

## Performance Improvement Policy (draft 05-12-19)

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## **Policy Summary**

This policy provides details and summarises Mid Ulster District Council's commitment and approach to continuous improvement in its business processes and practice in order to drive organisational excellence and provide service users, communities, customer and stakeholder satisfaction. Continuous improvement is an ongoing process of striving to improve outcomes for service users, communities, staff, partners and the Council through leadership, research, monitoring, consultation and evaluation.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Mid Ulster District Council is committed to driving continuous improvement and performance across all service areas within the organisation in pursuance of this policy. 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). Improvement is about activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities. The vision to improve the economic, social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Mid Ulster District is at the heart of everything the Council does. Put simply, it means, “getting better all the time”.

## **2.0 AIM/PURPOSE**

The policy provides details of Mid Ulster District Council’s approach to continuous improvement in its business processes and practices in order to drive organisational excellence and provide stakeholder satisfaction and describes how Council will implement it’s responsibilities under the Performance Duty as set out in Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

## **3.0 SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to everyone involved in the delivery of Mid Ulster District Council services and is set in the context of the Council’s statutory duty for continuous improvement under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (hereafter referred to as “The Act”). The Council also pays regard to statutory guidance for local government performance improvement; section III of the Act, as issued by the Department of Communities (Guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement 2016).

## **4.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES**

- Mid Ulster District Council is committed to ensuring the achievement of continuous improvement is within all areas of the organisation
- Employees, members, service users and partners, will be engaged and encouraged to participate in the improvement effort, we will provide guidance on how to implement continuous improvement in their day-to-day work
- We will establish a workplace where continuous improvement is embedded in the Council’s ethos and Culture
- Our approach to continuous improvement will be underpinned by the adoption of best practice, regular reviews of projects and services, regular evaluation, scrutiny and monitoring of the organisation and establish areas for development

## 5.0 LINKAGE TO CORPORATE PLAN

This policy is linked to the Corporate Theme of “Delivering for Our People” under priority 1.6, “Integration of a culture of service improvement as the key to service delivery”.

## 6.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK THE GOLDEN THREAD

The strategic planning framework is an inter-linked process. Our planning framework ensures everything is linked in what is known as “Mid Ulster Council’s Golden Thread”. This is a process, which ensures all of our important plans consider each other, refer to figure one below.

**Figure One: Mid Ulster Council Strategic Planning Framework**



Performance management is defined by the Council as the process by which it defines its objectives, sets out how it will achieve those objectives, reviews progress and revises its processes to improve future outcomes. The Council has adopted the industry-recognised principle of “Plan – Do-Review-Revise” and this summarises the principles of performance management.

The Council’s performance management framework is informed by a hierarchy of plans that work together to create a ‘line of sight’ to deliver key outcomes for Mid Ulster (refer to Diagram Two – Mid Ulster District Council’s Performance Management Framework – Step Approach to Managing Performance). Evidence linked to existing and forecasted data will inform the Council’s policy framework, which in turn will inform our planning process. It is important that elements within Councils planning and reporting activities are monitored and reviewed within an annual cycle.

The Senior Management Team, Heads of Service, Managers, Supervisors as well as elected members have a responsibility for ensuring implementation of performance management.

## **7.0 OUR VALUES**

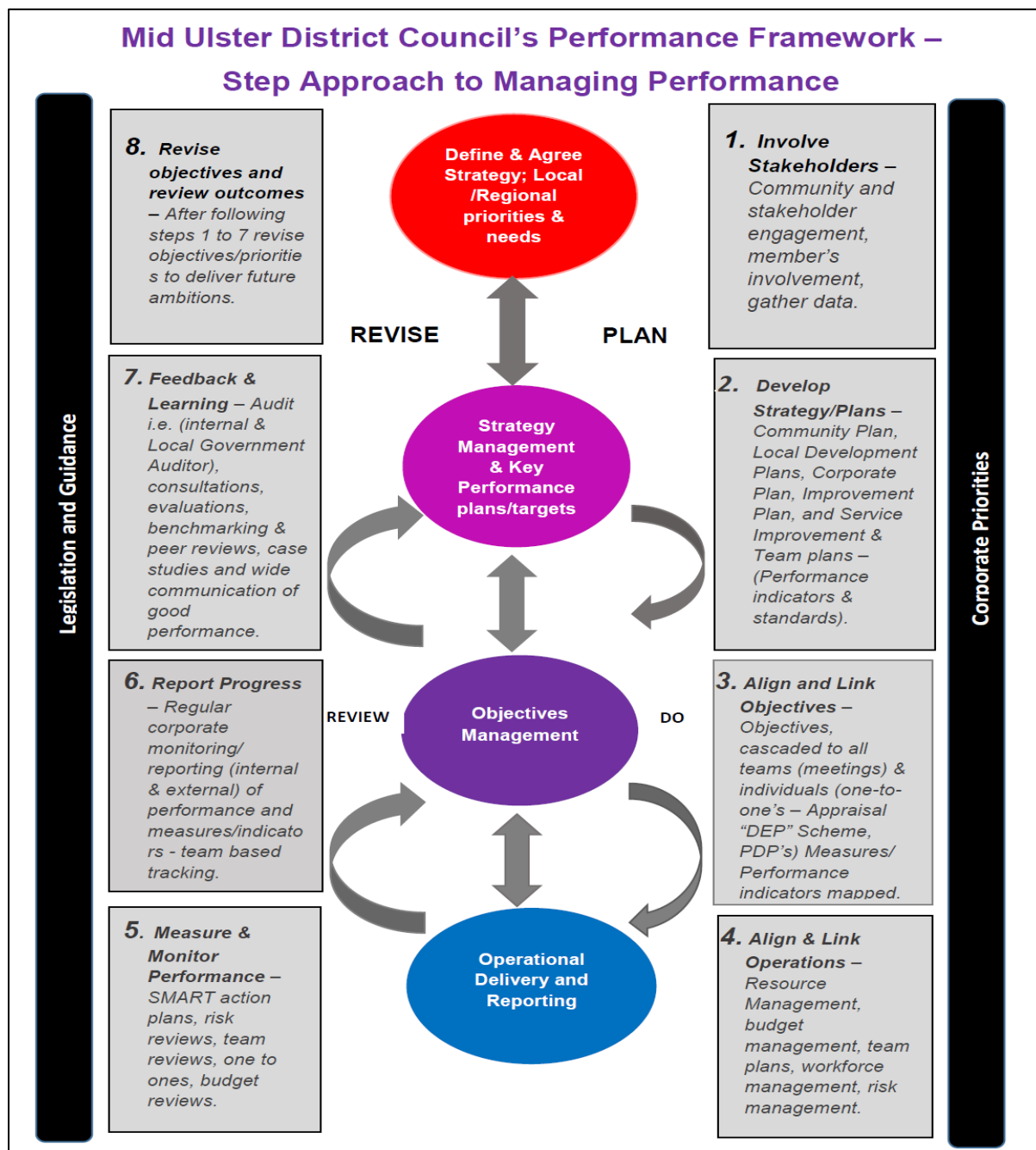
This policy reflects the organisations values. Our Values influence everything that we do and how we interact and shape our community, they impact our priorities and focus for the future and help form our key targets for improvement. Our values demonstrate that how we work to deliver our priorities is important to us, in everything we do – we all work to the same framework of values, this is at the core of what we do and guides how we deliver our service by being.

## **8.0 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WILL BE ACHIEVED BY**

Council will:

- Concentrate on what matters most, prioritising what gets done and ensuring there are sufficient resources to do it
- Promote an organisational culture that supports challenge, learning, innovation, empowerment and employee engagement
- Use best practice principles and the adoption of initiatives to ensure performance meets certain external standards
- Conduct regular evaluations of the impact all improvement initiatives are having on the services and the organisation
- Assess whether we are successful in achieving our goals, by identifying and rectifying poor performance at an early stage, learning from the past performance and improving future performance
- Ensure meaningful involvement of service users and effective use of consultation and feedback – a willingness to listen and learn from customer experiences and use these to drive improvements
- Develop business/service plans and strategies with ambitious but achievable objectives focusing on delivering outputs and outcomes for services users. This is supported by active, visible and effective management and leadership
- Cultivate project and performance management processes that prioritise and translate aims through to action integrating measures to evaluate success, while recognising and mitigating against risk.

**Figure Two: Mid Ulster Council's Performance Framework**



- Ensure effective measurement is in place (robust, authentic and valid performance data) to ensure that the results can be monitored and scrutinised and that change is happening in the right areas, through the provision of performance reports
- Enable accountability through transparent reporting systems

- Recognise and promote improvement efforts
- Target whole Council and personal professional development will provide significant support in the achievement of the identified improvement goals
- Benchmark and measure the performance of key processes
- Utilise the use of effective organisational planning and service modernisation as a vital component in pursuing continuous improvements
- Put in place a validation process regarding Council's performance reporting
- Comply with legislation outlining the General Duty to Improve
- The Council is committed to its obligations under section 75 (i) and (ii) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This commitment is demonstrated by allocating the appropriate time, people and resources to fulfil our equality duties. The Equality scheme commits us to implementing our duties effectively and in a timely manner alongside implementing performance improvement planning.
- We will also take into account the need to promote positive attitudes to people with a disability and encourage participation of people with a disability in public life. Mid Ulster Council are committed to fulfilling our disability duties and we set out how we intend to do this in our disability action plan.

## 9.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council's improvement activities are implemented under an appropriate framework as agreed from time to time, utilising various methodologies and strategies available therein. Progress on the implementation, tracking and scrutiny of performance will be communicated to the members and relevant committees and Council, the Senior Management Team and Mid Ulster District Council stakeholders.

- **Councillors:** have a role in adopting the policy, providing a scrutiny role in relation to performance reporting and ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated
- **Senior Management:** have a role in overseeing the implementation of the policy, analysing information, planning improvements, and evaluation of change
- **Heads of Service:** have a role in implement the continuous improvement policy relevant to their area and across the scope of functions for which they are responsible



- **Employees:** have a role in responsible for identifying and reporting necessary improvements and engaging in the planning and implementation of improvements

## **10.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

### **10.1 Equality & Rural Screening & Impact**

#### **10.1. Equality Screening**

The Policy has been subjected to an equality screening and no issues have been identified and not adverse impacts have identified which cannot be mitigated for

#### **10.2 Rural Needs Impact**

The policy has been subject to a rural needs impact assessment and issues considered, where relevant, in the development of this policy.

#### **10.3 Staff & Financial Resources**

No issues have been identified which would significantly impact on the councils resources and delivery of its business as a result of this policy being implemented

## **11.0 SUPPORT AND ADVICE**

- 11.1 Advice and guidance on the implementation of this should be sought from the Head of Democratic Services and in their absence the Performance & Quality Officer

## **12.0 COMMUNICATION**

- 12.1 The relevant service area, Democratic Services, is responsible for the communication of this policy.

## **13.0 MONITORING & REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**

- 13.1 Implementation of this policy will be monitored and a formal review undertaken 24 months from its effective date by the Policy Author in conjunction with the Head of Democratic Services to ensure alignment with best practice and integration with the council's performance management framework.