

Briefing Note

TURLEYASSOCIATES

Hamilton House, 3 Joy Street
Belfast
BT2 8LE

Client N.I. Environment Committee

T: 028 9072 3900
F: 028 9072 3901

Project Planning Reform

www.turleyassociates.co.uk

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Subject Local Government Bill Consultation

Turley Associates (TA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Local Government Bill as this provides the legislative framework for the Reform of Local Government within Northern Ireland from April 2015.

Detailed below we offer specific comments on few parts of the Bill.

Part 9 Conduct of Councillors

- TA welcomes the proposal to establish a mandatory ethical standards framework for Councillors and local government as represented by the Code of Practice.

Part 10 Community Planning

- TA welcomes the focus on partnerships - the legislation will create opportunities for more efficient service delivery.
- The legislation mentions the statutory link between the community and area plans. However, there is no further consideration of how this will work in practice. Will future guidance be provided in relation to the linkages?
- The Bill requires councils and partners to take all reasonable steps to exercise the function of Community Planning; however, there is no provision for the enforcement of measures. In other sections of the Bill the role of independent auditor is outlined. Would this be another function for the Department to exercise?
- Plans may encompass cross-administrative boundaries. Is there a need for guidance to cover this type of working to ensure these areas do not '*fall between the gap*'?