



**UKSPF Northern Ireland Partnership Group**

**14 October 2022 13:30-14:30**

**Belfast City Council Offices, 9 Adelaide Street, Belfast**

**Meeting Note**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Sector</b>
Sue Gray (Chair)	DLUHC	UK government
Colin Perry	NIO	UK government
Adrian McCreesh	SOLACE (Mid Ulster District Council)	Local government
Marie Ward (Newry, Mourne and Down Council representing John Walsh – Belfast City Council)	SOLACE (Belfast City Council)	Local government
Seamus McAleavey	NICVA	Voluntary and community
Valerie McConville	CO3	Voluntary and community
Maeve Monaghan	NOW Group	Social enterprise
Ann McGregor	NI Chamber of Commerce	Business

**Secretariat**

The meeting was supported by DLUHC officials: Chris Taylor, Hannah Henderson, Stephen Finlay and Christine Robinson

**Chair's welcome**

The Chair welcomed members and nominees to the fourth UKSPF Northern Ireland Partnership Group meeting and noted:

- A declaration of members interests.
- All actions from previous meeting were completed.
- Officials continue to explore the options to reprofile some of the funding with the Secretary of State.
- An overview of the meeting between the Secretary of State for Levelling Up and the Northern Ireland Finance Minister.
- A short update on engagement activity since previous Partnership Group meeting, most notably engagement with European Social Fund Peer Group, Rural Communities Network, Northern Ireland Local Government Association, and Northern Ireland Youth Forum.



## Investment Plan

DLUHC officials shared an overview of the draft Investment Plan.

Members noted:

- That that there should be a consistent service for start-up support across Northern Ireland, with business growth support tailored to local need.
- The importance of addressing barriers to access to funding that individuals may face (e.g., childcare provision, transport) in accessing support.
- The importance of early communications for those who are seeking funding through People and Skills interventions and the importance of setting out the application process clearly. This includes communicating examples of what light touch monitoring and assurance means for deliverers of funding.
- A need to explore a range of established allocation methods for any activities commissioned to individual councils/places.
- The ongoing importance of exploring reprofiling of the funding.
- The importance of ongoing engagement with Northern Ireland Executive Departments.

It was resolved that:

All members supported by consensus the overall draft and content of the UKSPF Investment Plan

Next Steps:

- Membership of the Partnership Group will be reviewed when the UKSPF programme in Northern Ireland moves from Investment Plan development to delivery planning.
- DLUHC to communicate the progress on the Investment Plan across sectors, including publication of meeting notes on GOV.UK.