

Draft Programme for Government 2024 – 2027 Consultation 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'

Consultation Open 9th September – 4th November 2024



Draft Programme for Government Consultation 2024-27

Overview

Welcome to the draft Programme for Government 2024-27 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' Public Consultation Survey

Thank you for your interest in this consultation.

On 5th September 2024 the Executive agreed a [draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'](#).

Developed by an Executive working for you, Our Plan is about making life better for you and your family, now and in the future.

We have thought carefully about what needs to change, focusing on what matters most to you, growing a globally competitive and sustainable economy, delivering affordable childcare, giving you great public services, creating better life opportunities for everyone, protecting our environment and making our communities safer.

It is designed for you, by people like you, but we need your help with shaping the final document.

Let's Build a Better Tomorrow, Today: Have Your Say

Have your say now by taking our online consultation survey. Just make sure to share your thoughts before the consultation deadline 4th November 2024, 23:59 hrs (GMT).

Keeping Your Personal Information Safe

The Programme for Government (PfG) Team, at [The Executive Office \(TEO\)](#) is committed to protecting your privacy. Learn how we handle your personal information in the [draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' Consultation Privacy Notice](#).

Here to Help

If you require assistance or have any questions with regards to completing your consultation response, please contact the PfG Team using the contact details below:

Email: PfGconsultation@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

More Information

For details on the Executive's draft Programme for Government 2024 - 2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' and to learn more about our consultation process and how your views count, please visit [PfG Consultation webpage](#).

About you

1. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

(Required)

- Individual
- On behalf of an organisation – please skip to the ‘About you – Organisation’ section

About you – Individual

1. Please provide your contact details below:

Your name and email address is collected for validation purposes.

Name: (Required)

Email address: (Required)

2. Can we contact you to discuss your response to this consultation?

This may be to follow up any specific points we need to clarify.

- Yes
- No

3. Can we contact you in future about the draft Programme for Government?

For example, to provide you with a link to the results of this consultation, to inform you of further consultations or provide updated information on the Programme for Government.

(Required)

- Yes
- No

4. To support transparency in our decision making process, we will publish a summary of the consultation feedback on the PfG webpage. This will sometimes include the responses themselves and may mention names of the responding organisation (if applicable). However, names of individuals responding on a personal capacity will only be published where consent has been given. Please note we will not publish contact details.

(Required)

- Yes, I consent to my name being published with my response
- No, please remove my name before publishing my response

Moderation policy

Feedback provided may be subject to publication or disclosure under access to information laws like the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. If you believe your input should be treated as confidential, please contact us, so that this may be considered should we receive a disclosure request:

Programme for Government team

Email: Pgconsultation@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

More about you – Individual

The following questions have been included to help us understand who is responding. Please note that response to these questions is **optional** and will be **anonymised**.

Please select only one option for each of the following questions.

1. What is your sex?

By sex we are referring to your current sex.

- Male
- Female
- I identify in a different way
- Prefer not to say

If you identify in a different way, please specify below:

2. What is your age?

- Under 16
- 16 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 to 84
- 85 plus
- Prefer not to say

3. What is your marital status?

- Single, that is, never married and never registered in a civil partnership
- Married
- In a registered civil partnership
- Separated but still legally married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Separated but still legally in a civil partnership
- Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
- Surviving partner from a civil partnership
- Prefer not to say

4. Which council area do you live in?

- Antrim and Newtownabbey
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast and Glens
- Derry City and Strabane
- Fermanagh and Omagh
- Lisburn and Castlereagh
- Mid and East Antrim
- Mid Ulster
- Newry, Mourne and Down
- Ards and North Down
- Prefer not to say

5. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expecting to last for 12 months or more?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If you answered 'Yes', does your condition(s) or illness(es) reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

- Yes, a lot
- Yes, a little
- Not at all
- Prefer not to say

6. What is your religion?

- No Religion
- Catholic
- Presbyterian
- Church of Ireland
- Methodist
- Baptist
- Free Presbyterian
- Brethren
- Protestant - not specified
- Christian - not specified
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Other
- Prefer not to say

If you have selected Other, please specify below:

7. Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

- Heterosexual or Straight
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say

If you have selected Other, please specify below:

8. Do you have responsibility for caring of any of the following groups?

Care of a child

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Care of a person with a disability

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Care of a dependant elderly person

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

9. What is your ethnic group?

- White
- Irish Traveller
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Other Asian background
- African
- Caribbean
- Other Black/African/Caribbean background
- Arab
- Other
- Prefer not to say

If you have selected Other, please specify below:

10. Do you think of yourself as a unionist, a nationalist or neither?

- Unionist
- Nationalist
- Neither
- Other
- Prefer not to say

If you have selected Other, please specify below:

About you – Organisation

1. Please provide your organisation's contact details below:

Your organisation name and email address is collected for validation purposes.

Organisation name: (Required)

Organisation email address: (Required)

2. Which of the following best describes the sector you work in?

This will assist us in monitoring the range of respondents the consultation has reached.

- Statutory or Regulatory Body
- Arm's Length Body (ALB)
- Organised interest Group: e.g. Education, Health, Business, Creative Industries, Environment, Community, Voluntary & Third sectors.
- Business operator
- Local Government
- Government Department
- Trade Union
- Church or faith group
- Media
- Academia
- Charity
- Political Party
- Other (please specify):

3. Can we contact you to discuss your response to this consultation?

This may be to follow up any specific points we need to clarify.

(Required)

- Yes
- No

4. Can we contact you in future about the draft Programme for Government?

For example, to provide you with a link to the results of this consultation, to inform you of further consultations or provide updated information on the Programme for Government.

(Required)

- Yes
- No

5. To support transparency in our decision making process, we will publish a summary of the consultation feedback on the PfG webpage. This will sometimes include the responses themselves and may mention names of the responding organisation (if applicable). However, names of individuals responding on a personal capacity will only be published where consent has been given. Please note we will not publish contact details.

(Required)

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Programme for Government team

Email: PfGconsultation@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More Information: 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy'

The Issue: Our economy continues to grow, and we now boast a growing reputation on the world's economic stage, backed by our leadership in key sectors and underpinned by our skills and technology. But not everyone here is feeling the benefit of that growth and there is still a long way to go.

Productivity has been below the UK average for decades and is the lowest across these islands. We need to provide better support to businesses and help grow a globally competitive and sustainable economy. We also need to help improve the quality of available jobs so more people can be involved in and proud of what we design, make, and build here.

We also need the right infrastructure which will create the foundations for a more productive and prosperous economy; for better rural and urban communities; and for healthier and greener lives.

To create an economy that works for everyone, we will address four key challenges: productivity, good jobs, decarbonisation, and regional balance.

Prioritising these areas will transform our economy, ensuring rewarding work for everyone, regardless of background, and spread economic prosperity across all areas. We will tackle low productivity to help businesses thrive and boost employees' wages through trade, innovation, and our key sector strengths. We will also move to decarbonise our economy and become self-sufficient in affordable renewable energy.

More information on the priority 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

More Information: 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy' Actions

Our Proposed Action: Through a series of multi-million-pound committed investments, we will make this a more vibrant and inclusive place to live, work, invest and visit. Central to every part of our plan for a globally competitive and sustainable economy will be employers and workers. Supporting them to build the skills needed both now, and in the future, will be vital if we are to harness our economic potential.

Actions are:

- Prioritise the development of high-productivity sectors through specific programmes to support cluster development
- Continue to streamline City and Growth Deals processes and approvals
- Additional investment in the Higher Education Innovation Fund and similar programmes, and by focusing on increasing the uptake of European and UK-based funding programmes
- Through the new Skills Fund, a range of initiatives will be introduced to ensure individuals have the right training to adapt to new technologies and new ways of working
- Improve management practices to boost productivity and job quality
- Appointed a new Chief Science and Technology Adviser and will establish a Northern Ireland Science and Technology Advisory Network
- A new Apprenticeship Inclusion Challenge Fund

- Set up a new Skills Fund; this will include a new Tourism and Hospitality Careers Programme and a new Skills Academy for the childcare sector
- Subject to Executive approval, we propose to introduce new Employment Rights Legislation and a Good Work Charter
- Seek to achieve self-sufficiency in our own clean and affordable energy
- Invest £15 million in the Energy and Resource Efficiency Support Scheme
- Invest a further £75 million via the Invest to Save Fund into the public sector's transition to net zero
- Realise ambition of the proposed £150 million Investment Zone
- Publish a Circular Economy Strategy
- We need to invest in our economic infrastructure working more closely and importantly more constructively with local stakeholders
- Continue to build on, and support, our established Higher Education campuses at QUB, UU Belfast and UU Coleraine
- The Magee Taskforce will develop and oversee an action plan for campus expansion (Ulster University's Magee Campus)
- Boost tourism's sub-regional impact through an innovative Tourism Strategic Action Plan
- Work with Councils and local partners to deliver a Sub-Regional Economic Action Plan

More information on the actions under 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

‘Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy’ Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More Information: 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare'

The Issue: We need to make childcare more affordable for parents to support employability and ease financial pressures. This must complement existing support available through Universal Credit and tax-free childcare. We also need to ensure that our childcare sector is stable and sustainable.

We know that early years intervention provides the best long-term outcomes for our children, particularly those facing disadvantage. Early years intervention can make a long-term difference to a child's communication skills and their educational and health outcomes.

More information on the priority 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Deliver More Affordable Childcare:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

More Information: 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare' Actions

Our Proposed Action: We have already started to develop a long-term approach which will make childcare more affordable and help parents stay in or return to work. We know support cannot come soon enough, and that is why we are taking steps to introduce a balanced package of measures this year. This has the interests of children at its core and will ease current financial pressures on providers and families. It will also lay the foundation for an Early Learning and Childcare Strategy.

Actions are:

- As we develop the Early Learning and Childcare Strategy, we are also taking immediate action. We are investing up to £25 million this year
- Introduce a 15% childcare subsidy for parents in receipt of tax-free childcare who have children below primary school age
- Supporting existing childcare and early years programmes, which are focused on children facing disadvantage, and will consider how to best support childcare providers
- Pre-School Education Programme; invest in taking steps to ensure we can deliver long-term change and to stabilise core services
- Collect more robust and comprehensive data from the sector so we can more effectively evaluate the 2024/25 interventions to inform the future longer-term development of the strategy
- Put in place the training needed to build a skilled, valued and happy workforce, including a new Skills Academy
- Create a solution focused on child-centred, developmental approaches and early support for children with additional needs
- Develop an Early Learning and Childcare Strategy which improves provision and includes two high-profile targets: supporting the development of our children to give every child the best start in life, while supporting more affordable childcare

More information on the actions under 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

‘Deliver More Affordable Childcare’ Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Deliver More Affordable Childcare' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below:

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Cut Health Waiting Times'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Cut Health Waiting Times' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More Information: 'Cut Health Waiting Times'

The Issue: We have the longest hospital waiting times in the UK, with people struggling to get the treatment they need. In recent years, pressure has increased due to both a rise in demand but also the impact of the pandemic on the Health and Social Care system. These have combined adding to the backlog of patients awaiting care. This backlog is unacceptable.

Tackling waiting times requires solutions across our entire Health and Social Care system. We know that long-term solutions are required to close the gap between growing demand and what we can deliver. This requires increasing capacity within our Health and Social Care system through service reform and reconfiguration. It also requires addressing health inequalities and helping to improve the long-term health and wellbeing of our population.

This will mean moving to a model of care that is not purely focused on acute interventions provided by our hospitals, to one that is centred around patient needs, and taking proactive steps to cure, care for, and prevent illness.

This will mean investing in primary, community and social care. All of the Executive is engaged in making this a healthier society.

We also know that these sorts of changes will take time, and long-term investment.

More information on the priority 'Cut Health Waiting Times' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Cut Health Waiting Times:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Cut Health Waiting Times'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

More Information: 'Cut Health Waiting Times' Actions

Our Proposed Action: The need to improve performance, increase productivity, and improve the quality and consistency of care is well understood. We know that we need to accelerate the transformation and reconfiguration of services to deliver that, and progress has and is being made to tackle the backlog of patients waiting. For example, through the development of elective care centres, rapid diagnosis centres, service reviews, and mega clinics.

In addition, officials are working with Trusts to increase productivity and efficiency through a wide range of best practice service improvements, and the Social Care Collaborative Forum is working across all social care sectors to reform the commissioning and delivery of adult social care.

Actions are:

- Given the importance of addressing waiting lists, investments of £76 million have been approved for 2024/25
- Supporting those on cancer and time-critical waiting lists
- Prepare for future investments that will provide improvements and efficiencies that help us reduce waiting times
- Investing in our workforce, delivering digital capability and innovation, taking the difficult decisions about reconfiguration, and supporting a move to addressing health inequalities and improving health through primary, community and social care

More information on the actions under 'Cut Health Waiting Times' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

'Cut Health Waiting Times' Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Cut Health Waiting Times' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below:

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More information: 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls'

The Issue: We must work together to end the epidemic of violence, abuse, and harm against women and girls.

Despite the work undertaken to date, there have been over 20 domestic homicides with a female victim since January 2020 and these numbers continue to rise. Evidence shows that most women and girls here have experienced at least one form of gender-based violence, ranging from everyday misogyny and sexual harassment to extreme physical and sexual violence.

This must stop.

It is vital to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls to help stop this violence before it starts. Victims and survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) need to be supported and have access to effective services, and perpetrators need to be held to account. This requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach – there is something everyone can do.

More information on the priority 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls' can be found in the [Draft Programme for Government](#).

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

[More Information: 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls' Actions](#)

Our Proposed Action: This year we will launch our first delivery plan.

The delivery plan will strengthen existing, and mobilise new, partnerships and networks across government, and all sections of our society. It will drive and enable the necessary change, embracing the vital roles of our community and voluntary sector and grass roots organisations.

We have co-designed, with a wide range of stakeholders, including those with lived experience, a Strategic Framework which sets out an ambitious roadmap for generational and systemic change. This will be supported by a series of action plans over a period of seven years.

Our long-term focus is on early intervention and prevention of violence against women and girls. We will take strategic action to tackle damaging attitudes and behaviours so everyone can have healthy, respectful relationships and a chance to thrive. Immediate action is also required to improve the outcomes for victims and survivors of VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls).

Actions are:

- Lead and work with partners to develop campaigns to ensure that there is strong, consistent messaging so that everyone here, including our children and young people, understands the issue and knows how to help end violence against women and girls
- Invest through a Change Fund, providing on-the-ground support for the vital work of communities and the sector in the delivery of the first-year delivery plan
- Introduce better access and support for victims and survivors in the criminal justice system
- Invest in organisations to explore the two key challenges that have been identified through our co-design; using technological innovation to improve understanding and prevention of VAWG, and increasing and improving the physical and psychological safety of women and girls everywhere
- Work collaboratively to support delivery, communications, and stakeholder networks and advise on innovation, measurement, and good practice, improving and joining up data

- Lead in connecting and supporting collaborative working across the public sector and with Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) sectoral stakeholders
- Officials will continue to work with the PSNI, and across departments, to ensure collaborative working and alignment with other strategies where there are clear shared outcomes

More information on the actions under 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls' can be found in the [Draft Programme for Government](#).

‘Ending Violence Against Women and Girls’ Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls’ priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below:

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More Information: 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs'

The Issue: Over the last decade, the number of children identified with Special Educational Needs (SEN) has risen steadily to almost one in five pupils alongside an increasing level of expenditure on SEN provision, not always matched by a demonstrable improvement to the outcomes for children and young people with SEN and disabilities.

The current education system is struggling to keep pace with the changing pupil profile and the model of support for children and young people needs significant transformation which requires additional investment. Over 200 recommendations exist from various reports evidencing the need for systemic reform, a focus on early intervention, and prompt access to effective supports to improve the experience of children, their families, and the educational workforce.

More information on the priority 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

More Information: 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs' Actions

Our Proposed Action: We will work to transform the Education system to provide high-quality, efficient and sustainable services for children with SEN and disability. Systemic transformation will take time but it is vital that we respond meaningfully to make sure our education system works for all learners.

Actions are:

- Rebuild trust and confidence in and within the system
- Developed a set of enabling actions to better support schools
- Clear and ongoing communications with children and young people with SEN and disabilities, and their supporting networks
- Prioritise providing the Right Support, from the Right People, at the Right Time and in the Right Place, through the proposed transformation implementation plan
- Develop an investment plan across the school estate which sets out the changes needed to make sure that all pupils have access to learning environments that are inclusive, safe and able to support pupils of different backgrounds, abilities, and cultures
- Seek to streamline the statutory assessment, statementing and annual review process to meet statutory timeframes and ensure timely confirmation of school placements for children with SEN
- The Department of Education (DE) will work with the Department for the Economy (DfE) and the Department of Health (DoH) to improve pathways to appropriate opportunities and improve protections for young people with Special Educational Needs when they leave school

More information on the actions under 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

‘Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs’

Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More information: 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing'

The Issue: Good housing is essential to our health and wellbeing. We want everybody to have access to affordable, sustainable and quality housing that meets their needs within thriving and inclusive communities. The challenge we face is evidenced by the social housing waiting list, which currently stands at over 47,000 households, including 35,000 experiencing housing stress.

These numbers are on the rise, indicating a pressing need for action to uphold the basic right to a good home. The Executive has not been able to deliver on its ambition of 2,500 new social homes a year, and we therefore want to commit to the long-term public subsidy required to deliver more social homes, while at the same time innovating to develop new funding models for the delivery of more Affordable Homes to make this achievable.

More information on the priority 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

More Information: 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing' Actions

Our Proposed Action

Actions are:

- Unlock the combined skills and resources of government, the private and third sectors, finding solutions and creating opportunities to transform supply and improve quality across the whole housing system
- Ensure that the planning system supports the delivery of the appropriate supply of housing, creating sustainable and inclusive spaces, and work with NI Water to help facilitate housing growth
- Deliver a Northern Ireland Housing Supply Strategy
- Seeking Treasury agreement for appropriate treatment of borrowing to enable the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to increase investment in its homes, improve energy efficiency, and contribute to new supply
- Focus on preventing homelessness, making it brief, rare and non-recurrent by working collaboratively, prioritising housing solutions for those most in need and developing innovative funding models with third sector partners to purchase homes
- Bring forward a pilot programme that will support young people leaving care and help to prevent this group from the risk of homelessness
- Continue to prioritise housing support for vulnerable people across our society through NIHE's three-year Supporting People Strategy
- By 2025, we will launch a new Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Continuing our investment in shared ownership homes, supported by low-cost loans to deliver 800 per year
- Continue our programme of reform the private rented sector
- Review the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Private Sector Grants, including the Disabled Facilities Grant

More information on the actions under 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

‘Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing’ Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below:

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Safer Communities'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Safer Communities' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More information: 'Safer Communities'

The Issue: A central role of government is to protect its citizens. By keeping communities safe we enable them to have the confidence they need to live productively and engage fully in society.

Through research and experience, we know more about different types of harm experienced by our people and our communities, although the true extent of violence is thought to be around ten times higher than justice and policing figures suggest. Whether this harm manifests as organised crime, child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, gender-based violence, racism or hate crime, it is more likely to be suffered by people from deprived areas.

These are the same people who are more likely to experience poor physical and mental health, are less likely to be active in their community, and are more likely to be the victim of a crime. We also know that harm results in elevated levels of trauma and that it is these same underlying societal issues and economic challenges that often lead people into crime, as well as making them vulnerable to criminal exploitation.

Domestic abuse accounts for around 20% of recorded crime in Northern Ireland, with one report to police every 16 minutes.

Paramilitary harm continues to affect too many adults and young people; this rises significantly in communities where paramilitary gangs continue to exert coercive control. The estimated cost to our economy is a minimum of £750 million per year.

More information on the priority 'Safer Communities' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Safer Communities:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Safer Communities'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

More information: 'Safer Communities' Actions

Our Proposed Action: We are committed to keeping our communities safe and to making sure you feel confident and secure to live your life to its fullest.

Actions are:

- Work across the Executive to embed trauma-informed, responsive systems
- Seek to drive forward a Speeding Up Justice Programme to reform the way in which cases are handled
- Seek to invest to drive much needed reform at a system level, underpinned by investment in digital capabilities
- Seek to achieve a sufficient number of police officers in line with NDNA commitments, the necessary prosecution resources, and capacity within the courts and Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) to process cases and capacity in prisons to hold people safely and securely and support their rehabilitation
- Work collectively to develop a cross-governmental strategy to reduce offending and reoffending
- Focus on preventing people from entering the justice system, where possible, through early intervention, diversion and the use of community sentencing
- Continue to implement the Strategic Framework for Youth Justice to ensure the youth justice system improves outcomes for children, families, victims and communities affected by crime
- Remain committed to tackling paramilitarism and organised crime and continue to support the cross-Executive efforts aimed at addressing them

More information on the actions under 'Safer Communities' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

'Safer Communities' Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Safer Communities' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More information: 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment'

The Issue: Lough Neagh is one of our most important natural resources and is of huge economic significance for those who depend on it for drinking water, its fishing and eel industries. It is also of growing importance for recreation and tourism.

The significant blue-green algae blooms being witnessed in Lough Neagh and beyond are due to a combination of factors. This includes decades of pollution by nutrients from agriculture, wastewater, septic tanks, and industrial processes.

We must deal with the significant amount of pollution getting into the Lough by targeting interventions at the areas that will have the most impact.

We need to tackle the problems at Lough Neagh urgently, but they cannot be seen in isolation from the natural environment more generally. Tackling climate change and paying attention to our natural environment are critical for our wellbeing and our prosperity and can help unlock new opportunities. Unless we look after our natural environment, we are likely to see many more environmental crises, like Lough Neagh.

More information on the priority 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

Our Proposed Action

Actions are:

- Publish a new environment strategy which will be adopted as Northern Ireland's first Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP)
- Set our carbon budgets and develop our first Climate Action Plan, detailing cross-cutting steps to reduce carbon emissions, adapt to changing weather patterns, and work towards net zero
- The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has led work with other government agencies to develop an Interagency Monitoring Protocol to clarify what monitoring will be carried out, and by whom, in response to future blooms of blue-green algae at any site
- The Lough Neagh Action Plan has already been agreed and published by the Executive
- With financial support from DfE, DAERA has launched a Small Business Research Initiative to explore potential solutions to treat/reduce blue-green algae blooms without impacting the natural environment of Lough Neagh and associated Northern Ireland waterways

More information on the actions under 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment' Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below

Doing What Matters Most Today: 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services'

1. How much do you agree that the priority 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services' should be included in the Programme for Government?

More Information: 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services'

The Issue: We recognise the many compounding factors, set out below, which have resulted in the unsustainability of many of your public services and the need for urgent Reform and Transformation.

Unsustainability of Public Services: Many sectors are in critical need of investment and reform to ensure the quality and efficiency of services you quite rightly expect. The scale of the problem is enormous. Rapid growth in both the cost and demand for public services is placing huge pressure on public finances and is undermining service provision. The Interim Fiscal Framework, agreed with UK Government in May 2024, is a significant early milestone towards putting our finances onto a more sustainable footing.

However, the strain felt by services in recent years cannot be fixed simply, even with funding at a level of relative need. For this reason, transformative approaches need to be considered and taken forward in order to deliver the public services people rely on.

More information on the priority 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Reform and Transformation of Public Services:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. The draft Programme for Government has set out actions that we plan to take under the priority 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services'. How much do you agree that these are the right actions to take?

[More Information: 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services'](#)

Our Proposed Action: We know that fiscal and service sustainability will require brave decisions, collaborative working, and a relentless focus on innovation and efficiency in service delivery. This can only be achieved through partnership working, and a willingness to accept change, challenge the status quo, and make long-term strategic decisions.

Actions are:

- Continue to explore options to deliver efficiencies, sustainability, and enhance borrowing powers
- Set up a new Reform and Transformation Unit
- A Reform Package which will include a Fiscal Framework, a Sustainability Plan and a Transformation Programme
- A new Public Sector Transformation Board, through which £235 million will be invested from a new Transformation Fund, with the objectives of: Service Delivery Transformation, Productivity and Digital Transformation, and Innovation and Research Transformation

More information on the actions under 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services' can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

'Reform and Transformation of Public Services' Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'Reform and Transformation of Public Services' priority:

Please enter any comments in the box below

Doing What Matter Most Today: Priorities

1. Are there any other priorities that should be included in the Programme for Government?

More Information: Priorities

The priorities included under Doing What Matters Most Today:

- Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy
- Deliver More Affordable Childcare
- Cut Health Waiting Times
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
- Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs
- Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing
- Safer Communities
- Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment
- Reform and Transformation of Public Services

Please enter any comments in the box below

Building New Foundations

We are committed to investing in our public infrastructure and reshaping how our services are delivered.

Together, we will work as hard as we can to continue taking care of your needs today while supporting your hopes and ambitions for tomorrow through the high-quality, sustainable public services you deserve.

We will:

- Boost Housing Funds
- Improve the Planning System
- Deliver Better Public Services
- Support Our Net Zero Future
- Manage Our Water
- Upgrade Stadia and Support Local Sports
- Retrofit Homes
- Improve Our Transport Infrastructure for Safer Travel, Connected Communities and Sustainable Economic Growth

We are committed to investing £26 billion of public funding in the next decade. More detail on this will be provided in the upcoming Investment Strategy.

1. How much do you agree that these are the right commitments in relation to the plans for investment in infrastructure?

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the plans for investment in infrastructure:

Please enter any comments in the box below

Shaping a Better Tomorrow

While making things better today is important to us, we also need to look at long-term issues.

Our commitments are based on a recognition of our duty and drive to do better for you, your family, our communities and this place we all call home, now and for generations to come.

Our focus will centre on three long-term Missions: People, Planet, and Prosperity, as well as a cross-cutting commitment to Peace.

People: Working to support everyone at all stages of their life to ensure they have the chance to succeed by improving life opportunities.

Planet: Harnessing the potential of a green growth economy while ensuring we provide an equitable transition to a sustainable and affordable society as we take responsibility for decarbonising our economy and society.

Prosperity: Improving our economic productivity while making sure that we have an economy that works for everyone, and our story continues to be an inspiration to others.

Peace: Our cross-cutting commitment to Peace will make sure that everyone feels the benefit of a growing economy, improved environment, and fairer society.

More information can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

1. The Executive have set out a long-term strategy to deliver three Missions, People, Planet and Prosperity, as well as a cross-cutting commitment to Peace.

How much do you agree with a Missions-based approach?

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please enter any comments in the box below

2. How much do you agree that these are the right Missions to focus on?

Please select only one option for each of the following statements

People:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Planet:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Prosperity:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Are there any areas that are not captured under these missions?

3. **People Mission: A series of actions have been proposed under this Mission. How much do you agree that these are the right actions?**

More Information: People Mission

Our Proposed Action: We are focusing on People, a long-term mission to make sure that everyone can live a long, healthy and happy life.

We want everyone to benefit from a fair and inclusive society where everyone flourishes, no one is left behind, and everyone is made to feel welcome.

Actions are:

- Committed to bringing forward actions to address the issues of integration and racism
- Through joint working across departments, statutory agencies, and voluntary and community organisations, we will work to keep people safe and allow them to achieve their potential
- The introduction of social inclusion strategies
- A significant programme of reform of children's social care services is underway
- Provide access to justice for those affected by Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses through the Truth Recovery Programme
- Deliver much-needed support to those experiencing poverty or at risk of it and continue work to ensure consumers are not exploited
- Increase the skills and talent pipeline of public services in Northern Ireland through apprenticeship routes
- An apprenticeship challenge fund will promote innovation in apprenticeships
- Launch the NI Food Strategy Framework, along with initiatives like the Food Action Plan
- Work with our agri-sector to support primary production and ensure food security
- Seek long-term arrangements to secure a veterinary medicine agreement
- Build on the Executive's strategic framework for public health, Making Life Better, to tackle the wider determinants of health, and we will redouble our efforts to improve the physical and mental health outcomes of Northern Ireland's population and reduce inequalities, through continued implementation of, for example, the Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031
- The "Live Better" initiative will deliver and test a new place-based approach to addressing health inequalities
- Prioritise sports and physical activity to tackle obesity
- Investments in new outdoor recreation and sporting facilities will help to ensure we provide quality and modern focal points for our communities and that we can help people to enjoy active social lives

More information on the actions under the People Mission can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

People Mission Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Is there anything else that should be included under the People Mission?

4. Planet Mission: A series of actions have been proposed under this Mission. How much do you agree that these are the right actions?

More Information: Planet Mission

Our Proposed Action: The effects of a changing climate, including prolonged periods of rain, regional weather warnings, flash flooding, longer-lasting wildfires and rises in water temperatures, accompanied by a seasonal upsurge in blue-green algae, cause untold damage to our local communities, economy, infrastructure, housing, natural environment and health.

These issues serve as a timely reminder that our natural environment cannot be taken for granted. While solving these problems will not happen overnight, we are taking immediate action.

It is important we do right by this place for now and for the future. That is why we are taking steps to support a fairer, cleaner, healthier future for us all. Prioritising our wellbeing means thinking ahead and taking actions now to protect and preserve our environment and our natural resources for generations to come.

Actions are:

- Climate Action Plan
- Water Quality
- Flood Risk Management
- Environmental Improvement Plan
- Affordable Renewable Energy
- Just Transition
- Renewable Electricity Support Scheme
- Facilitate Net Zero Infrastructure

More information on the actions under the Planet Mission can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Planet Mission Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Is there anything else that should be included under the Planet Mission?

5. Prosperity Mission: A series of actions have been proposed under this Mission. How much do you agree that these are the right actions?

More Information: Prosperity Mission

Our Proposed Action: Our goal is to support social enterprises and businesses here to thrive and ensure that everyone, no matter where they live, can have well-paid and fulfilling jobs. We will build capacity in the Social Enterprise Sector and will prioritise areas that are vital to delivering on productivity and decarbonisation. This includes sectoral partnerships to improve pathways into good jobs, a focus on technical and vocational qualifications, and provide opportunities for those returning to the labour market.

Actions are:

- Support small-to-medium-sized enterprises to adopt productivity-improving technology through the AI Collaboration Centre and City and Growth Deals investments
- Harness the UK Government Investment Zone policy to support our transition to net zero. This initiative is backed by a £150 million investment to bolster skills, local infrastructure, enterprise, business support, and planning and development efforts
- Through the development of a Net Zero Accelerator Fund, we are developing a concrete way of attracting net zero investment and cutting greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Climate Change Act 2022
- Maximise benefits from our unique place in the world to attract global investment, grow exports, and attract Foreign Direct Investment to support higher productivity
- Building on our international relationships to advance our economic development and attract new investment opportunities
- Build upon the existing institutions – the North South Ministerial Council, the British Irish Council and InterTradeIreland – to support our small and medium-sized enterprises in maximising trade
- Strengthen relationships and establish new institutions such as the East-West Ministerial Council and Intertrade UK
- Work with the UK Government to support pre-clearance between the United States and Belfast International Airport

More information on the actions under the Prosperity Mission can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Prosperity Mission Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Is there anything else that should be included under the Prosperity Mission?

6. A commitment to Peace will underpin the three missions (People, Planet and Prosperity). A series of actions have been proposed under this commitment. How much do you agree that these are the right actions?

[More Information: Commitment to Peace](#)

Actions are:

- Commitment to Safer Communities
- Partner with international governments, investors and philanthropists to embed a cross-cutting commitment to peace within Our Plan
- Develop a trauma-informed public sector
- Along with our ongoing support for the PEACE PLUS programme and Safer Communities, we will refresh our Good Relations Programme, Communities in Transition, Together: Building United Community, Urban Villages, and Tackling Paramilitarism, Criminality and Organised Crime, and the introduction of a strategic approach to racial equality

More information on the actions under the commitment to Peace can be found in the [draft Programme for Government](#).

Commitment to Peace Actions:

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Is there anything else that should be included under the commitment to Peace?

7. Peace is framed as a cross-cutting commitment, rather than a mission. How much do you agree that this is the right structure?

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please enter any comments in the box below

Understanding Missions by Tracking Wellbeing

1. The draft Programme for Government outlines how it will measure progress through a Wellbeing Framework. How much do you agree with the proposed approach?

[More Information: Wellbeing Framework](#)

To help us keep track of our Missions, a set of metrics have been developed to help understand quality of life in Northern Ireland and these can be found in our [Wellbeing Dashboard](#).

Our Missions have been broken down across ten strategic domains of wellbeing supported by a selection of indicators each of which is a high-quality official statistic. Each project and programme contained within the draft Programme for Government can be linked to a Mission.

We will work across the Executive to understand why the indicators within these domains are improving, staying the same or getting worse and use this analysis to inform future iterations of the Programme for Government.

Please select only one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response

Additional Information

1. Do you have any further comments relevant to this consultation?

Please enter any additional comments in the box below