Strategic threats and opportunities

The implementation of our strategic priorities is measured using a number of strategic performance indicators and managed using an opportunity/threat management model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Strategic performance indicators (SPIs)</th>
<th>Strategic threat (ST)/Strategic opportunity (SO)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Customer             | • Reduction in customers reporting service failures  
|                      | • First point of contact resolution  
|                      | • More customers singing our praises (Net Promoter Score) | ST1 ST2 ST3 ST4 ST7 ST8 SO1 SO4 |
|                      | Read more pg31                          |                                               |
| Water                | • Water quality compliance  
|                      | • Reduction in leakage  
|                      | • Reduction in supply interruptions | ST1 ST2 ST3 ST4 ST7 ST8 SO4 |
|                      | Read more pg35                          |                                               |
| Economy              | • Increase/(decrease) in customer tariffs excluding inflation  
|                      | • Reduction in number of areas with development constraints  
|                      | • Bathing water quality | ST1 ST2 ST3 ST4 ST5 ST7 ST8 SO3 SO4 |
|                      | Read more pg41                          |                                               |
| Nature               | • Reduction in our pollution incidents  
|                      | • Wastewater compliance  
|                      | • Reduction in number of properties at risk of out of sewer flooding  
|                      | • Reduction in our carbon footprint | ST1 ST2 ST3 ST4 ST6 ST8 SO3 SO4 |
|                      | Read more pg47                          |                                               |
| People               | • Employee engagement score  
|                      | • Reduction in health and safety incidents | ST1 ST2 ST4 ST5 ST6 ST7 ST8 SO2 SO4 |
|                      | Read more pg55                          |                                               |

Strategic threat (ST) | Strategic opportunity (SO)

ST1 Governance model and funding  SO1 Customer service and innovation
ST2 Health and safety  SO2 Wellbeing
ST3 Asset resilience  SO3 Living with water programme
ST4 Data integrity and cyber risk  SO4 Stakeholder engagement and education
ST5 Pension fund
ST6 Climate change
ST7 Covid-19
ST8 Brexit

Risk and resilience

Increasingly, NI Water faces downside threats which are external to the organisation. These include, for example, Covid-19, factors which impact our supply chain, uncertainty regarding funding, Brexit, cyber attacks and climate change/extreme weather events.

While management of these threats is to a large extent outside the control of NI Water, we recognise the need to build a resilience culture in order to protect the value we create.

NI Water manages risks (both threats and opportunities) in line with our integrated risk and resilience framework which demonstrates the interconnectivity between risk and resilience, and the need for accountability to protect value creation.

NI Water’s Integrated risk and resilience framework

Integrated
The framework and the model outline the requirement for risks (threats and opportunities) to be managed on a cross-directorate basis and with input from external partners where required (e.g. supply chain, strategic partners and service users).

Resilient
NI Water recognises the need to adopt a resilience culture to prepare for unavoidable risk factors, which are external to NI Water.
NI Water defines resilience as ‘the strategic and organisational capacity of NI Water to resist, respond to, and recover from disruptive threats both foreseen and unforeseen’.

A resilience culture within NI Water means that all employees are united in purpose and are clear on the need to be prepared for when that incident does occur rather than simply thinking that it might occur. This is demonstrated by putting plans in place in advance and then being adaptive when an incident does occur so that disruption is minimised and NI Water can return to ‘business as usual’ in the most effective and efficient way possible. Our response to the impact of Covid-19 is a prime example of how having effective business resilience in place makes a difference to managing even unexpected incidents. All the corporate risk maps have a section which records the existing controls and the actions to be put in place to continually improve on our resilience.

NI Water’s Integrated risk and resilience model
NI Water’s approach to risk management

NI Water’s approach to risk management is to have a risk culture where our employees and strategic partners are aware of how they contribute towards our strategic priorities. There is a collaborative approach to analyse the downside risk (threats) that could have a detrimental impact on the achievement of our priorities but also to consider the upside risk (opportunities) towards deriving better outcomes, as shown below:

Through a process of horizon scanning emerging risks, benchmarking, risk trend analysis and workshops held on a business-wide basis, corporate threats and opportunities are established at the start of year. These are updated throughout the year to take account of emerging risks.

The wording of the risk, the risk gradings and the individual risk appetite are approved by the Board. The Board receives a monthly progress report on the management of risks towards the projected risk appetite for each individual risk.

The Board has set the risk appetite for seven strategic risk themes. The movement of the current risk position against each of these seven strategic risk themes is reported to the Risk Committee twice each year.

The Risk Committee considers the threat and opportunity maps throughout the year, reviewing the effectiveness of clearly defined controls and the completion of actions towards the delivery of expected outcomes and the appetite level.

The Audit Committee considers financial risks on a regular basis and at year end holds a joint meeting with the Risk Committee to consider the overall effectiveness of NI Water’s system of internal controls and risk management.

The Executive Committee meets on a monthly basis to consider corporate risk maps and the completion of actions within agreed timelines.

Corporate risk maps are linked to directorate, programme and project threats and opportunities, and business-wide groups either have or are being encouraged to have updated ‘live’ risk registers in order to better integrate risk management into ongoing activities.

Read more about risk management on pages 95 and 97.

Emerging from the corporate threat and opportunity maps are a number of significant strategic threats and opportunities (described as principal in the UK Corporate Governance Code). For each strategic threat or opportunity, we have identified the related strategic priority and the change in the level of threat or opportunity over 2019/20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic threat</th>
<th>Strategic priority</th>
<th>Change in threat level*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ST1 Governance model and funding</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST2 Health and safety</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST3 Asset resilience</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, Nature</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST4 Data integrity and cyber risk</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST5 Pension fund</td>
<td>Economy, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST6 Climate change</td>
<td>Nature, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST7 Covid-19</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, People</td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST8 Brexit</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This column shows the change in the threat level compared to what was reported in 2018/19. An upward arrow means that the level of threat has increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic opportunity</th>
<th>Strategic priority</th>
<th>Level of Opportunity**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SO1 Customer service and innovation</td>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3 Living with water programme</td>
<td>Economy, Nature</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO4 Stakeholder engagement and education</td>
<td>Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**This column represents the change in the opportunity compared to what was reported in 2018/19. An upward arrow means that the potential benefits to NI Water from the opportunity have increased.
Strategic threats

ST1 Governance model and funding

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People

Background to the threat

The status of NI Water as both a Government Company (GOCO) and a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) is recognised as less than ideal for a utility provider with long term infrastructure investment needs. A sustainable funding model is required to support delivery of our strategy. There is a growing risk that:

• the levels of service to our customers in Northern Ireland will fall behind what customers expect and fall behind the water companies in the rest of the UK, which is often used as a benchmark against our performance;

• NI Water is unable to finance much needed infrastructure investment to underpin sustainable growth. The current Executive policy is that the funding arrangements will remain in place until 2022.

The absence of a sustainable funding model is recognised as the top strategic threat to the delivery of our strategy, both now in PC15 and in PC21.

The current system of setting investment financing within the Utility Regulator’s PC15 price setting process does not align with the annual cycle of public expenditure funding. NI Water is an asset intensive business and medium to long term planning is essential to improve services for customers today enabling us to invest to safeguard services for future customers. The uncertainty arising from annual budgeting for capital investment adds complexity and significant inefficiency to the delivery of longer term asset resilience. In the current model NI Water cannot finance a continuous multi-year investment programme and it is increasingly difficult to maintain momentum to complete programmes of work.

Like many businesses, NI Water is subject to threats which are largely outside its control such as pandemics, cost increases, adverse weather resulting in recovery costs and damage to our assets, unlawful acts by third parties (e.g. pollution, terrorism, legislation breaches) as well as a downturn in the economy, which could adversely impact on business performance. The timing and impact of these is dependent on the nature of the threat. NI Water does not have a contingency fund to deal with any cost shocks such as these if they occur. This can potentially impact on the recovery actions which NI Water can take.

Managing the threat

NI Water continues to work with the Utility Regulator and DfT to make the case for certainty of funding and on short, medium and long term targets and efficiency savings, including the approval of strategic capital projects to reduce the threat of adverse impacts on customers.

In the meantime, NI Water ensures that the implications on the delivery of our services as a consequence of funding constraints are fully analysed, managed and communicated to the public in a clear and responsive manner.

On 31 January 2020, NI Water submitted its PC21 Business Plan to the Utility Regulator based on ‘keeping tariffs stable in real terms’. The PC21 Business Plan requires a step change in capital investment seeking £2.2bn of capital funding compared to less than £1bn in PC15. The plan makes the case for necessary investment in water and wastewater services. This will include addressing our top asset risks, addressing development constraints to enable economic growth.

Covid-19 is having implications on funding and cash-flow for NI Water. Additional personal protective equipment and IT requirements along with associated costs, together with delays in capital projects resulting in higher costs, have created additional unforeseen expenditure which was not previously included in budget assumptions. Additional personal protective equipment will continue to be required over the short and medium term. Delays in issuing invoices to help to reduce the impact of the pandemic on our non-domestic customers coupled with significant reduction in usage by non-domestic customers will also have an impact on cash flow and our bad debt position in the medium term.

ST2 Health and safety

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People

Background to the threat

Health and safety is an integral part of NI Water’s day-to-day business. NI Water’s vision for health and safety for employees, contractors and customers is the ‘pursuit of zero harm by raising standards and performance through the identification and adoption of industry best practice and the development of an empowered, valued, engaged, accountable and competent workforce’.

All work activities should be conducted in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order.

NI Water has a Health and Safety Strategy and Action Plan for 2018-2021. Following significant actions undertaken during the year, including over 100 site visits, the need for further work to build sound foundations for health and safety was identified.

Managing the threat

NI Water has a Head of Safety senior manager who has undertaken significant work to establish a clear view of areas for improvement across the health and safety landscape.

The Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Team is key in ensuring NI Water complies with relevant legislation and best practice. The Health and Safety Focus Group made up of representative from across NI Water meets on a monthly basis to examine NI Water and Contractor incidents, review health and safety training needs, and general promotion of health and safety, providing assurance to the Executive Committee, the Risk Committee and the Board on health and safety related matters.

The Health and Safety Action Plan is currently being updated to include the new and urgent priorities identified as part of the work undertaken during the year.

In addition to the work undertaken by the SHE Team, there is a rolling programme of site safety visits by Directors and Line Managers.

Covid-19 presents challenges to NI Water in terms of the health and safety of our employees. Significant work is underway to address health and safety risks and enable return to office working when appropriate.
Strategic Report

ST3 Asset resilience

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, Nature

Background to the threat

NI Water inherited an aged asset base and significant investment is required to bring it to a comparable level by UK and European standards. Significant capital investment together with a funded maintenance programme for water and wastewater networks and treatment facilities is required in order to comply with regulatory and environmental performance standards.

There is a significant risk that NI Water could suffer a major failure in its assets or be unable to respond effectively to a major incident such as severe weather which has affected NI Water’s assets. This could cause a significant impact to our customers due to deterioration in the quality of drinking water, interruptions to supply and management of wastewater services, including an adverse impact to the environment.

The threat of service failure or service deterioration due to ageing assets not being replaced in a timely way has increased over the PC15 period due to constrained funding.

Managing the threat

NI Water is committed to working with the Utility Regulator and DfI on medium and long term funding arrangements in order to be able to invest in further improvement to its assets and take opportunities to manage exposure to threats associated with climate change. As part of the PC21 submission detailed capital maintenance plans have been developed to ascertain the correct level of funding and the likely impact on customer service if this funding is constrained. The assessment for PC21 has demonstrated that additional capital (base) maintenance will be required for PC21 in order to be able to maintain service levels.

In addition delays to delivery of the capital programme as a result of Covid-19 will have an impact on the resilience of our assets and increase the risk of disruption to services.

ST4 Data integrity and cyber risks

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People

Background to the threat

The robustness and accuracy of data, increasing regulation, changes in technology and the impact of cyber crime may have a significant disruption to the quality of service that customers have come to expect.

The General Data Protection Regulation brings increasing regulatory requirements in respect of privacy and the storage and retention of personal information. The Network and Information Security Regulation, mandatory for Operators of Essential Services establishes a set of principles to improve the security of network and information systems across the UK.

Cyber crimes are increasing in both frequency and disruptive potential; leading to disruption to services, interruption to computer control systems and impact on data integrity. This could have a significant adverse impact on business performance over the recovery period.

With a high number of our employees working from home as a result of Covid-19 coupled with an awareness of increased levels of cyber fraud, NI Water is further enhancing its IT security to ensure that systems remain secure and that any hard copy documents are maintained securely.

Managing the threat

NI Water is continually making improvements in its information governance to manage the quality of information to support service delivery and policy making.

In terms of the NI Water Corporate IT Network, there is a constant cycle of work to improve cyber resilience through updating of systems controls, compliance with IT system supplier updates and through training and awareness programmes. This includes a significant phishing campaign, which was rolled out in 2019/20 to educate employees of the need to be careful when clicking on links in emails.

For Operational Technology, which is the technology used to run the NI Water sites, an action plan was developed in 2018/19 in response to an external report on cyber security readiness. Significant work has been ongoing to deliver this action plan and a follow up to the initial report, undertaken during 2019/20, demonstrated that good foundations have been laid with certain improvements made in key areas. Delivery of this action plan may be delayed due to Covid-19.
ST5 Pension fund

Strategic priorities: Economy, People

Background to the threat

NI Water Limited operates a funded, defined benefit pension scheme. Given the nature of the NI Water Limited Pension Scheme, NI Water Limited is exposed to the threat of paying unanticipated additional contributions to the Scheme and its consequential impact to the business.

The threats in relation to the pension scheme include higher than expected actual inflation, lower than expected investment returns, the threat that movements in the value of the Scheme’s liabilities are not met by corresponding movements in the value of the Scheme’s assets, and members living for longer than expected.

Covid-19 has caused turmoil in the markets and as a result the funding level has fallen substantially. This could generate deficit contributions of significant payments per annum.

Managing the threat

The Pension Trustee’s investment strategy is to invest in a diversified range of growth and defensive assets. This is in order to strike a balance between maximising the returns on the Scheme’s assets and minimising the threats associated with lower than expected returns on the Scheme’s assets.

A triennial valuation of the pension scheme as at 31 March 2017 was completed by the Pension Scheme Trustees in June 2018. The valuation has reported a small deficit in the funding of the scheme. The Company has agreed to higher Employer’s Contributions to the Scheme effective from April 2017, which have been accrued in the financial statements.

Further information on accounting for the pension scheme is provided at page 81 and Notes E2 and G3 to the Statutory Accounts. The Trustee is required to regularly review the investment strategy in light of the revised term and nature of the Scheme’s liabilities. This includes consultation with NI Water Limited.

NI Water Limited is continuing to engage with the pension scheme trustees and DfI on pension scheme costs.

ST6 Climate change

Strategic priorities: Nature, People

Background to the threat

In February 2020 the Northern Ireland Executive declared a Climate Emergency, supporting immediate action to cut carbon emissions and calling for the establishment of an independent Environmental Protection Agency.

As Northern Ireland’s largest single electricity user and second largest landowner, NI Water has a role to play in helping the UK to meet its net zero carbon target by 2050.

Managing the threat

NI Water’s ambition is that services will always contribute to a flourishing natural environment. The goal is to fully exploit innovative approaches to energy, new technology, revised design standards, reuse/ repurposing of existing assets and artificial intelligence to reduce our carbon footprint and ultimately become carbon neutral.

In 2019/20 NI Water completed the restoration of Garron Bog, which is the largest expanse of intact blanket bog in Northern Ireland, to improve the quality and reliability of the water received at NI Water’s Dungonnell treatment works. The success of the work will serve as a demonstration site for best practice and as a model for future bog restoration projects. NI Water constructed a wetland in Clabby, County Fermanagh to replace the traditional wastewater treatment works. The wetland based Phragmalfitre wastewater treatment works was more efficient to construct than the traditional systems and more efficient as it requires less energy, carbon and chemical usage. Our first Nereda wastewater treatment work stream, at Dungannon, County Tyrone, which is a more sustainable process has been in operation since May 2019.

NI Water manages a range of SCaMP NI (Sustainable Catchment Area Management Practice Northern Ireland) Projects in order to improve the quality and reliability of the water through sustainable catchment based solutions that focus on protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

In order to achieve this NI Water is adopting a range of adaptation and mitigation measures which will affect almost every aspect of our business, including improved instrumentation, automation and control of plant and equipment, investing in new treatment processes and pumping systems to reduce their energy demand and the emission of other greenhouse gasses, increasing self-generation of renewable energy and procurement of more renewable energy.
ST7 Covid-19

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, People

Background to the threat
As an essential service provider, NI Water continues to deliver water and wastewater services to protect the health of the Northern Ireland public. Domestic consumption increased significantly over and above the reduction from non-domestic usage during the ‘lockdown’ period and our colleagues were able to work safely to manage the demand-surge.

This is a continuing threat as NI Water puts appropriate controls in place to move towards the ‘new normal’ way of working and take opportunity to improve service provision, customer experience and communication given the learning from our response towards Covid-19.

The impact of Covid-19 on NI Water’s income, operational costs, health and safety, pension fund and supply chain are included within each of the strategic threats highlighted above and are managed as part of NI Water’s risk management process.

Managing the threat
In January 2020 NI Water stepped up preparations to protect our colleagues and minimise disruption to business. There is the potential for significant impact as a result of Covid-19 including staff and resource availability, increased potential for cyber attacks, additional financial spend for purchase of health and safety stocks and equipment, human resource management, incident management and IT infrastructure resources. NI Water has updated and implemented its Pandemic Incident Plan and Business Continuity Plans across each business area within NI Water. In so far as is reasonable NI Water is continuing to run the business to achieve its core outputs. NI Water is conscious that the scale and nature of Covid-19 will likely escalate the challenges faced by the business operations on a day-to-day basis.

ST8 Brexit

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People

Background to the threat
There is a high risk that United Kingdom could fail to agree terms with the European Union before the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. The impact of ‘lockdown’ as a consequence of Covid-19 has made it more difficult for the authorities to agree and put in place the necessary measures for a smooth exit. The lack of certainty is making it increasingly more difficult to assess the strategic, financial and operational impact on our customers, colleagues and service provision and the conditions that could apply specifically to Northern Ireland brings with it a certain complexity, which needs to be managed.

Managing the threat
We have considered the threats and opportunities surrounding Brexit and have a well-established internal working group to manage the impact of Brexit. Through our longer term viability Brexit impact assessment, we have reviewed different ‘worst case’ and ‘best case’ scenarios and combination of risk factors to inform on the possible impact on our business. However, given the variety of possible scenarios and outcomes, managing this threat will be a short, medium and longer term risk. NI Water continues to engage our Shareholder, regulators and stakeholders to ensure that we receive the necessary resources and support to manage Brexit risks, such as supply of chemicals and equipment, to meet our business needs and regulatory compliance requirements.

We are working closely with Water UK and Irish Water to share learning and have established mutual support to improve on our resilience.
**Strategic opportunities**

**SO1 Customer service and innovation**

**Strategic priorities:** Customer

**Background to the opportunity**

NI Water is seeking to deliver an exceptional customer experience, which exceeds our customers’ expectations.

Changing customer expectations, the digital revolution and demographic and lifestyle changes are all leading NI Water to embrace new ways to meet customer needs, now and in the future.

**Exploiting the opportunity**

Future developments in artificial intelligence and machine learning will enable us to spend less time on low value-added tasks and instead focus on customer care and improving customer journeys. More customers are using self-service options such as web and mobile self-service, interactive voice response or chatbots as their preferred point of contact.

Through cooperation with other utilities, business partners and universities and in-house development, we continue to support and implement new technologies to improve customer experience and efficiency in service delivery.

During the year NI Water completed several actions to lay the groundwork for future improvements. This includes increasing the number of customer contact details recorded and developing the NI Water digital strategy to set out the roadmap for digital development. A social media pilot is underway to help communicate operational issues to customers. Options are being considered for an Intelligent Operations Centre to enable more efficient management of our assets.

**SO2 Wellbeing**

**Strategic priorities:** People

**Background to the opportunity**

In line with its strategic priority of People, NI Water wants to be a great place to work, recognised as a local employer of choice, championing diversity and attracting and retaining the best talent.

We have put in place a highly innovative health and wellbeing programme, which takes into account our workforce demographics, our engagement survey results and the business benefits of enhancing the wellbeing of employees. Our programme strategically focuses on improving the physical and mental wellbeing of employees and supports our attendance and engagement targets.

**Exploiting the opportunity**

We have delivered a programme that includes initiatives such as retirement seminars to support our employees (aged over 50) in the transition from work to retirement, dedicated workplace counselling on site, mental health courses and mental health training, and mental health first aid champions.

NI Water has undertaken significant work in relation to diversity and inclusion and has developed a NI Water diversity and inclusion strategy and roadmap, with some initial data gathering undertaken.

NI Water has strengthened the action planning process to concentrate on four elements – focus, momentum, involvement and accountability. Each business function has an engagement sponsor and engagement lead responsible for the delivery of the engagement and wellbeing activities across the business.

The quality and impact of our health and wellbeing programme has been recognised externally, as NI Water has been named winner of the Best Health and Wellbeing Initiatives award at the CIPD business awards. NI Water was also highly commended in the Wellbeing at Work Category in the Business in the Community Responsible Business Awards and in the Right Place to Work category at the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards.

In response to Covid-19, NI Water has been actively engaging with employees with a series of employee guides aimed at supporting employees through these unprecedented times. A series of pulse surveys have also been issued to all employees to identify whether there are any further measures NI Water could be taking.
SO3 Living with water programme

Strategic priorities: Economy, Nature

Exploiting the opportunity
NI Water’s participation in the programme provides an opportunity to develop the catchment based multi-agency and sustainable solutions needed to achieve key outcomes included within the draft Programme for Government and upgrade the sewerage networks and six wastewater treatment works that discharge into Inner Belfast Lough. The upgrades need to be undertaken in a way that Government and NI Water can afford, and which minimises disruption during construction.

NI Water’s investment appraisals to inform the plan are already helping to identify and manage risks and make the best use of the funding over PC15 and beyond. Implementation of most of the proposed programme capital investments that relate to NI Water’s assets will require funding over and above that likely to be made available through the price control model. This requirement to fund these essential infrastructure improvements has been factored into the draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland and the NI Water PC21 Business Plan.

Background to the opportunity
In line with NI Water’s strategic priority of protecting and enhancing the natural environment and building a more resilient network, NI Water is contributing along with a number of other organisations to the resolution of Belfast drainage and wastewater treatment issues. This opportunity will help to improve the drainage networks and waste water treatment works that discharge into Inner Belfast Lough.

In July 2014 the NI Executive agreed to develop a strategic drainage infrastructure plan for Belfast. The plan aims to protect against flooding, enhance the environment and support economic growth by improving capacity for new connections. The initiative is now known as the ‘Living with water programme’ and is led by DfI.

The programme is currently overseen by a Board that includes DfI, NI Water, the Utility Regulator, NIEA and Belfast City Council.

The programme has steadily developed a profile and was referenced in the draft Programme for Government, NI Water PC21 Business Plan and the ‘New Decade, New Approach’ deal, which accompanied the restoration of devolved government for Northern Ireland in January 2020.

SO4 Stakeholder engagement and education

Strategic priorities: Customer, Water, Economy, Nature, People

Exploiting the opportunity
NI Water will continue to promote employee volunteering schemes and other local initiatives to develop our people and benefit our local communities.

Over 1,500 volunteers have participated in the NI Water Cares Challenge volunteering programme – making it one of the largest corporate volunteering schemes in Northern Ireland.

NI Water has a multi-tiered educational programme, with a focus on school children, which has delivered a comprehensive series of campaigns, tailored specifically in terms of message, delivery mechanism and language to different audiences – young people, families, businesses and the wider community. This includes our ‘Fats Oils and Grease’ and ‘Bag it and Bin it’ campaigns.

NI Water also promotes the responsible use of water and how it can contribute to a healthy lifestyle. NI Water will continue to invest in educating the community by taking the value of water message to them and will work with strategic partners to broaden the education programme.

An overall engagement strategy is in place which is monitored regularly. As a result NI Water continues to develop good relationships with political, regulatory and media representatives.

In developing its brand and reputation, NI Water will seek to develop world class partnerships including with market leading companies and world leading universities in order to share learning.

Background to the opportunity
In line with the strategic priority of People, NI Water is seeking to create a legacy for our communities and to work in such a way which puts more back into society than we take out.