



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

# ***Environmental Health Department***

**SERVICE PLAN - 2021 / 22**

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## Foreword

At the start of 2020, Northern Ireland faced the spread of the global Covid-19 pandemic, which in turn has impacted on the way, Mid Ulster District Council delivers its services to communities. The Council's initial response was to protect frontline services, support the vulnerable in the community and ensure continuity of services.

On the Council's road to recovery and reinstatement of services, we have established 'Recovery Activities' that will enable the Council to learn from the impacts that Covid 19 caused, i.e. the new and emerging challenges that services face and the opportunities that have emerged from new ways of working. These 'Recovery Activities' will support the Council's Corporate Plan and this Service Plan will also support the delivery of these higher level objectives and associated outcomes for the residents of the District.

To make sure that we are transparent in what we are aiming to achieve, there is a series of activities outlined within the Service Plan. It should be noted, that it is proposed, that this will be a dynamic service plan, in light of Council's ongoing response to the Pandemic, reflecting the changing context within which it has been developed. Any changes that need to be made to the service plan (i.e. new actions added, or actions removed) will be reported to the Director of the Department as well as being reported as part of our 'business as usual' performance monitoring activity through committee papers during 2021/22.

## 1.0 OVERALL PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SERVICE

### 1.1. Purpose and Scope of the Service

The Environmental Health Department is fundamentally about improving the health & wellbeing of local communities. Our work as outlined in this document makes important contributions towards all of the Council's key themes and objectives, but in particular, through aiming to keep our environment safe and where possible, promoting healthier choices.

The purpose of the Environmental Health Department continues to be the control of factors in the environment which can affect public health and safety within the realms of the Council's statutory obligations. This is mainly achieved by enforcing environmental health legislation in a reactive and proactive manner. The Department also plays a supportive, informative and advisory role in all aspects of Environmental Health including health and well-being.

### 1.2 Responsibilities

Regulatory and advisory work in relation to the following core function areas

1. Food Control
2. Consumer Protection
3. Public Health and Housing
4. Environmental Protection
5. Licensing
6. Dog Control and Animal Welfare
7. Health and Safety
8. Health and Wellbeing programmes

### 1.3 Customers & Stakeholders

Customers & Stakeholders
• Public Health Agency
• Food Standards Agency
• Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland
• Northern Ireland Housing Executive
• Police Service of Northern Ireland
• Communities
• Residents
• Visitors to the District
• Businesses
• Department for communities
• Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
• Office of Product Safety and Standards

#### 1.4 Performance Overview in 2020/21

The Covid-19 pandemic has been one of the most significant challenges that Mid Ulster District Council has ever faced. It has required sudden and dramatic changes to the way we work, as Councillors and officers. The previous year has seen Council hold fast with front line service delivery and the section below outlines our response during 2020 to 2021 i.e. what we achieved, the remaining challenges, and how our service made a difference.

<b>2020/2021 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<b>Support for business in changing COVID-19 situation.</b> <b>Ensure that businesses have ready access to Food Hygiene &amp; Food Standards advice and guidance.</b> <b>90% of all queries responded to within 5 days.</b>	98% responded to within 5 days
<b>Businesses who are intending to or who have resumed their work activities are supported to ensure that they take all reasonable steps to protect their employees and others who may be affected by the risks associated with Covid-19 in the workplace.</b> <b>All requests from business operators for advice, guidance and advisory visits will be responded to within 5 days</b>	99% responded to within 5 days
<b>Provide support for business in changing COVID-19 situation through a revised service delivery model to ensure continuity of service provision to the 74 registered Pollution Prevention Control premises.</b> <b>90% of all related Environmental Protection complaints to be responded to within 3 days.</b>	All Registered PPC premises contacted as scheduled. 92% of PPC premise related complaints responded to within 3 days
<b>Adequately monitor the District for air quality issues and take suitable steps where exceedances of air quality objectives are noted. Investigation of air quality nuisance complaints, with appropriate action to resolve the problem. 85% of complaints responded to within 3 days</b>	N02 Tubes changed on schedule. 93% of air quality nuisance complaints responded to within 3 days
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing key messages to be delivered taking into account the COVID -19 situation. Exploration of extended customer journeys through enhanced integration of services with leisure and</b>	55 Clients re-engaged with through MAC programme

<p><b>parks teams to maximise benefit for customers. Clients on the existing programme re-engaged with to provide support on key messaging and to provide onward signposting as appropriate through integration with the parks and leisure services.</b></p>	
<p><b>With respect to EU Exit, assist and advise businesses regarding changes in regulatory checks and controls which fall under EH remit. 90% of all complaints to be responded to within 5 days.</b></p>	<p>FC – 100% of service requests responded to within 5 days CP – 100% of service requests responded to within 5 days.</p>
<p><b>Respond continuously to Public Health complaints as per Public Health &amp; Housing unit plan. Respond to 85% complaints within 5 working days</b></p>	<p>96% responded to within 5 working days</p>
<p><b>Review and develop new methods of service delivery to minimise H&amp;S risks from COVID-19 across EH</b></p>	<p>Development of new ways for delivering services through remote means and minimising onsite inspection time. Risk assessments in place.</p>
<p><b>Development of new delivery models for how Health &amp; Wellbeing key messages can continue be delivered to the target audience already within the Environmental Health database during the various stages of COVID-19.</b> <b>Work with internal partners to update and maximise referral pathways</b></p>	<p>New delivery models in place for delivery of H&amp;WB messages during COVID -19. Internal partners had to close at points throughout the year due to covid-19 so pathways not available throughout.</p>
<p><b>Further development of remote and rotational working arrangements for Environmental Health staff with adequate technology in place to facilitate fully operational office environment to ensure business continuity in any current or future situation.</b></p>	<p>Use of Teams for meetings. Environmental Health staff provided with suitable computer hardware such as laptops. Continued usage and support for web based platforms.</p>

## 2.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICE AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE - 2021/22

The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Service has access to throughout 2021-22 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

### 2.1 Budget 2021/22

Service Budget Headings	£
Affordable Warmth Programme Total	
Consumer Protection Total	
Dog Control including Enforcement Total	
Environmental Health : General /Support Total	
Food Safety Total	
Health and Safety at Work Total	
Health and Wellbeing	
Health Inequalities Total	
Home Accident Prevention Total	
Home Energy Total	
Other Licensing Total	
Neighbourhood Total	
Oil Stamps Total	
Pollution Control/Clean Air Total	
Public Health Total	
Gross Budget	
Income	
Net Budget for 2021-22	

### 2.2 Staffing Complement - 2021/22

Staffing	No. of Staff
Head of Service	1
Managers	4 Principals 9 Seniors
Officers	25
Health & Wellbeing Team	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

See Departmental Structure below.

**Director of Public Health & Infrastructure:**

**Head of Environmental Health**

**PHA/SLA  
Funded Posts**

**Principal EHO  
(PH, Housing H&WB)**

**Principal EHO  
(HS /Licensing )**

**Principal EHO  
(FC &CP)**

**Principal EHO  
(EP, Dogs, Animal  
Welfare)**

**S EHO  
(Public  
Health)**

**S EHO  
(Housing)**

**S EHO  
Health & Well  
Being  
/Promotion**

**S EHO  
(Health &  
Safety)**

**S EHO  
(Licensing  
/ Public  
Safety)**

**S EHO  
(Food)**

**S EHO  
(Consumer  
Protection)**

**S EHO  
(Environmental  
Protection)**

**Specialist  
EHO**

**S EHO  
(Dogs/ Animal  
Welfare)**

**District EHO's  
Health Promotion Officers  
Community Project/Home  
Safety Officers  
Make A Change Health  
Support Officer's  
Affordable Warmth Officer's**

**District EHO's  
Licensing/Regulatory  
Public Safety/  
Emergency Planning  
Oil Stamps  
Tobacco Control Officers**

**Business  
Support Team  
x 8 FTE**

**District EHO's  
Technical/  
Enforcement  
Officers  
Dog Control  
Licensing**



### 2.3 Service Work Plan - 2021/22

This plan confirms the core activities and actions, which will form EH Work Plan for 2021-22. This is a high-level capture of the Service activities as well as some improvement undertakings which the service will focus on throughout 2021-22. The Plan links to the Council's new 2020-2024 Corporate Plan priorities, Annual Corporate Improvement Plan Objectives, Corporate Indicators and Mid Ulster Sustainable Community Plan themes & outcomes:

## SERVICE WORK PLAN 2021/22

Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	e.g. XX			
Link to Community Plan Theme:	Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment &amp; enhance it for our children</i>	<i>Environment: 4.4 We will work to mitigate against impacts of climate change by taking steps to reduce our carbon emissions as an organisation.</i>			
What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Support on request the MUDC Climate Change group. Monitor current levels of air quality within the District, through maintenance of air quality monitoring network. Replace No2 tubes monthly. Assess Pollutant levels against recognised standards in line with air quality objectives	March 2022	CB	This will ensure that MUDC adequately monitors the District for air quality issues and takes suitable steps where exceedances of air quality objectives are noted.	Monthly monitoring results and annual review
Respond to all major planning applications within 21 days	March 2022	CB	Ensure support for continued development	Statistical records

What <b>Service Development/Improvement</b> will we undertake in <b>2021/22? (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Review time spend on planning responses to ensure capacity within the dept. to achieve the expected corporate demand. Work with planners to further prioritise planning types requiring EH input.	September 2021	CB	Improved response times	Improved response times
Engagement with key stakeholders in local air quality	March 2022	CB	Raise Air quality matters with relevant stakeholders	2 meetings per year to deliver on the Air quality strategy
Internal EH meetings to continue over TEAMS as far as possible to reduce Corporate carbon footprint and reduce mileage costs	March 2022	FMCC	reduce Corporate carbon footprint and reduce mileage costs	EH meetings to be delivered virtually

<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>e.g. XX</b>			
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>	<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>			
<i>CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment &amp; enhance it for our children</i>	<i>Environment: 4.2 We will continue to promote and protect our environment through our environmental and anti-littering programmes of education, awareness-raising and enforcement.</i>			
<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Enforcement of the litter legislation through responding to complaints and monitoring the district. Monitoring schedule in place across the main areas of footfall.	March 2022	AC/CB	Increased enforcement with a zero tolerance approach	Monitoring schedule in place across the main areas of footfall Number of fixed penalty notices

<b>What Service Development/Improvement will we undertake in 2021/22? (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Exploration of improved intelligence into the EH in relation to detection of offences and resultant enforcement action.	March 2022	FMcC	Increased enforcement with a zero tolerance approach	Increased numbers of Fixed penalty notices served

<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>e.g. XX</b>			
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>	<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>			
<i>CMP 1.3 Economic Growth - Our Towns &amp; Villages are vibrant &amp; competitive</i>	<i>Leadership: 1.3 We will work collectively to meet the identified needs and priorities of our citizens &amp; connect the people of Mid Ulster</i>			
<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Work with internal and external partners to provide support and guidance to business on food safety during the various stages of the pandemic	March 2022	MM	Support for local business	Provide support to businesses on Food safety on a priority basis as per the FSA recovery plan
Work with internal and external partners to provide support and guidance to relevant businesses on the covid regulations	March 2022	MP	Support for local business	Provide support to businesses on Health & Safety on a priority basis as per the recovery plan

<b>What Service Development/Improvement will we undertake in 2021/22? (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>

## **2.4 RISK MANAGEMENT OF SERVICE**

The purpose of risk management is to manage the barriers which prevents the Council from achieving its objectives. This section of the service plan includes space for the Service to input their key risks (in summary form), which have been identified during the business planning process. The Council uses risk management to maximize opportunities and minimize risks. This improves its ability to deliver priorities and improve outcomes. This is why the Council deems it important to link business planning and risk management. Risk Management aims to:

- Help the Council achieve its overall aims and objectives
- Manage the significant risks the Council faces to an acceptable level
- Assist with the decision making process
- Implement the most effective measures to avoid, reduce and control those risks
- Balance risk with opportunity
- Manage risk and internal controls in the most effective way.

This table illustrates the risks identified to deliver the Services business in 2021-22. *(These should be extracted from the Service's Risk Register DO NOT COPY AND PASTE YOUR COMPLETE RISK REGISTER HERE - THIS AREA IS FOR A SUMMARY NARRATIVE ONLY)*

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	Food Control and Brexit	6	Keep up to date with FSA/ DAERA and related guidance at local, regional and national level. Provision of adequate levels of EHOs (Food control) for support to relevant businesses.
2.	GDPR	6	Reminders at staff meetings
3.	No Co-ordinated on-call food arrangement	9	Relying on food officers answering phones out of hours
4.	Health and safety especially in line with risks of infection especially COVID-19	9	Risk assessment to be reviewed for all staff and working practices to be reconsidered for COVID-19. Reviewed methods of delivery. Use of white board within offices for lone working.

Rating	Descriptor
16 - 25	Extreme Risk (immediate action required)
10 - 15	High Risk (urgent action required)
7 - 9	Moderate Risk (action required)
1 – 6	Low Risk (keep under review)

### 3.0 OUR STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

In carrying out our responsibilities, the Service is cognisant of the statutory duties placed upon the council in the delivery of its services. Whilst the Service operates, under various obligations it is however mindful of the changing context in which it operates and endeavours to mainstream the equality and rural needs duties in the design and delivery of our functions.

#### 3.1 EQUALITY DUTY

The council and by consequence our Service is committed to contributing towards its part in working towards fulfilling obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to ensure adequate time, staff and resources to fulfil our duties.

The Service will also work towards adherence to the council's Equality Scheme ensuring equality duties, together with promoting positive attitudes towards persons with a disability and the participation of people with a disability in public life when carrying out our functions.

#### 3.2 RURAL NEEDS DUTY

The Service will be mindful of the rural needs of its customers when carrying out its functions and subsequent responsibilities, particularly in developing any new policies, plans or strategies throughout the year. In line with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 we will give due regard to rurality in terms of needs in carrying out the activities within our Service.