



Department for
Infrastructure
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RTPI
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Introduction

- Planning one year on
- Department for Infrastructure
- Current work of the Department
- Engagement with councils
- Challenges and way ahead





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Planning one year on

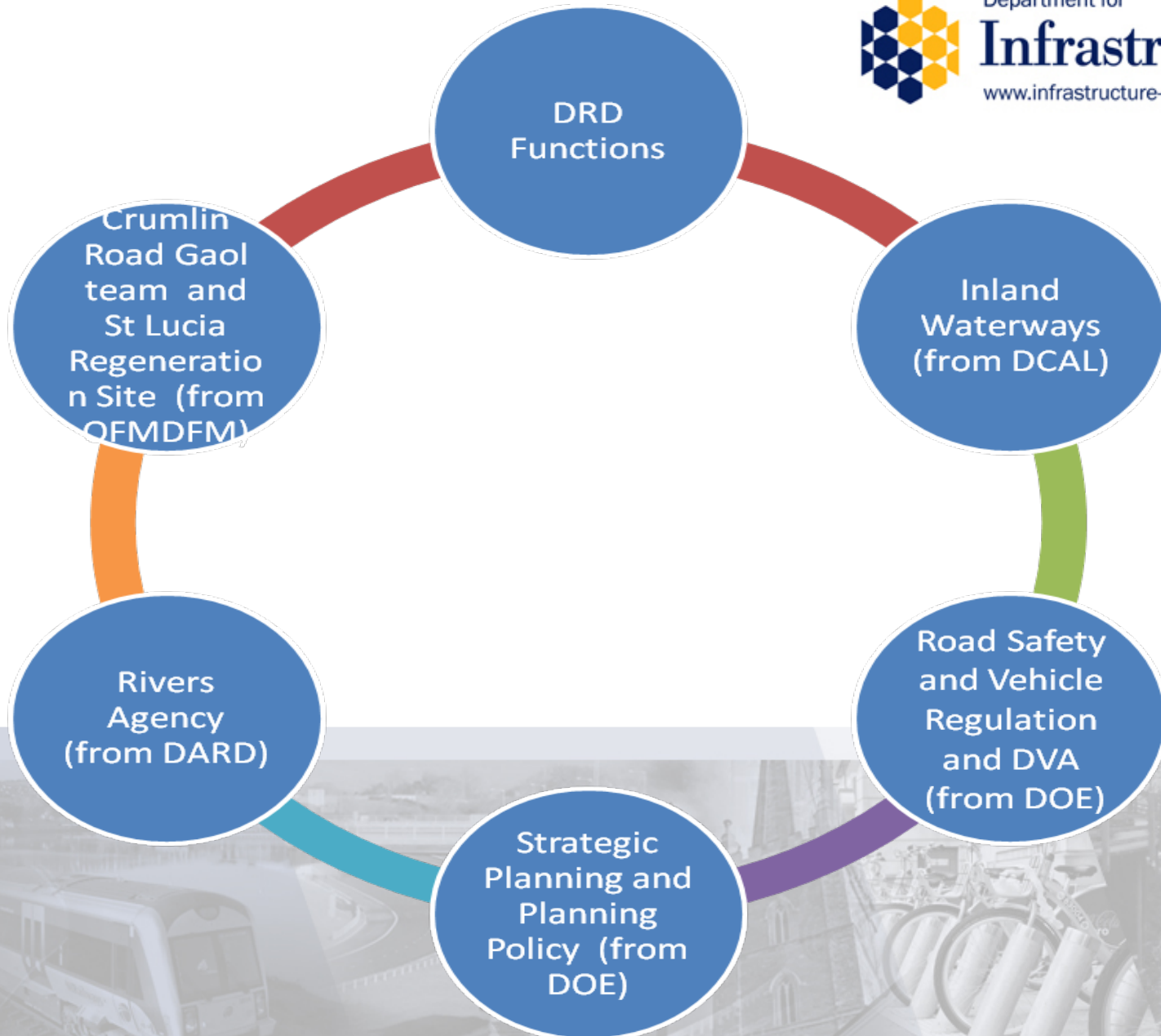
How well is the reformed planning system operating?

- Local development plans:
 - Early work commenced
 - Statements of community involvement
 - Local development plan timetables
 - Plan scrutiny
- Development management:
 - Schemes of delegation
 - Notifications

Planning one year on

Statutory indicators for first 9 months:

- average processing time to decide major applications was 41.8 weeks across all councils (against a target of 30 weeks);
- average processing time to decide local applications was 19.2 weeks across all councils (against a target of 15 weeks);
- nine of the 11 councils are on track to meet enforcement indicator; and
- number of planning applications decided has increased.



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- Synergies
- Opportunities
- New responsibilities – Regional Development Strategy
- Strategic priorities of Planning Group





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Strategic applications

- North South Interconnector
- Compressed Air Energy Storage (CAES) Project
- Gas to the West
- Belfast Harbour D3 Proposal



Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

Published by the Minister on 28 September.

- **A new approach** – more strategic, simpler, shorter and accessible planning policy
- **A new purpose** – Executive Statement on the purpose of planning
- **New core planning principles** – to explain the new planning system and key concepts
- **Strategic planning policy** on a range of topics

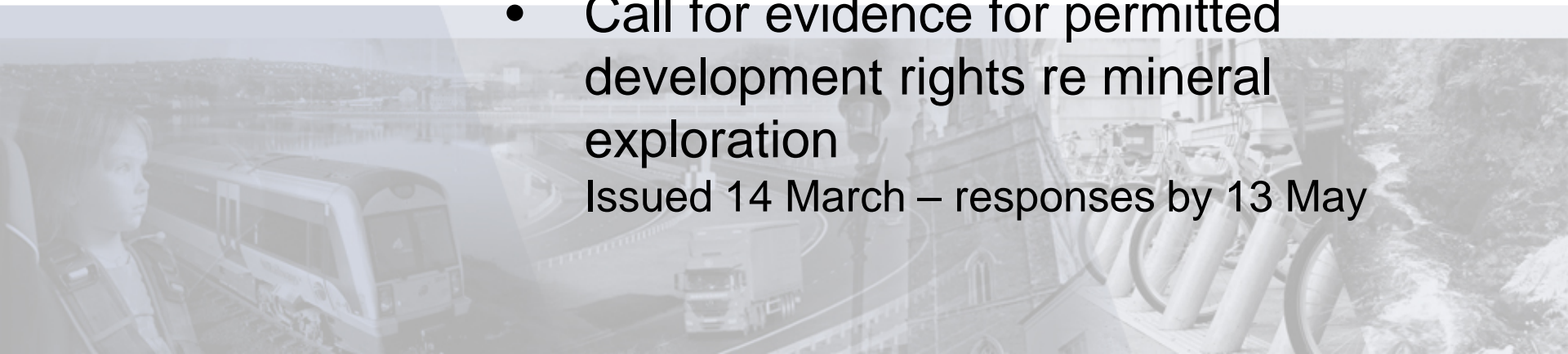


Forthcoming reviews



- Calls for evidence on strategic planning policy for:
 - development in the countryside; and
 - renewable energy developmentIssued 7 March – responses by 6 May

- Call for evidence for permitted development rights re mineral exploration
Issued 14 March – responses by 13 May




Forthcoming reviews cont'd

- Consultation on extension to permitted development regime iro:
 - telecoms development by Electronic Communication Code Operators;
 - extensions to shops, financial and professional services establishments;
 - electric vehicle charging points; and
 - solar PV



Engagement with councils

- Department has a key commitment to:
 - assist and support councils in creation of local development plans and carrying out development management functions
- Engagement
 - Number of forums in place to support operation of the new 2-tier system
 - Councils able to engage with the Minister and officials and raise issues

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- Programme of guidance
 - Planning conference
 - Planning portal



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Challenges ahead

- Improving performance
- Achieving synergies brought about by departmental restructuring
- NI portal replacement
- Budgetary constraints
- Ensuring planning system delivers for the economy whilst protecting the environment





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Looking ahead

- New Minister
- New Programme for Government
- Continue to support and consolidate the new planning system
- Develop agreed reporting & performance framework
- Improved engagement with key stakeholders
- Reviews of subject planning policies
 - renewable energy
 - sustainable development in the countryside
- Full review of SPPS within 5 years