

Report	Annual Self-Assessment Report 2020-21 of Council's Performance (Statutory Duty to Improve)
Date of Meeting	Thursday 9 th September 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 inform members on progress made towards discharging its General Duty to Improve under Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) act 2014 by way of an annual self-assessment report. Having due regard for the Department of Communities having set aside Council's requirement to develop a Performance Improvement Plan for 2020 to 2021.
2.0	Background
	Council Discharging Duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014
2.1	Council has a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement and to account for it under the 2014 Local Government Act. The purpose of this report is to present a summary of Council performance at the end of year 2020-21, based on statutory performance indicators, as outlined in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, as well as Corporate Health Indicators. The report also reflects on some key areas of Council's response and assessment in how it supported residents and communities during the pandemic, as well as focusing on activities to assist with recovery outcomes.
2.2.	Usually the annual assessment report would include progress made against Council's annual performance improvement plan (PIP). The PIP plan is normally published each year before the 30 th of June, in order to comply with Part 12 of the Act. An annual assessment report is also undertaken to comply with the Act and provides a retrospective review of the work Council had undertaken to improve its services (i.e. Annual Assessment Report). The annual assessment complies with departmental guidance under the Act and is published before the 30 th of September each year.
2.3	The Department of Communities (DfC) has however set aside the requirement to develop PIP plans for 2020 to 2021, in order that they were able to respond to front-line service provision during the Pandemic i.e. DfC would in effect regularise the legislative position to ease Council's Performance Improvement duties.

2.4	Our work is scrutinised by the Northern Ireland Audit Office to ensure we use public money effectively to deliver benefits to our communities. Council has ensured that this annual report presents progress and performance for the year in a fair and balanced way. Where our services and activity has been affected by Covid-19, this has been highlighted in the body of the report.
3.0	Main Report
	Mid Ulster District Council's Performance During 2020 to 2021
3.1	The Report reflects performance during the financial year 2020 to 2021 and the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on many of the Council's activities and measures of performance. The Council acknowledges that effective performance management arrangements are critical to supporting decision making during these challenging times.
3.2	Following the subsiding of the first wave of the pandemic, in the summer of 2020, saw many of our services re-open, however, a second wave more severe than the first grew to its peak in mid-November, which triggered a second national lockdown ending in December 2020. By Christmas there was a further significant surge in cases as a new more transmissible strain of COVID-19, spreading rapidly to other parts of the UK, which by the end of the year triggered a third lockdown. Council's annual assessment offers some insight into how Council responded to the Pandemic and provides an understanding of how services are continuing to work towards recovery for communities, businesses and partner organisations.
	Annual Self-Assessment Report 2020 to 2021
3.3	<p>The annual self-assessment report has been prepared and is set out in Appendix One to the paper, in summary it covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction: Covid-19 the Greatest Challenge to Public Services in a Generation - Section 1 • Mid Ulster District Council's Response, Reconfiguration and Recovery During 2020 to 2021 - Section 2 • General Duty to Improve and Council's Hierarchy of Plans - Performance Management Framework - Section 3 • Self-assessment of Statutory Indicators & Standards 20 to 21- Section 4 • Council's Self-assessment of Self-imposed Indicators and Standards 2020 to 2021 - Section 5 • Overall Assessment for 2020 to 2021- Section 6 • Have your Say - Section 7
3.4	<p>Benchmarking Data Supplied by DfC</p> <p>It should be noted that in respect of the requirement to compare performance with that of other Councils (benchmarking), DfC in correspondence to Councils have asked, that in addition to benchmarking the statutory indicators among the 11</p>

	<p>Councils, that Council also benchmarks Prompt Payments and Absenteeism figures, (where data has been supplied benchmarking has been undertaken in this regard).</p>
3.5	<p>Council Performance in 2020 to 2021 – An Atypical Year</p> <p>As a result of Covid-19, this has been a very atypical year with large variations across communities and individuals' lived experience during the pandemic. Services were also operating at different levels, as the Council focused on essential services and the safety of, and support for, the most vulnerable. A number of services were mostly closed throughout the year, for example, tourism, arts and cultural venues, and leisure centres, in order to protect the public and members of staff.</p>
3.6	<p>The majority of services continued to operate as normal, some new services were introduced to meet the needs of residents, at very short notice. As a result comparative changes in indicator values from the previous years should be treated with caution, given the impact and extenuating circumstance of the pandemic. Targets could not be set for some of the Corporate Health Indicators for the year 2020-21 and indicator values would be viewed as establishing baselines and reset for the period 2021-22 moving forward (regarding recovery from the pandemic). Four out of the seven statutory performance indicators/standards met or exceeded their target, 2 missed the target significantly, one missed the target narrowly. Two out of the three self-imposed indicators met or exceeded their target and one missed the target narrowly.</p>
3.7	<p>The Council still performs well across many of the Corporate Health and Service indicators in what has been the most challenging of years. In the remaining areas where there is scope for building on levels of performance, services are assessing targets as part of plans for renewal. We also want to retain some of the positive lessons learned during the pandemic to build towards achieving previous performance levels, particularly areas where services were impacted by COVID.</p>
4.0	<p>Other Considerations</p>
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: N/A</p> <p>Human: N/A</p>
4.2	<p><u>Screening & Impact Statements</u></p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: N/A</p>

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Review and provide comment as necessary on the analysis of the Council's performance as detailed in the Annual Self-Assessment Report 2020 to 2021
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix1: Mid Ulster District Council's Annual Assessment Report 2020 -2021