



**38<sup>th</sup> British-Irish Council Summit, UK Government**

**11 November 2022**

**Work Sector Update – Sustainable Growth and Regeneration**

**The Council is invited to note:**

- **BIC Member Administrations are collaborating to support Sustainable Growth and Regeneration across many of the BIC’s thematic work sectors; and**
- **That a Ministerial meeting of the BIC Social Inclusion work sector took place in October 2022, and to approve the proposed Forward Work Plan [Annex A]. Ministers are also asked to agree that the minutes of all future BIC Ministerial meetings will be agreed by correspondence.**

**BIC Secretariat  
11 November 2022**

## Summary

Across the thematic work sectors of the British-Irish Council, efforts are underway to progress a range of initiatives towards Sustainable Growth and Regeneration across these islands. Since the BIC Summit hosted by the Government of Guernsey in July 2022, the BIC Social Inclusion Ministerial meeting was hosted by the Welsh Government (October 2022), reviewing administrations' efforts in supporting the Social Enterprise sector, and agreeing a proposed Forward Work Plan, primarily focussed on supporting Social Enterprises to contribute to sustainable and resilient communities [Annex A].<sup>1</sup> Due to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Creative Industries Ministerial was postponed, and will be rescheduled for early 2023.

## Sustainable Growth and Regeneration

The building of economically thriving, environmentally sustainable and resilient local communities is an important shared ambition of administrations across these islands, particularly in the current context. This shared ambition is reflected across a number of the BIC's thematic work sectors. The **Creative Industries** work sector has committed to exploring how best to support creative and cultural industries to contribute to the growth of resilient local economies. Linked to these efforts, the **Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages (IML)** work sector is focussed on exploring approaches to supporting the use of IML languages, with an emphasis on building communities and employment opportunities in the IML-linked media and creative industries sectors.

Building on efforts to share best practice on town centre revitalisation, the **Collaborative Spatial Planning** work sector will, next year, bring together policy officials to consider positive placemaking - inclusively creating public places that promote people's health, happiness, connections and well-being. Given this focus on a multi-faceted approach to designing places, cross-collaboration with other relevant BIC work sectors will be a key feature of this symposium in 2023.

Approaches to building sustainable and resilient local communities are being considered through work sectors such as **Drugs and Alcohol** and **Housing**, looking at approaches to implementing the *Housing First* model to address the links between homelessness and substance use, in close collaboration with local, voluntary and community sectors. Similarly, the **Early Years** work sector is examining how best to support the poverty-related attainment gap across administrations, comparing best practice policy interventions to support families and build towards thriving communities. The **Digital Inclusion** work sector's agenda is exploring how online

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<sup>1</sup> In an effort to ensure BIC meetings are less procedural and more discussion-focused, Ministers are asked to agree that minutes of all Ministerial meetings will be agreed by correspondence.

platforms and services can support resilience in local communities, while also examining the importance of online safety in this regard.

### Environmental Sustainability

The British-Irish Council has committed to mainstreaming the climate change and decarbonisation agenda throughout all of its thematic work, and earlier this year, **Energy** Ministers agreed a renewed focus on the decarbonisation of heat globally and locally (working in partnership with the Housing work sector). The work sector has also visited a number of examples of best practice related to community and local energy schemes. The examples visited by the work sector encourage collective action to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy, with an emphasis on local engagement, local leadership and the local community benefiting collectively from the outcomes.

As a shared collective priority across administrations, the **Transport** work sector is now solely focused on the decarbonisation agenda, considering how best to promote modal shift towards active and sustainable transport within local communities, and methods to achieve the decarbonisation of public sector vehicles. Consideration is currently being given to the outputs of the BIC work sector review process, and in this context, a renewed structure for the **Environment** work sector is being examined, which could look at the Clean Air agenda, protecting public health and the environment, while also securing clean growth and innovation in local economies across these islands.

**BIC Secretariat**  
**November 2022**

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## **Annex A: BIC Social Inclusion Work Sector Forward Work Plan**

**Theme:** Social Enterprise

**Lead Administrations:** Welsh and Scottish Governments

Council is invited to endorse the following as priority areas of focus for the BIC Social Inclusion work sector during the 2022-2025 period:

- Examining the role of social enterprises in building sustainable communities and resilient local economies;
- Understanding the contribution of social enterprises to the climate change agenda; and
- Considering how to raise awareness of the importance and potential of social enterprises to contribute to more inclusive and sustainable societies.

**BIC Social Inclusion Work Sector**  
**11 November 2022**