Environmental Wellbeing Pillar: Infrastructure, Energy & Transport (IET)

Thematic Working Group (TWG): Workshop 3, 9 September 2016

Attendees: Joanne Wallace- Wallace Consulting, Bernadette Convery- Action Renewables, Davina McCay- Department of Economy, Don Leeson-NI Consumer Council, James Kelly- Transport NI, Mark Mullan- Translink, Stephen Wood-Department for Infrastructure

ABC Council - Aidan Mallon, Ciaran Coleman, Colm Gallagher, Damien McEvoy, Elaine Gillespie, Gemma Richardson, Gerard Enright, Helen Stoops, Janice Clarke, Jonathan Hayes, Liz Drew, Michelle Markey, Paul Kavanagh, Paul McCullough, Rebecca Flynn, Sharon O'Gorman

Apologies: Clive Bradberry- Translink Infrastructure Executive, Colette McKay- Department of Economy, Frankie Dodds- Consumer Protection & Environmental, Gary Mawhinney- Translink, Gordon Clarke- Sustrans, Hilton Parr- Translink, John French- NI Consumer Council, Leo Strawbridge- NI Energy Managers Forum Chairman, Margaret Hamilton- Gas to the west, Roy Bell- SIB

ABC Council Apologies: Gerard Houlahan, Gillian Topping, Greg Ferson, Jennifer Doak, Lynsey Daly, Noreen O'Callaghan, Richard Griffin, Sarah-Jane MacDonald, Tom Lavery

1.   Welcome & Introduction

Joanne Wallace, Wallace Consulting welcomed members as Facilitator of the Infrastructure, Energy and Transport TWG.

2.   Workshop 2 Report

The Vision, based upon member proposals is:

"ABC is a well-connected Borough with an innovative approach to meeting our infrastructure, energy, waste and transport needs in a sustainable way."

Joanne Wallace provided a recap on the draft outcomes & actions discussed at the previous session, as per the four inter-linked priorities of:

- Physical Connectivity;
- Digital Connectivity;
- Energy Efficiency;
- Waste & Resource Management.

3.   Short- Medium & Long Term Outcomes & Actions

Joanne presented draft short- and medium-term outcomes and actions for discussion by members. The following Tables were updated on the basis of the discussions (See Table 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4).

Outcome: Information updated to reflect TWG members comments

Table 3.1: Physical Connectivity Proposed Actions		
Proposed Actions	Detail	Outcomes
1 Audit/Review existing transportation system; Stakeholder Consultation	• Within the Context of emerging Local and Regional plans, strategies and programmes carry out an audit of existing transport modes, routes and travel patterns within / through ABC; • Review the coverage, quality, management and use of existing public transport services, infrastructure and supporting facilities (e.g. parking); • Consult (e.g. local communities, public bodies, business sector, landowners) to determine perceptions on the transportation system and on travel needs; • Identify stakeholder issues, service gaps and shortfalls.	• *Short Term* People are better informed about their travel options and providers are working towards making journeys more affordable, convenient, efficient and environmentally friendly. • *Medium Term* Transport and land-use planning, design and delivery is more integrated, improving physical connectivity and leading to greater use of sustainable modes of travel. • *Long Term* We have an accessible, affordable integrated and sustainable transportation system which enhances the economy, the
2 Collaborative Transport Infrastructure Plan & Partnerships	• Partnerships and collaborative working with central govt., other councils and stakeholders to agree objectives and responsibilities; share information, expertise and resources & agree ABC's transport needs and priorities; • Transport Infrastructure Plan and Local Development Plan to set the framework to facilitate the delivery of a sustainable, co-ordinated programme of investment and improvement to the transportation system; • Lobby for funding and explore cost-saving through partnerships; • Improve regional connectivity within NI and to ROI through ABC's road, waterway and rail links (including links to Belfast and Dublin); • Explore viability of a rail link to Armagh & Craigavon for commuting and tourism;	
3 Design, Coordination, Education Initiatives	• Raise awareness of existing travel options: - Improve travel information (e.g. timetables, bus stop displays, interactive app covering all modes and connections within and beyond ABC); - promote existing services & routes, including cycle-ways, walk-ways, Park & Ride • Plan, co-ordinate and integrate transport services across ABC and beyond to encourage modal shift: - Review existing policies & planning framework as part of the new Local Development Plan process to encourage a more sustainable approach to the allocation, siting, layout and design of new housing and other uses that encourages public transport, walking and cycling (and reduces reliance on car) - Improve connectivity and leisure routes within urban centres and beyond, by extending cycle and walking network and developing safe linkages;	

	- Develop connections to and support infrastructure around public transport hubs to encourage alternatives to car; - Explore potential for community transport sector to pick up rural service gaps;	environment and our quality of life.

Targeting:	Potential Partners	Potential Indicators
• Whole Borough/ All Citizens; • Community Groups, including Disadvantaged / Section 75/ Older people; • Rural Community; • Schools, Colleges, Further Education; • Hospitals / Clinics / Health Trusts; • Businesses • Visitors/Tourists; • Commuters / Workers	• ABC Council (Internal Departments incl. Planning); • Consumer Council NI; • Central Government Departments (incl. DfI Transport NI); • Other Councils (NI and ROI); • Operators e.g. Translink, Community Transport Sector, Taxis; • Community, Voluntary and Charity Sector; • Schools, Colleges, Further Education, Education Authority; • Business Sector / Employers; • Other Groups e.g. Sustrans, TourismNI; Waterways Ire.; SustainableNI • Research Groups e.g. Irish Cross Border Area Network (ICBAN).	• Improved coverage and reliability of public transport; • Increased use of public transport (bus and rail); • Increased cycle and walking journeys; • Reduced car journeys.

Table 3.2: Digital Connectivity Proposed Actions		
Proposed Actions	Detail	Outcomes
1 Audit / Review of existing digital services; Stakeholder Consultation	• Audit existing infrastructure, service coverage and quality at localised level (to address data gaps) in consultation with service providers; • Consult/survey across ABC (e.g. local communities, groups / business sectors) to determine satisfaction levels and to identify problems/deficiencies and particular digital needs; • Identify stakeholder issues, service gaps and shortfalls based on audit and consultation. • Research, develop & learn from best practice & ABC pilot projects e.g. ABC Rural Broadband Survey	• *Short Term* Local and central government are working with service providers to encourage improvement in broadband and mobile phone service coverage, quality and resilience and more people are digitally confident. • *Medium Term* Digital service quality, coverage and access levels have improved, facilitating economic growth and ensuring people can benefit from the digital age. • *Long Term* We have a modern, reliable, affordable, resilient digital network that everyone can access
2 Digital Task Force & Action Plan through a partnership approach	• Develop partnerships and collaborative working with central govt., other councils and stakeholders to share information, expertise and resources; • Establish a Digital Taskforce / Forum with stakeholders to agree objectives, priorities, responsibilities and address issues; • Develop a Digital Action Plan to meet ABC's current and future digital needs and lobby/engage with service providers on where to target investment and explore cost-saving through partnerships e.g. addressing broadband and mobile connectivity in rural areas; • Consider future legislative requirements through building regulations (out for consultation Aug-Oct 2016) for digital 'Future Proofing' of new buildings and determine how digital upgrades will be best delivered at reduced cost; • Explore funding opportunities and ensure funding allocation is 'needs based'; • Collaboration with service providers to enhance services e.g. Internet boosters along railway/bus routes	
3 Digital connectivity Initiatives	• Extend and tailor good practice across ABC, learning from local pilot projects; - - - Partnership projects to improve coverage, access levels, speed, bandwidth, affordability and resilience of broadband and mobile phone service across ABC - Create 'Super Hubs' in commercial centres to support business and attract investment; - Establish and promote free Wi-Fi areas (e.g. at key visitor attractions);	

		throughout the Borough.
	• Education/awareness on IT– to improve IT access, skills and confidence, tailored towards different groups (business sector, elderly / community groups etc.); • Ongoing monitoring of coverage, service quality, cost-effectiveness & resilience of broadband & mobile phone services to address deficiencies & future digital needs.	

Targeting:	Potential Partners	Potential Indicators
• Citizens, Communities (including marginalised/Section 75/Rural); • Children/Young people/Older People; • Hospitals / Clinics / Health Trusts; • Employees, business, Visitors/Tourists; • Transport providers.	• Operators / Service Providers, Ofcom (Regulator) • Central Government (incl. Dept for Economy), Other Councils (NI and ROI); • Business Sector/Employers, Community & Voluntary Sector • Libraries NI, Schools, Colleges, Further Education, Education Authority, Research Groups e.g. Irish Cross Border Area Network (ICBAN).	Increased: • access to high speed broadband & mobile phone service; • reliability of coverage; • uptake in digital services.

Table 3.3: Energy Efficiency Proposed Actions		
Proposed Actions	**Detail**	**Outcomes**
1 Audit / Review ABC's existing consumption and supply	• Energy consumption and energy source audit in consultation with stakeholders; • Identify stakeholder issues. • Engage with those affected by 'Fuel Poverty' & stakeholders on measures to reduce fuel costs • Engage with renewable energy experts and providers to explore local renewable energy options, efficient resource use and identify future needs.	• *Short Term* To have greater understanding of the financial and environmental benefits of energy efficiency measures and the use of alternative renewable energy sources. • *Medium Term* Targeted Investment by responsible bodies is encouraging greater innovation, improving availability and promoting use of energy efficient technology. • *Long Term* We have an efficient, secure, sustainable and affordable energy supply.
2 Develop Collaborative Energy Supply, Efficiency and Infrastructure Plan	• Develop partnerships and collaborative working with central govt., other councils, utility providers and stakeholders to share information, expertise and resources; agree objectives and responsibilities and identify ABC's current and future energy needs and priorities e.g. cost benefits analysis; • Develop an Energy Supply, Efficiency and Infrastructure Plan to deliver efficient, secure and sustainable improvements to meet ABC's long-term energy needs & address fuel poverty); • Lobby central government (policy makers), funders and providers on energy supply, choice, costs, efficiency-measures and alternatives to address ABC's specific needs; • Lobby government for funding for renewable energy sources and explore cost-saving and local funding sources for citizens/businesses through partnerships.	

3 Action Programme – Information & Innovation	• Information & Awareness on Energy Efficiency & Alternative Sources
	  - Encouraging energy conservation; and providing information on energy efficiency measures (including energy efficiency levels in all buildings) and alternative sources; available funding, pre-application advice and points of contact etc. Explore feasibility of a central portal of information;
	  - Schools & Community energy conservation and consumption programme;
	  - Promote alternative energy / fuel in everyday life (e.g. electric vehicles);
	  - Improve access to information/advice to parties interested in alternative energy sources (e.g. workshops, planning advice);
	  - fuel-saving initiatives (e.g. Local Community Energy Plans);
	• Supporting & Investing in Renewables	

	- Prioritise and streamline energy infrastructure-related planning applications to encourage renewable energy (Council's Planning Dept/DFI for significant applications); - Potential renewable energy initiatives (e.g. solar energy in housing developments); - Explore and develop a variety of local, affordable, renewable energy sources to increase consumer choice and reduce costs and fuel poverty e.g. exploration of Borough to exploit alternative renewable energy sources, such as thermal energy from local geology & 'Gas to the West'; - Develop a 'circular economy' of local energy supply e.g. wood chip burning and willow production

Targeting:	Potential Partners	Potential Indicators
• Citizens, Communities, including Disadvantaged / Section 75; • Children/ young people/ Older people; • Businesses, Environmental groups	• Utility / Energy Providers; • Business Sector/Employers; • NI Electricity Networks; • Consumer Council NI; • Central Government (incl. Dept for Economy); • Other Councils (NI and ROI); • Schools, Colleges, Further Education, Education Authority; • Utility Regulator (for Gas, Electricity, Water and Sewerage) • SONI (Licensed operator for electricity grid) • Community, Charity & Voluntary Groups e.g. Age Concern, fuel poverty; • Advisory Groups Eg. Energy Wise, Sustainable NI; • Renewable Energy Experts Eg. Action Renewables, Environmental Interest Groups, Academia / Research Groups	Increased: • use of local renewable energy resources; • Energy Efficiency Levels; Decreased: • Fuel poverty; • Pressure on the grid; • Dependency on oil; • Improvement in air quality (reduction in air pollution); • 'Switching levels' between providers.

Table 3.4: Waste and Resource Management Proposed Actions		
Proposed Actions	Detail	Outcomes
1 Review current waste and resource management practices	• Review waste management infrastructure, policies, practices and standards against the future needs of ABC Review & 'best practice' (e.g. How 'Banbridge Legacy Council' approach waste recycling), in consultation with waste industry / existing contractors and stakeholders; • Audit current recycling practices to establish current participation levels, customer satisfaction, waste arisings, household behaviours etc. against the Statutory Waste Targets.	*Short Term* People are better informed and motivated to prevent waste through reducing consumption and increasing recycling and reuse.
2 Develop a Waste Management Plan & partnerships	• Develop a long term Waste Management Plan with the focus placed upon waste prevention; • Develop partnerships and collaborative working with central govt., other councils, waste industry and stakeholders to share information, expertise and resources e.g. Explore reduction in unnecessary product packaging;	*Medium Term* We are making better use of our resources and reducing waste generated.
3 Deliver improvements in line with ABC Waste and Resource Management Plan with ongoing monitoring / review	• Encourage waste awareness & prevention - programme of education / promotion across ABC to encourage active waste prevention, recycling (provide clarification on what materials can/cannot be recycled) and reuse (domestic and non-domestic)- in line with Regional and National Campaigns; - local pilot projects on alternative waste management schemes (e.g. up-cycling schemes) - promote waste collection initiatives which assist Section 75 Groups (e.g. 'Assisted Lift' Bin collection for citizens with mobility problems); - Explore non-domestic waste targets through engagement with stakeholders • Energy Recovery/Waste Reduction - Lobby central govt (policy makers), funders and waste industry providers on both regional NI and ABC-based energy recovery options (incineration, anaerobic digestion); - Develop/advance local alternative waste uses (e.g. energy from waste);	*Long Term* The Borough demonstrates excellence in sustainable waste and resource management and leads the way in innovative waste management technologies

	- Prioritise and streamline waste related planning applications to encourage energy recovery and waste reduction (Council's Planning Dept/DFI for significant applications)	
Targeting:	**Potential Partners**	**Potential Indicators**
- Citizens, Community Groups, Rural Community, children & young people - Businesses; - Environment groups	Waste Industry - Facilities / Processors, Central Government (incl. Regulation by Dept of Agric, Env & Rural Affairs), Other Councils (NI and ROI), Business Sector/Employers, Schools, Colleges, Further Education; Community / Youth / Voluntary Groups; Waste Management Experts and Waste Facilities, Environmental Interests Groups, Advisory Groups (e.g. Energy Wise, Sustainable NI).	- Improved waste management targets (all streams); - Reduction in residual (non-recyclable) waste; - Locally based recovery of waste (energy from waste facilities); - Increased reuse rates

4.   Cross-Cutting Themes

Presentations were given on the following Community Planning cross-cutting themes:

- Sustainability;
- Equality, Good Relations & Social Inclusion;
- Rural Development; and
- Communication

Group discussion on sustainability issues relating to the four themes:

Sustainability		
Economic	Social	Environmental
- Improved coverage, quality and management of public transport services and infrastructure across ABC and beyond will encourage visitors and promote tourism within ABC; - Improved physical and digital connectivity will support businesses and attract investment e.g. creation of 'Super Hubs'; - Digital connectivity initiatives providing IT education/awareness will enhance economic sustainability by enabling people to develop desired IT skills and qualifications, and also providing the means to upskill individuals according to future business/market needs	- Improved physical and digital connectivity will enhance social sustainability as they will reduce social isolation and support inclusion; - Improving physical connectivity and leisure routes, extending cycle and walking network promotes health and wellbeing through active travel and reducing reliance on private car use; - Active prevention, recycling and reuse of waste has strong links with health and wellbeing, through the use of alternative waste sources and the improvement in air quality. - Energy efficiency links with fuel poverty and health inequalities	- Through the planning process (physical connectivity) there is potential to develop a more sustainable approach to the siting of housing and other uses to encourage walking and cycling, thus reducing the reliance on car use and improving air quality; - Promoting energy efficiency & exploring renewable energy options has strong links with environmental regeneration through the use of sustainable energy sources and reduction in oil dependency; - Active waste prevention and recycling (avoiding pollution) has strong links with environmental regeneration through the diversion of waste from landfill; - Utilising waste as a resource, for example through energy recovery, has strong links with environmental sustainability through the use of alternative sustainable energy sources; - Extending and promoting cycle and walking networks will reduce reliance on private car use and will reduce pollution/improve air quality.

Group discussion on equality, good relations and social inclusion relating to the four themes:

Equality, Good Relations & Social Inclusion		
Equality	Good Relations	Social Inclusion
• Identify under-represented groups (statistics), encourage ,empower & upskill (e.g. older people, people with disabilities, those with dependants etc); • Reduce barriers (e.g. improve transport options and coverage, enhance IT skills, improve qualifications); • Ensure employers are aware of S75 legislation related to recruitment; • Consider Equality Impact Assessments and equality guidelines/policy; • Provision of readily available alternative communication methods e.g. Braille, audio; • Ensure signs and symbols which assist S75 groups are used where necessary; • Address disability issues surrounding everyday activities e.g. preparing household bins for collection.	• Community engagement and involvement e.g. Through Community Plan Process to ensure that all representative groups are involved in programme design & promotion; • Creation and development of neutral 'Shared Spaces' and Hubs- from early design/concept stage; • Regeneration of interfaces to create 'Shared Spaces'; • Provision of efficient public transport routes without artificial detours across ABC and beyond to encourage neutral 'Shared Space'; • Incentives to use public transport to encourage communication between citizens and promote good relations e.g. continued use of bus/rail passes.	• Affordability across all areas- broadband, public transport etc.; • Addressing educational barriers e.g. Integrated Education, Cross Community Partnerships/Campuses; • Improved access to services/facilities e.g. mobile libraries; • Improved physical linkages e.g. disused railway beds reused as walkways/cycle routes; • Use of digital media e.g. online notification of events/community events/church services etc.; • Addressing deprivation e.g. food banks, clothes banks; • Social Support e.g. Promotion of 'Assisted Lift' bin collections; • Provision of subsidies for broadband and transport.

Group discussion on rural issues relating to the four themes:

Rural Development	
Challenges	Opportunities
"No agreed definition of rural"- inconsistencies in the definition of rural, may skew statistics and conceal the reality; - Dispersed rural population and varying community infrastructure; - Physical Isolation from services/facilities; - Fewer facilities/resources, social hubs; - Poor energy efficiency services- rural areas do not have the same access to providers/contractors, which has choice and cost implications; - High dependency on oil; - Poor information dissemination; - Poor broadband & mobile connectivity- added costs to extend and upgrade; - Weak transport links, fewer public transport services, lack of integration; - Centralisation of Policy has a negative impact on the access to services; - Limited access to recycling facilities; - Waste collection- Poor roads infrastructure, poor street lighting, difficulties in accessing rural dwellings/properties; - Fuel Poverty.	- Clarify definition of 'rural' for ACBCBC; - Enhance, promote, expand community transport e.g. Voluntary/community sectors to help address gaps in rural transport coverage; - Improved outreach facilities/services; - Lobbying for improved digital connectivity; - Expand coverage and quality of rural public transport; - Improve connectivity by extending cycle and walking networks/linkages; - Identify those affected by deprivation and establish action plan; - Integrated land use planning and transport functions; - Support and investment to revitalize rural areas e.g. grants programmes; - Development of rural community initiatives; - Improved infrastructure in rural areas.

Group discussion on communication issues relating to the four themes:

Communications	
Challenges	Opportunities
• Avoiding 'Information overload'- Delivering the message in a clear, concise way using 'user friendly' language without sacrificing the quality of the content; • Appropriate marketing- Reaching everyone, especially those in most need; • Ensuring that recipients have understood the content; • Ensuring underrepresented groups area are involved/have an opportunity to become involved; • Acknowledging different communication needs amongst specific groups (e.g. Interpreters, people with visual impairments, young people, older people); • Overcoming the reputation of 'Tokenism' Consultation- resulting in poor participation; • Overcoming and avoiding 'Consultation Fatigue'- resulting in poor participation; • Avoiding/preventing the delivery of mixed messages/inconsistent information- which impacts upon perception and response e.g. definition of 'Rural'; • Keeping participants involved and communicating results/outcomes of their input.	• Opportunity to address inconsistencies in information e.g. Agreed ACBCBC definition of rural; • Promotion and Involvement- PR exercise to promote the value of the community plan and encouraging communities to participate in the community plan process; • Engaging with relevant partners – identifying the right person/group that would be best placed to deliver the message to specific groups to ensure more efficient communication e.g. Age Concern; • Work with all stakeholders- ensuring that the process is a shared responsibility; • Utilising a variety of media advertising – arts & drama, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, involve young people; • Use of Alternative communication methods- e.g. Audio, Braille; • Use of existing networks/opportunities to deliver message and to improve reach and impact e.g. schools, libraries, community groups, community hubs, charitable groups, other Council events; • Opportunities for feedback- surveys to establish that the information has been understood, encouragement of 'two way' communication; • Ongoing Communication- opportunity to keep recipients 'up to date' with progress and of the final outcomes; • Tailored user friendly language.

5.   Next Steps

As this is the final workshop for the TWG, Elaine Gillespie, Head of Community Planning and Joanne Wallace, Wallace Consulting thanked the group for their continued support and expertise. Next Steps are:

• Consideration and prioritisation of outcomes from all six thematic working groups by Statutory Partners (Sept/Oct 2016);
• Consultation and engagement with local citizens and communities (Sept/Oct 2016);

- Draft Plan and formal consultation (Oct-Dec 2016);
- Conduct formal assessments (Oct-Jan 2017);
- Development of final plan (Dec- March 2017).