



01 July 2021

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to be held in The Chamber, Magherafelt and by virtual means Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6EN on Thursday, 01 July 2021 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

A link to join the meeting through the Council's remote meeting platform will follow.

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive

AGENDA

OPEN BUSINESS

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
3. Chair's Business

Matters for Decision

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 4. | Community Development - Connecting Pomeroy | 3 - 6 |
| 5. | Annual Progress Return - Equality Commission for NI (2020/2021) | 7 - 32 |
| 6. | Council's Corporate Performance Improvement Plan: 2021-22 to 2022-23 | 33 - 68 |
| 7. | Member Services | |

Matters for Information

- | | | |
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| 8 | Policy and Resources Committee minutes of meeting held on 10 June 2021 | 69 - 76 |
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Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.

Matters for Decision

9. Economic Development: Legal Agreements
10. Financial Report for 12 months ended 31 March 2021
11. Staffing Matters for Decision
12. Firewall Replacement
13. Desertcreat Lands
14. Cot Lane Footbridge - Repairs
15. Property, Dungannon
16. Civic Offices Refurbishment Works
17. ICT Fees - Update

Matters for Information

18. Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2021
19. Staffing Matters for Information
20. Labour Market Partnership
21. Managing Attendance
22. Contracts and DAC

Report on	Community Development - Connecting Pomeroy
Date of Meeting	1 st July 2021
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Head of Community Development

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To accept funding from the Rural Development Programme to proceed with the court yard parking and amenity area at Pomeroy Forest.
2.0	Background
2.1	As part of the development of Connecting Pomeroy a new build and trails are being proposed at Pomeroy Forest. Due to the planned use of the forest, and potential at a later stage for use of the court yard buildings, an additional car park and amenity area is being proposed.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>An award of funding of £93,750 has been secured from underspend from DAERA as part of the Rural Development Programme. The funding is to be matched by 25% to allow it to be utilised. A contribution of £31,250 is required to allow the funding investment to be maximised on the site at a value of £125,000.</p> <p>This funding contribution will alleviate some of the pressure on the Connecting Pomeroy budget which is due to the increasing costs and inflation between the initial application in 2017 and present.</p> <p>The funding will be used for the following works in line with the Rural Development Programme requirements:</p> <p>Courtyard Area Re-surfacing works for car parking £85,000 Car park lighting £20,000 Demolition of outbuilding and wall £5,500 Courtyard buildings made safe, cleaned, painted, virtual window dressings £10,000 Picnic tables and bins £3,000 Signage £2,000 Total £125,500 Note: these are stage 3 costs and final costs will be provided – within the overall budget allocation.</p> <p>It is proposed for Council to accept the funding and to maximise funding investment and match it by £31,250. The match funding will be from the main Council capital</p>

	<p>programme. Final confirmation from the main funder, SEUPB is required to ensure all governance requirements are met.</p> <p>Officers continue to work to identify areas of funding to support Council in the delivery of its agreed capital programme.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>£93,750 DAERA funding and £31,250 Council match funding.</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To accept funding from the Rural Development Programme, with match contribution, and proceed with the court yard parking and amenity area at Pomeroy Forest.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	None

Report on	Annual Progress Return - Equality Commission for NI (2020/2021)
Date of Meeting	Thursday 1 st July 2021
Reporting Officer	Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	Ann McAleer, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To consider Mid Ulster District Council's Annual Progress Report for the period 2020-21 on meeting the statutory equality and good relations duties as detailed within Section 75(1) and 75(2) of the N Ireland Act 1998.
2.0	Background
2.1	Mid Ulster District Council is bound by Section 75 of the N Ireland Act 1998. Section 75(1) requires that the council gives due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between groupings/categories as detailed within the Act and Section 75(2) requires that regard be given to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
2.2	The council's overarching document and framework around which it fulfils its statutory duties is its Equality Scheme. The Annual Progress Report (2020-2021) sets out to what extent the Council has demonstrated fulfilment of its statutory duties to promote equality and good relations through its Equality Scheme.
2.3	The Equality Commission has requested that a progress report be made and published on Council's website.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Annual Progress Report for the period 2020-21 is attached as Appendix A. It reports on aspects of the council's Equality Scheme and how it has been implemented over the period.
3.2	The Annual Progress Report for the reporting period 2020-21 is required to be submitted to the Equality Commission by 31st August.

4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: An RNIA would not be appropriate or proportional.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That Council considers and comments as necessary on the Annual Progress Report (2020-2021) on the implementation and activity surrounding its Equality and Good Relations statutory duties.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: Mid Ulster District Council Annual Progress Report (2020-2021)



Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2020/21

Contact:

• Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name:	Ann McAleer
	Telephone:	03000 132 132
	Email:	ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org
• Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (double click to open)
	Name:	
	Telephone:	
	Email:	

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

www.midulstercouncil.org/equality

Signature:

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2020 and March 2021

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1** In 2020-21, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

With specific reference to key policy/service delivery developments, activities undertaken in the context of Mid Ulster District Council making arrangements to meet its statutory equality and good relations duties in the 2020-21 period include:

Equality Scheme & Equality Action Plan:

- Council continues to implement its Equality Scheme which directly influences policies, practices and service delivery. Policy screening completed during the reporting period are available on www.midulstercouncil.org/equality
- During the reporting period a full public consultation was held on Mid Ulster District Council's Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.
- A new screening template has been developed for better ease of use for members of staff.
- Mid Ulster District Council's Equality Action Plan for the period (which was adopted by Council in September 2017) continued to be delivered via 4 themes (Accessibility, Corporate Practices, Participation Level and Partnership Working). Each theme has a number of outcomes for delivery. During the reporting period, a number of action measures within the Equality Action Plan were completed. Detailed information is available in the response to Question 2.
- Delivery of Council's Disability Action Plan continued during the reporting period.
- Mid Ulster Disability Forum continues to act as Council's primary consultee in relation to the implementation of Council's Disability Action Plan. The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer attended monthly meetings of the Mid Ulster Disability Forum via Zoom. Council also provides secretariat support to the group. The Forum continues to provide an opportunity to liaise directly with people with disabilities and with people who represent groups of people with specific disabilities. This includes Shop mobility, RNIB, Sure start, Education Authority, Social Services, Age NI, Mid Ulster Volunteer Centre, Mid Ulster Seniors Network and Health Trust representatives.
- Council's Equality Consultee List has been updated during the reporting period in line with our Equality Scheme.

Policy & Service Delivery:

- During the reporting period the Organisational Development department have introduced and amended a number of policies. This includes placing additional emphasis on Council's equality obligations via the revised Localised Induction Policy and developing and implementing a Dignity at Work Policy.
- Council continues to encourage the use of JAM- Just A Minute cards.
- Language Line telephone interpretation service for customers who do not speak English continues to be operational at the three civic receptions and the leisure centre receptions.
- The Mid Ulster Disability Forum's Access Mid Ulster website continues to be hosted on the equality section of Council's website.
- Council has continued to support the Oil Stamp Scheme.
- Mid Ulster District Council's first Changing Places was also opened to the public during this period
- Ongoing good relations activities continue. This work is carried out in partnership with the community and voluntary sector.
- During this reporting period, Council's Everybody Active Programme entered into its final year of delivery. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions only one face to face project could be delivered, an inclusive cycling summer programme for 1 week with 6 participants. As an alternative to face to face delivery, over the course of the year EBA participated in 6 sets of virtual information videos. The topics included:
 - Advice on Social distancing and safeguarding measures for Sport NI & EBA
 - At home physical exercising for Sport NI & EBA
 - MUDC walking routes for MUDC & EBA
 - Outdoor exercising using local trim trails for MUDC & EBA
 - Exercise videos for MUDC and EBA
 - Exercise videos for MUDC Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Mid Ulster District Council's Age Friendly Officer has continued the development of an Age Friendly Strategy for the District during this reporting period. Support was also provided via the following initiatives:
 - Regular meetings and engagement with older people groups/forums including working with Mid Ulster Loneliness Network, Mid Ulster Disability Forum and Mid Ulster Seniors Network. Links have also been created with Mid Ulster Agewell, Linking Generations NI and NHSCT Community Navigator.
 - Distribution of activity packs to those who were lonely or socially isolated in community.
 - Slow cooker programme-linking with Make A Change officers to distribute slow cookers, recipe books and food vouchers and also to support changes in physical activity and healthy eating
 - Distribution of Move with Mary DVDs and keeping well information booklets to those in the community and care homes

- 27th January 2021 Linking Generations NI along with the Age Friendly Coordinator held a network event for Mid Ulster Council area. The networks are a place to meet, share and collaborate with people who are interested in an intergenerational approach to their work.
- Work carried out through Mid Ulster Loneliness Network and Age Friendly included a £300 grant activity programme. Organisations/groups included:
 - Praxis- Application was for a therapeutic garden enlisting volunteers from the befriending scheme to help.
 - Mid Ulster Volunteer Centre- Key aim is to reduce loneliness and isolation through offering a range of socially distanced activities.
 - Mid Ulster Victims Empowerment- The project they have chosen is to provide large piece jigsaws, puzzle books, word search books and art and crafts activity packs to members. They will be able to extend this through other funding that they have received.
 - Agewell- The project involves giving each client a calendar with a pocket in front of it where they could insert their appointment letters and write reminder dates on the calendar. These calendars were sourced locally. They are hoping to print seven hundred which will be distributed to all their members.
 - Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network- Weekly click and collect. People are connected via phonecall, whatsapp group or zoom call.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Examples of the outcomes and impact of Equality Action Plan 2015-2020 include the following:

Theme 1: Accessibility

Action 1a: Increased Accessibility of Council services available online and in other requested formats

The Accessible Communications Policy was revised and updated in 2021. It was amended to include Sign Video; Video Relay System to support customers who are Sign Language Users. Language Line continues to be operated at Council receptions in order to provide translations. The website was also updated in line with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 which build on existing obligations to people who have a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

Action 1b: Staff Training

- Staff training during 20/21 was delivered online.
- The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer attended, Section 75 Policy Making Webinar delivered by ECNI in January 2021 and LGBT Awareness Training, delivered by the Rainbow Project in February 2021.
- Relevant Officers attended an Accessible Play webinar to inform the choice of play equipment in Council parks.
- Employers for Disability NI provided training sessions on the Reasonable Adjustment Duty and Hearing Loss Awareness (17 Attendees).
- John Kremer delivered 2 equality training sessions in February 2021 (via zoom), one of which was for Elected Members.
- An Equality and Diversity Training session was delivered to 6 members of staff from the new OM Darkies Skies facility.
- 6 officers have completed Accessibility Audit Training. Other officers are enrolled to complete this course during the 2021/22 period.

Theme 2: Corporate Practices

Action 2a: Any Gaps in Monitoring Information Identified

A monitoring form has been developed and implemented in relation to Economic Development funding programmes.

Action 2b: Development of a Policy in relation to Communicating with Disabled and Older People

This action was finalised in 2018 but an additional amendment to the policy was made to make Council's website more accessible in relation to the type of documents it displays. Please see 1a for additional detail.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Action 2c: Development of Procedural Arrangements for Translation and Interpretation

The Accessible Communications Policy was revised and update in 2021. This revision included adding specific procedural arrangements for translation and interpretation.

Theme 3: Partnership Working

Action 4b: Provide opportunities for residents, customers and visitors to engage directly with Elected Members

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought online engagement with elected members to the fore. While there is no doubt that the pandemic has significantly reduced the opportunity for face-to-face activities, there has been an increased opportunity to attend meetings virtually and for significantly increased online engagement. This has had a positive impact on people with caring responsibilities and disabilities, because previous barriers such as childcare and transport are no longer an issue. However there is a potential negative in relation to affordability of ICT equipment and access to broadband.

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No (go to Q.4) ☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

The consultation practices in our Equality Scheme had initially led to the inclusion of the Mid Ulster Disability Forum in relation to public realm schemes. This practice worked successfully for all partners and as such it has been further rolled out in 2020/21. During this period members of the Mid Ulster Disability Forum have been invited to attend site visits to a number of capital build projects including; OM Dark Skies at Davagh Forest, Changing Places facilities at Knockmany Forest, Clogher, Roundlake Campsite Fivemiletown, Changing Places facilities at the Bridewell, Magherafelt, renovations at the Burnavon Cultural and Arts Centre and the Seamus Heaney Open Ground Project. Drawings and plans for other projects were also provided to the group for comment/feedback.

- 3a** With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

With regard to the inclusion of feedback from Mid Ulster Disability Forum this practice has led to the development of more inclusive capital build projects within the District. While the focus is on accessibility for service users with a disability, there are also benefits for people in the age, people with dependents and men and women generally categories S75 categories.

- 3b** What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☒ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

The screening of the public realm schemes and capital development project and the associated consultation information encouraged Council to develop a number of other accessibility and inclusion focused projects. During the 2020/21 period MUDC commenced 13 accessibility projects including:

- Accessible canoe steps and accessible hoist at Newferry (west) and Ballyronan Marina
- Purchase of Wheelyboat at Dungannon Park Lake and other Council owned waters
- Surface Upgrade Lettervad Wood/ Dunlea Vale Walkway Dungannon

- Changing Places Installation at Dungannon Leisure Centre, Mid Ulster Sports Arena and The Bridewell, Magherafelt
- Largantogher Walkway and Maghera Walled Garden Accessibility Improvements Project Surface Upgrade Windmill Wood Dungannon
- Inclusion of Disability Play Equipment Drum Manor Forest Park
- Surface Upgrade Windmill Wood Dungannon

These projects represent an investment of approx. £265,000 on the physical accessibility and inclusion of Council owned facilities.

- ☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*
- ☐ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*
- ☐ As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*
- ☐ Other *(please specify and give details):*

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

- 4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*
- ☒ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

PART A

Section 75 statutory duties are integrated within job descriptions throughout all departments.

- 5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☒ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans throughout all services areas in the organisation.

- 6 In the 2020-21 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- ☐ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- ☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs
- ☒ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- ☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2020-21 report
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Equality action plans/measures

- 7 Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

6

Actions ongoing:

8

Actions to commence:

1

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

Action 1c- Awareness Sessions regarding the specific needs of s75 groups

During this period the following training was provided:

- Raise Your Voice: Harassment Training was provided for Elected Members in January 2021. The training focused on harassment and the link to gender and sexual orientation.
- The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer attended training facilitated via The Rainbow Project in relation to raising awareness of LGBTQ+ citizens.
- The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer attended a webinar in relation to the provision of accessible play.
- Elected Members received Equality and Diversity training from John Kremer in March 2021.

Action 2c- Develop Procedural Arrangements for Translation and Interpretation

This action was fully completed and implemented during the 2020/21 period. While translation were previously provided on an ad-hoc basis, full procedural arrangements have been incorporated into the Accessible Communications Policy. This includes guidance for the use of translation, both written and verbal. It also includes the introduction of sign video for virtual translation and over the phone translation for service users who are deaf.

The formal introduction of these practices was timely in relation to the public health messages being conveyed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Council responded by placing pictorial signage and displaying signage in common languages (other than English and Irish) used in the District regarding changing arrangements to entering buildings etc. This was as well as ensuring that via Sign Video, service users who are deaf were able to contact the Council directly via telephone regarding any query or service requirement they may have.

- 8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2020-21 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality Action Plan was reviewed during the 2020/21 period. The public consultation process ran for 13 weeks (from Monday 2 November 2020 to Friday 29 January 2021). 4 consultation responses were received as a result of the consultation. The responses were provided by; Equality Commission for NI, Mid Ulster Disability Forum, Triangle and a private individual. The updated Equality Action Plan commenced implementation in April 2021 and is available for view on Council's website at www.midulstercouncil.org/equality

- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2020-21 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*

- ☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- ☒ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- ☒ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- ☒ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

- ☒ All the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2020-21 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

The consultation in relation to capital build projects has resulted in the increased level of accessibility in current projects. This is evident in projects such as Ballyronan Marina. Consultation with local residents, current users and Mid Ulster Disability Forum has led to the inclusion of a hoist to allow people with mobility requirements to access boats and/or the water. Plans have also been put in place to provide an accessible house boat as part of a glamping experience. The original plans featured 4 house boats to be situated on Lough Neagh, this was later amended to inclusion one accessible version of the house boat. Other accessible facilities included on-site are a Changing Places and an inclusive play park. These facilities are due for completion in Summer 2021.

- 12 In the 2020-21 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Face to face meetings
- ☒ Focus groups
- ☒ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- ☒ Questionnaires
- ☐ Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation

- ☐ Internet discussions
- ☐ Telephone consultations
- ☐ Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

One example of the use of focus groups is that the Public Realm schemes continue to use town forums to consult on their capital projects as they are implemented. In relation to Coalisland Public Realm a focus group meeting was held with members who are also Mid Ulster Disability Forum in relation to the quantity and location and sizes of accessible parking bays. This resulted in some of the accessible spaces being moved and some being increased in size. This was as a result of opposition to the use for minimum standards for all accessible spaces being raised at this meeting. The inclusion of additional larger and more strategically placed spaces will positively impact on S75 groups such as age, women, disability and carers.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

In line with Council's GDPR Policy, all members of the consultee list were contacted during the 2020-21 reporting period. This was to ensure that the members were clear why they are included on the list and to gain their permission to be retained on the list if their contact details are not a matter of public information.

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

www.midulstercouncil.org/equality

- 15** Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year *(as recorded in screening reports)*:

19

- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2020-21:

2	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

- 17** Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

The main consultation relating to Section 75 carried out during this period was the public consultation in relation to the Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan and the Disability Action Plan.

There were a limited number of other consultations carried out during this period because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However a re-Consultation was held on the Local Development Plan Draft Strategy and a scoping study was carried out to inform plans for the potential development of Drumcairne, Altmore and Dunmoyle Forests.

- 18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

 ☒ No concerns were raised

 ☐ No

 ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

 ☒ No

 ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

No EQIAs were carried out during this reporting period.

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☐ No, already taken place
☒ No, scheduled to take place at a later date ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

An audit of gaps in monitoring was commenced during this period but it was only completed in one service areas. Further monitoring audits will be carried out during the 2021/22 period.

- 21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2020-21 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

During this period a review was carried out of the Dual Language Nameplate Signage Policy. The review indicated that this policy, which facilitates any language, received 91% of the applications for one language and that was despite the promotion of the policy amongst ethnic minority groupings who are resident in the District. This policy was first introduced in 2019 as a result of enabling legislation in place. Therefore, this is the first time a potentially adverse Good Relations impact has been formally identified as a result of the implementation of this policy. In line with Council's Equality Scheme this policy has been referred to the Good Relations Working Group for consideration during the 2021/22 period.

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

During this period policies were mainly monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance with the Covid-19 legislation and guidance. While policies were screened to ensure no

negative impact there was limited general monitoring of policies because of the impact of Covid-19 on the delivery of a number of Council services.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2020-21, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

The following training was completed during this period:

- The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer attended, Section 75 Policy Making Webinar delivered by ECNI in January 2021 and LGBT Awareness Training, delivered by the Rainbow Project in February 2021
- Relevant Officers attended an Accessible Play webinar to inform the choice of play equipment in Council parks.
- Employers for Disability NI provided training sessions on the Reasonable Adjustment Duty and Hearing Loss Awareness (17 Attendees)
- John Kremer delivered 2 equality training sessions in February 2021 (via zoom), one of which was for Elected Members.
- An Equality and Diversity Training session was delivered to 6 members of staff from the new OM Darkies Skies facility
- 6 officers have completed Accessibility Audit Training. Other officers are enrolled to complete this course during the 2021/22 period.
- Two sessions of Raise Your Voice Training

Elected members also attended training workshops in relation to the following; mental health awareness, personal resilience and fuel poverty awareness. These sessions provided partially meet the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

The Burnavon Arts and Cultural Centre commenced training and action planning in relation to the Autism Impact Award in March 2020. As a result of the outputs and success of this training, this model is now be considered for increased roll out across further Council facilities in 2021/22.

The Equality and Diversity training that was provided to staff during this period received positive evaluations responses, commonly stating that the information provided them with additional skills and knowledge that they would use to carry out their roles. The main objective of this training is to give staff an awareness of the relevant legislation and how it impacts on the delivery of Council services.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2020-21, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

An audit of the informational content of Mid Ulster District Council's was carried during this period. This was in order to gauge how accessible the informational content was. This led to documents such as PDFs being removed where possible and appropriately formatted information with alternative description etc. being included instead.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2020-21?

Insert number here:

1

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

A service user (a planning applicant) who requested information in an alternative format (audio) raised a complaint against MUDCs Planning Department. The complaint related to an alleged breach of the Equality Scheme when the service user claimed that the requested information was not provided to him. This matter was raised with ECNI and MUDC was invited by ECNI to resolve the issues raised.

MUDC investigated the complaint internally and responded to allegations that the Council was discriminatory in its treatment of a service user and his access to information in an alternative format. The applicant then withdrew his planning application and ECNI was updated accordingly.

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28** Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

2026

- 29** Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

The renewed Equality Scheme included an updated Equality Screening template as well as updated EAP and DAP. The next reporting period will be used to place a focus on raising

awareness in relation to these updated documents and ensuring that staff are aware of their commitments in relation to the delivery of the actions detailed in each document.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- ☐ Employment
- ☒ Goods, facilities and services
- ☐ Legislative changes
- ☐ Organisational changes/ new functions
- ☐ Nothing specific, more of the same
- ☐ Other (please state):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans
1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:
8

Fully achieved

5

Partially achieved

0

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			
Local ^v	The Chair of Mid Ulster Disability Forum is a wheelchair user continues to be a member of the PCSP, a member of the local town forums and is a member of a thematic Community Planning Working Group.	Lived experiences of disability. Championing disability.	Council services, buildings and capital projects have been made more accessible and user friendly for people with a disability.

PART B

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Equality and Diversity Training was delivered to staff via 58 members of staff via Microsoft Teams	Increased knowledge and awareness for staff.	Increased knowledge and awareness of relevant legislation and a greater understanding of how individual roles and responsibilities are impacted upon by the legislative requirements.
2	Elected Members received Equality and Diversity training from John Kremer in March 2021.	Increased awareness of the relevant legislation and how it impacts on elected members duties	Improved awareness of equality screenings and their outcomes.
3	17 members of staff received training on Reasonable Adjustments	Increased understanding of what reasonable adjustments are and how to implement them.	Increased awareness of the duty and how it relates to service users requirements and members of staff who have a disability.
4	16 members of staff received training on Hearing Loss	Increased understanding of the needs of service users with hearing loss.	Improved service provision for service users with hearing loss.
5	Three members of staff attended a training webinar in relation to Changing Places	Awareness raised of Changing Places and how they can be incorporated in Council's current and new facilities	Increased awareness for relevant members of staff regarding Changing Places and where and how to incorporate them into Council's current and future capital build projects.
6	Six members of staff attended and completed Accessibility Auditing training	Knowledge gained in relation to how to carry out an accessibility audit and what practical considerations need to be taken into account in building design.	This knowledge should lead to more accessible designs being used for Council's facilities and capital build projects.

PART B

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Develop and Implement a set of Accessible Information Protocols	The Accessible Communications Policy was updated during this period and now includes the use of Video Relay System.	Customers who are sign language users are now able to contact Council directly.
2	Continue to assess and improve accessibility of Council's website and other communication materials	The Accessible Communications Policy was updated during this period and now includes adherence to the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.	Improved accessibility of the information that Council provide online.

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to '**encourage others**' to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Illumination of Council buildings	Council buildings were illuminated numerous times through the year in order to raise awareness of various types of disabilities and the organisations who support them.	Illuminating Council facilities raises awareness in relation to various types of disabilities and encourages other to do likewise. It also recognises the impact particular disabilities have on residents of the District.
2	Accessibility Assessments of Capital Build Projects	Feedback from Mid Ulster Disability Forum on capital build projects.	Ensures that capital build projects have been examined from the perspective of people with additional needs and encourages people to use

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
			council facilities e.g. via the inclusion of accessible picnic benches and play equipment.

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Integration of Disability Duties into new policies	Equality screenings completed.	Improved decision making and mitigating measures put in place when required.
2	Completion of report on Annual Progress	Annual Progress collated and provided to the	Gaps in areas of progress identified. Focus placed on specific areas where required.
3	Contact with Disability support services/groups in the District	Attendance and administration provided for Mid Ulster Disability Forum's monthly meetings	Lived experiences influencing Council policy and practices.

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
--	---------------------------------	---------------------	------------------	----------------------------

PART B

1	Any new/substantially renovated play areas meet this highest possible standards of accessibility	Improved opportunities to use accessible play areas.	Improved services for children and young people with a disability.	This is an ongoing activity. The Public Parks and Play Strategy was being delivered on an ongoing basis up until 2020. The accessibility level for 2020/21 was 22%. This represent a 7% increase from the 19/20.
2	Working towards the BS:8300:2009 1:2010	Principles of disability access is adhered to.	Council buildings and facilities are equitable.	This is an ongoing activity and it was implemented when possible in capital build projects during 2020/21.
3	Integrate our Disability Duties into new Policies	All new and revised policies screened for impact on disability duties.	Improved service provision via inclusive policy development and decision making.	This is an ongoing activity. New policies are equality screened to ensure the inclusion of disability duties.
4	Provide up to 6 work placements per year for individuals with disability. These placements should last approximately 10 weeks.	Number of placements provided.	Opportunity provided for people with a disability.	Number of placements that could be conducted during the Covid-19 outbreak TBC

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	N/A	

PART B

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Elected members are informed annually of the progress made in relation to the implementation of the Disability Action Plan and Equality Action Plan.

(b) Quantitative

The number of equality screenings carried out are recorded and circulated three times per year.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

If yes please outline below: N/A

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

The Council's Disability Action Plan (DAP) was reviewed during this period because it had come to the end of its term of delivery. A new DAP is now in place for the 2021-2026 period.

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

Report on	Corporate Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to 2022-23
Date of Meeting	Thursday 1 st July 2021
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	L Jenkins, Performance & Quality Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To consider Council's Corporate Performance Improvement Plan for period 2021-2022 to 2022-2023.
2.0	Background
2.1	The 2014 Local Government Act places a general duty on the Council to " <i>....make arrangements to secure continuous improvement....</i> " in the exercise of its functions.
2.2.	Each year the Council develops an annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), containing improvement objectives, associated activity and outcomes for citizens and local communities. The plan also includes the statutory performance indicators and standards as outlined in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, as well as Council's Corporate health indicators (measures).
2.3	Senior management previously undertook a workshop to look at areas for improvement, moving forward, with a focus on current and future issues for Mid Ulster citizens, the contextual issues relating to current Council operations and short to medium term Council priorities (in relation to the newly developed corporate plan 2020-2024). The outworking's from this session were analysed and four draft improvement objectives developed, with supporting rationales, which were due to go out for public consultation running from March through to early May 2020. The proposed improvement objectives would form the basis of Council's two-year performance improvement plan for 2020/21 to 2021/22.
2.4	By the 23 rd of March 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic required the Council to divert resources and attention to support the emergency response in order to help and protect the most vulnerable in society and ensuring the continued delivery of our essential services. In recognition of these circumstances, the Department for Communities (DfC) proposed that Councils were not required to publish a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for 2020-21. This was confirmed in a letter sent by the Department for Communities (DfC), to Chief Executives on 11th June 2020 (refer to December 2020 Policy and Resources

	Committee report). Council did not develop a Performance Improvement Plan or consult on the improvement objectives based on the departmental guidance in line with COVID responses.
2.5	<p>Subsequently, the Department has engaged with the Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group, chaired by a SOLACE representative, to discuss the arrangements to secure continuous improvement moving forward into 2021/22 year (short term) as well as medium to long-term issues. During meetings in January 2021 a DfC representative outlined that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils proceed with a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for 2021/22 • during discussions it was mooted by the Department that it would; in light of the pandemic, understand that performance plans may require a “broader definition”, as they would likely include both recovery and improvement objectives for each Council • The department and the Local Government Performance Working Group recognised that all Councils would be in different stages of recovery and have various contextual issues/factors unique to their areas
2.6	<p>The Local Government Performance Working Group corresponded with DfC in January on issues discussed. Further issues were highlighted in the correspondence such as Councils’ flexibility in terms of publication dates of performance improvement plan (PIP plan usually published by June 30th each year), as well as the risk that the standards for the statutory performance indicators would not be met this year owing to the pandemic. Again, flexibility was sought in terms of achieving the standards and that this be built into the audit process so that local government would not be negatively impacted upon as a result of not meeting the targets. In addition, standards for the 2021/22 year need to be confirmed as soon as possible for all statutory performance indicators.</p>
2.7	<p>Subsequent to the letter of the 20th of January forwarded to DfC by the Working Group, Council received correspondence from DfC, dated the 8th of June, (refer to Appendix One). The Department has confirmed that it will bring forward legislation to regularise and ease council Performance Improvement duties, which includes setting aside the requirement for councils to publish a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP plan) for 2020-21. Following on from that decision, the Department has determined that whilst councils will have to produce a Performance Improvement Plan for the current 2021/22 year, <i>“the requirement to publish the plan has been extended to 30th September 2021”</i>.</p> <p>Developing Council’s new PIP plan - Review of Improvement Objectives for 2021/22 to 2022/23</p>
2.8	<p>A self-analysis exercise was undertaken by Council to review the previous year’s draft improvement objectives to establish their continued relevancy for</p>

2.9	<p>the period 2021/22 to 2022/23. The exercise was undertaken in order to ensure that the improvement objectives were based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thorough, evidence-based understanding of the communities Council serves, • Local needs and Council's capacity to address those needs. • Improvement objectives correspond directly with the council's priorities for improvement in the hierarchy of plans, and • The context of the Covid-19 pandemic <p>Proposed Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2021/22 to 2022/23</p> <p>Senior management were content with the review of the proposed improvement objectives, which are outlined below in table one. Each improvement objective has an assigned Head of Service acting as a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), along with a project team, to develop and embed a body of work to deliver improvement outcomes for citizens specific to the improvement objectives. Each project will undertake an annual review.</p> <p>Table One - Proposed Improvement Objectives 2021-22 to 2022-23</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="240 999 1370 1630"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Proposed Improvement Objectives 2021/22 to 2022/23</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and environment</td></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>We will contribute to the on-going regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Proposed Improvement Objectives 2021/22 to 2022/23		1	Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action	2	We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them	3	To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and environment	4	We will contribute to the on-going regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people
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3	To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and environment										
4	We will contribute to the on-going regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people										
3.0	Main Report										
3.1	Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Communities to Councils on taking forward the general duty on improvement, requires that the council consult on a yearly basis on their improvement objectives. This requirement on consultation falls from section 87 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.										
3.2	There is no statutory duty to consult on the improvement plan, but rather the improvement objectives. The four new improvement objectives proposed for										

3.3	<p>2020-21 to 2021-22 went out for public consultation from Thursday the 11th of March to Thursday the 22nd of April 2021 - 55 responses were received. The consultation told us that each objective received significant support (scores ranged from 94% to 98% agreement for the draft improvement objectives). When reviewed, respondent commentary did not warrant the removal, amendment to or addition to the objectives proposed.</p> <p>Together with additional commentary provided, the council has developed its 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 Corporate Performance Improvement Plan around them (refer to Appendix Two).</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A.
4.2	<u>Screening & Impact Statements</u>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That members consider and approve the Council's Corporate Performance Improvement Plan 2021–2022 to 2022-2023.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix One: Department for Infrastructure letter dated 8th June 2021</p> <p>Appendix Two: Corporate Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to 2022-23</p>



All Chief Executives

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Dear Chief Executive

8 June 2021

LEGISLATION PERTAINING TO VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

As you will be aware the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020 ended on the 6 May 2021.

A number of councils and local government bodies have raised concerns about these provisions ending. Please be assured that the Department is currently progressing this matter and the Minister intends to bring forward primary legislation as soon as possible to introduce the legislative changes needed to ensure that powers to operate remotely are extended.

The proposed legislation will also regularise the legislative position to ease council Performance Improvement duties, which includes setting aside the requirement for councils to publish a Performance Improvement Plan for 2020/21. Following on from that decision, the Department has determined that whilst councils will have to produce a Performance Improvement Plan for the current 2021/22 year, the requirement to publish the plan has been extended to 30 September 2021.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Carleton

Mid Ulster District Council

Corporate Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

**2021-2022 to
2022 -2023**

May 2021

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Foreword

Each year we are required to develop a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to show our commitment to continuously improving service delivery. This plan has been written at a time of great change and unprecedented challenge across Mid Ulster, where our Council staff have worked in partnership with communities to adapt and deliver services in the most challenging of circumstances. There is still much uncertainty about the effects COVID-19 will continue to have. We have all been touched in some way by the effects of this virus and its impact will be with us for some time to come. I continue to be immensely proud of the community I serve, as well as Council staff and volunteers who came together and provided a district-wide response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

This improvement plan reflects how our services are changing. How we live our lives and how we deliver services, has an impact on the environment and it is important that we work together to respect, enhance and enjoy our environment. It is one of our greatest assets and we have a duty to protect it for future generations. Access to parks and green space locally is perhaps even more important now than ever and health and well-being are inextricably linked with the environment. We also believe it is important to enjoy where we live and to make the most of living and working in such a beautiful area as Mid Ulster. We will take steps to minimise our negative impact on the environment and to influence others to follow our lead and consider how their actions may impact on the natural and built environment.

We will continue to encourage residents, visitors and business to minimise waste, reduce litter and to consider how their actions may contribute to pollution. We want people to be able to safely enjoy our parks, towns, villages, and countryside and to respect the local area, its residents and visitors.

Even before the onset of the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, “digital” was a key focus for Mid Ulster District Council, however the criticality of digital proficiency, access, and solutions for all aspects of modern life have all been brought into even sharper relief since the pandemic began. Put simply digital connectivity, skills, activities, and services that were already a priority are now an everyday necessity. Just as the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that digital skills are a form of basic literacy, it has equally highlighted that digital connectivity is a form of critical infrastructure and a fourth core utility, facilitating the ability to learn, work, shop and socialise, as well as providing access to vital public information and services.

The Council continues to be ambitious in its plans for the future; we remain committed to the delivery of our objectives and our capital programme to achieving our vision of ‘to be at the heart of our community’. Last year we published a new Corporate Plan 2020-24 and this Performance Improvement Plan contributes to the continuing delivery of the four year Corporate Plan. The following pages set out the actions we want to take over the next 24 months, to deliver our improvement objectives and ultimately the outcomes for our local communities. We remain ambitious for the future and confident in our ability to respond, recover and to take strength from the challenges we face.



Councillor Paul McLean
Chair Mid Ulster District Council

1.0 INTRODUCTION & RESPONSE TO COVID-19

1.1 Introduction

Each year we are required to develop a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to show our commitment to continuously improving service delivery in accordance with the priorities set out by the Council. In the plan, we set out Council's intentions for our services, and include details, of how we will do the work. Last year we published a new Corporate Plan 2020-24 and this plan contributes to the continuing delivery of the four year Corporate Plan.

This plan has been written at a time of great change across Mid Ulster, where our Council staff have worked in partnership to adapt and deliver services in the most challenging of circumstances. For the past twelve months, the overriding purpose of this Council has been to do all we can to keep our community safe in the face of a global pandemic. Responding to, and living with, the impacts of Coronavirus (COVID-19) has represented one of the greatest challenges for a generation. It has required sudden and dramatic changes to the way we work, as Councillors and officers.

1.1 Covid-19 Response and Measures

The most significant set of restrictions in living memory, to our way of life, were set in place in March 2020, when as a response to a global pandemic, measures to tackle the COVID-19 virus were put in place. These included; restrictions on movement - enforcing social distancing and the closure of all non-essential businesses. The measures were introduced to reduce the spread of the virus.

The Council enacted its emergency plans, as a response to the unprecedented threat to public health. Council worked with a range of third sector organisations, as well as government and other public bodies, including Mid Ulster's partnership organisations, while at the same time ensuring that we continued to deliver our normal frontline services to residents as far as possible. Council was also involved in undertaking new and emerging services. A community hub was established in April to support the most vulnerable people across the district, helping to coordinate the delivery of food parcels, as well as helplines to provide practical assistance including picking up prescriptions, support and advice.

We began with the first lockdown, which meant facility closures and suspensions of some services, but this also saw our essential services continue without interruption and a legion of staff armed with laptops/PC's continue to do their jobs remotely. Council also saw more staff being redeployed to other services, whilst many colleagues developed new and innovative ways to engage with their customers. COVID-19 has forced and demonstrated to services how they can work differently, redesigning processes to allow staff to work from home, boost productivity and generate cashable efficiency savings whilst still delivering a good service to our customers. This brings benefits in terms of productivity, reduced travel time, and includes benefits to the environment.

We prepared for the short-lived recovery, which came in the summer, re-opening facilities, returning to our normal work locations, supporting the community and the

local economy. The second lockdown saw further facility and service closures and again Council policy remained to protect frontline service provision by delivering our services as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The Department of Communities directed all eleven Councils to suspend their 2020 to 2021 performance improvement plans (PIP's) in order that Councils could reprioritise at pace all their resources to respond to the unprecedented situation. Council has had to be flexible and this emergency has impacted on the delivery of some of our Performance Improvement Plan objectives for 2019/20.

Behind the scenes, we have also been focusing on what we need to do in the recovery phase, because we recognise that the effects of the pandemic will be long lasting, on individuals, businesses and the economy. They will potentially reshape our community.

The road to the full recovery of our services will be guided by the Executive's 'Pathway Out Of Restrictions' document which was published in early March 2021. There are nine pathways in total, covering all aspects of life from home and work to travel and hospitality, and with 5 phases of recovery in each. Each pathway may move from phase to phase at a different pace and, as everyone will know, there are no set dates at this point – only agreed review points. While this makes it harder to plan when services will resume, we do at least know the sequence in which it will happen. There's no hiding from the fact there will be more hurdles to clear - not least because we've so much still to learn about COVID-19 and its impacts, however Council will continue to take decisive action and reshape our services to reduce long term costs whilst embracing new opportunities to do things differently.

2.0 DEVELOPING OUR IMPROVEMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

2.1 Setting Our Improvement Objectives

The Council's Policy and Resources Committee oversaw the development of the two-year Performance Improvement Plan (2021 – 2023) to ensure the plan's publication as soon as practicable following the 1st April 2021, in line with Department for Communities guidance.

The process of developing the Council's improvement objectives involved engagement between Senior Management, Heads of Service and the Democratic Services Team. This engagement identified potential areas for improvement across the council from which four proposed improvement objectives were identified for consideration and approved by elected members as a focus for continuous improvement – refer to table 2.1.1 Council's Improvement Objectives 2021 - 2023.

Table 2.1.1 – Council's Improvement Objectives 2021 - 2022 to 2022 - 2023:

Objective One: Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action.

- Objective Two:** We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them.
- Objective Three:** To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the environment.
- Objective Four:** We will contribute to the ongoing regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people.

To lead the delivery of our improvement objectives council has established project teams to drive the objectives forward; under the direction of a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) from the Heads of Service, appointed by the Chief Executive.

The proposed improvement objectives, rationale and associated links to the Community and Corporate Plan were considered and approved by elected members at their March 2021 Policy & Resources committee meeting for public consultation.

The outcome of the consultation undertaken throughout March to April 2021, and a report on the final improvement objectives were considered by Senior Management, and subsequently considered by elected members for approval at their April 2021 Policy & Resources Committee before being considered by Council.

The review of the projects, along with other statutory and corporate indicators will be reported by the 30th of September 2022 in Council's Annual Assessment Report, where we will look at the performance over the previous financial year.

2.2 Consultation

Consultation undertaken on our proposed improvement objectives, rationale for their inclusion and associated activities for the period of the plan, was undertaken from Thursday the 11th of March to Thursday the 22nd of April 2021. Our consultation involved a survey made available for completion and submission online and by post to the council.

To ensure maximum engagement, the process was promoted through a variety of communication channels including; council social media outlets, internal staff meetings, and the council website. Fifty-five responses were received in relation to the consultation.

2.3 What the Consultation told us

- **98 % of respondents agreed with objective one:** - *Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action.*

- **98% of respondents agreed with objective two:** - *We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them.*
- **94 % of respondents agreed with objective three:** - *To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the environment.*
- **94% of respondents agreed with objective four:** - *We will contribute to the ongoing regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people*

With such significant support for the four proposed improvement objectives, together with additional commentary provided, the council has developed its 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 Performance Improvement Plan around them. When reviewed, respondent commentary did not warrant the removal, amendment to or addition to the objectives proposed. Additional commentary and views provided is informing our wider improvement activity across services.

3.0 DUTY TO IMPROVE & COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Duty to Improve

Part 12 of the Local Government (Act) 2014 requires Councils to “*make arrangements to secure continuous improvement*” in the exercise of our functions (section 84). Council is also required to set improvement objectives for services and secure arrangements for achieving them each year (section 85). We are also required to publish an annual improvement plan

Statutory guidance defines improvement as “... *more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the organisation. Improvement for Council's should mean activities that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities*”.

Each corporate improvement objective has been developed to focus improvement on at least one of the seven improvement aspects detailed in S84(2) of Local Government (NI) Act 2014:

- Strategic Effectiveness
- Service Availability
- Sustainability
- Service Quality
- Fairness
- Efficiency
- Innovation

In addition, guidance determines that improvement objectives should be:

- Legitimate – making a contribution to at least one (or probably more than one) of the seven aspects of improvement
- Clear – setting out the visible improvement that citizens can expect
- Robust – with defined terms of success (whether qualitative or quantitative)
- Deliverable – with established links to individual service programmes and budgets
- Demonstrable - capable of being supported by objective (but not necessarily measured or quantitative) evidence.

3.2 Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Council's Performance Management Framework

The Local Government (Act) 2014 has changed the way we plan, and encouraged us to look much more to the future. Reducing budgets, increasing demands and higher public expectations means that we must change our approach to delivering and improving public services. Public services need to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities, look to prevent problems before they arise, and take a more joined up approach.

We need to look at balancing short-term needs (which are reflected in the improvement objectives contained in this current plan) with our responsibilities to think about some of the big challenges facing our district in the future (as outlined on the Mid Ulster District's Ten Year Community Plan). We are working with other public services; the private and voluntary sector on the delivery of the local community plan. This includes well-being outcomes that provide a focus for the public sector as part of the Community planning for the area; these are related but separate from the objectives detailed in this report that focuses specifically on the Council.

The Corporate Plan is a key component of the Council's Integrated Performance Management Framework. The framework consists of a hierarchical set of inter-related plans, which deal with the organisation's delivery of services. The "peak" plan is the District's Ten Year Community Plan, which encapsulates the communities' vision and long-term aspirations. Sitting beneath the Community Plan is the Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan is the point where the Council responds to the Community Plan's objectives that are within its area of responsibility; therefore, if the Community Plan is seen as the Community's aspirational document, the Corporate Plan is the Council's policy response to what residents and ratepayers desire to see happen in their community.

The Corporate Plan is designed as a fixed term plan to align with the council's electoral cycle (currently a four-year plan 2020 2024). Each newly elected Council is responsible for preparing a new corporate Plan setting out what they want to achieve during the electoral term.

3.3 Improvement, Corporate Values, Service and Individual Planning

Whilst this plan focuses specifically on Corporate Improvement Objectives, we are still seeking to bring about improvement in other areas. Planned improvements in our day-to-day work are set in our service plans. Service delivery plans translate corporate objectives into service targets and operational activity, aligning with finance, workforce and risk issues.

Individual plans (staff appraisals) translate service or group delivery plan objectives into practical measures and targets for all members of staff within the Council. This ensures that all our employees understand their contribution and accountability towards meeting the Council's values, priorities and vision.

We are committed to delivering our improvement objectives within the context of our adopted Corporate Values; this is at the core of what we do and guides how we deliver our service by being:

- **Citizen and Customer-focused:** designing and delivering our services in response to and around the needs of our customers and within our resources
- **Respect:** Treating each other, our customers and our stakeholders in the same considerate way that we wish to be treated ourselves.
- **Excellence:** Striving to excel in every aspect of our work, being accountable for and delivering the best value for money services.
- **Trustworthy:** Working for our communities in a spirit of friendliness and openness by delivering fair, transparent, equitable and ethical service to all customers.
- **Innovative:** New and better ways of doing what we do.
- **Inclusive:** Creating a culture that values, supports and celebrates diversity to the benefit of the organisation and the people we serve.

3.4 Statutory Indicators

In addition to the Council's improvement objectives and associated actions used to measure our performance, the Northern Ireland Assembly has set a series of performance measures (indicators and standards) which the council will report on annually. Where relevant, the council's improvement objectives incorporate statutory performance standards and indicators for Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management. The statutory performance indicators and standards are set out as Appendix 1 to our plan.

For the last five years, the arrangements for managing, improving and tracking Council's performance in relation to set statutory indicators has been progressed through our service plans, which are developed on an annual basis and endorsed by Council. Quarterly reviews and update reports relating to Council's statutory indicator performance are collated and forwarded to our Senior Management Team, respective committees and Council. Unless otherwise highlighted in this plan, statutory performance indicators are managed at a directorate performance management level.

3.5 Corporate Indicators

During 2017 to 2018, the Council has developed a suite of Corporate Indicators, which are now being measured across the Council. This suite of corporate level indicators are set out in Appendix Two to our plan and performance status and performance updates are reported to Senior Management and Council on a regular basis. Progress made against the corporate performance indicators are reported in Council's Annual Assessment report (a retrospective assessment report of performance in the previous financial year).

The council is engaged with the Department for Communities, along with other local authorities to inform the development of a benchmarking framework for local government. This will focus on areas where the greatest overall benefit, in terms of delivering outcomes, can be achieved.

4.0 DELIVERY & SCRUTINY OF OUR IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

The council to inform how it delivers effective services to its communities uses a series of processes and policies. This helps the council to plan, govern and drive service delivery. The following section provides information on the key processes and activities, which we utilise to strengthen improvement.

4.1 Managing and Reporting Improvement.

The Council's service improvement planning process establishes clear links between the District Community Plan, Corporate Plan priorities, other Council Strategic Plans (such as the Local Development Plan), the corporate level Improvement Objectives, Project Plans and Service Plans. It ensures everyone working for the Council is able to see how their work contributes to the work of the organisation.

Each Improvement Objective has a project delivery plan, overseen by a Head of Service, documenting clear milestones, activities, resources and associated risk mitigation. Each plan also identifies with whom the council will work in partnership with for each objective, thus ensuring the successful delivery of outcomes for citizens (visible improvements). The improvement project delivery plans are regularly reported to Senior Management and Council, along with statutory performance indicators and the suite of corporate performance indicators.

Service Plans are in place across Council, setting out key programmes of work being progressed throughout the year along with resources required to deliver on the identified actions. Services regularly monitor their plans and where they are involved in one or other of the improvement objectives, within this improvement plan, the Service will report this through to the senior management team and council's Policy & Resources Committee on progress to date.

Elected members have an important role in monitoring how well the Council is achieving its improvement objectives. They are prepared to challenge officers on service improvement performance to ensure that the priorities are delivered and that the needs of the local community are met.

A mid-year report (April to September 2021) on progress against this year's Improvement Plan objectives and how we have performed against the statutory performance indicators and standards for Economic Development, Planning and Waste, as well as progress against corporate measures will be presented to Council's Policy & Resources committee.

By 30th September 2022, the council will publish a self-assessment report setting out how we have performed against the Improvement Plan for 2021- 2022 and where possible, the Council will benchmark indicators against the performance other Councils.

4.2 Audit, Inspection and Regulation

The council is inspected by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) to challenge and examine its performance and effectiveness, through an annual audit and assessment.

Post an audit and assessment of Council, the Local Government Auditor (LGA) certifies the improvement and assessment for the Council with an audit opinion. To date Mid Ulster has received annual standard, unqualified opinions. As a result of the NIAO audits, the LGA believes that the Council to date has discharged its duties in connection with (1) improvement planning and (2) publication of improvement information in accordance with section 92 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 and has acted in accordance with the Department of Communities' guidance sufficiently.

LGA to date have made no recommendations under section 95(2) of the Act and were not minded to carry out a special inspection under section 95 (2) of the Act.

5.0 IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

Improvement Objective One

5.1 Objective One: Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action.

"I agree with Objective One on the basis that as a young person, how we treat the environment will have repercussions for myself and generations after me. I believe therefore, that it is important we act now and don't treat it like it isn't a top priority..."

Lead Officer: Head of Environmental Services.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

As we navigate through and ultimately emerge into a post-pandemic era, how we reshape our world will have key implications for our ability to address climate change this decade. The global response to the Covid-19 crisis has had little impact on the continued rise in atmospheric concentrations of CO₂, says the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This year carbon emissions, have fallen dramatically due to lockdowns that have cut transport and industry severely (carbon emissions fell by 17% at their peak), but this has only marginally slowed the overall rise in concentrations, the scientists say¹ and the overall effect on concentrations has been very small.

Climate change has been recognised internationally as the most important environmental challenge that we currently face it is a large scale, long-term shift in the Earth's weather patterns and average temperatures. Scientific consensus recognises human activity² as a major cause of recent unprecedented warming and climate projections show that past, current and future gas emissions will influence the climate for decades. The Climate Change Act, passed in 2008, committed the UK to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050 when compared to 1990 levels. This approach has now been used as a model for action across the world, and is mirrored by the United Nations' Paris Agreement. The next world climate summit (COP26) will be held in Glasgow towards the end of November 2021 and during the last 11 years, the Summit has become a key platform for connecting markets with policies, to flatten the climate curve³.

The intergovernmental panel on climate change predicts increases in extreme weather events over the twenty first century and attributes this to a result of greenhouse emissions and rising surface temperatures. The latest U.K Climate Change projections (UKC P18)⁴ predict that Northern Ireland will experience warmer, wetter winters and hotter drier summers by the 2050's, with extreme weather events becoming more frequent⁵.

We recognise the key role and contribution that the Council has in supporting and promoting local actions and local people, businesses and partners in the move to a low carbon future. Taking action to protect the environment for future generations is a priority for Mid Ulster and is recognised in the Districts Community Plan and Corporate Plan. We care about the environment and understand our legal duty to protect it. We seek to minimize the environmental impacts of our own Council activities and work with other partners and stakeholders to protect and enhance our local environment. Subject to procurement regulations, we can also choose to buy local produce, which not only supports our local economy, it also reduces carbon emissions from freight transport and travel. Climate change is a collective issue and we can all make changes to our lifestyles to reduce the impact on the environment.

1. https://library.wmo.int/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=21795#.YCJTnzFxc2w

2. <https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/>
3. <https://www.worldclimatesummit.org/>
4. <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/download-data>
5. <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/UK-CCRA-2017-Northern-Ireland-National-Summary.pdf>

Actions - What are we going to do?

What are we going to do? (Activities)	What difference will it make? - (Outcomes)
1. Plant additional trees at Tullyvar Landfill Site to add to the native woodlands previously created at Magheraglass and Ballymacombs Landfills.	8,800 Trees planted establishing a new native woodland at Tullyvar Landfill Site offsetting an additional 1,400 tonnes per year of Carbon per annum.
2. Increase the Council recycling rate to further boost the carbon reductions associated with recycling.	Offsetting an additional 800 tonnes per year of Carbon p.a., as a result of the improved recycling performance.
3. Manage Landfill Gas emissions at the Tullyvar, Magheraglass and Ballymacombs Landfill Sites.	Reduction of 14,000 tonnes per year of Carbon equivalent per annum and generates an income of £130,000 from the sale of electricity.
4. Increase participation in the Eco-Schools programme, which encourages and directs young people to think about climate action including litter, recycling, energy saving, and water conservation.	All schools in Mid Ulster engaged in programme and pupils well informed on the environmental impacts of their activities.
5. Increase the re-use of Council's technological hardware i.e. it is recycled and re-used.	Establish links to Community partners and opportunities for technology recycling - Forty Council Desktops recycled for safe use and distribution in the Community.
6. Monitor and review air quality across the District to determine whether national air quality objectives are being met.	2020 Air Quality statistics to be compiled and produced as a Report for 2021.
7. Environmental Health Services will control the environmental impacts	Local Air Pollution Prevention and Control (LAPPC) - Conduct

of certain specified industrial activities through an industrial permitting process by inspecting permitted premises to ensure compliance with Environmental permits	scheduled inspections of premises to ensure that premises are complying with air emission targets as outlined in their Environmental Permits - (currently. 74 premises that have Environmental permits issued by Mid Ulster District Council).
8. Number of homes helped to improve the energy efficiency of their homes - (linkages to affordable warmth).	Help provide Energy Efficiency Advice to 247 homes.
9. Using the Arts to Increase engagement with local schools and wider community of recycling and upcycling.	Junk Art schools programme made available to local schools (60 schoolchildren) and deliver four Arts and Crafts “recycling and upcycling” workshops for the wider public as part of Burnavon Arts Programme.
10. Produce best practice Sustainability Guidelines for businesses applying to construct premises on serviced sites within the proposed Maghera Business Park in terms of the environment and reducing carbon emissions.	Future proofed Sustainability guidelines for the construction of premises on serviced sites within the proposed Maghera Business Park to support a low carbon future.
11. Raise community awareness/resilience of climate crisis and increase participation in practical action for climate friendly/low carbon lifestyles	Review, deliver and further develop sustainability ‘Change one bit’ project (100 participants in programme) and undertake 4 environmental/sustainability/nature conservation activities
12. Increase community involvement in sustainable food growing /gardening/self-sufficiency - leading to positive changes in residents' diet / lifestyles towards low-carbon food production and consumption	Provide practical gardening support and networking opportunities for community gardening/allotment groups across Mid Ulster through the Revised “Mid Ulster is Growing from Home” scheme established- (15 groups involved) and ensure 5 new groups/gardens supported.
13. Create a joined-up approach across all services in order to build a Council framework, addressing the interrelationships between Biodiversity, Habitats and Invasive	Development of new Council framework, which identifies new policies/activity in relation to biodiversity, habitats and invasive species.

Species in order to identify key new policy/enhancement activity.

14. Introduce and pilot sustainability assessment (screening tool) for 50% capital projects (Early stages).

Council can increasingly demonstrate that sustainable development and climate change considerations are being integrated in their decision making process around capital projects.

15. Submit the Draft Plan Strategy for Independent Examination (IE) in 2021/2022, which will include policy to protect our environment e.g. including the Sperrins, Lough Neagh and Clogher Valley and; policy, which encourages more sustainable forms of transport, and reduces the need to travel by private vehicles.

Submission of Plan Strategy for IE, which includes policy that will guide, enhance and protect the local environment while encouraging sustainability.

16. Research the application and introduction of alternative fuelled Vehicles/Diverse Plant into Council's Fleet and develop Fossil Fuel Usage Baseline Report on Fleet/diverse plant.

Two alternative fuel vehicles/diverse plant purchased and the production of time series annual Fuel Usage Reports in place.

17. Research and develop a Mid Ulster District Council's Estates Carbon Management Plan 20/21 and by 21/22 develop monitoring arrangements for MUDC properties reference the impact of :

Display Energy Certificates (DEC's) assessments completed across MUDC estate and monitoring/measurement methodology for collating; emissions, fossil fuel consumption, energy usage and renewal source identified and applied.

1. • Emissions.
2. • Fossil fuel consumption.
3. • Energy usage.
4. • Renewal source.

18. Develop and agree Hybrid Working as part of flexible working arrangements policy - by September 2021.

Promote Flexible Working opportunities to Staff and potential job applicants while reducing carbon emissions associated with staff commuting.

How will we know?

- Numbers of trees planted.
- Carbon reduction/offsetting (tonnage) per annum.
- Numbers of Mid Ulster Schools participating in Eco Schools Programme.
- Numbers of Council's Desktops recycled/re-used within Community.
- Air Quality within District determined within 2021 Air Quality Report.
- Number of homes helped to improve their energy efficiency.
- Number of participants/groups in Council led environmental/sustainability conservation activities/programmes.
- Submission Draft Plan Strategy.
- Numbers of vehicles replaced in Replacement Fossil Fuel Capital Fleet Programme.
- Number sustainability assessment guidelines, tools developed.
- Estates Carbon Management Plan in place
- Council framework relating to Habitats, Biodiversity and Invasive Species.
- Number of alternative fuels vehicles /diverse plant replacements
- Number of Display Energy Certificate assessments completed.
- Hybrid Working – Flexible Working Arrangements Policy.

Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

As a local authority, we recognise that we have a responsibility to take positive action and provide strong leadership on averting the dangerous effects of climate change. We will reduce carbon emissions from our buildings, vehicles, operations, activities through strategic planning, policy development and the management of projects. We will promote a culture of environmental responsibility amongst staff and customers, with the aim of reducing energy, water use and raising awareness of the effects of climate change, and the circular economy within the District and beyond.

Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Citizens, visitors, community and voluntary groups, schools, colleges, youth groups, businesses, staff, Executive Departments, Conservationists.

Link to District Community Plan Theme and Outcomes: Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment and enhance it for our children

Link to Corporate Plan Theme: Environment - We will work to mitigate against the impacts of climate change by taking steps to reduce carbon emissions as an organisation.

Performance Improvement Aspects which this improvement objective aims to deliver against

Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Sustainability, Service Availability, Fairness, Efficiency, Innovation

Improvement Objective Two

5.2 Objective Two: - We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them.

“Better broadband connection can accommodate more working from home and less car journeys, freeing up better family time”.

(Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey Excerpt, April 2021)

Lead Officer: Head of Marketing and Communications.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

Since the start of the global pandemic, digital technologies has been the driving force for change in how we connect across the globe and with each other. COVID-19 has had an enormous impact on the lives and fortunes of every consumer. It has impacted on the way people live, work, study, have fun, connect, transact and communicate. We are a long way from business as usual these days, as many of us juggle work and home responsibilities, having video conferences interrupted by our kids, dogs barking and kitchen appliances whirring in the background.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also brought about a renewed focus on enhancing citizen and customer experiences, especially as more services must be delivered remotely. Customer experience is especially important for industries such as banking and finance, retail, supply chain, logistics, healthcare as well as local council service delivery and there is now an enhanced need to transform how these organisations engage with customers through digital platforms. This increasing use of digital channels is here to stay. Citizens now have higher expectations of online council services and want a digital customer experience similar to that provided by retailers.

We want to harness the potential of digital design, data and technology to work efficiently, transform the relationship between residents and the Council, and make Mid Ulster a leading destination for sustainable growth, opportunity and quality of life. To embrace such opportunities we are developing a roadmap to define how our future use of technology and human resources will be optimised to enable the efficient delivery of our business and community priorities to the businesses and citizens of Mid Ulster. Technology is only an enabler, transformation involves changing how we work, how we organise ourselves and how we serve our citizens.

We will have real opportunities to radically rethink, and redesign our services, as we move towards being a more agile and flexible organisation, with staff able to work from any location as we make more efficient use of physical space and mobile technology. We can and will learn lessons from innovative digital practice utilised as a response to the Pandemic. More of our high volume, low contacts that we deal

with, should be completed at our customer's convenience, enabling Council staff to focus on more complex and sensitive enquiries that benefit from the human touch. All of this can help us manage the rising cost and demand pressures the Council is facing.

Whilst we want everyone to become digital citizens, we recognise that not all residents have the means or skills to take up digital. The council aims to grow and develop its digital inclusion work to provide skills and confidence in this area for staff, and our customers will always be able to speak to a person when they need to, and the person they speak to will be able to provide improved customer service. We will not leave anyone behind, however, we must continue to maximise technology to drive better services and lower delivery costs. As a Council, we already offer online access in a number of areas; however, we need to push further, faster with our digital approaches, data and technology, to ensure the district thrives through the fourth industrial revolution. The Council in order to make the right choices post pandemic will need to think differently and, crucially, put citizens, data and insight, and technology at the heart of change.

Actions - What are we going to do?

What are we going to do? (Activities)	What difference will it make? - (Outcomes)
1. Development of a Four-Year Digital Transformation Strategy.	Digital strategy and action plan will set the organisation's digital direction, enabling it to leverage opportunities and impact of digital technologies, to innovate and improve, realising cultural, organisational and operational change, and adding value for the organisation, its stakeholders and customers.
2. Establishment of a Digital Leadership Team	Create Digital leaders at all levels who are responsible for delivering the Digital Transformation Strategy - ensuring our people are supported and appropriately skilled to embrace a digital culture.
3. Development of a new digital system to support the delivery of Planning.	Bespoke to Mid Ulster (and at a reduced cost), which integrates processes online including applications and payments, enhancing the planning experience for stakeholders and citizens, while also streamlining internal system management.

4. Development of digital systems to support the delivery of Financial Services.	Efficient and effective financial management information system, providing easy access, self-service to financial ledgers, financial information and reporting for all services, with improved controls and governance.
5. Implementation of Phase 2 of the HR System to support the delivery of Human Resources.	E-enabled human resource management information system, providing easy access, self-service for staff, incorporating modern efficient recruitment and Learning & Development modules and advanced reporting for all services.

How will we know?

- New digital strategy and action plan in place
- Council Digital Leadership Team in place.
- Number of Councils new digital systems/platforms developed and in place.

Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

The Council's role will be focused on helping to identify the priorities that will lead to the biggest impacts on economic growth and public service reform, thus ensuring key policies and strategies are integrated. This will include the infrastructure to support digital innovation in the District, providing insight and delivering public service reform directly, including working in a more digital way as a Council and promoting work that will support every resident in the District to benefit from digital change.

Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Northern Ireland Executive, Members of Council, Staff from various service areas across Council, digital designers/experts, Citizens, Visitors, Statutory, Voluntary, Community groups, Councils, Regulatory/statutory bodies.

Link to Community Plan Theme and Outcomes: *Economic Growth – We prosper in a stronger and more competitive economy*

Link to Corporate Plan Theme: Service Delivery - We will improve services for our citizens through the development and delivery of an innovation agenda.

Performance Improvement Aspects, which this improvement objective aims to deliver against:

Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Fairness, Sustainability, Efficiency, Innovation.

5.3 Objective Three: To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the environment

“Yes addressing the litter problem is very important. So much used PPE is discarded in the streets.”

(Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey Excerpt, April 2021)

Lead Officer: Head of Environmental Health

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

Pre pandemic we all used public spaces every time we left home. These include the footpaths and streets we walk or drive along each day, the parks our children play in and the outdoor areas we go to exercise or relax in. Many of our daily decisions and activities are influenced by our perceptions of the quality and cleanliness of the public areas we encounter. The importance of clean, green and blue (our rivers, canals, loughs etc.) spaces and parks, cannot be underestimated. Many benefits derive from a pleasant environment. The Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns has shown just how important it is for us to have easy access to open space for recreation and exercise and has had a huge impact on everyone in the district, region and worldwide. At its peak, half of the world's population was made to stay at home or restrict movement in public (¹Sandford, 2020). The importance of safe, accessible and well-connected green and blue spaces for improving quality of life has never been more pertinent, and for those without gardens the value of these spaces is amplified.

Good quality parks and attractive open space contribute economic benefits to towns and villages. As Mid Ulster competes with others to attract growth, tourism and inward investment a clean, green and pleasant environment plays an important role in marketing the District as a place to live in, move to and visit. Businesses are drawn to places with good quality environment as this in turn attracts customers, employees and services into the local area. In addition, well-maintained towns and villages has a positive impact on commercial and domestic property values.

Regionally and locally increases in obesity, are linked to more sedentary lifestyles including lower levels of outdoor activity. Patterns of exercise in adults are set early in life, so obesity and inactivity in childhood can lead to poor health in later years. Good quality public open space is required to encourage healthier lifestyles by providing opportunities for walking, cycling and other outdoor pursuits, as well as being beneficial to mental well-being. Clean and well-maintained play areas, parks and open space provide important beneficial opportunities for children to learn and develop (their social and emotional development) and stay healthy. Apart from access, the quality of green space is crucial too. Quality of facilities – including toilets and cafes; regular maintenance; organised activities can help ensure a green space supports the wellbeing of its citizens equally.

Clean neighbourhoods engender social pride, add vibrancy, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, all of which are essential to the development of strong prosperous neighbourhoods. Anti-social behaviour can be seen through dog fouling, littering, abandoning vehicles, graffiti, and fly tipping etc. We are very much aware that many of our clean and green services are demand led, whilst much of this demand is inevitable, it is also clear some of it is avoidable. We want to be clear about our service promises, standards, and the response times we aim to achieve to ensure our communities understand what levels of service they can expect. On its own the Council cannot deliver a cleaner and greener environment for residents. We want to work collaboratively, with residents, communities, visitors and businesses and through active citizenship we hope to see reduced demands on our services and more residents taking greater pride in and ownership of their local environment. This is more necessary than ever as overall public sector expenditure reduces at an unprecedented rate, combined with the economic fallout arising from the pandemic.

¹ Sandford, A., 2020. *Coronavirus: Half of humanity now on lockdown as 90 countries call for confinement.* Euronews

Actions - What are we going to do?

What are we going to do? (Activities)	What difference will it make? - (Outcomes)
1. Develop enhanced enforcement options paper for Council decision-	Standardised pathway for intelligence gathering, higher number of Fixed penalty notices served and benchmark position for Fixed Penalty Notices across all Northern Ireland Councils.
2. Support and promote local community clean-ups and events e.g. Big Spring Clean organised by schools, community groups and sports clubs.	10% increase in number of clean-ups supported in each district electoral area (DEA) across Mid Ulster district.
3. Develop a Community engagement programme for Maghera Walled Garden.	Friends of Maghera Walled Garden established and actively engaged.
4. Co-ordinate and deliver a programme of Town and Village Spruce Up - Deliver 73 grant schemes in 2021/22 and up to 60 schemes in 2022/23.	Contributes to well-maintained towns and villages resulting in a positive aesthetics.
5. Co-ordinated litter/ recycling educational programme in place for participating schools.	Educational programme made available to all primary schools and delivery schedule in place.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 6. Develop, manage and deliver a marketing and communication activity plan 2021/22 aimed at reducing littering and awareness of dog fouling across Council parks. | Increased public awareness of effects of littering and dog fouling across the District. |
| 7. Develop extended coverage of Forest Schools programme across all seven District Electoral Area's (DEA's) - DEA's are Carnogher, Clogher Valley, Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt, Moyola, Torrent in Mid Ulster District. | Work in partnership to broaden the invitation to schools, youth groups to take part in the Forest Schools Programme across the Districts green and blue spaces. |
| 8. Continue to raise Parks and Open Green Spaces management standards across Council Properties by attaining one additional Green Flag/Blue Standard award by 2022. | Enhancing horticultural, cleanliness, biodiversity, community involvement, and environmental management standards across the Districts recreational spaces. |
| 9. Provide environmental volunteering opportunities and support community groups to manage local environmental projects. | Strengthening the provision of environmental volunteering opportunities within the District. |

How will we know?

- Enhanced enforcement options paper agreed by Council
- Number of fixed penalty notices
- Number of community clean ups and events supported
- Number of Town and Village Spruce Ups co-ordinated and delivered
- Number of community engagement programmes developed.
- Number of littering and recycling school programmes delivered.
- Number of schools participating in Forest Schools Programme
- 100% of activities against Marketing /Communication plan completed
- Number of blue and green flag management standards attained
- Number of environmental volunteering and community groups supported.

Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

Increase in the number of "Clean and Green" schools and educational programmes delivered and supported throughout the District. Greater support of "active citizenship" through local action and engagement opportunities. Enhanced enforcement opportunities and awareness, which reduces anti-social behaviour such

as littering, dog-fouling etc. Improved quality and cleanliness of the public areas citizens, tourists, and businesses encounter across the District.

Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Members of Council, staff, citizens, visitors, community/ voluntary groups, schools, colleges, youth groups, regulatory and statutory bodies, businesses.

Link to Community Plan Theme: Infrastructure- We increasingly value our environment and enhance it for our children.

Link to Corporate Plan Theme: Environment - We will continue to promote and protect our environment through our environmental and anti-littering programmes of education, awareness raising and enforcement.

Performance Improvement Aspects, which this improvement objective aims to deliver against

Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Fairness, Sustainability, Efficiency, Innovation

Improvement Objective Four

5.4 Objective Four: We will contribute to the ongoing regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people.

“This will be even more important to the district post pandemic as it feeds into our local economy”.

(Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey Excerpt, April 2021).

Lead Officer: Head of Technical Services

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

The additional challenges facing Mid Ulster’s most vulnerable communities due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic means there has never been a more important time to strengthen the economic, social, and physical wellbeing of our places, lasting effects will be felt for many years to come. We must look to a period of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We have had to lead our lives locally, pulling together more as communities, to see off the many challenges arising from coronavirus. The Council’s capital programme of local projects will maintain our

ongoing support for vibrant, accessible village/ town centres, open spaces and communities.

Regeneration is a long-term process and is delivered through a wide range of projects, programmes, partnerships, infrastructure initiatives. Since the late 1990s, policymakers have recognised the wider social factors that affect the success of regeneration schemes, but this is even more vital in the current economic climate. Infrastructure is a valuable and efficient economic stimulus. Every £1 of investment in infrastructure generates a potential further £2.70¹ due to economic multiplier effects. Making the most of existing social capital and providing opportunities for local people to be involved in regeneration is a vital part of making the best use of limited resources.

As a Council we support locally developed place based regeneration projects, we continue to invest in Mid Ulster, as well as providing essential services paid by your rates. Our Capital investment programme is our commitment to addressing the economic downturn and making the District a better place to live, work and invest. The programme includes major schemes to boost the economy, create jobs and improve the quality of life for our citizens.

Quality of place matters in economic, social, cultural and emotional terms. A sense of place helps establish strong social infrastructure, which supports people to improve their prospects and maximize their potential. We are taking a “Whole District” approach creating places that are attractive, well designed and well managed. Our approach focuses on tailored solutions for settlements within the District and business locations.

We recognise our major assets as those that have the potential to deliver the greatest impact. Building on and investing in these assets alongside complementary interventions will release the District’s potential for growth and connect areas of growth with deprived places in need of generation. By following a planned phased approach across the District we will be able to deliver greater impact for each locality, using the resources available to best effect. This work has never been more important as we look to rebuild from the devastating impact of COVID-19

¹ Further detail can be found here: <https://www.ice.org.uk/getattachment/news-and-insight/policy/infrastructure-as-a-stimulus/post-crisis-infrastructure-investment-insight-paper-covid-19.pdf>.

Actions - What are we going to do?

What are we going to do? (Activities)

1. Undertake the Project management of Council's current committed live Capital Works Programme 2020 - 2024 with an indicative spend < £26m.

What difference will it make? - (Outcomes)

Contribute to the ongoing regeneration of our district.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2. Research, develop and implement a pilot capital project procedural guide. | Efficient management and governance of capital programme. |
| 3. Develop a skills/competency matrix/ tool to map required and desired skills for capital projects team/client services teams and conduct training/development programmes to optimise efficiencies and workflows by April 2022. | Streamline processes for efficiency compromises within the capital projects team through staff development. |

How will we know?

- The number of current live Capital Works projects within 2020 to 2024 programme, to include:
 - 3 Waste Infrastructure Projects; -new Magherafelt Recycling Centre , final closure works at Ballymacombs Landfill and potential development of a Dry Recyclables Facility (MRF)
 - 3 Public Realm - Coalisland scheme, Design out & Development of Maghera, Magherafelt Phase 2.
 - 13 Major Projects - Maghera LC 3G, Ballyronan, Round lake, Davagh Walks/Trails, Moydamlaght Forest, Maghera HS site, Connecting Pomeroy , Gortgonis Health& Well Being Hub, Railway Park , Reservoirs Projects, MUSA Sports 3G & Running Track, Maghera Walkways, Active Travel Projects,
 - 3 Minor Projects - Portglenone Fishing / walks, Greenvale repairs, DFC Urban Regeneration.
- Capital Council Procedural Guide in place
- Capital Programme Delivery - learning and development programmes in place.

Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

Council will work with a wide range of partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Wherever possible the Council will seek to work in partnership with others to deliver its capital investment programme in order to provide facilities that meet the needs of the District. Council strategically manages its operational properties through the establishment of a rolling programme of improvement, repairs and refurbishment (e.g. office accommodation, depots, yards and venues such as open space facilities). Provision of a clear context within which proposals for new capital expenditure are evaluated, to ensure that all capital investment is targeted at meeting the Council's Priorities and/or legislative requirements.

Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Council members, council staff, ratepayers, citizens, tourists, businesses, statutory and regulatory bodies, community and voluntary groups.

Link to Community Plan Theme: Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger and more competitive economy.

Link to Corporate Plan Theme: Economy - We will continue to identify opportunity sites for development proposals and to deliver against existing plans for other key strategic sites (including Ann Street, Dungannon and the former Maghera High School site).

Performance Improvement Aspects this improvement objective aims to deliver against?

Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Sustainability, Service Availability, Fairness, Efficiency, Innovation.

Contacting Us

As always, your feedback is important to us and as such, Council is committed to improving its services and welcomes your comments or suggestions at any time of the year. If you, have any comments, feedback, would like any further information or would like a copy of this plan in an alternative format please contact:

Democratic Services Team
Council Offices
Circular Road
Dungannon BT71 6DT

Telephone: 03000 132132

Email: info@midulstercouncil.org

Appendix One – Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015 has specified performance indicators and standards for Mid Ulster District Council on Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management. Improvement in relation to the statutory measure as and indicators is managed through our service plans and reported to Council on a regular basis.

Reference	Statutory Indicator	Standard to be Met (annually)
ED1	<p>The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity.</p> <p>[Business start –up activity means the delivery of completed client led business plans under the Department of the Economy’s Regional Start initiative or its successor programmes]</p>	210
P1	<p>The average processing time of major planning applications.</p> <p>[An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015 (a)]</p>	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 30 weeks
P2	<p>The average processing time of local planning applications.</p> <p>[An application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and other applications for approval or consent under the Planning act (NI) 2011 or any Regulations made under the Act]</p>	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 15 weeks.
P3	<p>The percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.</p> <p>[Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning act (NI) 2011 or any regulations made under the Act].</p>	70% of all enforcement cases are progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.
W1	<p>The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)</p>	Set Annually by the Department for Agriculture,

	[Household waste is as defined in Article 2 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997(a) and the Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013(b)]	Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
W2	<p>The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.</p> <p>[Local Authority collected municipal waste is as defined in section 21 of the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003(c)]</p>	Set annually by DAERA
W3	<p>The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings</p> <p>(Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings is the total amount of the local authority collected municipal waste which has been collected by a district council]</p>	Set annually by DAERA

Appendix Two - Mid Ulster Council's Corporate Health Indicators

Measure	Target/Standard 2021 - 2022	Responsible Service	Lead
1.0 Economy			
1.1 Number of jobs promoted	210	Economic Development	
1.2 Average processing time for local planning applications	15 weeks	Planning: Development Management	
1.3 Average processing time for major planning applications	30 weeks	Planning: Development Management	
1.4 % Building Regulations Applications determined to target	90%	Building Control	
2.0 Waste Management			
2.1 Percentage (%) of waste going to landfill	35%	Environmental Services	
2.2 Percentage (%) of waste recycled	50%	Environmental Services	
3.0 Council Facilities			
3.1 Visitors to Arts/Cultural venues		Arts & Culture	
3.2 Users of Leisure and recreation facilities	1.2 million	Leisure	
3.3 Visitors to Council Offices	NA	Human Resources	
3.4 Number of RIDDOR incidents	NA	Health & Safety	
4.0 Better Responses			
4.1 Freedom of Information (Fol) requests responded to within target	90%	Democratic Services	
4.2 Complaints dealt with within target	90%	Chief Executive's Office	
4.3 Correspondence responded to within target	90%	Chief Executive's Offices	
4.4 Number of online transactions	<17,062	ICT	
5.0 Resident Satisfaction			
5.1 Percentage (%) of Residents content with our services	80%	Marketing & Communications	
5.2 Percentage (%) of residents agree that Council keeps them informed	80%	Marketing & Communications	

5.3 Percentage of Residents agree that Council listens and acts on concerns	80%	Marketing & Communications
5.4 Number of organisations receiving Grant Aid	NA	Community Development
6.0 Staffing		
6.1 Number of Staff (FTE's) on payroll	NA	Human Resources
6.2 Number of Casual Staff employed in the past 12 months	NA	Human Resources
6.3 Percentage (%) Attendance	95%	Human Resources
6.4 Percentage (%) Overtime	2.5%	Finance
7.0 Engaged Workforce		
7.1 Percentage of staff satisfied with their current job	80%	Marketing and Communications
7.2 Percentage (%) of workforce who take pride in working for Mid Ulster District Council	80%	Marketing & Communications
7.3 Percentage of workforce who understand Council's priorities and how they contribute to them	80%	Marketing & Communications
8.0 Finances		
8.1 Loans Outstanding		Finance
8.2 Cash Reserves	£10 m	Finance
8.3 Invoices paid within 30 days	90%	Finance

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 10 June 2021 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor McKinney, Chair

Councillors, Ashton, Buchanan*, Cuddy, Doris* (7.07 pm)
Elattar*, Forde*, Gildernew*, Kearney, S McAleer*,
S McGuigan, McLean*, S McPeake, Molloy, Quinn, Totten*

Officers in Attendance

Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Mrs Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
Ms Donnelly**, Council Solicitor
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure
Ms Mezza**, Head of Marketing and Communications
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT
Mr Tohill, Director of Finance
Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

* Denotes members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.01 pm

The Chair, Councillor McKinney welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor McKinney in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee in the chamber and by virtual means, by referring to Annex A to this minute.

PR110/21 Apologies

None.

PR111/21 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest.

PR112/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Molloy proposed that a working group be set up to look at the Blackwater Valley/Ulster Canal/Coalisland Canal and the associated blueways and greenways. The Councillor asked that this working group include members/officers from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, ICBAN and other associated bodies who may have an interest in progressing projects.

Councillor Quinn seconded Councillor Molloy's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to set up a working group which will explore the blueways and greenways for the Blackwater Valley/Ulster Canal and Coalisland. Working group to include members/officers from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, ICBAN and other associated bodies.

Councillor Quinn referred to Joshua Griggs from Newmills who died tragically earlier in the week. Councillor Quinn stated he met recently with Joshua's father and could tell how immensely proud he was of his son. Councillor Quinn stated that Joshua was a talented athlete and was also working as a Blacksmith and that there had been incredible shock and outpouring of grief from across the local community on learning of his death. Councillor Quinn stated that Joshua's funeral service will be held at Brackaville Football Club tomorrow which was unique and shows how highly regarded both Joshua and his family are in the area.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney stated that the life of a child was very precious and the loss of the life of a child is tragic.

Councillor Cuddy referred to his previous request for LPS to make a presentation to Committee and that LPS had declined this invitation. Councillor Cuddy proposed that Council go back to LPS and seek a less formal meeting with LPS to discuss purchase/leasing of lands with Members.

The Chief Executive agreed to seek a meeting with LPS.

Councillor Doris joined the meeting at 7.07 pm.

Matters for Decision

PR113/21 Response (draft) to Consultation on DAERA Disability Action Plan 2019-2024

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which provided a draft response developed on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council in response to the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Disability Action Plan 2019-24.

Councillor Molloy referred to issues regarding footpath links to settlements particularly in rural areas and rural transport. The Councillor stated that at a recent meeting with DfI it was shown that someone can walk between Portadown and Belfast without leaving a footpath and that such links between towns and villages in this Council area are very poor. Councillor Molloy asked that reference to these comments are included in the response.

The Head of Democratic Services agreed to include the points raised within the final response to be submitted.

Councillor Cuddy stated that Councillor Molloy raised a valid point as now was the chance to make a difference and that Council should take the opportunity when it is there.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney stated he agreed with the comments made and referred to the footpath link between Tobermore and Portrush.

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve and submit draft response as set out at Appendix A to report to the Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) with regard to their consultation on a Disability Action Plan 2019-24. Comments in relation to poor footpath linkages in the District and issues with rural transport as outlined above to be included within final response to be submitted.

PR114/21 Council Policy on Accessible Communications (Reviewed)

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the Council's policy on Accessible Communications.

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the revised Policy on Accessible Communications.

PR115/21 NILGA Consultation on Local Government's Vision & Development 2021-2023 - Response (draft)

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which highlighted consultation from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) on its consultation on Local Government's Vision & Development.

Councillor Kearney stated that as an office bearer of NILGA he acknowledged the work of this Council in preparing this document and that the work of this Council is held in high regard by NILGA.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the draft response as set out at Appendix B of report for submission to NILGA on its policy document - Vision & Development of Local Government 2021-2023.

PR116/21 Elected Member Development Working Group

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered the report of a meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group held on 17 May 2021.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney thanked the Head of Democratic Services and officers for their work in receiving the Charter and congratulated those Members who have completed accredited courses recently.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the report of the Elected Member Development Steering Group meeting, and actions contained, held on Monday 17 May 2021.

PR117/21 Requests to Illuminate Council Property: June 2021

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered requests received to illuminate/light up the Council's three designated properties to raise awareness of and mark;

- 75th Anniversary of Northern Chest Heart & Stroke - 14th June 2021
- Motor Neurone Disease Association Global Awareness Day - 21st June 2021
- International Day of the Disabled Person - 3rd December 2021

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Ashton and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to light up designated Council properties to mark –

- 75th Anniversary of Northern Ireland Chest, Heart & Stroke – 14 June 2021 (colour red)
- Motor Neurone Disease Association Global Awareness Day – 21 June 2021 (colour blue)
- International Day of the Disabled Person – 3 December 2021 (colour purple)

PR118/21 Member Services

No issues.

PR119/21 Community Development

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure presented previously circulated report which sought approval to proceed with the Town Shared Space Awnings capital works.

Councillor Cuddy thanked officers for the work done to progress these works and that it will be good to see the area identified in Dungannon becoming more user friendly. Councillor Cuddy proposed the report recommendation.

Councillor Quinn seconded Councillor Cuddy's proposal and referred to the area in Coalisland and that it will be good to see this being improved.

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the commencement of the towns shared spaces project.

Matters for Information

PR120/21 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 6 May 2021

Members noted Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 6 May 2021.

PR121/21 Annual Progress Return on Rural Needs 2020/2021

Members noted previously circulated report which set out Mid Ulster District Council's Annual Progress Report to Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) for the period 2020-21.

PR122/21 Somme Association: 2021-2022 Membership Subscription

Members considered previously circulated report which outlined correspondence received from the Somme Association on annual membership contributions payable for period 2021-2022.

Proposed by Councillor Ashton
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to make payment of £1,200 to the Somme Association for 2021-2022 annual subscription.

PR123/21 Marketing & Communications Service Improvement Plan 2021-2022

Members noted previously circulated report which detailed the Marketing & Communications Service Improvement Plan for 2021-2022.

Councillor S McPeake stated he welcomed the plan and that going forward the use of social media will be hugely important. The Councillor commended the team for their work and in particular mentioned the monthly videos which he felt are very informative and highlight stories that could otherwise become lost. Councillor S McPeake proposed the report recommendation.

Councillor Kearney concurred with Councillor McPeake's comments and acknowledged the quick responses made to customer queries. Councillor Kearney seconded Councillor S McPeake's proposal.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney thanked the marketing and communications team for the work that they do.

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the Marketing and Communications Plan 2021-2022.

Live broadcast ended at 7.26 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Member consider items PR124/21 to PR132/21.

Matters for Decision

- PR124/21 Staff Matters for Decision
- PR125/21 ICT Update Report June 2021
- PR126/21 Members Allowances Update
- PR127/21 Rate Support Grant Update
- PR128/21 Economic Development Update – NIBSUP2'Go For It' Programme
- PR129/21 Estate and Asset Management

Matters for Information

- PR130/21 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 6 May 2021
- PR131/21 Staff Matters for Information

PR132/21 Contracts and DAC

PR133/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.24 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Dungannon/Magherafelt] and virtually.

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I let you know before this happens.

Just some housekeeping before we commence. Can I remind you:-

- If you have joined the meeting remotely please keep your audio on mute unless invited to speak and then turn it off when finished speaking
- Keep your video on at all times, unless you have bandwidth or internet connection issues, where you are advised to try turning your video off
- If you wish to speak please raise your hand in the meeting or on screen and keep raised until observed by an Officer or myself
- Should we need to take a vote this evening I will ask each member to confirm whether they are for or against the proposal or abstaining
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- For any member attending remotely, if you declare an interest in an item, please turn off your video and keep your audio on mute for the duration of the item
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- Lastly, I remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted

Thank you and we will now move to the first item on the agenda - apologies and then roll call of all other Members in attendance.