

Department for Social Development

Business Plan 2015-2016

DS1/15/60886

DSD Business Plan 2015 - 2016

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1. TOP PRIORITIES FOR DSD IN 2015/16

Housing Reform

- Implementing the Social Housing Reform Programme

Reform of Local Government

- Facilitating the smooth transition of DSD powers and functions to Local Government

Welfare Reform

- Implementing the changes to the welfare system arising from the Welfare Reform Bill
- Implementing the agreed schemes arising from the Stormont House Agreement

Child Maintenance

- Implementing a reformed system of child maintenance

Developing Successful Communities

- Helping create 5 urban villages and at least 3 new shared neighbourhood communities under Together: Building a United Community

New Department

- Creating the Department for Communities which will encompass DSD and functions from other departments

People

- Providing leadership at all levels of the organisation to manage significant change over the next year, including the Voluntary Exit Scheme

Finance

- Ensuring budgets are appropriately focused on the delivery of key strategic objectives within the constrained economic environment

Further details are covered in the main document

2. INTRODUCTION

Our most recent Corporate Plan is for the period 2011-2015 and links closely with the 2011-2015 Programme for Government. Given the Executive decision to extend the period of Programme for Government for 1 year, we are similarly rolling forward our Business Plan for the period 2015/16.

Our mission '**together tackling disadvantage building sustainable communities**', demonstrates our continuing commitment to our vision '**helping people change their lives for the better**'.

Together, the actions delivered through the Department's different businesses make a major contribution to addressing poverty: by tackling homelessness and fuel poverty; through Welfare Reform protecting the most vulnerable whilst supporting more people into work; and through our regeneration work addressing the poverty of our most disadvantaged communities.

In our society poverty is often directly associated with divided communities. Therefore this plan includes a number of actions that directly address community divisions; these actions are part of the Executive's wider Together: Building a United Community Programme.

We seek to do all of this in a way that utilises our skills to complement the contributions of citizens, neighbourhoods and communities.

Our work links directly and indirectly to the five priorities of the Programme for Government:

- Growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future;

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- Creating opportunities, tackling disadvantage and improving health and well-being;
- Protecting our people, the environment and creating safer communities;
- Building a strong and shared community; and
- Delivering high quality and efficient public services.

Our key themes of Housing, Welfare Reform and Strengthened Communities and Vibrant Urban Areas continue to represent our Minister's priorities for tackling poverty and disadvantage. By focusing on these, we aim to create a society that is economically prosperous, socially connected and which makes the best use of its resources.

These themes form the framework for the commitments and milestones we have set to signpost progress towards achieving our strategic objectives which are to:

- Provide access to decent, affordable, sustainable homes and housing support services;
- Meet the needs of the most vulnerable by tackling disadvantage through a transformed social welfare system, the provision of focused support to the most disadvantaged areas and encouraging social responsibility; and
- Bring divided communities together by creating urban centres which are sustainable, welcoming and accessible to live, work and relax in peace.

Given the widely varying work of this Department, this Business Plan does not attempt to cover all aspects of our business activities but provides the key commitments and milestones which provide the basis

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for the development of more detailed plans in business areas. These in turn inform the Personal Performance Agreements for our staff.

The Department is engaged in a major programme of reform covering the welfare system, child maintenance service, social housing and reform of Local Government. This is being taken forward at a time of significant change with budget reductions of £63.3m (9.7%) from 2014/15 and preparations for the restructuring of Government departments in May 2016. This will provide many challenges as we strive to deliver an acceptable level of service and protect the most vulnerable whilst progressing the reform programmes. It will also provide opportunities for the Department to look at new structures and ways of working.

Within this context, the business plan for 2015/16 sets out what we plan to achieve over the next 12 months. Key deliverables include:

- The provision of 1,950 social and affordable homes;
- To commence a major capital investment programme in Northern Ireland Housing Executive stock;
- To deliver at least 9,000 energy efficiency improvements to vulnerable households;
- Delivering Year 3 of the Housing Strategy Action Plan;
- Assisting vulnerable people to live independently by providing assistance to at least 17,000 householders;
- To have introduced welfare changes arising from the Welfare Reform legislation;
- To have introduced a number of schemes to support people who are adversely affected by welfare changes;
- To have completed the launch phase of the New State Pension;
- To secure planning approval for the Belfast Streets Ahead (Phase 3) project;

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- To have arrangements in place to deliver a smooth transition of DSD powers and functions to local government;
- To put in place arrangements to enable the Department to support local government through Community Planning; and
- To continue our programme of child maintenance reform supporting separated parents to make better provision for their children.

We will also work with colleagues in other departments to ensure the smooth transfer of functions and creation of the new Department for Communities from May 2016.

In conducting our business, we are committed to complying fully with our statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. With this in mind we will screen all of our policies for equality and good relations impacts and conduct full equality impact assessments when appropriate. We will also continue to implement our Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan.

3. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The Department's Management Board supports the Permanent Secretary in his oversight of the delivery of this Business Plan. The Board and the Minister receive quarterly performance reports which set out progress against all the commitments and milestones identified in Sections 4 and 5. This includes a report on performance against delivery of our Efficiency Plans which are published separately on our Internet site www.dsdni.gov.uk.

Reports on our Business Plan achievements during 2014–2015 are also published on the internet at www.dsdni.gov.uk. However, some

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key achievements during the period of the 2014-2015 Business Plan are as follows:

- Over 91%, the highest level ever, of parents in NI contributed towards their child maintenance liability;
- Phase 2 of the Child Maintenance Reform Programme aimed at encouraging separated parents take greater financial responsibility for their children was introduced;
- Child maintenance work undertaken in Belfast was formally recognised as 'best in class' by DWP and by March 2015 up to 1000 jobs (400 above baseline) were being funded as a result;
- We continued to make significant progress towards delivering the Programme for Government commitment of 8,000 social and affordable homes. In the first three years of the 2011/15 PfG period 7,000 new social and affordable homes have been delivered at a cost of £625m;
- We assisted more than 17,000 householders to live as independently as possible;
- Over 9,000 homes assisted with energy efficiency measures and 6,000 boilers replaced as part of the Boiler Replacement Scheme;
- The Pavement Cafe Bill received Royal assent;
- The Community Asset Transfer Policy was approved by the Executive and 8 demonstration projects were supported;
- 10 Social Enterprise Hubs became operational;
- 26 Public Realm Schemes were completed;
- The North West Science Park opened;
- The evaluation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was published; and
- We have completed the reassessment of all Incapacity Benefit claims.

4. COMMITMENTS AND MILESTONES FOR 2015/16

Strategic Theme – Housing	
Commitments	2015/16 Milestone(s)
Deliver social and affordable homes in 2015/16. (PfG)	1950 social and affordable homes by 31 March 2016.
Support a range of initiatives aimed at reducing fuel poverty across Northern Ireland including preventative interventions. (PfG)	To assist 9000 homes, targeted at those homes in severe fuel poverty.
By the end of 2015/16, to have progressed the implementation of agreed changes to support the improved delivery of housing services to citizens of Northern Ireland. (PfG)	<p>By July 2015, have ready for Ministerial and Executive consideration preferred options for structural change.</p> <p>By September 2015, to have finalised policy for a Tenant Participation Strategy for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>By November 2015, to have finalised policy for a new approach to regulation for social housing in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>By March 2016, to have finalised a future social housing rent policy for Northern Ireland.</p>

Strategic Theme – Housing	
Commitments	2015/16 Milestone(s)
To deliver the 2015/16 commitments contained within Northern Ireland Housing Strategy Action Plan.	<p>To take forward actions in the Action Plan with a 2015/16 timescale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion document to be published in May 2015. Public consultation on proposals in Autumn 2015. Complete a review of the Private Rented Sector by 31 March 2016. • Complete a review of the Supporting People Programme.
To assist vulnerable people to live independently.	Provide assistance to at least 17,000 householders annually to live as independently as possible.
To make progress towards achieving the Together: Building a United Community headline action of creating 10 new shared neighbourhood developments. (PfG)	Subject to approval of plans by stakeholders and appropriate community participation, open at least three new shared neighbourhood developments.

Strategic Theme - Welfare Reform	
Commitments	2015/16 Milestone(s)
To implement the changes to the welfare system arising from the Welfare Reform Bill and the measures emanating from the Stormont House Agreement.	1. By 31 March 2016 to have introduced Personal Independence Payment for new claims and natural reassessment.
	2. By 31 October 2015 to have introduced Mandatory Reconsideration within SSA.
	3. By 31 March 2016 to have introduced Employment and Support Allowance legislative changes.
	4. By 31 December 2015 to have introduced the Discretionary Support Scheme.
	5. By 31 January 2016 to have obtained Ministerial agreement of a Launch Strategy in advance of the introduction of Universal Credit.
	6. By 31 December 2015 to have introduced the Benefit Cap.
	7. By 31 March 2016 to have introduced the Disability Protection Scheme.
	8. By 31 December 2015 to have introduced the Supplementary Payment Scheme.

Strategic Theme - Welfare Reform	
Commitments	2015/16 Milestone(s)
	9. By 31 December 2015 to have introduced the Social Sector Size criteria.
Implement a reformed system of child maintenance to ensure more money goes to more children.	<p>1. Complete, analyse and publish the latest findings of our baseline survey assessing the totality and effectiveness of child maintenance arrangements across Northern Ireland by 31 March 2016.</p> <p>2. Promote greater financial responsibility amongst separating parents by increasing the level of Family Based Arrangements and Direct Pay cases so that at least 40% of cases are managed directly between parents, avoiding charges and collection fees by 31 March 2016.</p> <p>3. End liability on the approximate 2800 legacy cases that are planned to move to the new system by March 2016.</p> <p>4. Achieve 97% Cash Value Accuracy in all our cases by 31 March 2016.</p>

Strategic Theme - Strengthened Communities and Vibrant Urban Areas	
Commitment	2015/16 Milestone(s)
Ensure the necessary arrangements are in place to enable local councils to take forward delivery of Urban Regeneration, Tackling Social Need and Community Development from April 2016.	By 31 March 2016, to have arrangements in place to deliver a smooth transition of DSD powers and functions to local government.
Under the Together Building United Communities (TBUC), create a minimum of 5 urban village regeneration projects. (PfG)	Progress development of 5 Urban Villages.
Invest in social enterprise growth to increase sustainability in the broad community sector. (PfG)	<p>By 31 March 2016 in Partnership with Development Trusts Northern Ireland, deliver the Community Asset Transfer Demonstration Programme.</p> <p>By 31 March 2016 complete evaluations of the Development Trust Northern Ireland support arrangements and the two social enterprise pilots. (RESURGAM and Vista) projects.</p> <p>By 31 March 2016 to have developed an action plan for both social enterprise pilots.</p>

Strategic Theme - Strengthened Communities and Vibrant Urban Areas	
Commitment	2015/16 Milestone(s)
	Develop an action plan to disseminate the action/learning to encourage social enterprise start ups in local communities. Action Plan to be in place by 30 June 2015 and implemented by 31 March 2016.
Develop a joined-up approach by the statutory, private and community sectors to maximise the potential regeneration opportunity for Belfast from the expansion of the University of Ulster's York Street Campus.	By 31 December 2015 to have secured planning approval for the Belfast Streets Ahead (Phase 3) project.
To maximise the potential regeneration opportunity from the development proposed at Girdwood.	By 31 March 2016 to have completed the DSD infrastructure works at Girdwood. By 31 March 2016 to have completed the multi-sports pitch. By 31 March 2016 to have completed preparatory work to finalise specific plans for the development of the indoor sports centre and mixed use space.

Strategic Theme - Strengthened Communities and Vibrant Urban Areas	
Commitment	2015/16 Milestone(s)
<p>Reduce the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and Non-Neighbourhood Renewal Areas on key deprivation indicators relating to health, community safety, education and worklessness; and in addition respond to issues impacting negatively on areas outside Neighbourhood Renewal Areas through our Areas at Risk Programme.</p>	<p>To have produced Annual Reports for each of the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas by 30 June 2015.</p> <p>To have updated the 36 Measurement of Outcome Reports by 31 March 2016.</p> <p>By 31 March 2016 to have overseen the Evaluation of the Delivering Social Change (DSC) Nurture signature project to determine future policy provision.</p>
<p>Implement a Volunteering Strategy to promote and develop volunteering.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2016, to have completed all actions within the Volunteering Strategy Action Plan for 2015/16.</p>
<p>To stimulate social innovation across the Voluntary Community Sector.</p>	<p>By 30 June 2015 Phase 1 Social Innovation Action Plan to be in place.</p> <p>By 31 March 2016 to have implemented Phase 1 of Social Innovation Action Plan.</p>

Strategic Theme - Strengthened Communities and Vibrant Urban Areas	
Commitment	2015/16 Milestone(s)
To implement a Strategy for Generalist Advice Services.	By 30 September 2015 to develop Strategy Action Plan. By 31 March 2016 implement Action Plan Activities for 2015/2016 year.
To carry out a cross Departmental Review of Advice Services.	By 31 March 2016 complete the review of advice services across Northern Ireland.

5. SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITMENTS

The Departmental Management Board will also be monitoring progress on a number of other Business Plan commitments as set out below:

Commitment	Target
Deliver a truly customer centric quality child maintenance service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure complaints do not exceed 1% of caseload. • Answer 80% of our calls within 30 seconds. • Working with NI Direct, ensure at least 90% of all initial calls to 'Choices' meet the agreed Client Service Standard. • Acknowledge all correspondence within 2 days. • Assess liability of 80% of all new applications within 6 weeks of receipt and to a payment within 12 weeks. • Host two meetings of the Child Maintenance Stakeholder Forum.
Tackling Homelessness.	Provide a detailed assessment of the progress made in implementing the Homelessness Strategy by 31 March 2016.
Modernise service delivery to improve choice and accessibility for benefit claimants.	By 31 March 2016 to have implemented agreed recommendations from Dr Lichfield's 5 th Report on the Work Capability Assessment (WCA).
	By 31 March 2016 to have completed of the launch phase of the New State Pension.

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Commitment	Target												
	By 31 March 2016 to have implemented the next phase of MOSAIC to include the introduction of the new medical certificate proforma.												
Ensure benefit claimants are receiving the right benefit at the right time.*	<p>By 31 March 2016 to have achieved the average actual clearance times targets in the following benefits:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Income Support</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jobseekers Allowance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Pension Credit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability Living Allowance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">35 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employment and Support Allowance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14 days</td> </tr> </table>	Income Support	8 days	Jobseekers Allowance	11 days	State Pension	7 days	State Pension Credit	9 days	Disability Living Allowance	35 days	Employment and Support Allowance	14 days
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Employment and Support Allowance	14 days												
	<p>By 31 March 2016, to have achieved, within tolerance, the following overall financial accuracy targets of total expenditure in relation to:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Income Support</td> <td style="text-align: right;">99%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jobseekers Allowance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">99%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">99%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Pension Credit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">98%</td> </tr> </table>	Income Support	99%	Jobseekers Allowance	99%	State Pension	99%	State Pension Credit	98%				
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Commitment	Target
	Disability Living Allowance 99%
	Employment & Support Allowance 98%
Maximise the uptake of benefits by targeting those likely to be eligible for unclaimed benefit.	By 31 March 2016, to have implemented Year 3 of the Benefit Uptake Plan for maximising Incomes and Outcomes.
	By 31 March 2016, to have issued an invitation to 25,000 people at risk of poverty offering a full and confidential benefits entitlement check.
Develop and test new ways of collaborative working between government and the voluntary and community sector and promote more effective partnerships within the sector.	By 30 June 2015 to have rolled out training and awareness events across government Departments to support implementation of the Addressing Bureaucracy Code of Practice.
Mainstream European engagement in core Business Planning processes to ensure proper alignment of departmental EU targets with the Executive's Strategic European Priorities.	By 31 January 2016 all Business Areas to contribute to targets to the Executive European Priorities for 2016/17.
Reduce Sickness Absence.	The DSD sick absence rate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average number of working days lost per staff year: 10.7 days[#].

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Commitment	Target
To operate an effective and timely Budgetary Control process within the Department as evidenced by the constant review of Departmental budgets and timely actions taken to ensure budget allocations meet key Ministerial priorities, all of this within the Financial Control Framework.	To live within the Department's reduced overall budget for 2015/16, which is 9.7% lower than the opening 2014/15 figure. Final outturn to be within final budget and explanations given for any material variances at unit of business level.
To prepare for the creation of the Department for Communities in May 2016.	By 31 March 2016 to finalise arrangements for staffing & governance structures.

***SSA health warning: could be subject to change - dependent on the Welfare Reform Bill achieving Royal Assent**

#Subject to change

Appendix 1 – Our Resources for 2015/16

Spending Area	Current £m	Capital £m	Total £m
Core – including the Child Maintenance Service	177.7	1.5	179.2
Social Security Agency	202.1	10.4	212.5
Sub-Total	379.8	11.9	391.7
NI Housing Executive	146.2	132.8	279.0
NI Housing Executive Loans	-	-56.7	-56.7
Housing Associations	9.3	13.8	23.1
Sub-Total	155.5	89.9	245.4
Urban Regeneration/Community Development	54.7	20.0	74.7
EU Peace Programme	0.6	2.6	3.2
Sub-Total	55.3	22.6	77.9
Total	590.6	124.4	715.0
Ring fenced – non-cash Resource DEL	9.7		9.7
Overall Total	600.3	124.4	724.7

In addition, the Department has been allocated an Annually Managed Expenditure Budget of £5,697 million (£5,640 million approximately for Social Security Benefit Expenditure and Financial Assistance Scheme, £50m for Housing and £7 million for Urban Regeneration). The Annually Managed Expenditure Budget is demand led and consequently subject to change throughout the year.

(Figures are subject to change in-year following monitoring round adjustments.)

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Appendix 2 – Planned Legislative Programme

Primary Legislation which the Department plans to take forward in 2015/16

Primary Name	Stage (Subject to Executive Approval)	Scheduled for
Welfare Reform Bill	Royal Assent	May 2015
Pensions Bill	Final	April/May 2015
Pension Schemes Bill	Introduction May 2015	December 2015
Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill	Legislation Drafting	March 2016
Liquor Licensing Bill	Final	February 2016
Regeneration Bill	Royal Assent	March 2016

Appendix 3 – Related Publications

A Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan For Northern Ireland 2012-2016	www.dsdni.gov.uk/join-in-get-involved-2012.pdf
Benefit Uptake Plan	www.dsdni.gov.uk/maximising-incomes-outcomes.pdf
DSD Corporate Plan 2011-2015	www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/business_plans.htm
Facing the Future: Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland Action Plan 2012-2017	www.dsdni.gov.uk/housing-strategy-consultation.pdf
Homelessness Strategy	www.nihe.gov.uk/homelessness_strategy_for_northern_ireland_2012-2017.pdf
Lichfield Report	www.dsdni.gov.uk/an-independent-review-of-wca-year5.pdf
Programme for Government 2011-2015	www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-2011-2015-final-report.pdf
URCDG Policy Framework	www.dsdni.gov.uk/urcd-policy-framework.pdf

Appendix 4 – Glossary

DSD	Department for Social Development
DTNI	Development Trusts Northern Ireland
DWP	Department for Work & Pensions
MOSAIC	Mail Opening, Scanning and Image Circulation project
PfG	Programme for Government
TBUC	Together Building United Communities
WCA	Work Capability Assessment

Further Information

This Business Plan for 2015 -2016 is available on the Internet at www.dsdni.gov.uk.

Copies can also be obtained by writing to:

Corporate Planning and Governance Unit
4th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
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Or by e-mailing cpgu@dsdni.gov.uk

Corporate Planning and Governance Unit can also be contacted by telephone on 028 9082 9502.

Copies in alternative formats or languages will be considered in light of demand.