



BELFAST REGION CITY DEAL



Annual Report
2023/24



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Deal ambition

It is thanks to the combined commitment of the UK Government, the NI Executive, local government and further and higher education partners, alongside industry partners, that we are benefiting from the unprecedented opportunity - presented by the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) - to accelerate inclusive economic growth across the region.

The direction of travel envisaged by the Deal and the ambitions it strives to deliver, mirror and complement the aspirations of the Department for Economy as articulated through the Minister's recent Economic Vision¹.

The investment made in BRCD projects will strengthen the region's offer in growth sectors such as life and health sciences, the digital and creative industries, and advanced manufacturing. It will support next generation digital capabilities, boost tourism and support the region's regeneration, underpinned by infrastructure developments and skills investment to connect people to jobs and services. The focus on these sectors will help make the 'adjustments' needed to our economic structures to improve the quality of jobs available to local people.

As we move further into delivery stage, we will continue to align with the wider economic priorities for Northern Ireland, ensuring that the Deal acts as a catalyst for a sustained approach to collaborative working in order to maximise its overall growth impact.

We also remain committed to the ambitions and benefits set out in our Deal document signed in December 2021.

-  support the creation of up to **20,000 jobs**
-  connect local people to new and better jobs
-  place the region at the **top table of digital innovation**
-  deliver **£400 million in GVA** directly on-site and within the region
-  target delivery of almost **£1 billion of private sector leverage**
-  create compelling **world-class visitor attractions**
-  help to **regenerate major towns and cities**
-  foster **collaborative working**

Delivery in 2023/24

Over the last year, partners have continued to progress the delivery of individual projects at pace.

At Programme level, we have enjoyed a successful year, with significant progress being made during 2023/24. The most advanced projects are now recruiting and upskilling staff, constructing new premises, co-designing projects with industry, procuring next generation technology and equipment, and moving fully into operation.

A total of 15 projects now have Outline Business Cases approved. Of these 15, nine now also have Contracts for Funding (CfFs) and Funding Agreements (FAs) signed, with Innovation pillar projects generally at a more advanced stage of development. We also reached a significant milestone in March 2024 with the approval of our first Full Business Case for the **Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC)** project, followed by approval of the Full Business Case for **Studio Ulster** shortly afterwards.

The first Contract for Funding (CfF) was signed by Ulster University for the **Studio Ulster** project in July 2022 and this was followed in the same financial year with CfFs relating to: **Carrickfergus Regeneration**, **Bangor Waterfront** and **Newry City Centre Regeneration** and with Queen's University for the **AMIC** (supported by Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council and Ulster University), **Momentum One Zero** and the **Institute of Research Excellence for Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH Health)** projects.

These signed Contracts for Funding will enable project delivery with an approximate value of £500m, with £5.2m paid to projects from the Accountable Body up to 31 March 2024.

During 2023/24, further contracts were signed with **Augment the City** and **Digital Twin**. Two projects, **Studio Ulster** and **AMIC**, are now in the construction phase, and planning approval is now in place for the **Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge** and **iREACH Health**. The **Augment the City** Challenge Competition has been launched and the project is now in delivery.

The **Infrastructure projects** (financed directly through BRCD funds available to the Department for Infrastructure), are also progressing towards delivery phase.

¹ Statement from Minister Murphy, Economic Vision 19.02.24



To better understand and respond to the labour and skills implications and opportunities presented by the City Deal investment projects, we have continued to progress skills assessments on a cross deal basis.

Having last year completed a Skills Assessment for the Construction Sector opportunities that BRCD will generate, 2023/24 brought forward further recommendations through a Skills Assessment for the projects associated with Advanced Manufacturing.

Skills Assessments for the Creative Industries (Virtual Production and Digital sectors) were started in the latter part of 2023/24 and approvals will continue into the next financial year.

Ongoing inflationary pressures, combined with political and economic uncertainty and complex financing and governance processes associated with the Deal, remain a challenge.

Following the introduction of the Subsidy Control Act in January 2023 - and subsequent legal advice to government departments that this complex legislation must be considered in advance of Contracts for Funding being signed - the assessment of the presence of a subsidy, and where required, completion and referral of subsidy assessments to the Competition and Markets Authority - has added further complexity to the approval process, and in particular for tourism project contracts.

However the Innovation projects which are at (or approaching) FBC submission stage and Digital projects working towards CfFs, have also had to consider the implications of subsidy control. Currently, due to tight timeframes and as the PMO learns how to navigate the assessment process, the subsidies are being considered on a project by project basis, however it may be worth developing subsidy schemes to cover the remaining tourism and digital projects.

Partners have continued to work with government departments to simplify processes and have been encouraged by the recent return of a local Executive and Assembly. We also welcome early indications from Executive Ministers that they are keen to expedite the process and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, to deliver a more productive, prosperous region in the face of ongoing constraints on public finances.



GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

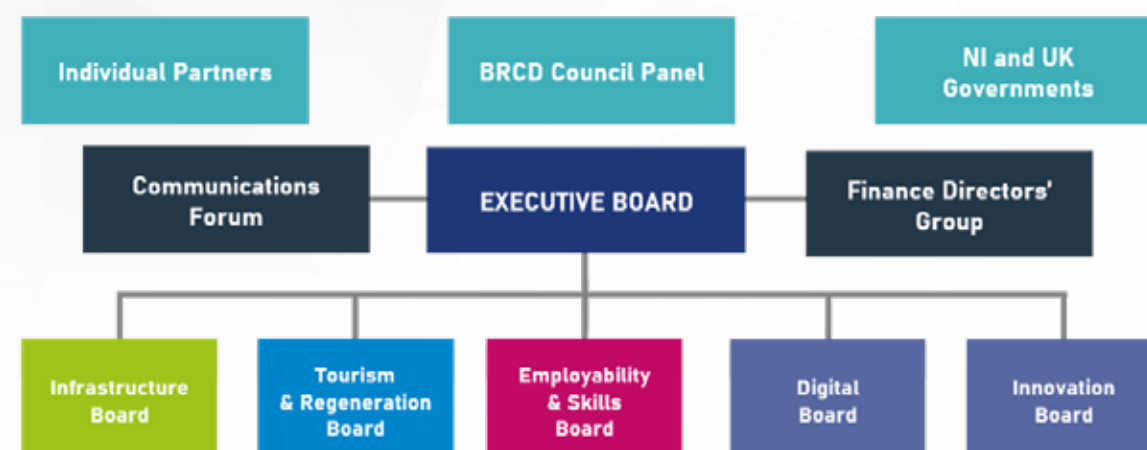
The BRCD operates under a set of governance arrangements, set out below.

These include:

- A Council Panel with representatives from all six councils, providing political oversight to help ensure that the Deal continues to align to the vision of inclusive economic growth and ambitions across the region;
- An Executive Board, responsible for driving the delivery of the BRCD programme in accordance with the requirements of the Deal document.
- A number of Boards with responsibility for overseeing each of the pillars of investment, programme finances and programme communication.

This arrangement aligns with the NI wide arrangements for City and Growth Deals which are overseen by the Northern Ireland City/Growth Deals Delivery Board on behalf of the UK Government and the NI Executive. The governance arrangements in place for BRCD ensure that decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, while remaining in step with the individual decision-making processes of our partner organisations.

BRCD Governance Structure



Accountable Body

Belfast City Council is the Accountable Body for the Deal. This means that it is responsible for ensuring that partners make decisions that comply with all legal, financial and administrative requirements.

For the most part, grant funding to projects is channelled through Belfast City Council as the Accountable Body, ensuring that the Deal remains within the overall funding envelope.

As Accountable Body, Belfast City Council also prepares detailed quarterly finance and performance reports for consideration at relevant departmental Boards, in line with conditions set out in Contracts for Funding and Funding Agreements.

Governance and Assurance Framework

A Framework² setting out the governance and assurance requirements of the BRCD programme underpins the partnership's decision-making process. This Framework outlines the procedures that BRCD partners will follow in relation to decision-making and Deal delivery.

This includes reporting and monitoring arrangements aligned to Contracts for Funding and Funding Agreements as well as processes for financial drawdowns, claims and payments. These arrangements help to ensure that public money is spent responsibly, is accounted for, and that decisions are made strategically and transparently for the benefit of the whole region.

² The Governance and Assurance Framework

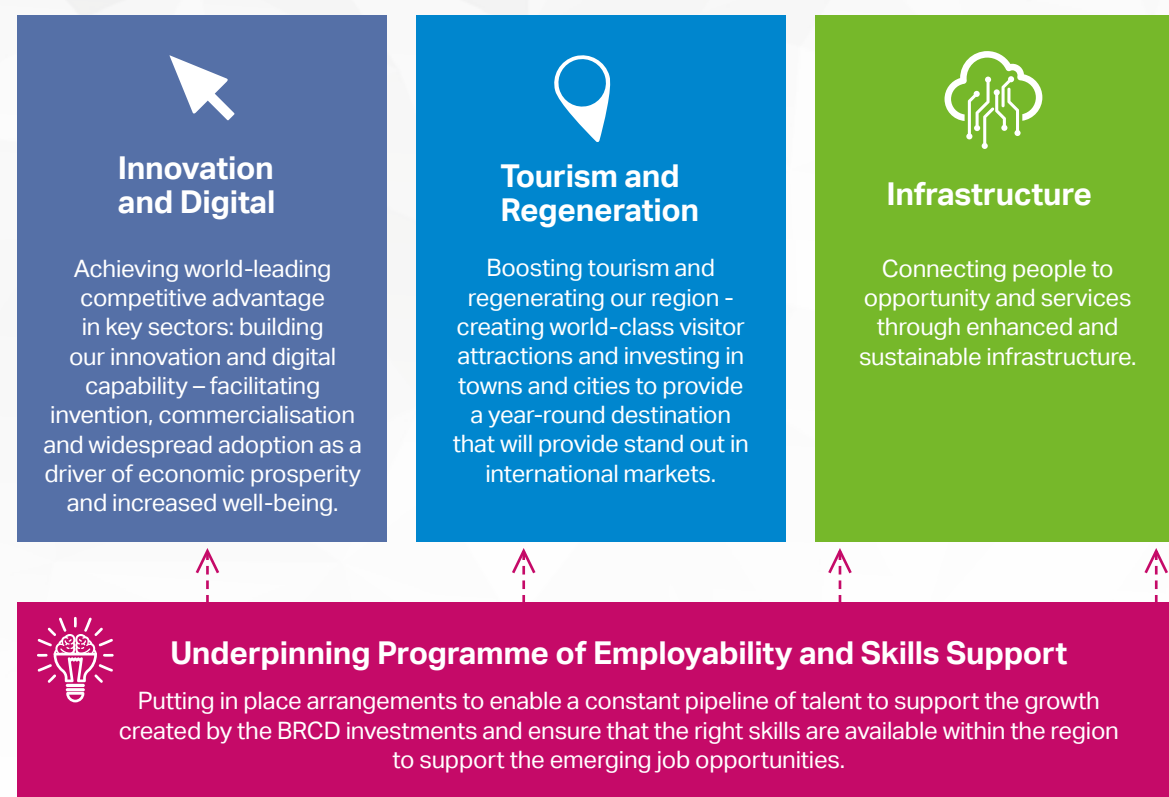


PILLARS OF INVESTMENT

The BRCD programme of investment is based upon a robust evidence base, including an Industrial Framework³ that seeks to build upon the region's unique strengths and characteristics, which include rapid growth in the knowledge economy.

The Deal is directly aligned with the UK Industrial Strategy⁴ and Innovation Strategy and the NI Executive's Programme for Government⁵ and aims to tackle head-on the fundamental structural barriers that have traditionally constrained productivity and excluded many from enjoying the benefits of economic prosperity.

The BRCD focuses on areas in which the region can become genuinely world-class: in particular in digital and creative industries, life and health sciences and the advanced manufacturing and tourism sectors – aligning directly to the priority areas called out by the Economy Minister⁶ in his vision for an economy which helps alter our economic structure towards industries that provide 'good jobs' and which do more to improve our relatively weak productivity levels.



The co-design and partnership model endorsed by the Minister also reflects the City Deal process, as Partners collaborate not only in the delivery of the projects themselves, but also in the identification of and response to the skills needs they will create.

The implementation of our Employability and Skills programme, including the skills assessment process which operates across all four Deals, will identify the opportunities for our skills providers to re-skill and up-skill local people so that they can avail of the emerging jobs.

The geographic spread of partners, ranging from Mid and East Antrim to Newry, Mourne and Down council areas, is itself indicative of the Deal's drive for greater 'regional balance'.

³ BRCD Industrial Strategic Framework, 2018

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/the-uks-industrial-strategy>

⁵ <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/programme-government-pfg>

⁶ Statement from Minister Murphy, Economic Vision 19.02.24

INNOVATION

Research⁷ has shown the importance of a high performing innovation system to support strong overall economic performance, particularly for small economies such as Northern Ireland.

The BRCD investment in innovation involves the creation of new centres of excellence that span the advanced manufacturing, health and life sciences and digital and creative sectors, bringing together great minds and creative thinking to solve some of the biggest global challenges, while also creating real-world impact through connected, purpose-driven innovation.

In addition to unlocking private sector investment, the City Deal centres of excellence will be critical in enabling access to an estimated £250 million of R&D funding which Northern Ireland has previously been unable to benefit from⁸.

The projects will support businesses to access major funding opportunities from outside the region, enabling the region to reap the benefits of distinctive, long-term sectoral strengths.

⁷ The strategic integration of skills & innovation policy in Northern Ireland: An international small economy perspective, David Skilling, July 2019

⁸ The Missing £4 Billion Making R&D work for the whole UK, NESTA, May 2020

AMIC – ADVANCED MANUFACTURING INNOVATION CENTRE

Project overview:

The AMIC project, led by Queen's University Belfast in partnership with Ulster University and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, will be an industry led, open access manufacturing innovation centre that provides fresh capabilities for the NI Advanced Composites and Engineering Centre and create a 10,500m² state-of-the-art facility at the Global Point site in Newtownabbey, giving advanced manufacturing and engineering businesses access to the very latest technology, specialist equipment and expertise.

This flagship facility will become a national centre for advanced manufacturing, with state-of-the-art facilities and an expert engineering team, underpinned by academic excellence.



Current status year end 2023/24

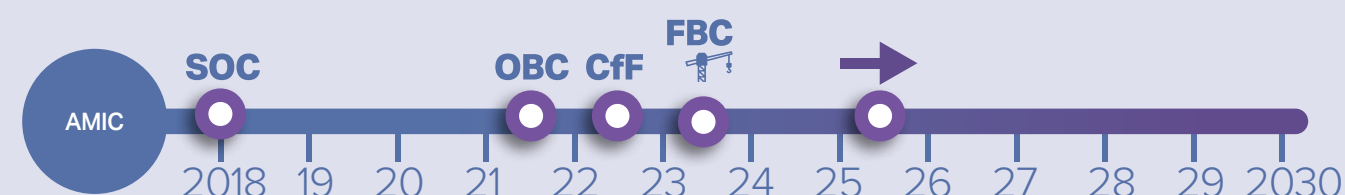
A key focus during 2023/24 for the AMIC project was securing approval for the Full Business Case. This was secured in early March 2024, allowing the project to start work on site at Global Point on 25 March 2024.

The Centre has established an Industry Board made up of 24 local and multinational companies. To date, investment in AMIC has leveraged additional support from a range of funders including from Innovate UK, the Made Smarter Digital Innovation Fund and the DSIT 5G Innovation Regions, and it continues to work on a range of collaborative bids.

AMIC also continues to work with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on the £15m HyTech NI Complementary Fund award to provide a foundation of infrastructure for the hydrogen supply chain in NI.

AMIC, in partnership with industry, training providers and other sectoral stakeholders, supported the advanced manufacturing skills assessment for Northern Ireland. Work has also started on an initial recruitment campaign for 21 skilled roles within AMIC.

£78.7 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **CFF:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

I-REACH HEALTH – INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FOR ADVANCED CLINICAL HEALTHCARE

Project overview:

iREACH Health is an integrated clinical research centre of excellence, located on the Lisburn Road, Belfast, that will be at the centre of the emerging life sciences innovation, translation, and commercialisation ecosystem.

The project will integrate the activities of clinicians, life scientists and data scientists with industry partners to identify and develop new diagnostic tests, treatments, and health technologies to improve patient outcomes and contribute to economic growth.



Current status year end 2023/24

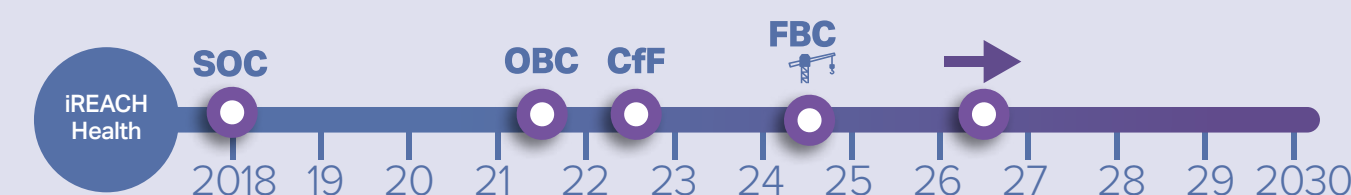
Following signing of the Contract for Funding in March 2023, iREACH Health has progressed through design phases with the completion of RIBA Stage 3 and start of RIBA Stage 4. During the year, the project also received full planning permission and significant progress was also made in relation to site acquisition..

Queen's University Belfast appointed John Graham Construction as its works contractor under the Early Contractor Involvement model in December 2023 and this appointment has supported the design process and move into RIBA Stage 4.

Significant progress has also been made in formalising partnerships with key anchor tenants including industry and the Health Trust. Phased recruitment for 15 posts is also underway.

Drafting of the Full Business Case also started prior to year end.

£39.7 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **CFF:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

MOMENTUM ONE ZERO

Project overview:

Momentum One Zero (M1.0), located in Belfast's Titanic Quarter, will support the transformation of Northern Ireland's digital economy by substantially increasing both the volume and range of digital innovation taking place and developing skills to meet industry needs.

The project will benefit from the unique combination of expertise contributed by The Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology (ECIT), which unlocks an integrated approach to Secure Connected Intelligence (cyber security, advanced wireless, data science and scalable computing) to tackle big societal and industry challenges. Local and global companies, entrepreneurs and researchers will come together in a multi-disciplinary innovation environment, providing a nexus for co-innovation between researchers and industry in data security, connectivity and analytics.



Current status year end 2023/24

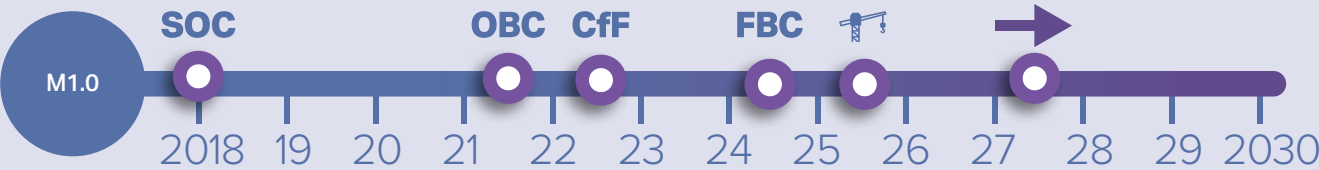
Following signing of the Contract for Funding in March 2023, the project has progressed through design phases with the completion of RIBA Stage 3 during the year. The project has also submitted its planning application for the development, adjacent to ECIT.

M1.0 is establishing an Industry Advisory Board, consisting of key industry organisations that will shape the role of M1.0 in helping companies develop deep-tech products and services.

Even at this early stage of delivery, M1.0 has secured successes demonstrating the potential for leveraging funding and driving inclusive growth and benefits. For example, a significant project is ongoing with Moy Park and McDonald's relating to an AI-powered video analytics solution for animal welfare in chicken farming.

Investment in the project is supporting leverage of additional funding, with a number of bids of scale in development.

£52.4 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; OBC: Outline Business Case approved; CFF: Contract for Funding approved; FBC: Full Business Case approved; Construction commences; Project operational

CDHT – CENTRE FOR DIGITAL HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY

Project overview:

CDHT represents a significant investment to develop a unique Research and Innovation Digital Healthcare Technology Centre in Belfast city centre where over 140 researchers and companies with strong clinical integration will address a range of healthcare challenges through world-class research and innovation.

In addition there will be investment in clinical innovation living labs at the Belfast City and Royal Victoria Hospital sites. A community living lab will also be based in the main CDHT building adjacent to the Ulster University Belfast campus.



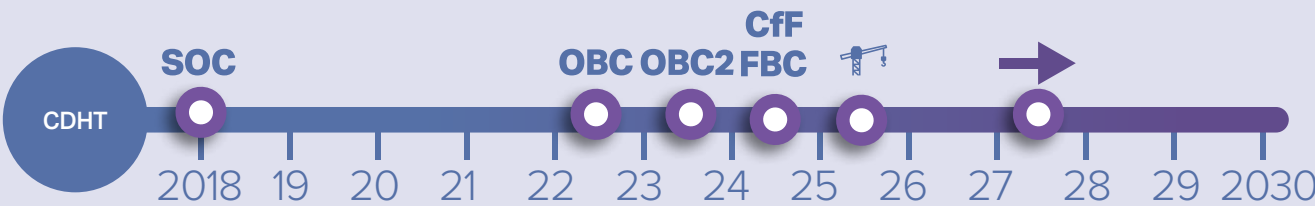
Current Status Year End 2023/24

The Outline Business Case for the CDHT was approved in May 2022. However, as the result of a proposed project change, an updated Outline Business Case 2 (OBC2) was then developed, which will allow for early procurement of specialist equipment to support accelerated delivery of the Clinical Living Labs within the Belfast Trust. The facility will also now include a Community Living Lab – with a primary and home-based care focus, situated within the new CDHT city centre facility.

This updated business plan received Departmental approval in February 2024 and development of the Contract for Funding started prior to year end.

In March 2024, Ulster University, in partnership with University College London, secured £11.7m funding to develop a EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Digital Health Technologies which will be based at CDHT. The PhD programme will train 70 next generation digital health researchers and innovators who will develop and advance the future state of digital health technologies.

£34.0 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; OBC: Outline Business Case approved; OBC2: Updated Outline Business Case approved; CFF: Contract for Funding approved; FBC: Full Business Case approved; Construction commences; Project operational

STUDIO ULSTER

Project overview:

Developed by Ulster University, in partnership with Belfast Harbour, and supported by Northern Ireland Screen, Studio Ulster is a unique investment in a large-scale Virtual Production studio complex at Giant's Park in Belfast.

Virtual Production is driving a revolution in production pipelines across converging sectors with application in film, broadcast, commercial, animation, games, immersive and visual effects. The complex will include world-class commercial virtual production stages, fully supported by an integrated research, development and innovation centre of excellence in real-time and virtual production.



Current status year end 2023/24

Production of the Full Business Case, which received approval in March 2024, was a key area of focus during the year for Studio Ulster. Approval allowed the project to finalise the procurement phase for investment in virtual production equipment and proceed to contract award.

Construction works, led by Belfast Harbour, at the Giant's Park site in north Belfast were significantly advanced and nearing completion at year end.

During the year, Studio Ulster was also recognised as part of UKRI's CoSTAR programme, which is supported by £75.6 million of AHRC funding and £63 million of new industry investment, and will form the largest virtual production research and development network in Europe, along with four other facilities across the UK.

A significant recruitment campaign is underway for key, senior roles. Studio Ulster is also working with Belfast City Council as part of its 5G Innovation Regions programme – leveraging additional funding as a result of the Studio Ulster investment.

DIGITAL PROGRAMME

A successful digital innovation ecosystem has a key role to play in contributing to economic inclusion and sustainable growth for the region. The BRCD's £120m long-term, challenge-led, flexible programme has been developed to enable partners to keep pace with the rate of technological and societal change.

The programme of digital investment will help to address key areas of challenge such as artificial intelligence and data, health and wellbeing and sustainability and resilience - and will complement the investments being made by the Deal in centres of excellence in innovation, research and development, with a consistent focus on areas where the region can be distinctive and competitive.

The Digital Programme is at an earlier stage of development and is broken into three distinct areas of investment.

(i) Enabling infrastructure

Investment in regional enabling infrastructure (including digital connectivity and data infrastructure) will stimulate the conditions for innovation and business growth.

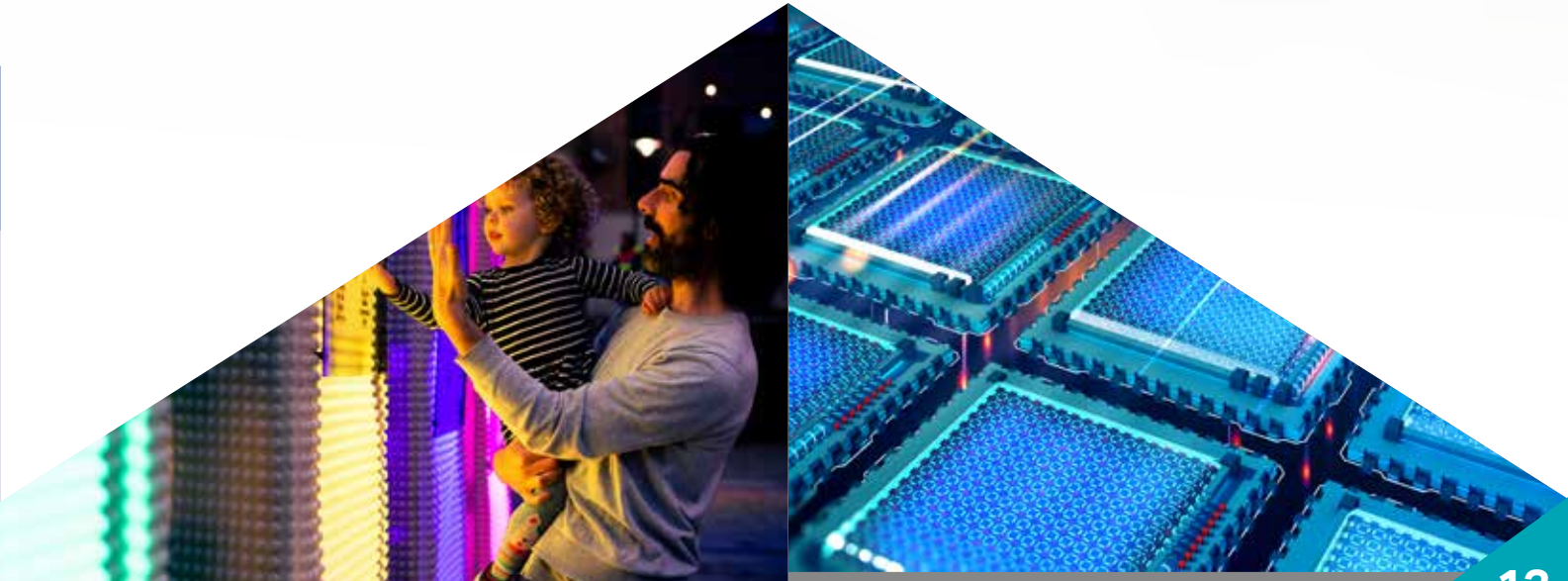
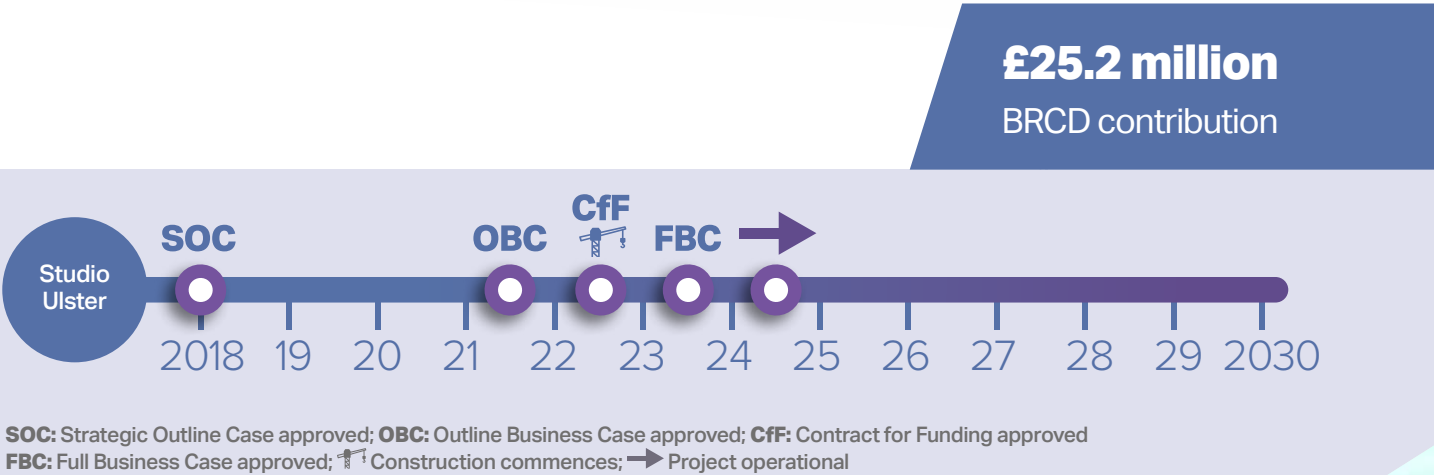
Given technology's underpinning role in the future of many commercial and public services across a wide range of sectors, this funding will have a particular focus on supporting the rapid availability of advanced wireless networks.

Project in development:

During the past year, partners have secured designation for the Belfast Region as one of ten 5G Innovation Regions across the UK – resulting in an award of £3.8m of wireless innovation funding from the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) which will support a range of anchor projects.

Belfast Region City Deal partners will deliver a Belfast 5G Innovation Region programme to support our local SMEs and high-growth sectors including creative industries, advanced manufacturing, and transport and logistics to deliver an exciting range of innovative projects powered by advanced wireless technologies. These include four 5G anchor projects with Belfast Harbour, Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and Translink, a 5G grant scheme for SMEs, and a 5G Enablement Programme to foster the Belfast Region's advanced wireless ecosystem.

The BRCD partners will build on this investment and the 5G Enablement Programme and plan to use Enabling Infrastructure funding to support further development of advanced wireless adoption across the region.



(ii) Challenge Fund Programme

We recognise that we exist in a rapidly changing environment, so the BRCD partners are investing in challenge funding.

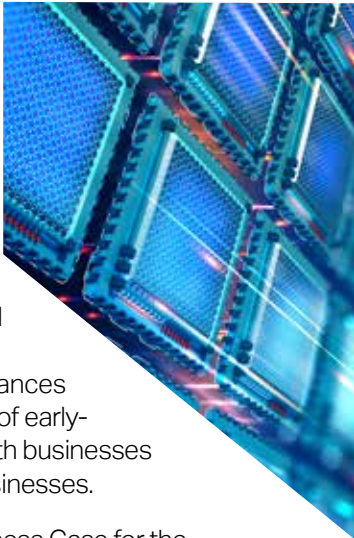
Although the City Deal offers funding across a ten-year time scale, many of the challenges, solutions, and in particular technologies, will change over periods of time measured in months, not years.

Projects in development:

DIGITAL VENTURE FUND

A proposal is in development to invest £20m in a Digital Venture Fund to help address regional imbalances in demand and supply of early-stage finance for growth businesses - particularly digital businesses.

The Draft Outline Business Case for the Digital Venture Fund is being further updated to reflect current market demand before further consideration by Government and partner councils to inform its design and proposed operation.



The Challenge Fund will provide a funding mix influenced by the specific needs of each project and may include risk finance, capital grants and innovation for societal impact, including SBRI.

AUGMENT THE CITY

During 2023/24 financial year a Contract for Funding was signed for this Small Business Research Initiative challenge call. This is a pilot project to test the planned Innovation for the Societal Impact Challenge Fund in early real-world learning.

This XR challenge competition, led by Belfast City Council and supported by £930,000 of BRCD investment will enable local SMEs to explore the role of immersive technologies in enhancing visitor experiences and in Creative Digital - addressing the lack of formalised innovation in many of the 1,300+ creative technology businesses across NI, creating games, apps, immersive experiences and animation.



(iii) Regional Innovation Hubs

Regional Innovation Hubs will afford local businesses and communities the space to pursue innovation projects at small and medium scale. They will also provide space where people with shared interests, especially in advanced computing or technology, can gather to work together on projects.

Each hub will have a specific sectoral focus and purpose and collectively, they will offer support to expedite the widespread adoption of digital technologies by companies at differing levels of digital maturity.

I4C INNOVATION AND CLEANTECH CENTRE

Project overview

The i4C project, led by Mid & East Antrim Borough Council, involves the construction of a new, significant scale innovation and clean technology centre at the former St Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena.

The centre includes a range of accommodation types to facilitate SME innovation activity i.e. incubation labs and workshops, Grade A office and co-working office space, as well as meeting and event spaces to encourage open innovation and collaboration.

Current status year end 2023/24

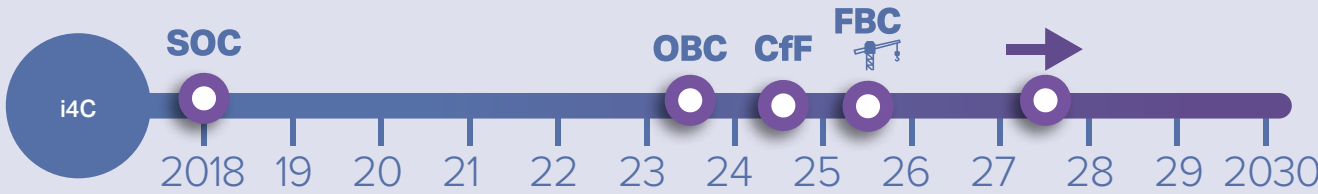
The i4C Innovation Centre's Outline Business Case was approved by the Economy Minister in Spring 2022. However, due primarily to the impacts of construction inflation, the project updated its Outline Business Case for resubmission. This was approved by the Department in the 2023/24 financial year.

Despite this delay, the project has continued to make progress, with the procurement competition for an Integrated Consultancy Team now almost complete at year end. Consultancy services have also been appointed to support the procurement of a centre operator.

In parallel, whilst plans for the i4c Innovation Centre progress, the Hydrogen Training Academy in Ballymena is delivering a range of hydrogen training for industry.



£20.5 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; Construction commences; Project operational

DIGITAL TWIN

Project overview:

The Digital Twin Centre, led by Digital Catapult, will provide common, shared physical and digital infrastructure to support the development of digital twins, elements of which include common data architecture, tools, models, software, systems and hardware. The centre will initially focus in sectors including maritime, aerospace and defence, but will also have the capability and potential to explore other sectors.

Digital Catapult plans for the Digital Twin Centre are intended to support the diffusion of Digital Twin research, development and innovation projects regionally and nationally.



Current status year end 2023/24

Digital Catapult has led on the development of the Digital Twin Centre in Northern Ireland which originally received Economy Minister approval in October 2022.

However, due to a change in the funding position for the project, an updated OBC was submitted during this financial year – with Departmental approval received in December 2023.

A contract for funding was signed in March 2024.

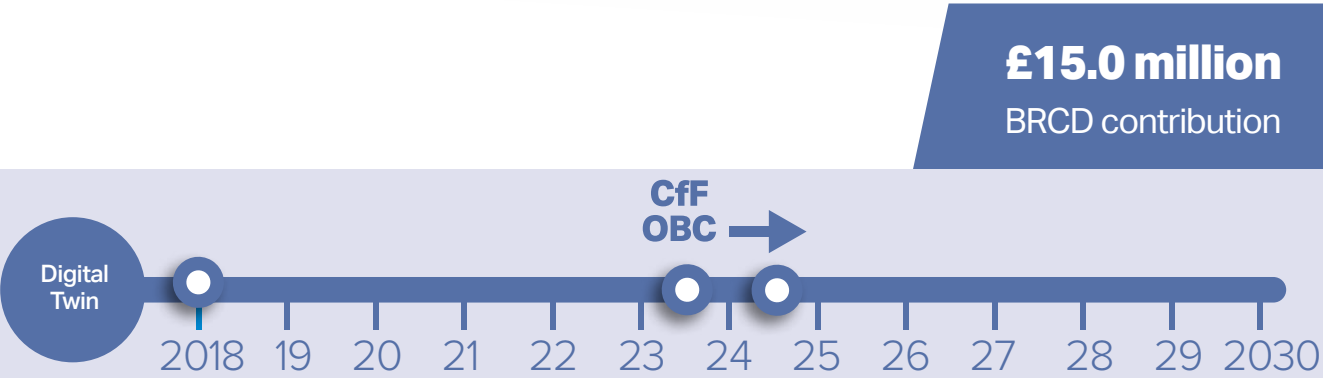
TOURISM AND REGENERATION

The BRCD programme of investment in Tourism and Regeneration aims to create regional, sustainable, year-round tourism products that will provide standout in international markets and create spill over benefits for local economies, including delivery of a range of employment opportunities across all skill levels.

The proposed Tourism and Regeneration projects will help to address a legacy of under investment, building on key areas of economic strength and creating resilience to future shocks and stresses.

Alongside new tourism products, investment is being directed towards towns that have suffered from industrial decline and economic restructuring, so that they have the opportunity to play a full part in the region's growth.

The regeneration outturn of this investment will see transformational improvements in the quality of the environment that will benefit local economies and communities, promote public wellbeing and serve as a catalyst for investment from, and collaboration with, private sector businesses.



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved
FBC: Full Business Case approved; **↑** Construction commences; **→** Project operational



BANGOR WATERFRONT

Project overview:

By supporting an ambitious, sensitive and site-specific waterfront development for Bangor that reflects the individuality of the community, the location and shared collective heritage and culture in a sustainable, unique and distinctive manner, this project has been designed to revive Bangor as a 'destination of choice'.

Reconnecting the city with the sea, and regenerating assets including Bangor Marina, Ballyholme Yacht Club, Pickie Fun Park and a new Music Hub, this investment will provide high quality public spaces, enhance the town and encourage further investment.



Current status year end 2023/24

Work has continued on the procurement of professional services teams to develop the capital projects, with design teams for Ballyholme Yacht Club and Pickie Fun Park to be appointed in the first quarter of 2024/25.

Procurement of an Operator for both the Marina & Harbour and Pickie Fun Park has also been progressing alongside design team procurement, to ensure Operator knowledge and expertise informs the design development of both facilities.

Significant stakeholder and public engagement is ongoing as outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan to finalise project briefs and inform design development.

BELFAST STORIES

Project overview:

Belfast Stories is a transformative tourism-led regeneration project in the heart of Belfast city centre, on the edge of the historic Cathedral Quarter. The best of immersive storytelling will be supported by vibrant public spaces to meet, eat, drink, network and enjoy new cultural experiences.

As a major tourism anchor, it will help revitalise our city centre and create a focal point for the screen industry, allowing people to connect with the city and one another through stories, screen and social spaces.



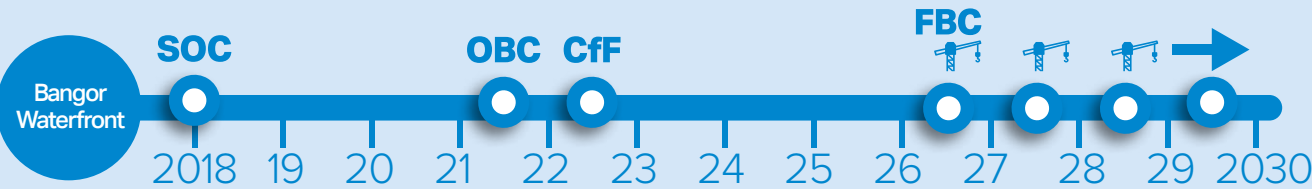
Current status year end 2023/24

Following a competitive procurement process, Belfast Stories appointed their integrated design team and project management and design assurance team in November and have completed RIBA Stage 1 preparation and briefing.

A visitor experience consultant to support the masterplanning and concept design for RIBA 1 and 2 was also appointed. Work continues on the development of the OBC and a Benefits framework is in place to support and input into the OBC. Each of the five procurements completed to date has applied Social Value principles.

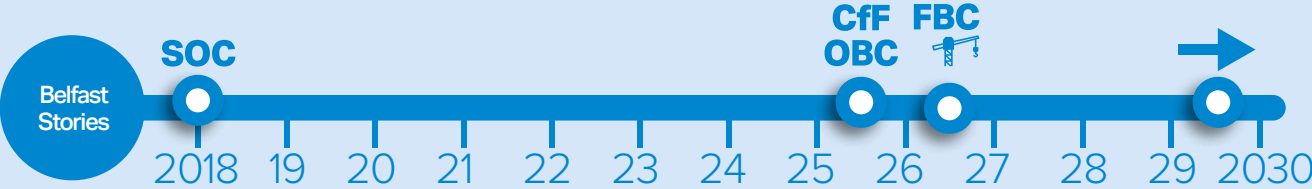
Significant work has also been completed on the Story Collection and a Stories Pilot commenced in December 2023 with a report on the findings and recommendations due early in 2024.

£40.0 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

£65.0 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

Project overview:

The project will offer integrated and improved access and connections to key attractions such as the Castle, Courthouse, Fort, Forest, Gardens and wider village area and deliver an enriched heritage tourism potential.

**Current status
year end 2023/24**

Following significant engagement with DfE, TNI, BRCD PMO, LCCC and Historic Royal Palaces the Contract for Funding and back to back agreements with LCCC and HRP have been finalised and will be signed in the first quarter of 2024/25. A subsidy assessment has also been prepared, in line with the Subsidy Control requirements.

The procurement strategy has been agreed and finalised and development of procurement documentation for key professional services has been ongoing, with the first appointments expected this summer.

Engagement is ongoing with DfI, Planners and planning consultants to secure planning permission for the public realm element of the programme.



Project overview:

The investment in Carrickfergus will regenerate, reposition and rebrand the town to place it firmly on the map as an authentic heritage-led tourism hub and the 'must visit' starting point of the internationally recognised Causeway Coastal Route.

This project will strengthen the visitor offering at the southern end of the Coastal Causeway Route offering greater opportunity to consume the route as a whole, extending visitor stay and spend. It will also drive additional outcomes in terms of the economic benefits to Carrickfergus town centre; provision of new training and employment opportunities and the promotion of social inclusion and well-being for all.

**Current
status year
end 2023/24**

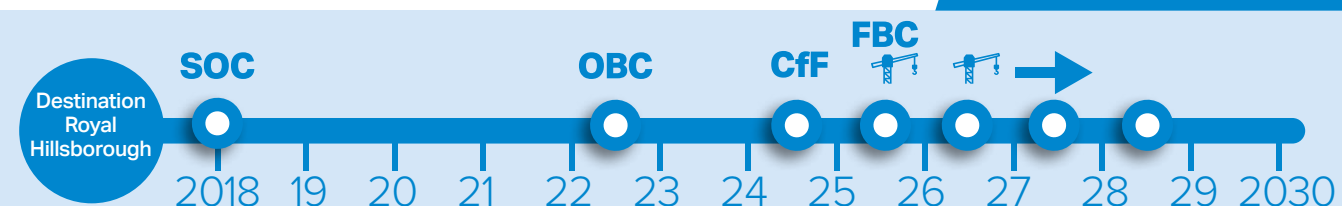
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has appointed the Integrated Consultancy Team and Conservation Management Plan consultants and are engaging with key stakeholders including DfI and HED in the progression of RIBA 2 stage design. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed and a number of Working Groups have been established to inform and support development of the project.

Specialist support was commissioned to develop the Target Operating Model for Carrickfergus and the Gobbins. The pre-market engagement stage has concluded and the Operator Model is now being finalised.

Significant work to ascertain ownership of land potentially impacted by the project and to determine current town centre building usage and vacancy has also been completed.



£20.0 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **CfF:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

£26.4 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **CfF:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

THE GOBBINS PHASE 2

Project overview:

As an established visitor attraction, The Gobbins' world-class credentials will be secured by creating a spectacular and iconic entrance structure to link the experience across the existing cliff top and cliff face paths, creating a circular closed loop and significantly increasing visitor capacity.

The project also includes a major upgrade to the cliff top path, a new cliff top Welcome Hub and a new rope bridge stretching across the coastline below.

A fully immersive experience using the latest technology will be delivered at the current visitor centre. This will offer a Virtual Reality Dome, an exhilarating and accessible 'must see' visitor attraction at the southern end of the Causeway Coastal Route.

Current status year end 2023/24

The Outline Business Case was approved in November 2023. Following a positive outcome from the mandatory referral of the subsidy assessment to the Competition and Markets Authority, the Contract for Funding has been finalised and will be signed in the first quarter of 2024/25

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council appointed an Integrated Design Team in March 2024 following a procurement exercise. Specialist support was also commissioned to develop the Target Operating Model for Carrickfergus Regeneration and The Gobbins and the pre-market engagement stage has concluded. The Operator Model is now being finalised.

Negotiations with landowners around project requirements are ongoing.



MOURNE MOUNTAINS GATEWAY

Project overview:

To enhance and redefine the visitor experience associated with the Mourne Mountains, the Mourne Mountains Gateway Project includes the establishment of a Visitor Centre in the Mourne Mountains and the creation of a mountainside Gondola experience commencing in Donard Park, Newcastle.

The project will deliver a world-class international visitor attraction and more sustainable access, including better transport infrastructure and green travel options to Newcastle and the Mourne Mountains.

By protecting and enhancing the natural heritage and habitat of the region and creating an appealing year-round, sustainable tourism offering, the project will also support the sustainable growth of tourism in the Mourne Mountains and will help to position the local area as one of the premier visitor destinations on the island.

Current status year end 2023/24

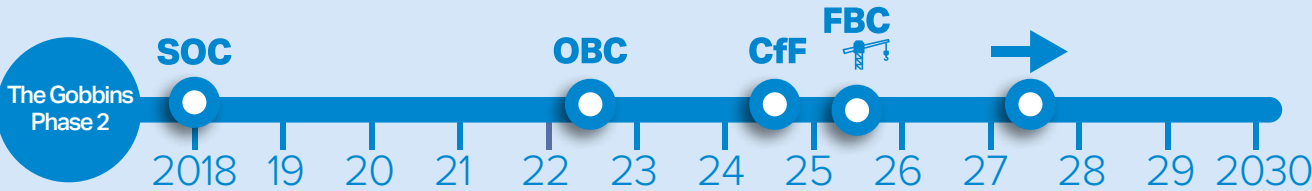
An addendum to the Outline Business Case for the Mourne Mountain Gateway Project was submitted to DoF. Following a positive outcome from the mandatory referral of the subsidy assessment to the Competition and Markets Authority, the Contract for Funding has been finalised and will be signed in the first quarter of 2024/25, pending DoF approval of the OBC Addendum.

Newry, Mourne and Down proceeded with the procurement of the Integrated Design Team at risk with a view to appointing the design team in the first quarter of 2024/25, pending DoF approval of the OBC Addendum.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed and signed with the National Trust, as the project landowner.

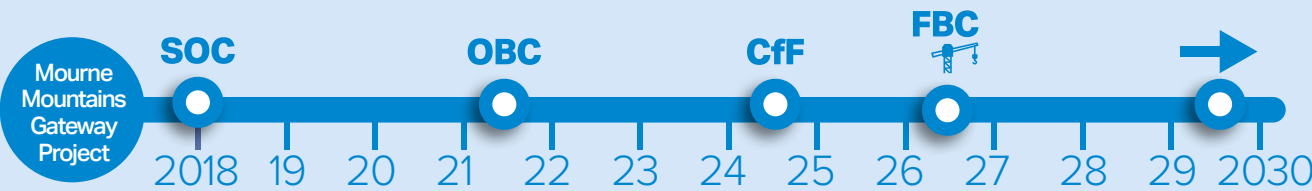


£12.6 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; OBC: Outline Business Case approved; Cff: Contract for Funding approved; FBC: Full Business Case approved; ↑ Construction commences; → Project operational

£30 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; OBC: Outline Business Case approved; Cff: Contract for Funding approved; FBC: Full Business Case approved; ↑ Construction commences; → Project operational

NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION

Project overview:

This investment in Newry city centre will support the re-imagining of the city centre by delivering a civic and regional hub, theatre and conferencing facilities, improvements to the public realm and investment in Grade A office provision.

As well as regenerating the city centre, the investment will create employment opportunities, increase visitor numbers, stimulate the evening economy, improve civic pride and help stimulate further private sector investment.

Rural areas will also benefit from the wider range of employment opportunities that increased investment in the city will bring, contributing to the inclusive growth ambition of the City Deal.



Current status year end 2023/24

Engagement with key stakeholders to progress the planning applications for both the Theatre and Conference facility and the Civic Hub is ongoing.

Procurement of the Integrated Supply Teams is ongoing and following the severe flooding experienced in Newry in October 2023, flood alleviation works proposed by DfI have been incorporated into the procurement documents for the Theatre and Conference facility.

Work to develop the Full Business Case has commenced and engagement is ongoing with stakeholders in relation to the Office Development Fund and how this can support development of Grade A office accommodation.

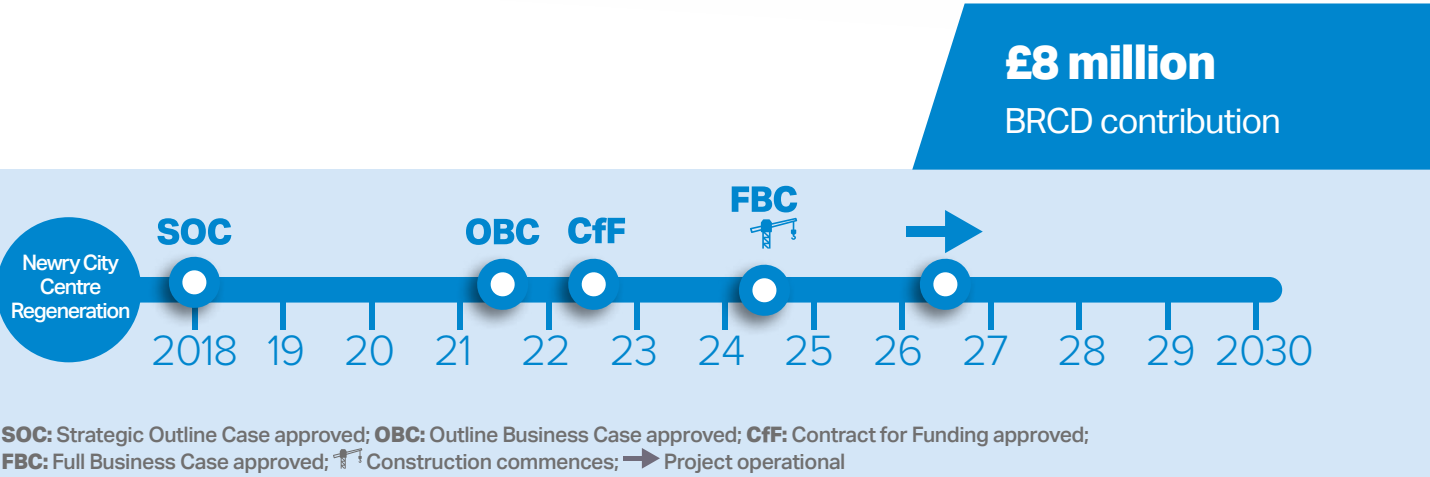
INFRASTRUCTURE

Modern, world-class infrastructure enables economic growth, builds connections to markets and opportunities, gets people to jobs in a sustainable way, and is a key consideration for inward investors.

However the Belfast region continues to wrestle with the consequences of under-investment in transport infrastructure, particularly public transport, and the resulting high levels of car use, pollution and congestion.

Improvements to inter-regional and intra-regional transport are vital to facilitate continued economic growth. Connectivity will be key to providing access to jobs and increasing the talent pool for business recruitment

The BRCD infrastructure projects will help prime the region to support these efforts.



LAGAN PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE BRIDGE

Project overview:

The pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Lagan will provide an attractive commuter and leisure linkage, offering workers and visitors a quicker route between the city centre and Ormeau Park, one of the biggest, most visited parks in greater Belfast.

The bridge will also improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists and encourage a shift to sustainable transport modes while promoting an active lifestyle, improving the well-being of those in the region and enhancing social inclusion.

The new route will offer increased opportunities for visitors to explore the city, shrinking the perceived (and actual) distance between previously disconnected areas. This investment has the potential to unlock new development opportunities, boost tourism and support regeneration efforts.

Current status year end 2023/24

The pre-tender cost estimate identified significant increases to the project budget and DfI has agreed to prioritise the active travel budget towards the scheme to address the funding shortfall. An addendum to the OBC was prepared to reflect this increased cost and received DoF approval in March 2024.

An external peer review exercise, similar to a Gateway 2, was completed for Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge in preparation for procurement of a design and build contractor. As a result, the project programme was updated and the current target is to appoint a Design and Build contractor in spring 2025. Design and construction is expected to take up to 24 months from award of the contract.



BELFAST RAPID TRANSIT PHASE 2

Project overview:

The Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 project is the further development of the Belfast Rapid Transit system north to Antrim and Newtownabbey and south to Lisburn and Castlereagh and an extension of the existing CITI route to serve Queen's University Belfast and City Hospital.

The project aims to increase numbers travelling by public transport instead of car and contribute to an enhanced city image.

Current status year end 2023/24

DfI continues to progress the project with work to determine the feasibility of BRT2 extensions to Glengormley and Carryduff, as requested by the Minister, due for completion in the second quarter of 2024/25.

The project team is also working with transport consultants to determine the city centre routes in order to align with the emerging Eastern Transport Plan, Bolder Vision for Belfast, and proposed public realm projects.

In terms of delivery timelines, a definitive programme has not yet been established, however at present the earliest 'go live' date for BRT2 would be 2031.

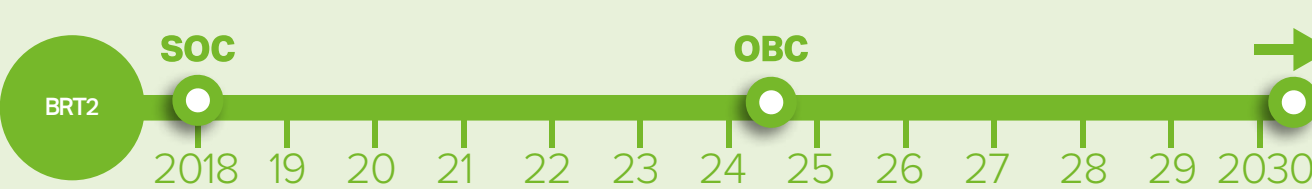


£12.1 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

£35.0 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

NEWRY SOUTHERN RELIEF ROAD

Project overview:

Newry is strategically located between Belfast and Dublin and is a major inter-regional gateway that includes through access to Warrenpoint Harbour, Northern Ireland's second busiest port. Its location means the city experiences periods of high traffic demand, which contributes to delays and congestion on the local and strategic road network.

This project proposes development of a high standard relief road as an alternative route for strategic through-traffic, to improve journey times and journey time reliability for strategic traffic and to reduce the conflict between strategic and local traffic movements in Newry city centre, complementing the city's regeneration ambitions.

Current status year end 2023/24

The Minister recently re-confirmed a decision by the Permanent Secretary that the scheme can proceed on the basis of a fixed bridge.

A community information event - which provided an opportunity for stakeholders to view the emerging final scheme proposals for the project - took place in Newry Leisure Centre in October 2023.

Development work has continued to progress towards the next key decision stage; publication of Draft Orders. Work is proceeding to finalise the draft Statutory Orders and Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) in advance of their publication and statutory public consultation, currently anticipated for publication in mid-2024.



SECTION 4

EMPLOYABILITY AND SKILLS

Overview

Northern Ireland's City and Growth Deals are keen to work together to tackle shared challenges and consider more joined-up responses to the skills needs anticipated through their planned investment projects.

The BRCD capital investment is intended to help rebalance the local economy by building on our competitive strengths, increasing productivity and supporting the creation of more and better jobs. However, it will be critical that the right skills are in place to enable as wide a range of people as possible to avail of the opportunities arising from this investment if we are to drive inclusive growth - a fundamental ambition of City and Growth deals.

Current Status Year End 2023/24

Despite resourcing challenges over the past year, the BRCD partners have continued to support the delivery of the Employability and Skills programme. The first BRCD skills assessment in relation to construction was completed in the 2022/23 period. Over the last year, a second cross deal Skills Assessment has also been completed for the Advanced Manufacturing sector.

As with the Construction Skills Assessment, it is clear from the Advanced Manufacturing Assessment, that promoting those skills areas where opportunities are most likely to emerge will need to be a key priority. At the same time preparing for future skills needs - in new technical areas such as Net Zero - will require greater focus, as will the expansion of apprenticeship provision to address some of the current gaps.

The emerging recommendations from this Skills Assessment points to the need for a more integrated approach to the identification of needs and better alignment between what the sector is telling us is needed and the current available provision.

To summarise the key emerging recommendations (each of which has associated actions) include:

- Developing a collaborative approach to future skills provision for the advanced manufacturing sector
- Aligning and re-scaling existing provision to meet current and future demand reflecting industry need
- Expanding the range of apprenticeship and higher-level apprenticeship pathways in line with the 10X implementation plan
- Increasing attractiveness and raising awareness of career potential in the sector

- Preparing for emerging skills needs associated with sustainability and Net Zero

Although there is no funding resource for skills delivery within the Deal itself, the evidence gathered in these assessments will be useful for our delivery partners as they build their curricula around identified needs in areas where opportunities are likely to be greatest.

Work is also continuing to map existing digital skills provision as part of the Digital Skills Assessment. An employer survey will help to inform needs and, towards the end of the current year, results from a workshop to engage with partners who are delivering the digital curriculum will also feed into the Assessment.

A Skills Assessment for the Creative Industries (Virtual Production) is also nearing completion.

Collaborating to achieve more

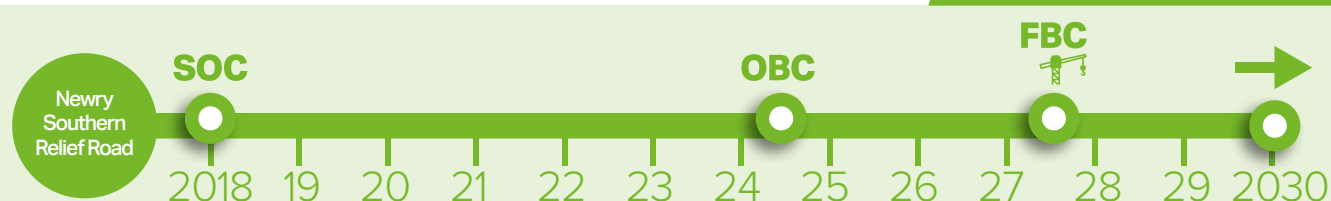
Partners have also been developing a number of collaborative proposals for funding to complement and support the implementation of skills assessments.

The £7.1m Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF⁹) was launched throughout Northern Ireland during the past year - an initiative supported and taken forward by the BRCD partners, given the shared region-wide interest in advancing the region's SME capability in the digital economy.

Led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and facilitated by the Full Fibre NI partnership, the Fund seeks to support economic growth by fast-tracking the response of SMEs to the business opportunities provided through digital transformation.

BRCD is also continuing to engage with other emerging opportunities such as the Centre for Digital Innovation and Technology (CDIT), and SRC's ongoing bid for a Dublin/Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC).

£93.4 million
BRCD contribution



SOC: Strategic Outline Case approved; **OBC:** Outline Business Case approved; **Cff:** Contract for Funding approved; **FBC:** Full Business Case approved; **↑** Construction commences; **➔** Project operational

⁹ Through provision of a capital grant fund that supports investment in capital equipment (hardware and software), the Fund alleviates the financial barriers that can hinder the strategic digital transformation plans of businesses.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Pillar	Project	BRCD capital investment £'000	Partner capital investment £'000	Other capital investment £'000	Total planned capital investment £'000	Contract for Funding and Funding Agreement signed	BRCD Spend £
Innovation	AMIC	78,700	9,300	10,000	98,000	January 2023	2,111,623
	Momentum One Zero	52,400	15,700	-	68,100	March 2023	1,234,490
	I-REACH Health	39,700	10,100	7,300	57,100	March 2023	1,303,100
	CDHT	34,000	4,100	2,000	40,100	Expected Q2 FY25	-
	Studio Ulster	25,200	3,600	2,900	31,700	July 2022	-
Digital	Challenge Fund Programme	55,000	-	-	55,000	N/A	-
	Enabling Infrastructure	25,000	-	-	25,000	N/A	-
	Regional Innovation Hubs	40,000	5,000	-	45,000	N/A	-
	Digital Twin *included in Regional Innovation Hubs above	15,000	-	22,600	37,600	March 2024	214,250
	Ards & North Down Council Digital Hub *included in Regional Innovation Hubs above	8,920	1,100	370	10,390		-
	I4C *13.5m contribution included in Regional Innovation Hubs above and additional £7m contribution from T&R Pillar below	20,500	3,570	-	24,070		-
Tourism & Regeneration	Bangor Waterfront	40,000	20,000	12,800	72,800	January 2023	-
	Carrickfergus Regeneration	26,400	14,400	1,400	42,200	November 2022	139,770
	Newry City Centre Regeneration	8,000	34,900	-	42,900	January 2023	189,890
	Belfast Stories	65,000	35,000	-	100,000		-
	Destination Royal Hillsborough	20,000	4,250	1,725	25,975	Expected Q1 FY25	-
	The Gobbins Phase 2	12,600	1,000	-	13,600	Expected Q1 FY25	-
	Mourne Mountain Gateway	30,000	14,600	-	44,600	Expected Q1 FY25	-
Infrastructure	Lagan Pedestrian & Cycle Bridge	12,100	12,850	-	24,950		350,000
	Newry Southern Relief Road	93,400	27,940	-	121,340		-
	Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2	35,000	109,900	-	144,900		-
Totals		699,500	322,640	38,125	1,060,265		5,543,123

LOOKING AHEAD

Benefits Realisation

As we move into Year 3 of delivery, the BRCD partnership is committed to achieving the benefits and outcomes that the Deal is designed to deliver. This will include a focus on the benefits not only of the Deal itself, but of the wider partnership to the region.

BRCD investment will strengthen the region's offer in growth sectors such as life and health sciences, the digital and creative industries, and advanced manufacturing. Collectively, they will support next generation digital capabilities, boost tourism, and support the region's regeneration, all underpinned by infrastructure developments and skills investment to connect people to jobs and services.

Project benefits were initially identified within Benefits Realisation Plans (derived from Outline Business Cases). From this, the benefits to be delivered are articulated within Contracts for Funding and Funding Agreements (FAs) and will be captured in project benefits registers in line with the Full Business Cases. Realising these benefits will become increasingly meaningful as we move more deeply into the delivery phase where each project will be responsible for reporting progress through our standard quarterly reporting process.

The BRCD partnership also recognises the importance of identifying and reporting on extraneous benefits whether planned for, or resulting more organically from the partnership.

To this end, and in addition to reporting project benefits, a Programme Level Benefits Realisation Framework is now in development which will not only set out how we intend to collate and report on project benefits, but will also identify partners' plans to work collaboratively – including better alignment with government partners - to maximise the impact of the Deal.

Inclusive, Sustainable Growth

Inclusive growth is at the heart of BRCD investment. This approach to economic progress and development reflects the Deal's commitment to balance societal, economic and environmental needs.

The BRCD will deliver its vision for inclusive and sustainable economic growth through:

- delivering the Employability and Skills programme
- integrating inclusion and sustainability commitments into project design and development
- holding projects to account for delivery of their own inclusion and sustainability commitments
- using additional policy levers to integrate inclusive growth where possible

To meet the Social Value objectives of the Deal, BRCD partners have agreed the Strategic Investment Board's (SIB) Points Based [Model for Social Value](#) as a minimum requirement. This is supported with clear processes and guidance to help projects incorporate social value considerations into their procurement [processes](#).

Once contracts are awarded, the BRCD projects develop Social Value Delivery Plans and implementation is then monitored through the SIB portal. Although this remains at a relatively early stage of development, the PMO is already beginning to receive its first quarterly reports on how projects are incorporating social value, allowing us to identify successes or challenges. Our Employability and Skills support also provides a resource for contractors wishing to connect with relevant employability and skills services across the region.

Inclusive Growth will continue to be a critical success factor for Deal projects. As project integrated consultancy teams are procured and social value delivery plans developed and delivered, we will seek to ensure that inclusive growth opportunities are maximised for those priority groups defined in the Deal's inclusive growth ambitions.

The Strategic Investment Board continues to provide regular training to all projects to ensure full awareness and understanding of the agreed approach to social value.

Delivering in 2024/25

The year ahead will see a significant milestone for BRCD with the opening of Studio Ulster in late 2024.

Delivery will also progress at pace across the investment pillars.

The innovation centres of excellence will continue to build capacity through ongoing recruitment to key positions, development of operating models, business and industry engagement, and identification of future skills need.

We will work with government departments to ensure we can unlock the roll out of the digital programme focusing on Challenge Funds, ongoing investment in 5G, and identifying further testbeds to support the delivery of the overall programme of investment.

The coming year will be a key phase of development for our tourism pillar, with Contracts for Funding for three projects expected to be signed early in the year. This will enable appointment of professional services to progress development of the projects and funding to flow. Investment in key public realm schemes will also continue through our regeneration projects.

Engagement will continue with the Department for Infrastructure on its three key projects, with significant progress expected on the Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge.

Work will also continue on our Employability and Skills programme with continued focus on the cross Deal skills assessments. The skills assessment for the Creative Industries and Digital sectors will be produced early in the year and we hope to commence work on Skills Assessments in respect of the Tourism and Health Sciences sectors, working with partners, industry and government to identify how we align plans and resources to meet the needs of the high quality jobs that will be created in these growth sectors.

During 2024/25 we will:

- sign five additional Contracts for Funding
- receive approval for three additional Full Business Cases
- have in place eight additional major contracts for design and delivery
- complete two additional Skills Assessments
- commit an additional £150 million in signed Contracts for Funding
- drawdown circa £40 million

With the investment programme well into delivery phase, communication and engagement at programme, pillar and individual project level is becoming ever more important.

A priority for the year ahead will be the implementation of our Strategic Engagement Plan. Focusing on political and businesses engagement, it sets out actions to ensure continuous engagement with local businesses and elected members across the region to offer updates on progress and identify further priorities and areas of collaboration, as well as future investment.

We will continue to engage with the Belfast City and Region Place partnership to share relevant messaging with investors across the UK, Ireland and internationally, at showcase investment events such as UKREiF - The UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum, MIPIM, the world's leading real estate market event and New York New Belfast.

We will also work with the NI and UK Governments and partner agencies to ensure that the opportunities created through the BRCD and the City and Growth Deals across NI are promoted effectively across the UK, Ireland and internationally as drivers for future investment and business growth.



COUNCIL PANEL 2023/24

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council



Councillor
Matthew Magill



Alderman
Mark Cosgrove



Councillor
Jay Burbank



Councillor
Michael Goodman

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council



Alderman
Allan Ewart MBE



Councillor
Gretta Thompson



Councillor
Tim Mitchell



Councillor
John Lavery BEM

Ards and North Down Borough Council



Alderman
Alan McDowell



Councillor
Alistair Cathcart



Councillor
Ray McKimm



Councillor
Craig Blaney

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council



Alderman
Billy Ashe MBE



Alderman
Robert Logan



Councillor
Timothy Gaston



Councillor
Robin Stewart

Belfast City Council



Councillor
Sarah Bunting



Councillor
Ronan McLaughlin



Councillor
Emmet McDonough-Brown



Councillor
Carl Whyte

Newry Mourne and Down District Council



Councillor
Oonagh Hanlon



Councillor
Declan Murphy



Councillor
Pete Byrne



Councillor
Henry Reilly

GLOSSARY OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The BRCD has a number of frameworks and plans that sit behind the main Deal Document agreed in December 2021 which describe the arrangements in place to ensure we deliver an effective Programme.

Document	Purpose
Deal Document	Document that confirms the joint partner commitment to full implementation of the BRCD. The Deal Document represents the statement of commitment to support and deliver the Deal.
Financial Agreement	Outlines the collective financial commitment of all partners over the lifetime of the Deal to deliver the project outcomes as detailed in each approved business case.
Financial and Implementation Plan	Outlines detailed funding profiles for each project and programme and the appropriate financial stewardship, protocols and controls to ensure accountable delivery.
Employability and Skills Proposition	Outlines how partners can maximise the benefit of the investment by identifying the skills needs and opportunities it will create and by addressing barriers to employment that might hinder inclusion.
Governance and Assurance Framework	Outlines the procedures that BRCD partners will follow in relation to decision making and delivery of the Deal.
Communication Protocol	Sets out an agreed framework for communication protocols around the BRCD to ensure areas of responsibility and working practices are clearly defined.
Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Framework	Demonstrates the commitment of BRCD partners to improving inclusivity across society in the implementation of projects while also strengthening the sustainability focus of the Deal by considering opportunities to support climate resilience.
Risk and Issue Management Framework and Registers	Outlines partners' commitment to good corporate governance and helping to improve decision making, enhance outcomes and strengthen accountability.

BRCD KEY CONTACTS

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Programme Manager	Theresa Slevin	slevint@belfastcity.gov.uk
Programme Accountant	Jane Young	YoungJane@belfastcity.gov.uk



Images courtesy of Tourism Northern Ireland and partners.

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City Council**



**Antrim and
Newtownabbey
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**Lisburn &
Castlereagh
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**Mid & East
Antrim
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Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**
**Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council**



**QUEEN'S
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**Ulster
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