



05 December 2019

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to be held in
The Chamber, Magherafelt at Mid Ulster District Council, Ballyronan Road,
MAGHERAFELT, BT45 6EN on Thursday, 05 December 2019 at 19:00 to transact
the business noted below.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Tohill
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

- | | | |
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| 4. | Response to Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation | 3 - 28 |
| | Consultation on Equality & Disability Action Plans | |
| 5. | Appointments to NILGA Policy & Learning Networks | 29 - 38 |
| 6. | Working Group Meeting Report - Council Representation | 39 - 42 |
| | on Outside Bodies | |
| 7. | Council Performance Improvement Policy (draft) | 43 - 56 |
| 8. | Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan | 57 - 60 |
| 9. | Member Services | |

Matters for Information

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| 10 | Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 November 2019 | 61 - 66 |
| 11 | Marketing & Communications Update | 67 - 74 |

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

12. To consider a Council and Social Housing Association partnership approach across Mid Ulster towards the provision of social and affordable housing
13. Land Acquisitions and Disposals
14. Lands at Railway Park, Ballysaggart
15. Staff Matters for Decision
16. Staffing Matters for Decision - Policies
17. Server and Storage Infrastructure Review
18. Broadband Connection Procurement
19. 2020/21 Rate Estimates
20. Procurement of Valuation Services

Matters for Information

21. Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 November 2019
22. Staff Matters for Information
23. Planning System Replacement update December 2019
24. Contracts and DAC
25. Financial report for 7 months ended 31 October 2019

Report on	Response to Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation Consultation on Equality & Disability Action Plans
Date of Meeting	Thurs 5 th December 2019
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	M McSorley, Corporate Policy & 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 provide members with a draft response to the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation consultation on its Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan and consideration for approval.
2.0	Background
2.1	Notification of the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation consultation on its reviewed Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan was provided to Council at its meeting held on 25 th October. It was subsequently resolved that the draft documents under consultation be given consideration and a draft response prepared for consideration.
2.2	Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act. This duty is also placed on Mid Ulster District Council as a public authority. The initial development and now review of the draft action plans is the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation's response to meeting this duty under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
2.3	Appendix A provides a draft response to the two plans under consultation and Appendix B provides documentation relating to the draft Equality and Disability Action Plans.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Equality and Disability Action Plans have been considered and a draft response is attached, as appendix A, to this report for review by the committee.
3.2	The draft response provides comment specific to the strategy and policy development, human resource management and communication actions within the draft Equality Action Plan. Commentary on the draft Disability Action Plan has been provided with a focus on the proposed actions;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and • To encourage and support full participation of disabled people in public by improving accessibility
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable to council service delivery
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable to council service delivery
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That the committee considers the draft response on the Maze Long Kesh Equality and Disability Action Plan, comment as necessary and recommend the approval of the response as a submission from Mid Ulster District Council.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix A: Draft Mid Ulster District Council Response</p> <p>Appendix B: Consultation Documents from Maze long Kesh Development Corporation</p>

Mid Ulster District Council - Response to Consultation by Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation (MLKDC) on its Draft Equality Action Plan 2019-2023 and Draft Disability Action Plan 2019-2023

November 2019

Mid Ulster District Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on MLKDC's draft Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan. The Council notes that MLKDC is awaiting Ministerial agreement from the Northern Ireland Executive on its future. The Council also notes that the Executive Office does not require MLKDC to have a current corporate plan and there is no published annual business plan for 2019-20.

The absence of a corporate plan covering the period of the draft action plans makes it difficult to provide substantive feedback as to how relevant and appropriate the proposed actions will be to the organisation's operation over the next three years.

The Plans under consultation acknowledge the organisation's limited functions at present and the Council in turn acknowledges the limited potential to address equality and good relations and disability duties in such circumstances. Our response is therefore limited to general comments on the actions outlined and based on the strategic objectives outlined on p4 of the Equality Action Plan and P3 of the Disability Action Plan.

Draft Equality Action plan

We note that the Draft Action Plan is *"designed to be flexible, adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances and needs"* and *"will be reviewed in line with MLKDC'S business planning process"*. Council agrees that this is a reasonable approach although it is unclear what the business planning process might be. In the absence of an agreed corporate plan for the site's future development, we agree that equality actions have to be restricted to the existing remit. In practice, this means that actions are limited to a large extent to internal processes and functions.

However, the council feels that MLKDC needs to be prepared for a time when there is Ministerial agreement to progress plans for the site and the coming period presents an opportunity to lay the groundwork for the future. Council provides comments as follows.

1. Strategy and Policy Development Actions

The majority of these actions, although welcomed, are required to ensure administrative compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and may not necessarily better promote equality and good relations or address inequalities experienced by any Section 75 group.

Action 2: The Council welcomes the commitment to review equality and good relations screening processes and to mainstream equality and good relations in business planning

Action 6: While the commitment to review consultation and engagement systems is welcome this may not in itself, improve engagement with Section 75 groups

2. Human Resource Management

Actions 9-11: The council supports training and positive targeting in relation to any recruitment

Action 12: The undertaking of a staff survey may not in itself result in 'improved wellbeing' and focus may be best be on what is done with the findings of the survey

Action 13: Whilst the inclusion of equality-related duties in job descriptions is to be welcomed, it should be perhaps clearer on whether this equally applies to current or future posts. Greater clarity should be considered on the measure, "*% applicants applying with knowledge of equality legislation*". For example, does this mean that job descriptions for new posts will ask for equality knowledge/expertise?

3. Communication

Actions 14 & 15: whilst these are welcome actions, they may not be adequate and sufficient to promote equality and good relations. Consideration should be given to how MLKDC could work towards promoting the site and its potential to the wider community

Overall, consideration should be given to making an enhanced reference to the promotion of good relations in the plan, given that the significance of the site to all communities in Northern Ireland.

Other Comments

There is reference in the strategic objectives (p4) to "*taking account of requirements relating to public access*" to fulfil MLKDC's responsibilities as a landowner though associated actions would help in understanding the activity which will be undertaken around this.

The Council feels that MLKDC should take account of rural needs when developing future planning. Although MLKDC may not be subject to the requirements of the Rural Needs Act it is important that people across Northern Ireland, including those in rural areas, benefit from the proposed significant public investment in this project.

Draft Disability Action Plan

We acknowledge that MLKDC is limited in what it can do in the current circumstances to "promote positive attitudes towards disabled people" and "encourage the participation of disabled people in public life". We welcome the commitment to equality screening for impact on disabled people and to engaging with groups that represent disabled people to encourage their involvement in future working groups, etc.

Section 1 Actions to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people

No comment

Section 2 Encouraging and supporting full participation of disabled people in public by improving accessibility

The public life duty in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)/Disability Discrimination Order duties refers specifically to “*participation in public life*” and not participation generally or access to services generally. The latter is covered under the access provisions of the DDA and could be best catered for to some extent in the Equality Action Plan.

The wording of the section heading above may be too narrow to reflect the duty as improving accessibility is only one element of the action required to address this duty.

Some of the actions (measures) outlined appear to be about general accessibility. For example, website accessibility and appropriate communications channels to reach disabled people are requirements of the DDA. The intention to engage with the Equality Commission’s Every Customer Counts initiative is to be welcomed, though it is not directly relevant to this DDA disability duty.

We suggest that MLKDC could increase its awareness of its public life positions even though the Executive Office is responsible for the public appointments process. MLKDC can take further steps to promote awareness of its role and work and help ensure that people with disabilities consider applying. The appropriate outcome might be more people applying and being appointed and disabled people’s views influencing future policy/decision making.

Section 3 Supporting full participation of disabled people in our workforce

Again, the council is unclear as to whether or not this heading is directly relevant to the two disability Duties and would suggest that the actions are either included in Sections 1 and 2 or appear in the wider Equality Action Plan. For example, action 1 could go in Section 1. Action 3 would sit well in Section 2 and would further add that other external disability related groups, as well as Employers for Disability, be asked to communicate/advertise the availability of public life or participation opportunities.

Mid Ulster District Council
December 2019

Officer Contact: Ms Mary McSorley, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

Tel: 03000 132 132

Email: mary.mcsorley@midulstercouncil.org



Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation Draft Equality Action Plan

September 2019

Accessibility Statement

Requests for the document in another format will be considered.

Please contact: contact@mazelongkesh.com

or Tel: 02892501806

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The document sets out the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation (MLKDC) response to the Audit of Inequalities. The Equality Action Plan is aligned to our current business plan of 2019-20 and covers a further three year period (2019- 2023). Progress will be measured annually with opportunities to amend the plan should this be necessary.
- 1.2 In its development, consideration was given to a review of existing priorities and consideration of new priorities.
- 1.3 This plan is a 'live' document and as such will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

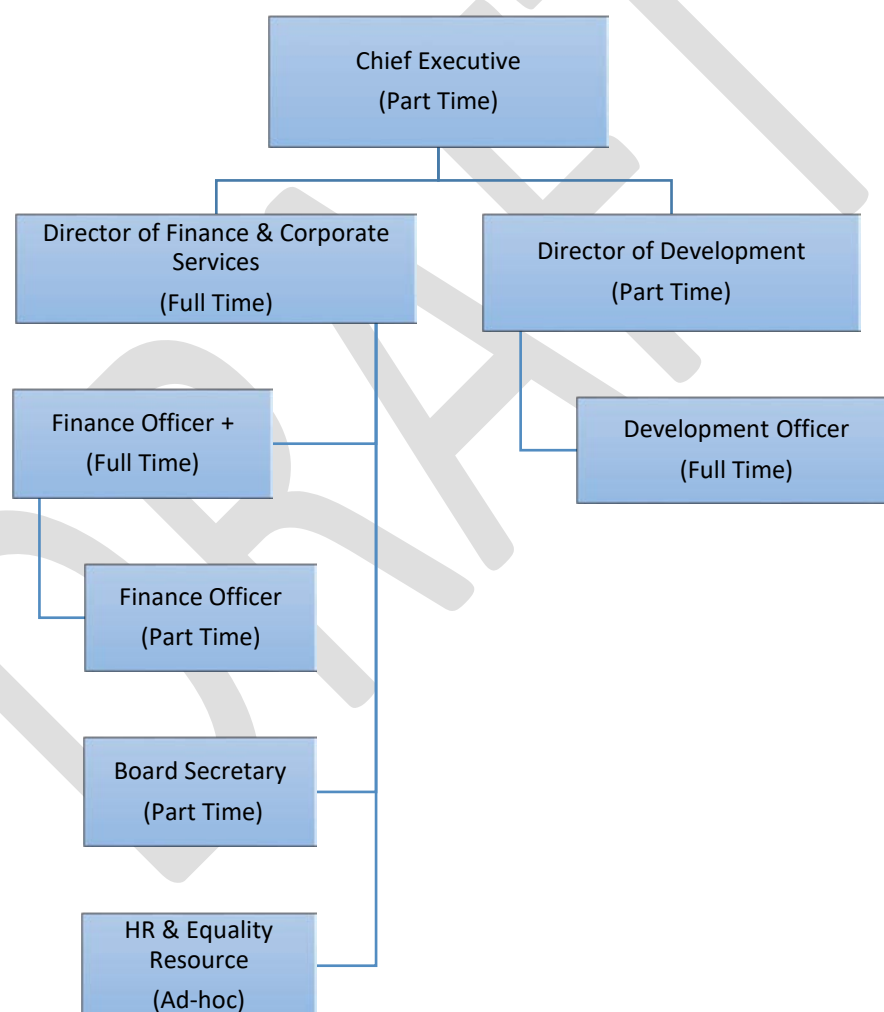
2. Equality Scheme Commitments

- 2.1 The Equality Action Plan outlines actions relating to our functions and takes account of our equality scheme commitments relating to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Our Equality Scheme is available on our website: www.mazelongkesh.com
- 2.2 The law requires us, when we carry out our work, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity across nine equality categories; age, gender, disability, marital status, political opinion, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, religion and ethnicity. It also requires us to consider good relations in relation to political opinion, religion and ethnicity.
- 2.3 In our Equality Scheme we gave a commitment to monitoring progress and updating the plan as necessary. We also said we would engage and consult with stakeholders when reviewing this action plan.

3. Who we are and what we do

- 3.1 MLKDC was established on 1 June 2011 and became operational on the appointment of the Chairman and Board on 10 September 2012 with the objective of regenerating the site by maximising its economic, historical and reconciliation potential. To this end, it has wide ranging powers to manage, develop, acquire and dispose of land. It is an 'arm's length body' under the sponsorship of The Executive Office (TEO). The aim was to create a setting conducive to private sector investment in the site.
- 3.2 Our Board, under the chairmanship of Terence Brannigan, is composed of a wide cross section of our community and our Executive Team is led by Dr. Bryan Gregory.

- 3.3 However, since August 2013, with the lack of Ministerial agreement on the future of the site, the activities of MLKDC have been guided by the parameters set by TEO. These have largely limited activities to essential maintenance and Health & Safety works, to maintain the site in fulfilment of our statutory responsibilities, as landowner and landlord.
- 3.4 This limited remit has also impacted on the structure of the organisation, with resources being limited to a skeletal structure of a temporary or part time nature. In these circumstances, the requirement for a Corporate Plan has been suspended. MLKDC activities have therefore been formulated on the basis of an annual business plan and supporting action plan.
- 3.5 The current structure of MLKDC is as follows:



Strategic Objectives

- 3.6 The annual business plan objectives are set to enable MLKDC to fulfil its current remit, as defined by TEO. They seek to contribute to the draft outcomes based Programme for Government (PfG), as far as is practicable and achievable within the current constrained framework within which MLKDC has to operate. For the period of this scheme it is assumed that TEO will be content for MLKDC to operate in line with these business plan objectives, as has been the practice in previous years, in the absence of agreement on the way forward. MLKDC will continue to operate on that basis, unless otherwise instructed by TEO. These objectives are as follows:
- To identify and explore possible options that could help to maximize the economic, historical and reconciliation potential of the site and inform the development of a regeneration strategy, with the aim of securing agreement on the way forward for MLK.
 - To fulfil MLKDC's statutory and landowner responsibilities in relation to health and safety, estate management and the protection of the listed and retained buildings and scheduled monuments, taking account of requirements relating to public access.
 - To honour MLKDC's agreements with its tenants and occupiers, supporting and facilitating them, as appropriate, in their activities and future planning.
 - To ensure MLKDC fulfils its corporate responsibilities with good governance, propriety and regularity.
- 3.7 In addition to essential maintenance and Health & Safety works, MLKDC continues to support Royal Ulster Agricultural Society (RUAS) in the phased development of their show grounds (now known as Balmoral Park), as provided for under the Development Agreement between the parties. This has seen increased use of the EIKON exhibition and event centre and the construction of additional covered exhibition space, known as the FE Logan Hall.
- 3.8 In addition, Air Ambulance Northern Ireland (AANI) commenced operations for their Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) on the site in July 2017. This has provided a fast response doctor led service responding to medical emergencies.

4. How we developed the Plan

- 4.1 A team was formed to review the previous Equality Action Plan and prepare an audit of inequalities. Following this review a number of factors became apparent.
- 4.2 Firstly as stated previously, with the lack of Ministerial agreement on the future of the site, the activities of MLKDC have been guided by the parameters set by TEO. These have largely limited activities to essential maintenance and Health & Safety works, to maintain the site in fulfilment of our statutory responsibilities, as landowner and landlord.
- 4.3 This has also impacted on the structure of the organisation, with resources being limited to a skeletal structure, largely of a temporary or part time nature. In these circumstances, the requirement for a Corporate Plan has been suspended. MLKDC activities have therefore been formulated on the basis of an annual business plan and supporting action plan.
- 4.4 As a consequence, the review of the audit of inequalities identified the need to revise the Equality Action Plan to ensure that it reflected the current status of activities and remit available to the MLDKC.

5. What is in our Equality Action Plan

- 5.1 It is important to highlight that the action plan has been designed to be flexible, adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances and needs.
- 5.2 The broad themes and areas of work where MLKDC considers targeted actions could address inequalities and advance equality of opportunity and good relations are currently:
 - Strategic and Policy Development;
 - Human Resources; and
 - Communication.

Strategic and Policy Development

- 5.3 MLKDC appreciates that equality, diversity and disability related issues need to be at the core of business planning. To this end our plan ensures that we mainstream equality, diversity and disability issues across all functions.

Human Resources

5.4 MLKDC values the need for staff to be empowered and given the right training and tools to do their job. One of MLKDC core values is equality; we are keen to ensure that through our action plan:

- We have a fuller picture of the makeup of our workforce;
- We will ensure all our staff, regardless of their background, will enjoy working for MLKDC;
- We will ensure that all staff are made aware of the need to address equality legislation as part of their job role; and
- We will ensure that our staff and board members are trained in equality, diversity and disability related issues.

Communication

5.5 MLKDC highly values communication. Our aim is to ensure that we communicate effectively with all our stakeholders. To this end we will ensure our website is accessible. In addition, we will ensure that diverse imagery is used in all our publications.

5.6 MLKDC are mindful that this situation may change should there be changes to its remit, as defined by TEO. MLKDC will reflect such changes by amending the Equality Action Plan as necessary.

6.0 Reviewing our Plan

6.1 As this plan is intended to be a 'living' document, it will evolve and be reviewed in line with MLKDC's business planning process. This linkage to the business planning cycle will also ensure that equality of opportunity and promotion of good relations are incorporated and mainstreamed at a strategic level.

6.2 Appendix 1 outlines our actions for the next four years. We will keep this plan under regular review and report annually on progress to the Equality Commission NI. We will undertake a wider review in four years and will involve Section 75 equality groups and individuals in that review, producing a new four year plan.

6.3 This document is also available on our website: www.mazelongkesh.com

7.0 Who to contact

- 7.1 The person in our organisation who is responsible for making sure that the actions in this plan are undertaken and completed is:

Alison Stafford
Director of Finance and Corporate Services
94 Halftown Road
Lisburn
BT27 5RN
Tel: +44 (0)28 9250 1806
contact@mazelongkesh.com

Signed by:

Chairman

Chief Executive

Appendix 1

Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation

Draft Equality Action Plan 2019-23

1. Strategy and Policy Development

	Outcome	Action	Measure	Lead and Timeframe
1	MLKDC will have better integration of Section 75 duties in all planning and decision making processes.	Review the equality screening forms and processes. Complete timely and thorough equality screening exercises of all new policies.	Revised Equality Screening forms and processes. Equality Screening completed.	Alison Stafford is the Lead for all actions. 2019/20 Annual
2	Mainstreaming Equality and Good Relations and linking to business planning.	Review equality and good relations processes for all aspects of business.	Completed Business Plan and Business Cases.	2020/21
3	Improved awareness of disability issues.	Develop a Disability Action Plan.	Completed Disability Action Plan.	2019/20
4	Improved understanding of equality processes and outcomes.	5 year review of Equality Scheme.	Completed Equality Scheme review.	2019/20
5	Improved awareness of understanding inequalities and potential impact of decision making.	Monitor and report on progress of Equality Action Plan. Review issues on an annual basis and develop actions.	Equality data collected. Completed annual reports.	2019/20 Annual
6	Improved engagement with S75 groups.	Review consultation and engagement systems.	Up to date consultation lists and processes.	2021/22

	Outcome	Action	Measure	Lead and Timeframe
7	Improved awareness of HR processes and practices.	Review staff handbook.	Update staff handbook and improved staff awareness.	2022/23
8	Mainstreaming equality across all functions.	Equality targets set at corporate level.	% measurable business plan targets relating to equality achieved.	Annual

2. Human Resource Management

	Outcome	Action	Measure	Lead and Timeframe
9	Improved diversity in staff complement.	Positive targeting of underrepresented groups.	% applicants from underrepresented group.	2020/21
10	Improved awareness of equality of opportunity and good relations.	Comprehensive equality and good relations training for all staff. Comprehensive equality and good relations training for all board members.	100% staff trained. 100% board members trained.	Annual Annual
11	Improved awareness of disability equality awareness.	Disability equality awareness training for all staff. Comprehensive disability equality and good relations training for all board members.	100% staff trained. 100% board members trained.	Annual Annual
12	Improved wellbeing in the workplace.	Staff survey on workplace environment and culture.	Positive staff survey results.	2022/23
13	Improved awareness of equality legislation.	Equality legislation integrated into job descriptions.	% applicants applying with knowledge of equality legislation.	2020/21

3. Communication

	Outcome	Action	Measure	Lead and Timeframe
14	Accessible Website communication.	Review website accessibility.	Website conforms to accessible standards.	2019/20
15	Diversity in communications.	Inclusion of diverse imagery in all documents.	Representation of diverse imagery.	2021/22

DRAFT



MazeLongKesh
from peace to prosperity

Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation Disability Action Plan

September 2019

Accessibility Statement

Requests for the document in another format will be considered.

Please contact: contact@mazelongkesh.com

or Tel: 02892501806

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation (MLKDC) is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
 - encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').
- 1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, MLKDC is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a **disability action plan** showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.
- 1.3 As Chairman & Chief Executive of MLKDC we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will seek to allocate the necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into annual operating plans.
- 1.4 We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan effectively implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and to providing all necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan.
- 1.5 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of this plan as well as carrying out a three yearly review of this plan. MLKDC is committed to consulting with people with disabilities and groups that represent people with disabilities.
- 1.6 Overall responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within the MLKDC will be:

Alison Stafford
Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation
94 Halftown Road
Lisburn
BT27 5RF
Tel: +44 (0)28 9250 1806
contact@mazelongkesh.com

- 1.7 If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or an alternative language, please contact the above person to discuss your requirements.
- 1.8 A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission Northern Ireland (ECNI) and our three year review of this plan will be made available on our website: www.mazelongkesh.com

2. Functions

- 2.1 In the absence of Ministerial agreement on the development of the site, the organisation's four strategic objectives, from the 2019-20 Business Plan are as follows:
- To identify and explore possible options that could help to maximise the economic, historical and reconciliation potential of the site and inform the development of a regeneration strategy, in line with the MLKDC Board's vision and concept¹.
 - To fulfil MLKDC's statutory and landowner responsibilities in relation to Health and Safety, estate management and the protection of the listed and retained buildings, and scheduled monuments, taking account of requirements relating to public access.
 - To honour MLKDC's agreements with its tenants and occupiers², supporting and facilitating them, as appropriate, in their activities and future planning.
 - To ensure MLKDC fulfils its corporate responsibilities with good governance, propriety and regularity.

¹ This reflects the absence of Ministers at the time of drafting the business case, but the Board's aim and commitment is to secure Ministerial agreement on the way forward for MLK.

² These include, as of April 2019, RUAS, UAS and AANI.

3. Public Life Positions

- 3.1 MLKDC is limited in what it can deliver due to the current situation. The Executive Office (TEO) is responsible for appointment of Board members to the MLKDC. TEO in conjunction with office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments (CPANI) will focus on broadening the pool of applicants to encourage and promote diversity on the Board.

3.2 Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

- 3.2.1 MLKDC has engaged with organisations that represent disabled people during the consultation process, as part of our Section 75 requirement and will continue to do so. MLKDC screens any policies / projects for equality impact assessment, taking due note of any adverse impact on disabled people

3.3 Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

- 3.3.1 Due to lack of Ministerial agreement on the development of the site since August 2013, there have been a limited number of developments in policy and service. This situation is ongoing, hence the lack of working groups established to deliver specific projects in connection to the site. MLKDC will actively engage with groups that represent people from disabled backgrounds to encourage their involvement in working groups, should any be established in the future.

4. Action Measures

- 4.1 Outlined in sections 1 to 3 below are the measures which we propose to take over the four-year period of this disability action plan, together with performance indicators or targets.

Year 1	2019-20
Year 2	2020-21
Year 3	2021-22
Year 4	2022-23

Section 1: Actions to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

Measures	Timescale / Indicators	Outcomes
Training Relevant training and development to staff to meet our obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and DDA (1995) and DDO (2006).	Ongoing; both face to face training and online training. Training conducted annually; this will be updated as appropriate. Any training requirements for staff are formally reviewed at the midpoint and end of the annual performance cycle. Year 1-4	Staff have improved knowledge of the legislation and increased awareness of disability.
Relevant training and development to Board Members to meet our obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and DDA and DDO.	Both face to face training and online training. Training conducted annually; this will be updated as appropriate. Any training requirements for Board Members are formally reviewed at the midpoint and end of the annual performance cycle. Year 1-4	Board Members have improved knowledge of the legislation and increased awareness of disability.
We will review our staff Disability Equality Training.	Training reflects all disabilities (hidden / autism / sensory). Year 2	Training is up to date and relevant and will challenge negative stereotypes / attitudes to disabled people.
Training for new employees on obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and DDA (1995) and DDO (2006).	Training requirements for staff are formally reviewed at the beginning, midpoint and end of the annual performance cycle. As Appropriate	New staff have improved knowledge of the legislation and increased awareness of disability.
Training on good practice in relation to the recruitment/interviewing of a person with a disability	Training requirements are reviewed at the initial stage of the recruitment competition.	Staff have improved knowledge of best practice and increased awareness of disability.

Measures	Timescale / Indicators	Outcomes
for anyone involved in the recruitment panel / procedure.	As Appropriate	
Communication We will use our internal methods of communicating with staff to raise awareness of national awareness days / weeks particularly in terms of disability.	Disability related communication articles recorded. Year 1-4	Increased staff awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled people and how to better support disabled people.
We will ensure all methods of communicating with external stakeholders promote positive attitudes to disabled people.	All communication methods both internally and externally assessed. Year 1-4	Positive attitudes to disabled people in all communications.
Prepare an annual progress report on the action points in this Disability Action Plan. The progress report will detail progress in terms of: actions fully achieved, partially achieved and not achieved.	Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission for NI (ECNI). Annual	ECNI will receive Annual Progress Report by the end of August each year.
Use a wide range of images of disabled people in our publications.	Year 1-4	Positive attitudes to disabled people in all communications.

Section 2: Encouraging and supporting full participation of disabled people in public by improving accessibility.

Measures	Timescales	Outcomes
Engage with The Executive Office who is responsible for the public appointments process for the MLKDC Board as it is a non-departmental public body and encourage recruitment of disabled people onto Board.	People with disabilities and groups that represent them are made aware of any public life positions that may arise at MLKDC. As appropriate	Supporting full participation of disabled people in public by improving accessibility.
Engage with Equality Commission 'Every Customer Counts' initiative to ensure that services and the physical environment is accessible.	Signed up to ECC initiative. Year 3	Improved accessibility for all.
In line with new legislation our website will be reviewed to ensure accessibility.	Website reviewed in line with legislation. Year 2	Compliant with legislation. Website that is user friendly and easily accessible for all.
We will work to ensure access to all forms of communication support on request, including support for BSL/ISL users, Makaton users and people who have Autism Spectrum Disorder.	Improved access to services. Improved communication with service users and carers Improved experience for people using our services. Year 3	Improved accessibility for all.
Conduct Access Audit of premises and staff location.	Access audit complete. Year 1	Improved accessibility for all.
Develop a plan for improvements to implement the recommendations from the Access Audit based on priority, resources and timescale.	Implementation plan developed. Year 1	Improved accessibility for all.
Liaise with tenants to encourage and support improved disability access.	Year 1-4	Improved accessibility for all.

Section 3: Supporting full participation of disabled people in our workforce.

Measures	Timescales and Targets	Outcomes
A staff attitude survey will be carried out to suggest further ways of promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.	Findings of survey will be compared with baseline data and will inform future MLKDC action plan. Year 1	Accurate statistical information will be maintained and suggestions for promoting positive attitudes will be collected and implemented where appropriate.
Recruitment and selection procedures reviewed in line with best practice to remove barriers.	Reviewed recruitment and selection procedures. Year 3	Improved access to job positions for disabled people.
Advertisement of positions for Board or employees on Employers for Disability NI jobs Bulletin Board.	As Appropriate	Improved access to job positions for disabled people.
Development and distribution of reasonable adjustment protocol.	Year 2	Improved accessibility for all.
Sign up to ECNI's Mental Health Charter.	Year 2	Support of workforce.

Measures	Timescales and Targets	Outcomes
Review opportunities for staff to disclose their disability.	<p>Staff encouraged to declare that they have a disability.</p> <p>Promotion of the benefits of disclosure and importance of monitoring.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the importance of staff keeping personal equality monitoring records up to date.</p> <p>Increased staff disclosure and staff supported.</p> <p>Robust equality monitoring statistics to ensure meaningful analysis to support decision making and benchmark workforce profile.</p> <p>Year 2</p>	Positive attitudes to disabled people and staff.
Promote our staff's health and well-being particularly in terms of mental ill health.	<p>Enhanced understanding of how to maintain good mental health.</p> <p>Enhanced awareness of mental health issues.</p> <p>Supportive work environment for staff with mental health related issues</p> <p>Year 4</p>	Positive attitudes to disabled people and staff.

Signed by:

Chairman

Chief Executive

Report on	Appointments to NILGA Policy & Learning Networks
Date of Meeting	Thursday 5 th December 2019
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	E Forde, Members Support 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	<p>To consider appointment of elected members to represent the Council on NILGA Policy & Learning Networks. Networks requiring representation extend to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform, Devolution and Improvement • Local Economic Development, Investment and International Affairs • Place Shaping and Infrastructure • Health, Social and Environmental Wellbeing
2.0	Background
2.1	The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) established five Policy & Learning Networks after the 2019 Local Election to coincide with the commencement of the new local government Council Term (2019-2023). NILGA is now seeking representatives from Mid Ulster Council to sit on each of these Networks.
2.2	One of the five Policy & Learning Networks has been filled this being the Elected Member Development network. Cllr N Doris was nominated and approved to represent the Council on this network at the Council's May 2019 annual meeting.
2.3	Members will be aware that the Working Group - Council Representation on Outside Bodies has now convened and the issue of nominating to 'outside body' requests was discussed at its meeting of 9 th October. It was recommended by the Working Group and approved by this Committee at its November meeting that vacancies are filled prior to the conclusion of the activity/work of Working Group in the interests of having Council represented.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The committee is being requested to give consideration to nominating/appointing members to fill a single position of each of the four Policy & Learning Networks, as detailed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform, Devolution and Improvement • Local Economic Development, Investment and International Affairs • Place Shaping and Infrastructure • Health, Social and Environmental Wellbeing

	Appendix A provides further detail on the establishment of these networks and the key objectives of each.										
3.2	<p>Members are reminded that the council has made/makes appointments to outside bodies using the council d'Hondt calculation with the grid/order recommencing for each new appointment to an 'outside body', in this case to each new policy and learning network. This arrangement is in place unless the 'outside body has been designated to be filled by DEA or is to be done by Party Agreement. The council d'Hondt calculation starts as:</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>1</td><td>SF</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>DUP</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>SF</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>SDLP</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>UUP</td></tr> </table>	1	SF	2	DUP	3	SF	4	SDLP	5	UUP
1	SF										
2	DUP										
3	SF										
4	SDLP										
5	UUP										
3.3	In referring to 3.2 (above) and the council d'Hondt calculation the default/current position is that Sinn Féin is required to nominate 4 councillors to fill the positions on each of the Policy & Learning Networks listed at 3.1 above. It is recommended that these be drawn from the membership of Policy & Resources but this is not a requirement.										
3.4	<p>NILGA has indicated that representatives may or may not come from the overall NILGA membership. For information the current NILGA membership from Mid Ulster Council is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllrs Totten, McPeake, S McGuigan, Doris, Burton, Robinson, Kearney, Glasgow 										
4.0	Other Considerations										
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications										
	Financial: not applicable										
	Human: not applicable										
	Risk Management: not applicable										
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments										
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: none identified										
	Rural Needs Implications: none identified										
5.0	Recommendation(s)										
5.1	That consideration be given by the Committee to the appointment of councillors to represent the Council on the NILGA Policy and Learning Networks.										
6.0	Documents Attached & References										
	Appendix A – NILGA Member Policy and Learning Networks: Details and Objectives										

NILGA MEMBER POLICY AND LEARNING NETWORKS

1. Adding Value to Councils and Corporate Relevance for the Sector

The actions related to the three themes and associated 20 actions making up NILGA's 2019 – 2023 Corporate Plan will be practically supported by a small, focused number of Member Policy and Learning Networks which strategically align to, inform and are drawn from councils, plus NILGA's Full Membership and Executive Committee.

This ensures a dynamic, inter-dependent and integrated policy development and communication system for local government.

To ensure that NILGA fulfils its role in supporting the development of a strong, effective sector, it is vital for this to be fully understood, embraced and owned by our member councils – both elected members and officers.

As such, NILGA will seek for meetings of these Groups to be hosted by councils, to be fully aligned to the corporate governance of our member local authorities, and to be fully communicated at Standing Committees.

The impact of these groups within councils and externally, particularly of the lead elected members, is critically important to improving regional communications and policy effectiveness.

The system of Elected Member Policy and Learning Networks has been further refined for 2019 – 2023, driven by the developing need for the 11 post-reform councils and the issues affecting the sector in this mandate.

This includes a fresh impetus & focus on devolution, on reviewing local government reform, on **powers, resources and protection** of councils; emerging as a leader body in terms of elected member development, and policy and resource lobbying to support and progress community planning. Similarly, effective services and appropriate performance measurement & management, underpinned by sustainability & efficiency, feature heavily.

These Networks focus on work that needs to be done and learning that needs to be shared, to improve councils in N. Ireland and develop the knowledge & use of new working practices and governance requirements.

Developing policy, supporting improved guidance, addressing communication and investment deficits, and providing training within the Corporate Plan Period 2019 – 2023 will be dynamic actions of the Networks, during a time of unprecedented uncertainty due to Brexit and the regional political impasse.

2. Linking the objectives of the Member Networks to the draft Programme for Government (NI).

Councils have been endeavouring to ensure that community plans and other council led plans and strategies, tie in with the relatively new outcomes-based draft Programme for Government (NI). It is incumbent on NILGA to ensure that the work we do supports council needs and supports members to build their own and the sector's capacity in priority areas. NILGA, through the member network system will support NI local government to work in partnership with NI Government and Westminster; acting locally, relevant regionally and nationally

3. Linking the objectives of the Member Networks to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Councils in Northern Ireland have been at the forefront of sustainable development since the UN launched Agenda 21 in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Now that the three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – have helped frame the wellbeing agenda and form the framework for the council-led community planning system, and as we approach 2021, it is time for NILGA to contemporise its approach. We want to ensure that Northern Ireland's councils are playing their part in meeting the goals identified by the UN in its SD agenda for 2030; acting locally, relevant globally, leading by example. The Networks, in many cases, will distil existing good practice and promote simple, yet effective, new initiatives also.

4. NILGA's five Policy & Learning Networks and Audit Working Group

Network Name	REFORM, DEVOLUTION AND IMPROVEMENT	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Chair	Party 1	Party 1
Vice Chair	Party 2	Party 2
Members	One from each council	One from each council
Support Officer	Derek McCallan / Council CEOs	Lisa O'Kane / Council officers
Key objectives	<p>Lobbying for the necessary (and still outstanding) legislation, guidance and support for councils in relation to local government reform, community planning and well-being.</p> <p>Co-ordinating actions around the Local Government Reform / RPI Review, New burdens Doctrine, devolution within Northern Ireland, and NILGA's Programme & Vision for Local Government.</p> <p>Materially contributing to the evidence and mechanisms to develop shared services and performance improvement.</p>	<p>Democratic Scrutiny of: NI Economic Strategy (and related strategies), national & international funding policies & programmes and Councils input into same.</p> <p>Regional council input into economic, tourism and rural development issues</p> <p>Regional council input into the delivery of local skills, growth and jobs</p> <p>Monitoring: Local Government representation in and benefit from Europe and international organisation, and oversight of member representation on relevant outside bodies</p> <p>Brexit as it impacts on councils</p> <p>Oversight of opportunities presented by Sister Cities, Commonwealth, North - South /East- West and international partners</p>
Wider objectives	<p>Building member capacity in relation to devolution, new burdens, community planning and performance management and improvement.</p> <p>Design and delivery of regional member development events on relevant issues.</p> <p>Supporting the competency development of elected members in their strategic management and scrutiny roles related to devolution, reform, improvement, performance management, and shared services.</p>	<p>Building member capacity on Economic, EU and international issues.</p> <p>Disseminating knowledge and investment opportunities throughout the Councils. Supporting elected members and officers to influence policy, plan and deliver investment in specific sectors. Communicating role of elected members on key European bodies e.g. CoR, Congress, CEMR, Monitoring Committees and the Managing Authorities in NI.</p> <p>Partnership working with key linked bodies (e.g. Regional Assemblies, Cross Border Bodies, LGAs, sectoral representative bodies) to innovate, and offer best practice solutions.</p>

Network Name	PLACE SHAPING AND INFRASTRUCTURE	ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT
Chair	Party 1	Party 1
Vice Chair	Party 2	Party 2
Members	One from each council	One from each council
Support Officer	Karen Smyth / Council Officers	Fiona Douglas / HR, Members Services & Democratic Services Officers
Key objectives	<p>Lobbying for the necessary (and still outstanding) legislation, guidance and support for councils in relation to planning and regeneration e.g. Regeneration Bill, SPSS, continued concern re transfer of functions funding. Future proofing NI Infrastructure.</p> <p>Democratic Scrutiny of: Departmental and partner organisation input into the design delivery and resourcing of planning, regeneration, roads, water, transport, energy and communications infrastructure, climate change adaptation activity, SuDS, parks and open space provision</p> <p>Monitoring the progress of the relationship between DfI and councils on planning and infrastructure e.g. on place-shaping, the Planning Portal, roads closures, roads maintenance and statutory consultee activity.</p> <p>Monitoring the progress of the relationship between councils DfC, NIHE and other housing providers in relation to housing supply and allocation</p>	<p>The Elected Member Development Network has representation from members across councils and is supported by the National Association of Councillors. It ensures that a regionally co-ordinated set of inexpensive, professional, vital member learning and development initiatives have been created by members themselves, based on best practice and local need, tailored to each council in NI. The EMDN is implementing a Work Plan which has Charter – the national standard for Elected Member Development - at its core, with an ambition to achieve – and retain - Charter or Charter Plus for all 11 councils by December 2019. Member Development and Capacity Building at Regional Level (in partnership, including Charter)</p> <p>Partnership Work including Training and Awareness Events with LGTG, NAC, Politics Plus, NI Ombudsman, LGA, European EU regulatory, awareness and funding bodies. Communication around pay/ performance linked to National Negotiating Machinery. Production of and investment in Toolkits of Information such as Councillors Guide 2015 – 2019.</p>
Wider objectives	<p>Building member capacity; design and delivery of regional member development events and Supporting the competency development of elected members on relevant issues.</p> <p>Design and provision of necessary regional member development events. Assisting in the wider work on the new elected member role and code of conduct. Continued development of a partnership role for local government within an integrated govt approach.</p>	<p>Best Practice in terms of Workforce Development and Versatility</p> <p>Different Service Delivery Models – Commissioning, Outsourcing (Councils as Municipal Entrepreneurs). Political Skills Framework for Councillors. Apprenticeships in local government – benchmarks and models to consider.</p>

Network Name	HEALTH, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING	AUDIT & ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP
Chair	Party 1	Party 1
Vice Chair	Party 2	Party 2
Members	One from each council	One from each remaining political party
Support Officer	Karen Smyth / Council Officers	Derek McCallan / Diane Anderson
Key objectives	<p>Democratic Scrutiny of: Departmental and partner organisation input in relation to climate change mitigation, community mental and physical wellbeing, leisure provision, community safety, regulatory issues, energy efficiency, fuel poverty and to develop regional policy approaches on these and related issues.</p> <p>Monitoring the progress of the relationship between government departments and councils on community, health and environment issues, including relationships with arms-length bodies</p> <p>Oversight of the partnership work between local and central government and partners on delivery of a circular economy and waste management in NI.</p>	<p>To update NILGA's risk register quarterly.</p> <p>To ensure that NILGA's activities are sustainable, compliant and accountable.</p> <p>To ensure that an effective system of internal control is maintained.</p> <p>To develop recommendations regarding NILGA's sustainability in the new electoral period 2019 – 2023.</p> <p>Review and approve plans in relation to external audit.</p> <p>Review NILGA's performance as set out in the Corporate Plan and Annual Report.</p> <p>Review key areas of risk in NILGA's activities and maintain Risk Register.</p> <p>Sanction meetings of All Council CE Pay & Performance Body</p>
Wider Objectives	<p>Building member capacity; design and delivery of regional member development events on relevant issues.</p> <p>Supporting the competency development of elected members in their strategic management and scrutiny roles related to climate change mitigation, community mental and physical wellbeing, leisure provision, community safety, regulatory issues, energy efficiency, fuel poverty and related issues.</p> <p>Design and provision of necessary regional member development events. Assisting in the wider work on the new elected member role and code of conduct. Continued development of a partnership role for local government within an integrated govt approach.</p>	Governance of NILGA – reporting to Executive & aligned to Corporate Plan

Report on	Working Group Meeting Report - Council Representation on Outside Bodies
Date of Meeting	Thursday 5 th December, 2019
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services E Forde, Member Support 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 receive and consider report of the first meeting of the Working Group on Council Representation on Outside Bodies held on Wednesday 6 th November 2019.
2.0	Background
2.1	Policy and Resources Committee previously recommended and Council subsequently resolved that a working group of councillors be established to review, council's representation on outside bodies and on the approach taken to appoint representatives.
2.2	<p>The remit of the Working Group is detailed within its Terms of Reference, extending to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying outside bodies to which council has representation Reviewing continuing need for representation on the identified outside bodies Reviewing appropriateness of the number of representatives on the outside bodies Reviewing continuing need for those bodies, forums and partnerships established and facilitated by Council Reviewing approach taken on filling positions on outside bodies at annual meetings and as they arise Reviewing approach to dealing with 'in-year' requests to nominate to an outside body
2.3	The Working Group Terms of Reference confirms that it shall report to Policy & Resources Committee.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Working Group met on Wednesday 6 th November and a report of this meeting is attached for consideration and approval by the Committee
3.2	<p>Actions agreed by the working group to fulfil its Terms of Reference are contained throughout the meeting report at Appendix A though specific attention is drawn to following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated list of outside bodies indicating those that should be retained as receiving representation; those that should be on the list requiring further information before a decision is taken; and those that should be removed to be brought back to the Working Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the working group give further consideration to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the current method and application of d'Hondt to remain for filling outside bodies for the rest of the current term (i.e. 2019-2023) ▪ applying d'Hondt on a continuous basis at the first AGM of Council in May 2023 ▪ new bodies made known to the council after the AGM should start afresh each time • That the Working Group on Civic Recognition be reconvened to review the existing policy and arrangements • That the status of some of the long standing working groups be considered
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That the committee considers and approves the report of the Working Group on Council Representation on Outside Bodies held on Wednesday 6 th November 2019.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix A - Working Group Meeting Report: Council Representation on Outside Bodies

Working Group Report Council Representation on Outside Bodies

Report of Outside Bodies Working Group meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on *Wednesday 6 November 2019* in *Cookstown* at *5.30pm*

Attendees **Members:** Councillors Cuddy, Clarke, Mallaghan, McGinley, S McPeake, B McGuigan, Quinn
Officers: Head of Democratic Services (P Moffett), Member Support Officer (E Forde)

Apologies Councillor Brown

AGENDA	MATTERS AGREED	ACTIONS & RESPONSIBILITY
1.0	Working Group Report 9th October 2019	
	<p>Members noted the report</p> <p>It was AGREED to keep the date of the next meeting as scheduled for Thursday 5th December 2019 5.30pm with the location being Magherafelt to coincide with the December Committees</p> <p>It was NOTED with the exception of Clogher Valley and Moyola District Electoral Areas (DEAs) all areas had a Town Centre Forum in place to feed into</p>	
2.0	Consideration on Outside bodies	
	<p>P Moffett referred to the updated list of Outside Bodies together with ‘data collection returns’ from each. The Groups view/consensus on the continuance of representation on each was noted. It was AGREED that changes to documentation to be reflected and reported to next meeting.</p> <p>It was AGREED that the updated documentation/report of the list of bodies to be forwarded to Members for consideration</p>	Head of Democratic Services
3.0	Assessment of how D’hondt is applied: existing and other methods	
	Members discussed application of d’hondt and how it relates to Mid Ulster District Council	

	<p>It was AGREED that consideration be given to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The Working Group recommends that current method and application of d'Hondt remain for filling Outside Bodies for the rest of the Council term (i.e. 2019-2023) 2 D'hondt applied should be applied on a continuous basis at the first AGM of Mid Ulster District Council in May 2023 3 However, if any new bodies are added/made known to the Council then the d'Hondt calculation should start afresh each time a request is made to fill an 'outside body' 	Head of Democratic Services
4.0	Working Groups Established by Committees and Council	
	<p>P Moffett referred Members to, for information, the existing Working Groups established by Committees and Council</p> <p>It was AGREED that consideration be given to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 All Working Groups being set up on a 'task and finish' basis to have either five or ten members agreed through d'hondt 2 Reorienting some of the Working Groups to a different 'sub-committee' type status given their continuing purpose within the Council. The Elected Member Development Group, Good Relations and Regional & Minority Languages were, for example, cited 3 The Working Group on Civic Recognition reconvening in the New Year to consider the existing policy arrangements on basis that it's due for revision by April 2020. It was noted that consideration should be given to one awards night per annum with pre-determined categories 4 Looking at the future of current working groups moving forward and their status as part of council business (linked to 2 above) 	Head of Democratic Services
	Meeting ended at 6.47pm	

Report on	Council Performance Improvement Policy (draft)
Date of Meeting	Thursday 5 th December 2019
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	The purpose of the report is to seek approval from elected members on the draft Council's Performance Improvement Policy
2.0	Background
2.1	The Council is committed to ensuring continuous improvement in the delivery of its services and this draft policy further ensures Councils commitment to compliance with the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.
2.2.	The Northern Ireland Audit Office in relation to proposals for improvement suggested in addition to Council's current performance management framework that, <i>"Given the statutory nature of the framework, expand upon the current corporate performance management framework to develop a performance improvement policy. Whilst this is not a statutory requirement we would regard this as good practice"</i> .
2.3	<p>"Improvement" in the context of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 means more than just quantifiable gains in the output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the Council. Improvement for Mid Ulster District Council 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". As the Council's arrangements for meeting its responsibilities under the Performance duty have matured, a Performance Improvement Policy has now been developed to complement the performance management framework.</p>

3.0	Main Report
3.1	The aim of the policy is to describe how Council will implement its responsibilities under the Performance Duty as set out in part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (The Act) and how performance management and improvement will be embedded across the Council and align with the strategic planning and performance management frameworks. Further detail is provided in Appendix One – Draft Performance Improvement Policy
3.2	<p>The objectives of the policy signifies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Council will embed 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.
3.3	This policy is linked to the Corporate Theme of “Delivering for Our People” under priority 1.6, <i>“Integration of a culture of service improvement as the key to service delivery”</i> .
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: not applicable, arrangements being delivered within existing resource
	Human: not applicable, arrangements being delivered within existing resource
	Risk Management: Will assist in council's compliance with Part 12 of the Local Government Act 2014

4.2	<u>Screening & Impact Statements</u>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Screened no impact or mitigating actions required
	Rural Needs Implications: Screened - No impact or mitigating actions required
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that the committee approved the draft performance Improvement Policy as detailed as part of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix One – Draft Performance Improvement Policy

Performance Improvement Policy (draft 05-12-19)

Document Control			
Policy Owner	Head of Democratic Services		
Policy Author	Performance & Quality Officer		
Version	Final (draft)		
Consultation	Senior Management Team	Yes / No	
	Trade Unions	Yes / No	
Equality Screened by	<u>Yes</u> / No	Date	01/08/19
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes or <u>No</u> or N/A	Date	01/08/19
Good Relations	Yes or <u>No</u> or N/A		01/08/19
Approved By	(Awaiting P & R approval)	Date	December
Adopted By	Council	Date	
Review Date	01/01/21	By Whom	Performance & Quality Officer
Circulation	(Insert) e.g. Councillors, Staff, Intranet		
Document Linkages	A Guide to Developing , Engaging and Performing at Mid Ulster District Council		

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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

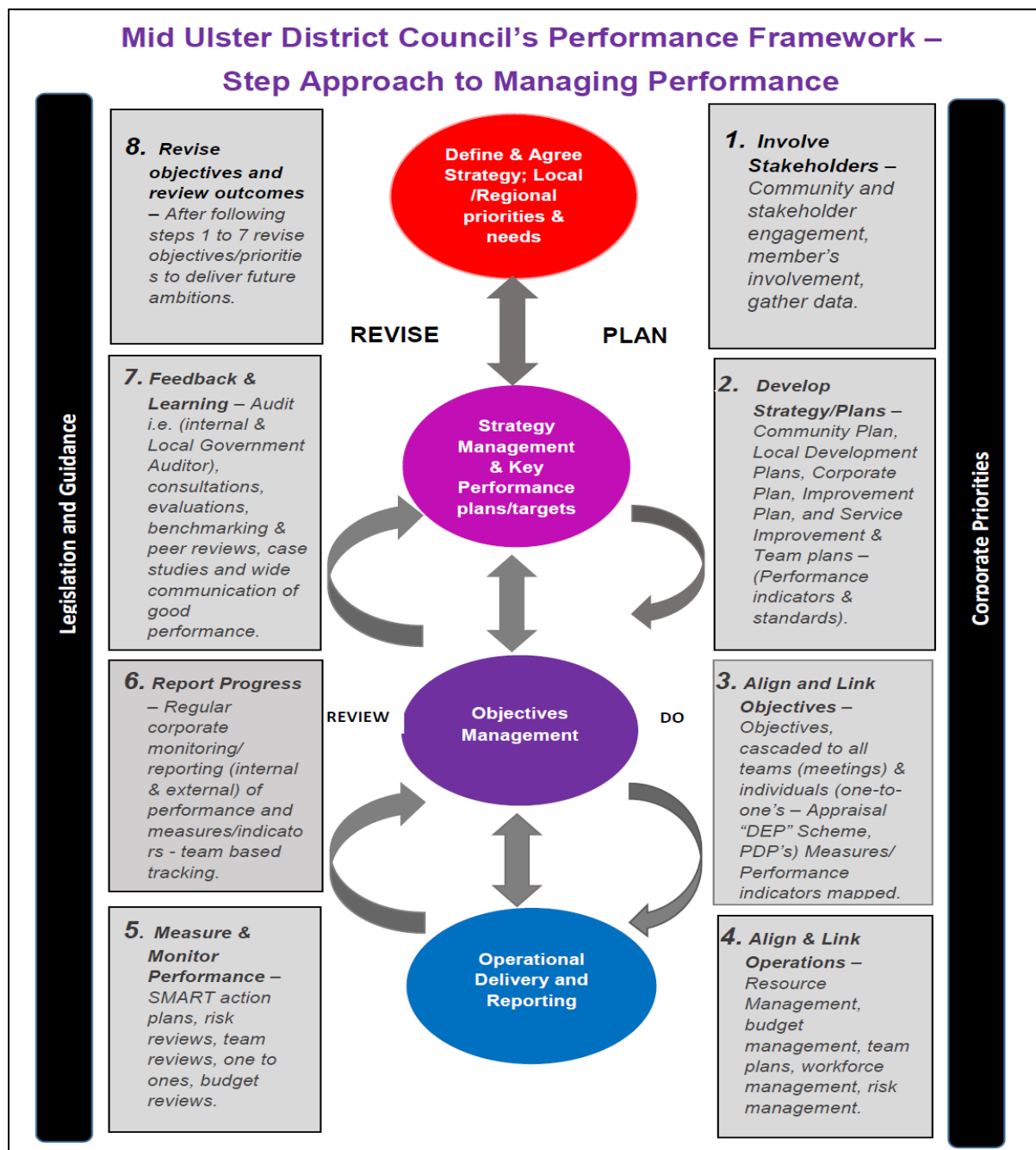
This policy reflects the organisations values. Our Values influence everything that we do and how we interact and shape our community, they impact our priorities and focus for the future and help form our key targets for improvement. Our values demonstrate that how we work to deliver our priorities is 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.

Report on	Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan
Date of Meeting	Thursday 5 th December 2019
Reporting Officer	Head of Parks
Contact Officer	Nigel Hill

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 seek Member approval for the recommendation from Development Committee for capital budget allocation associated with the Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan.
2.0	Background
2.1	Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI) was commissioned in November 2016 to prepare a Public Park and Play Strategy for Mid Ulster District Council area (MUDC) that will provide direction for the management and development of facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources, and investment over the period 2020-2025 within the Mid Ulster District Council area. MUDC park estate boasts over 100 public park/play facilities across the Council area ranging from small equipped areas for play, Multi Use Game Areas (MUGAs) to parkland of 70 acres in size. In assessing the park locations, the spatial distribution is an important factor. While a higher concentration of park/play facilities are located in the larger towns and settlements, some areas within Council are over provided for while others experience provision to a lesser extent.
2.2	The draft Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan was presented to committee in June 2018. Members requested that further consultation be undertaken. Additional workshop information sessions were held on for members participation from which contributions were collected and factored in to the current plan. The Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan was presented again to Committee again in September 2018. Members deferred approval requesting an extension for further consultation. Additional one to one consultations were made available to members in October and November 2018. Amendments, as agreed were factored into the final draft, which was presented to November 2019 Development Committee where it was approved.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The adopted strategy will provide direction for managing and developing parks and play facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources, and investment over a projected 5 year period 2020 – 2025. The Strategic Plan process has assessed the status of parks and play within the Council area and proposes a direction that reflects the Corporate Priorities of the Council and needs of the community.
3.2	A programme of works setting out the recommendations for each of the 102 public park/play park locations has been identified. The five year strategy has a projected average spend of £250,000 per annum, a total cost of £1,250,000. The Rural

3.3	<p>Development Programme (RDP) will contribute an additional £1,103,839 of funding over the period of the strategy across 19 sites. A further contribution of £300,000 from Peace IV will provide a combined strategy expenditure of £2,653,839 for identified for Parks and Play projects across Mid Ulster District Council to the end of 2025.</p> <p>The strategy will be reviewed in year three to assess progress on its objectives. This Public Parks and Play Strategy for the Mid Ulster Council area sets out a strategic framework for the next five years in order to help reposition the parks and play provision within the Council. It will help improve co-ordination, collaboration, capacity and the Councils' capability to meet the current and future challenges in a way that maximises opportunities, benefits, investment and resources. In addition, it will help consolidate into one joined up Plan previous pieces of work undertaken by the legacy Councils.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan will require council resourcing for the period of the programme that equates to £1,250,000 (excluding external funding streams) over a five year period as scheduled in the action plan. The Parks and Play Strategy may be subject to variables associated to opportunities of external funding that may enhance or change the delivery objectives over the life of the strategy.</p> <p>Human:</p> <p>Current staff structure sufficient to deliver on Parks and Play Strategic Plan in conjunction with the appointment of appropriately qualified and experienced consultancy (ICT) and supply team (IST).</p> <p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The strategic plan will be managed and monitored by the Parks Services in line with Council's risk management governance procedures</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>An extensive process of consultation was carried out with individual Council Officers, Council elected members, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), public and statutory agencies, children's day-care providers, youth centres, community associations and groups, sporting clubs and the general public.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>In line with the Mid Ulster Council Community Plan, one the 15 outcomes is to 'give our children and young people the best chance in life'¹. Within this Strategy, it is the aim of Council to address this deficiency and ensure citizens of all abilities are adequately provided for across rural and urban areas</p>

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members approval is sought to approve the recommendation from Development Committee for the allocation of £1,250,000 funding from Council Capital Budget, over a five year period from April 2020, for the delivery of the Parks and Play Five Year action plan subject to inclusion in the rates estimates.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	None.

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 7 November 2019 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

Members Present

Councillor Molloy, Chair

Councillors Ashton, Buchanan, Colvin, Doris, Elattar, Forde (7.02 pm), Hughes, McFlynn, S McGuigan, McKinney, McLean, S McPeake

Officers in Attendance

Mr A Tohill, Chief Executive
Mrs Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
Mrs Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Mr O'Hagan, Head of IT
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Ms Mezza, Head of Marketing and Communications
Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance
Mr Scullion, Head of Property Services
Mrs Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

PR186/19 Apologies

Councillors Gildernew, Totten, Quinn.

PR187/19 Declaration of Interest

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

PR188/19 Chair's Business

No issues.

Matters for Decision

PR189/19 Working Group Meeting Group – Council Representation on Outside Bodies

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report to ask for members consideration regarding the first meeting of the Working Group on Council on Outside Bodies held on Wednesday 9 October 2019.

Councillor Forde entered the meeting at 7.02 pm.

Proposed by Councillor McPeake
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the report of the Working Group on Council Representation on Outside Bodies held on Wednesday 9 October 2019.

PR190/19 Member Support on Member IT Allocation

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report to seek consideration regarding the provision of IT equipment and allocations for each category IT provision.

Councillor Ashton referred to £12,000 in this Council term to accommodate additional digital requirements and enquired how much the actual cost was going to be within the next two years.

The Head of Democratic Services advised that no figures were available on the total costings for the next two years.

The Head of ICT advised that pressures were already being incurred due to the allocation of equipment for new members and legacy councillors having issues with devices which were outdated and unfit for purpose.

Councillor Colvin enquired how this Council benchmarked compared to other Councils.

The Head of ICT said that this Council was quite accommodating compared to some other Councils and that the Democratic Services team were constantly reviewing and keeping things running efficiently.

Councillor McKinney said that some IT equipment were coming to the end of their term but that not all Councillors would be requiring equipment.

The Head of IT said that he would encourage Councillors to avail of the allocation for equipment as the volume of papers which was now being distributed needed appropriate storage, capacity and speed which older equipment may struggle with.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the:

- Revised IT allocations, wording and monetary limits.
- Necessary release of monies from Council reserves to accommodate additional digital requirements within the current Council Term, noting that the first six months has been £12,000.

PR191/19 Report of Elected Member Development Working Group

The Head of Democratic Service presented previously circulated report to ask for members consideration regarding the meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group held on Thursday 3 October 2019.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the report of the Elected Member Development Steering Group meeting held on Thursday 3 October 2019.

PR192/19 Council Meeting December 2019

The Chief Executive presented previously circulated report and sought members approval to move the date of the Council meeting in December 2019 to avoid a clash with the General Election.

Proposed by Councillor Ashton
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to move the date of the December Council meeting to Monday 16 December 2019 at 7pm in Dungannon.

PR193/19 Corporate Plan 2020-2024: Draft Report for Public Consultation

The Head of Marketing and Communications presented previously circulated report to provide a draft Corporate Plan for members consideration and agreement in advance of a period of public consultation beginning on 11 November 2019.

Councillor Doris left the meeting at 7.13 pm and returned at 7.14 pm.

Councillor S McPeake said that it was a good report but would have concerns regarding the terminology “Customer-focussed” and asked that consideration be given to rephrasing the term to something more appealing like “Citizen-focussed”.

Proposed by Councillor Colvin
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that the agreed draft Corporate Plan Consultation Report proceed now to public consultation.

PR194/19 Member Services

No issues.

Matters for Information

PR195/19 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 3 October 2019

Members noted Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 3 October 2019.

PR196/19 Corporate Health Indicators: 2019-20 (Q1-Q2)

Members noted report on Corporate Health Indicators: 2019-20 (Q1-Q2).

PR197/19 Performance Improvement Update: Six Month (Q1-Q2) 2019-20

Members noted report on Performance Improvement Update: Six Month (Q1-Q2) 2019-20.

PR198/19 2019 Election Costs

Members noted report on 2019 Election Costs.

Councillor Ashton enquired about expenditure of £64,500 showing for election literature.

The Chief Executive responded to confirm that the expenditure showing was for literature delivered by Royal Mail available to all election candidates. He drew members attention to the election being delivered considerably below the set expenditure threshold, the fact the Count was concluded over one day being contributory factor in this.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Colvin

Seconded by Councillor McFlynn 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 Members consider items PR199/19 to PR212/19.

Matters for Decision

- PR199/19 Land Acquisitions and Disposals
- PR200/19 Request for funding to undertake Asbestos Removal and Appointment of a Licenced Asbestos Contractor
- PR201/19 Staffing Matters for Decision
- PR202/19 Transforming the Delivery of Leisure Services in Mid Ulster District Council
- PR203/19 Request that Council contribute the cost of Air Ambulance on recurrent basis

PR204/19 2020/21 Rate Estimates
PR205/19 Business Rates Collection
PR206/19 Amendments to Senior Staff Structure

Matters for Information

PR207/19 Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee
held on Thursday 3 October 2019
PR208/19 Staff Matters for Information
PR209/19 Planning System Replacement Update
PR210/19 Contracts and DAC
PR211/19 Financial Report for 6 months ended 30 September 2019

PR212/19 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.30 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Report on	Marketing & Communications Update
Date of Meeting	5 December 2019
Reporting Officer	Ursula Mezza
Contact Officer	Ursula Mezza

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	The report provides an update on key areas of recent marketing and communications activity.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Marketing & Communications service works corporately as well as across departments and services, to develop and deliver effective external and internal marketing and communications activity which supports the Council's vision, values and strategic direction.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The update report records core activity levels and key areas of recent work undertaken by the Marketing and Communications service and covers the period September to December 2019.
3.2	In the period under consideration, the service has supported 9 strategic events in October and November, with pre-event campaigns and live social media coverage at each.
3.3	The 16 page residents' magazine, Insight, was drafted, edited, designed and distributed to 55,000 homes w/c 11 November 2019.
3.4	Communications planning and delivery has taken place for the launch of Connecting Pomeroy and for Enterprise Week, while work is ongoing to prepare for the roll-out of the cemetery memorial testing programme.
3.5	Brand development for the Davagh Dark Skies has progressed with a new name for the facility and work to develop a web site for the facility has also commenced.
3.6	The service's digital approach continues at a pace, with the performance of the new web site outstripping that of the old platform and the successful launch of an Instagram channel extending our social presence and reach.

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: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That the Committee notes the report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Marketing & Communications Update

Marketing & Communications Update

Summary

This update relates to the 3 month period from September 2019 to November 2019.

- The service's digital focus has continued with the launch of a new Instagram account in September 2019, the development of a suite of new explainer videos for internal and external use and the issue of our first E-newsletters. Performance of the new web site continues to outstrip that of the old platform.
- The service has supported/is currently supporting 9 strategic events in October and November, with pre-event promotional campaigns and live social media coverage.
- The 16 page residents' magazine, Insight, was drafted, edited, designed and distributed to 55,000 homes w/c 11 November 2019.
- Communications plans have been developed and delivered for Connecting Pomeroy (launched 17 October 2019) and Enterprise Week (18 – 22 November 2019) as well as for a range of leisure campaigns. Work to support the cemetery memorial testing programme has also been on-going during the period.
- Brand development for the Davagh Dark Skies has progressed, with a new name for the facility now agreed and landmark development underway. Web development has also begun.
- Development of the new draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 was also facilitated and the plan is now out for public consultation.
- Core activities in terms of general departmental and service communications, speech-writing and the management of media enquiries have continued.

Digital

Web Site

The new web site continues to perform very well, with the customer-focussed structure and simpler, more intuitive navigation demonstrating significant rises in use.

A continued approach to digital first communications will prioritise driving traffic to our website through social media and email marketing.

The service has encouraged other services to focus on a more digital approach to their marketing and communications. A recent Restart a Heart campaign, which traditionally relied on 'sign up' over the telephone during office hours, had an online form developed which allowed users to 'sign up' at any time. Feedback from the Environmental Health team praised the development of the new form, its ease of use both internally and externally and the number of people signing up online.

- Analytics show that:
 - Web traffic has increased by over 76,000 over the same period last year, with more than 446,955 page views from 5 August – 19 November 2019.
 - Leisure and bins remain the most visited pages on our website, however a digital first approach to the promotion of Enterprise Week knocked bins from its traditional second spot.
 - Web traffic to the main leisure page has increased significantly. Over the same period last year 5 August – 19 November 2018 there were 5,672 page views compared to 24,713 page views since the new website and structure went live. That is an increase in web traffic of 19,041 or over 300%.
 - a reskin of the CMIS site is now complete, with a consistent look now established.

E-Newsletter

The new web site includes a 'sign up' button to receive further information and has attracted over 650 subscribers to date.

The first E-newsletter was issued to support promotion of Halloween activities and the second focussed on the first Mid Ulster Enterprise Week.

Instagram

Instagram is the latest addition to our social media channels and is a departure in terms of content and style for our communications, appealing to a younger demographic in a more informal way.

The channel was launched in mid-September and followers have been building steadily, now standing at over 1,000.

Only 3 other councils here are using Instagram and comparatively, given number of posts and length of time the accounts have been operational, our follower numbers and overall performance in terms of content are solid (Belfast BC 12.9K, Ards and North Down 3,098K, Mid and East Antrim 2,383K).

Instagram and Facebook are now our channels of choice for consumer-facing event promotion.

Explainer Videos

A series of 6 explainer videos (short 30-60 second animated videos) have now been developed, with a mix of internal and external audiences.

The first issued to support Enterprise Week, with a further 2 for recycling and online services in the external category.

GDPR, social media policy and the benefits of working for the Council feature in the 3 internally-focussed videos.

Event Marketing & Promotion

October and November are traditionally dominated by strategic corporate events and 2019 was no different, with 9 events supported by the service.

- *Saturday 26 October: Halloween at MUSA*
- *Wednesday 30 October: Halloween Dungannon*
- *Thursday 31 October: Halloween Maghera*
- *Thursday 31 October: Halloween Coalisland*
- *Friday 22 November: Cookstown Switch-on*
- *Friday 22 November: Dungannon Switch-on*
- *Saturday 23 November: Magherafelt Market & Switch-on*
- *Sunday 24 November: remote support for Dungannon and Magherafelt events*
- *Saturday 30 November: Maghera Switch-on*
- *Sunday 1 December: Coalisland Switch-on*

Each has required pre-event promotional activity on and off line, together with on the ground delivery of social media content plans live at each event. Evaluations of the events are being completed and will be shared at a review meeting with various event-owners.

Direct Communication: Residents' Magazine

The winter issue of Insight, the residents' magazine, was distributed to 55,000 homes in Mid Ulster w/b 11 November 2019.

The publication is now a standard 16 pages and the latest issue included:

- Investment pieces on Coalisland Public Realm, Leisure (spin studios, Dungannon LC refurbishment)
- Davagh Dark Skies Telescope
- Plastics recycling
- Christmas events, parking and shop local drive
- Enterprise Week
- Litter
- Connecting Pomeroy
- Accessibility.

Davagh Dark Skies

Pre-opening promotional activity around the new project continues, highlighting construction milestones and new developments (e.g. telescope feature in resident's magazine and on social media, the latter drawing significant positive engagement and highlighting the level of interest which exists in the new facility at Davagh).

The first stage of the brand development process has completed and presentation of the facility's new name was presented to the Development Committee in November.

The development of the facility's new web site has now to begin following a procurement exercise, and is being led by the service's Design and Digital Media Officer.

Communications Planning

Marketing and Communications' plans have been developed and delivered for:

- The official launch of Connecting Pomeroy on 17 October, including the creation of key messaging, the design of a visual identity for the project, associated artwork, development of a video in-house to support the launch and as the first of a 'before and after' library of footage, PR and social media content planning and delivery on the launch evening.
- Enterprise Week which has been heavily supported from delivery of scripts and production of radio ads, creation of web site content, securing of outdoor media, PR activity, speech-writing and messaging and, most notably, the development of substantial content for social media channels. The Enterprise Week web page was the 2nd most visited page on our web site during the campaign, relegating both bins which is consistently at the top 'most visited' list.
- A range of leisure-focussed campaigns, including:
 - Investment in new fitness studio at Cookstown Leisure Centre
 - On-going support for the new spin studios
 - Disabled parking campaign at MUSA.

A programme of cemetery memorial testing is due to commence in January 2020 and the service has been working closely with the cemetery team to refine the narrative and approach to the programme, reflecting the sensitivity of this area of work.

Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024

Facilitation of the process to develop the new draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 took place across September and October and the draft plan for consultation was written and presented for approval to proceed to public consultation in November.

Coordination of consultation is now on-going until 10 January 2020.

General communications support continues to be provided across departments and services, encompassing a wide range of projects and issues. In the period under consideration, the recycling campaign delivery with its focus on plastics, has been prominent.

Core Service Activity Levels

News releases issued in September and October 2019.

Note: news releases are not an end in themselves and are often simply the core script. Further creative content and messaging evolves to suit different audiences and translates into activity across channels.

	No issued	Breakdown by service area:
September 2019	12	Environmental Services 3; Events 2; Economic Development 2; Environmental Health 2; Parks 1; Council General 1; Arts & Culture 1
October 2019	15	Events 6; Economic Development 3; Environmental Services 3;; Environmental Health 2; Parks 1; Council General 1; Arts & Culture 1

Media Enquiries

	No received	No answered in 4hrs	Fastest response time	Slowest response time	Top Topic(s)	Top Source(s)
Sept 2019	30	19	5mins	6days 3hrs 51mins	Planning 6	Dunganon Herald 9; Tyrone Courier 9
Oct 2019	15	7	19mins	15hrs 24mins	No significant topic	BBC 4; Mid Ulster Mail 3

Ursula Mezza
20 November 2019

