategic Partnership Board	Meeting scheduled for 22nd July, 6th August & 21st October																																																						
Housing Land Monitor	Ongoing throughout programme																																																						
Retail Monitor	Ongoing throughout programme																																																						
Employment Land Monitor	Ongoing throughout programme																																																						
Development Mgmt: assistance (Plg apps/correspondence/complaints, etc), map preparation & LDP/Tree/CAO consultation responses	To continue throughout Programme																																																						
Planning advice to other council departments	To continue throughout Programme																																																						
Responding to Council consultations (from adjoining councils/government departments, etc)	To continue throughout Programme																																																						
Providing Council input into DfI Sustainable Water: A long term water strategy for Northern Ireland	In response to DFI request for updates																																																						
Climate Change: Public Body Reporting	Providing Planning Department input via Council's Climate Action Team (CAT) and Climate Emergency Forum (CES) as and when required																																																						
Council representative (planning advisor) eg AONB, WHS, GIS, Tech Support groups, etc	To continue throughout Programme																																																						
Building Preservation Notices, TPOs & Works to Trees	To continue throughout Programme																																																						
Tree Protection	Work to continue on the recommendations set out in the NIPSO Report																																																						
Attendance at other council LDP Independent Examinations (IEs)	To other Councils/PAC timetable																																																						
Mandatory Staff Training and Continuing Personal Development(CPD)	To continue throughout Programme																																																						

* Please note that dates may be subject to change. Ad hoc meetings may also be required throughout the programme.