



13 January 2021

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to be held in  
The Chamber, Magherafelt and by virtual means Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6EN on Wednesday, 13 January 2021 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

In accordance with the spirit of the recent COVID restriction, Members are strongly encouraged to join virtually as the preferred option. Should you need to attend in person then provision will be made at the Council Offices, Magherafelt. Please notify Democratic Services in advance if this is the case.

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

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh  
Chief Executive

---

## AGENDA

### OPEN BUSINESS

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

### Matters for Decision

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 4. | Ballyronan Wood - DAERA: Environmental Challenge Fund 2020/2021 | 3 - 4   |
| 5. | Response (draft) on Consultation for a Bill of Rights for NI    | 5 - 24  |
| 6. | Policy on Room Hire - draft                                     | 25 - 56 |
| 7. | Member Audio Device Management for Remote Working               | 57 - 60 |
| 8. | Member Services   |         |

### Matters for Information

9	Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 3 December 2020	61 - 64
10	Marketing and Communications Update	65 - 72

**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

11. Staffing Matters - On Call Cemetery Cover for Weekends and Bank Holidays
12. Staff Matters for Decision
13. DFI Active Travel Projects - Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme
14. Peace IV Shared Space
15. Land Acquisitions & Disposals
16. Full Fibre NI
17. Tender Report - Software Licensing Agreement
18. 2021/22 Rate Estimates
19. Consultation Response on Proposed NILGOSC Pensions Reform

Matters for Information

20. Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 3 December 2020
21. Staff Matters for Information
22. Contracts and DAC
23. Financial report for 8 months ended 30 November 2020

<b>Report on</b>	Ballyronan Wood DAERA: Environmental Challenge Fund 2020/2021
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 13 January 2020
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	N Hill Head of Parks
<b>Contact Officer</b>	A Reid Parks & Countryside Development Officer

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To seek Council approval for Match Funding for offer from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs: Environment Challenge Competition 2020/21, successful application for the redevelopment of Ballyronan Wood and approve the allocation of match funding for the proposed project.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Ballyronan Marina & Caravan Park is due to undergo extensive refurbishment this year. This has been made possible from funding secured from Rural Development Programme. These refurbishments will provide significant improvements to visitor reception and existing children's play facilities, public trails and walkways, vehicular access entrance and car parking on the site. The introduction of floating houseboat accommodation units and improvements to existing jetties and slipways will form part of the proposed refurbishment works at Ballyronan marina.
2.2	Further to this development, there has been a requirement to develop Ballyronan Wood within the site. The woodland walk was first created in the early 1980s and since there has undergone minor repairs. The woodland walk is prone to seasonal closures due to flooding, given its close proximity to the Lough.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	In July 2020, an application was made to DAERA: Environment Challenge Competition 2020/21 to redevelop the woodland within Ballyronan as a quality off road multi-use 1km trail. The project plans has a long-term aim to link Ballyronan with TRAAD point, as land access and funding opportunities are identified.
3.2	Ballyronan Wood is Phase 1 in this long-term project. It is envisaged that at the start of the trail there will be an interpretation panel depicting the flora & fauna of the area. The trail will be way-marked, and eco-plastic boardwalk in sections where

3.3	flooding is prevalent. The trail will have bench seating and artwork throughout. The woodland will also contain bird and bat boxes.
3.4	<p>The total cost of the project is £81,000.00. The application to DAREA has been successful and a letter of offer has been awarded to Council for £40,500. This is to cover 50% of the funding required to see the project to completion.</p> <p>It is proposed to source match funding from the Council's Outdoor Recreation Capital Programme. The redevelopment of Ballyronan Wood will significantly enhance and compliment the current Ballyronan Development Project.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p>Financial: DAERA: Environment Challenge Competition 2020/21 Secured funding £40,500 (50%) MUDC contribution £40,500 (Outdoor Recreation Capital Programme)</p>
	Human: Existing staff resources sufficient to coordinate project support. No additional staffing resource required.
	Risk Management: In conjunction with Council policies and procedures.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: In conjunction with Council policies and procedures.
	Rural Needs Implications: In conjunction with Council policies and procedures.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members approval is sought for the allocation of match funding £40,500 to the Ballyronan Wood redevelopment from Council's Capital Programme budget allocations as part of the Councils Outdoor Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	N/A

<b>Report on</b>	Response (draft) on Consultation for a Bill of Rights for NI
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Ann McAleer, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide and seek input from members on the draft consultation response developed in response to the Consultation on the Creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, and seek their comment and approval.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Members were notified of the above consultation at their December Council meeting held on 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 and it was subsequently agreed that a draft response be developed and considered by the relevant committee before the deadline for submissions on 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2021.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	An Ad Hoc NI Assembly Committee on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland has been established. The Committee is tasked with considering the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. That includes looking at why Northern Ireland does not have one, if there should have one and if one is needed.
3.2	The Committee launched a public consultation seeking views and to understand opinion on the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. A draft response is attached as appendix A to this report. The survey received by Council is attached as appendix B, for background purposes.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A

<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None
	Rural Needs Implications: None
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That members consider, provide comment as necessary and approve the draft response to the NI Assembly's Ad-hoc Committee consultation on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	Appendix A: Response (draft) to consultation on Creation of a Bill of Rights for NI
	Appendix B: The Bill of Rights Survey

**DRAFT Response: Committee Consideration**

Communications Office  
Room B4  
Parliament Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

13 January 2020

To whom it may concern:

**Re: Consultation on the Creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland**

Mid Ulster District Council would like to take this opportunity to put forward its views and opinions in relation to the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. The Council understands that this current consultation is as a result of the implementation of the New Decade New Approach Agreement. However, the creation and delivery of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland is also, a so far undelivered, aspect of the Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement. As such, while the Council welcomes progress in relation to progressing this aspect of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, the Council would hope that the process of developing and implementing a Bill of Rights is completed within the current term of the Assembly's mandate.

**Views on Human Rights**

In relation as to whether or not everyone in Northern Ireland enjoys the same human rights, it is clear from documented research, that this is currently not the case. Evidence shows that there are varying levels of access to services across society. In addition, there are specific human rights issues in relation to members of the BME (Black Minority Ethnic) community, the elderly, and people who are living in poverty.

While it may not be the intention to discriminate against people in these social groupings, nevertheless representatives of people in these social groupings report that, in practice, people can find it difficult to access the same rights as everyone and this can be for various reasons.

## **Protections**

Regarding the groupings of people who may require more protection for their human rights, some groups of people are disproportionately impacted upon by deprivation, access to services, access to healthcare and secure employment. This issue has been highlighted recently by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the highest death rates being linked to areas of social deprivation. Therefore there is an argument to suggest that some people in Northern Ireland may need more protection of their human rights than others for an abundance of reasons; possibly including age, whether or not a person has a disability, their ethnic grouping and gender. However any protections should be rights based and equitable and provide a balanced approach.

## **Values**

The Council would support the inclusion of values as stated within the consultation documentation. However, an emphasis should be placed on the actual rights provision itself, rather than focusing on values that can be hard to measure, support and implement. Overall the values of any Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland should embed fairness and equality deliver via a documented rights based agenda.

## **Bill of Rights Contents**

The Council would class the development and implementation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland as very important. Whilst the concept of developing an 'aspirational vision' may be useful for the development of a Bill of Rights, Mid Ulster District Council would promote the development of concrete rights, which seem real and can be used and more readily implemented, this should include civil and political rights that are based on fairness, equality and respect.

In relation to the inclusion of social, economic and cultural rights and the right to a healthy environment the Council takes the view that the inclusion of these rights are important and a must for any society, and should also be fully included in a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.



There are numerous examples of good practice of internal standards which should be considered and replicated, where appropriate, for Northern Ireland. This includes the EU Charter of Human Rights which provides twelve civil and political rights including the right to life; the prohibition of torture; the right to liberty and security; the right to a fair trial; the right to respect for private and family life; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; and freedom of expression.

The Council welcomes the chance to provide into as part of this consultation process and awaits the outcome, bringing the finalisation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland a step closer.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor Cathal Mallaghan**  
**Chair**

# Have your say: Human Rights in Northern Ireland

## Consultation on the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

This consultation was set up by the Northern Ireland Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights. The Committee wants to hear your views and understand how you feel about the creation of a Bill of Rights in Northern Ireland.

### Why was the Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights set up?

The Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights was set up following the New Decade, New Approach Agreement in early 2020. The Committee is tasked with considering the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. That includes looking at the implications of a Bill of Rights here and what rights it might include. The Committee has discussed and received briefings from a wide range of stakeholders and experts in human rights in recent months, but a crucial part of its evidence-gathering is listening to those who are directly affected – you.

### What is the consultation about?

This consultation is about the Committee getting your views, listening to what you think and taking on board how you feel about the creation of a Bill of Rights in Northern Ireland. The results of the consultation will provide valuable information to the Committee and help inform its forward work programme. The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. If you choose to provide contact details, so you are kept informed of the Committee's work, these details will not be linked to your responses.

### Why should I get involved?

This is your chance to say what you think and how you feel. Your views and opinions are as important as anyone's. To get an understanding of what people who live here think about the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, we need to hear from lots of different people. By getting involved you'll help to ensure that the Committee's report is reflective of society across Northern Ireland.

### How do I get involved?

You can complete the consultation survey attached.

## Appendix B

### Complete our survey

This short survey should take less than ten minutes to complete. The results will provide valuable information to the Committee.

The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. If you choose to provide contact details they will not be linked to your responses.

#### 1. Views on Human Rights

This first set of questions looks at your general view on human rights.

**a. To what extent do you agree that everyone in Northern Ireland today enjoys the same basic human rights?**

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Agree                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. Disagree                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. Strongly disagree          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. Don't know                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**b. Why do you feel this way?**

## Appendix B

### 2. Protections

**In your view, do people in Northern Ireland need more protection for their human rights in relation to any of the following areas?**

Choose as many as you like.

- A. Age ☐
- B. Caring responsibilities ☐
- C. Community background ☐
- D. Criminal record ☐
- E. Cultural background ☐
- F. Disability ☐
- G. Economic status or income ☐
- H. Ethnic group ☐
- I. Family or civil status ☐
- J. Gender ☐
- K. Health status ☐
- L. Language ☐
- M. National identity ☐
- N. Political or other opinion ☐
- O. Pregnancy and maternity ☐
- P. Property ☐
- Q. Religion or belief ☐
- R. Sexual orientation ☐
- S. Don't know ☐
- T. None of the above ☐
- U. Other ☐

If you selected 'Other', please let us know what other areas you think should be included:

## Appendix B

### 3. Values

**In your view, which of the following values, if any, would make appropriate foundations for rights in Northern Ireland?**

Choose as many as you like.

- A. Community ☐
- B. Human dignity (everyone deserves respect) ☐
- C. Fairness ☐
- D. Freedom and democracy ☐
- E. Justice ☐
- F. Mutual respect (respect for each other) ☐
- G. Parity of esteem (valuing all traditions equally) ☐
- H. Respect for culture, identity, traditions and aspirations ☐
- I. Peace and reconciliation ☐
- J. Don't know ☐
- K. Other ☐

If you selected 'Other', please let us know what other foundations you think should be included:

--

## Appendix B

### 4. Bill of Rights

Human rights are freedoms and protections belonging to everyone. A bill of rights contains human rights protections for everyone - it is a list of the laws a country agrees to make to protect all the people who live there.

**a. How important, if at all, do you think a bill of rights is for Northern Ireland?**

- A. Very Important ☐
- B. Important ☐
- C. Moderately important ☐
- D. Slightly important ☐
- E. Not important at all ☐
- F. Don't know ☐

**b. To what extent, if at all, do you agree that a bill of rights for Northern Ireland should set out an aspirational vision based on guiding or foundational values?**

- A. Strongly agree ☐
- B. Agree ☐
- C. Neither agree nor disagree ☐
- D. Disagree ☐
- E. Strongly disagree ☐
- F. Don't know ☐

## Appendix B

**c. Civil and political rights can include freedom from discrimination; the right to privacy; freedom of expression, assembly, religion and movement; and the right to a fair trial. To what extent, if at all, do you agree that a bill of rights for Northern Ireland should include civil and political rights?**

- A. Strongly agree ☐
- B. Agree ☐
- C. Neither agree nor disagree ☐
- D. Disagree ☐
- E. Strongly disagree ☐
- F. Don't know ☐

**d. What, if any, political and civil rights would you like to see in a bill of rights for Northern Ireland?**

## Appendix B

**e. Social and economic and cultural rights can include rights around standards of living, health, social security, victims, education and language. To what extent, if at all, do you agree that a bill of rights for Northern Ireland should include social, economic and cultural rights?**

- A. Strongly agree ☐
- B. Agree ☐
- C. Neither agree nor disagree ☐
- D. Disagree ☐
- E. Strongly disagree ☐
- F. Don't know ☐

**f. What, if any, social, economic and cultural rights would you like to see in a bill of rights for Northern Ireland?**



## Appendix B

**g. To what extent, if at all, do you agree that a bill of rights for Northern Ireland should include the right to a healthy environment?**

- A. Strongly agree ☐
- B. Agree ☐
- C. Neither agree nor disagree ☐
- D. Disagree ☐
- E. Strongly disagree ☐
- F. Don't know ☐

**h. Do you have any other comments?**

## Appendix B

### 5. About You - Section 75

This section contains Section 75 questions. These questions allow us to ensure that we are carrying out our work with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations in respect of religious belief, political opinion, gender, race, disability, age, marital status, dependants and sexual orientation.

You do not need to complete this section but the more information we can collect the better we are able to monitor our responses.

All information will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. If you choose to provide contact details they will not be linked to your responses.

**Only complete this section if you are happy to answer the Section 75 questions.**

#### **a. What is your gender?**

- A. Female ☐
- B. Male ☐
- C. Prefer not to say ☐

#### **b. Age Group**

- A. Under 18 ☐
- B. 18 - 24 ☐
- C. 25 - 34 ☐
- D. 35 - 44 ☐
- E. 45 - 54 ☐
- F. 55 - 64 ☐
- G. Over 65 ☐
- H. Prefer not to say ☐

## Appendix B

### c. How would you describe your national identity?

Choose as many as you like

- A. British ☐
- B. Irish ☐
- C. Northern Irish ☐
- D. English ☐
- E. Scottish ☐
- F. Welsh ☐
- G. Prefer not to say ☐
- H. Other ☐

If you selected 'Other', please let us know how you would describe your national identity:

## Appendix B

### d. What is your ethnic group?

Select one only.

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| A. White              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Chinese            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. Irish Traveller    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. Roma               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. Indian             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. Filipino           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. Black African      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. Black Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. Mixed ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. Prefer not to say  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K. Other              | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you selected 'Other', please let us know your ethnic group:

--

## Appendix B

### e. Religious Belief

- A. Protestant ☐
- B. Roman Catholic ☐
- C. Other Christian ☐
- D. No religious belief ☐
- E. Prefer not to say ☐
- F. Other ☐

If you selected 'Other', please let us know your religious belief:

### f. In terms of political outlook would you describe yourself as broadly...

- A. Nationalist ☐
- B. Unionist ☐
- C. Prefer not to say ☐
- D. Other ☐

If you selected 'Other', please let us know how you would describe your political outlook:

## Appendix B

### g. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- A. Heterosexual/Straight ☐
- B. Gay or Lesbian ☐
- C. Bisexual ☐
- D. Prefer not to say ☐
- E. Other ☐

If you selected 'Other', please let us know how you would describe your sexual orientation:

### h. Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/ her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities” (Disability Discrimination Act 1995).

#### Choose as many as you like.

- A. I have a physical disability ☐
- B. I have a sensory disability ☐
- C. I have a learning disability ☐
- D. I do not have a disability ☐
- E. I have a mental health condition ☐
- F. I have a long-term health condition ☐
- G. Prefer not to say ☐

## Appendix B

### i. Dependants

Choose as many as you like.

- A. I have personal responsibility for the care of a child (or children) ☐
- B. I have personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability ☐
- C. I have personal responsibility for the care of a dependent older person ☐
- D. I do not have any dependants ☐
- E. Prefer not to say ☐

### 7 - Are you willing to be contacted again (for example, to take part in further consultation)?

- Y. YES ☐
- N. NO ☐

If 'Yes', please enter your email below. We will only use your email to contact you in relation to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights.





<b>Report on</b>	Policy on Room Hire - draft
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Ann McAleer, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To consider further the council's current general Policy on Room Hire, with specific reference to a revised draft version following previous committee discussions.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The Council has a policy in place developed specifically to deal with room hire and the availability of Council Civic Buildings and facilities for the transaction of council business. The policy, previously reviewed in 2018 was considered at November and December 2020 meetings of Committee.
2.2	Whilst a full review has been undertaken of the policy discussion has centred on section 5.3 (exclusions to hire), with particular reference to the unavailability of rooms for events and activities which could be viewed as promoting the profile and interests of political parties over other political parties. The policy refers specifically to council civic buildings and council facilities with the latter being all facilities, except the council offices, where rooms are available for hire.
2.3	On considering the merits of removing or retaining the exclusions to hire as referenced within the policy the Committee at its December meeting considered research on the current practice of similar organisations to the Council on the application of their room hire arrangements, with specific reference to the hire of rooms within civic offices and facilities. It was agreed at December Committee and subsequently approved by Council that the series of amendments presented be incorporated into a revised policy and brought before a future meeting for a final consideration.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The Policy has been revised with the areas presented to December committee as suggestions for incorporation, based on research undertaken on similar organisations to Mid Ulster Council in Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions.

3.2 The revised (draft) policy is attached as appendix A for consideration. Amendment has primarily been made to section 5.3 (Limitations as to Hire) and for ease of reference section 5.3 is set out below:

Extract

### **5.3 Limitations as to Hire**

*5.3.1 As a local government body, the Council is cognisant that from time to time its civic offices and facilities will be sought for hire for political purposes.*

*5.3.2 The hire of council owned premises for events, activities or otherwise which could be viewed as promoting the profile and interests of a political party over other political parties shall be permitted i.e. for political purposes. This refers to all political parties and independent representatives irrespective if they have representation on Mid Ulster Council or not. Hires identified as such shall be limited to the following, as detailed:*

*(i) That such hires be restricted to council facilities only and not extend to the hire of rooms in either of its three civic offices*

*(ii) That such hires of a room within a council facility are restricted to rooms that are available to the public generally and paid for at the same hire rate levied on any other member of the public*

*(iii) That any banners, posters, leaflets or any other paraphernalia forming part of the event be displayed and made available within the room only under hire within the facility*

*(iv) Block bookings shall not be permitted for such hires*

*(v) Hiring of a room within any of the council facilities shall be accepted and permitted except for events, activities or otherwise which are linked to elections and political party campaigning*

*5.3.3 This section (5.3) will not preclude an elected member of the council or group of elected representatives from booking a room during normal opening hours for the purpose of progressing council business in their representative role, as referred at 5.2.1 above.*

*5.3.4. Decisions on the use of all premises, except for the three civic buildings, shall be delegated to any Director of Council as referenced within Council's Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers. The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for the civic buildings.*

*5.3.3 When it is felt that requests for the use of rooms within either of the civic buildings or facilities require council consideration, for events deemed as controversial these will be reported to Council. Where there is not*

	<i>sufficient time for Council to be consulted approval shall only be given following consultation with the Chair of the relevant Committee and Council.</i>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: An equality screening has been completed and it has been determined that the policy implemented as presented would not present any adverse impacts on equality of opportunity with respect room hire.
	Rural Needs Implications: A rural needs Impact Assessment has been completed and has been determined that this policy applies equitably to all council offices available for hire across the district, irrespective if they fall within an urban or rural defined environment.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That the committee considers this paper and subsequently approves the revised draft Policy on Room Hire.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	Appendix A: Policy on Room Hire (revised draft)  Appendix B: Equality Screening on Room Hire Policy (revised draft)





## Revised (draft) **Policy on Room Hire**

Document Control			
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Head of Democratic Services		
<b>Policy Author</b>	Head of Democratic Services		
<b>Version</b>	Draft (1.0)		
<b>Consultation</b>	Senior Management Team	Yes / No	
	Trade Unions	Yes / No	
<b>Equality Screened by</b>	Yes/ No	<b>Date</b>	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	Yes/No/ N/A	<b>Date</b>	
<b>Good Relations</b>	Yes/No/N/A		
<b>Approved By</b>	Policy & Resources	<b>Date</b>	
<b>Adopted By</b>	Council	<b>Date</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>		<b>By Whom</b>	Policy Owner
<b>Circulation</b>	Councillors, Staff		
<b>Document Linkages</b>	Mid Ulster DC Scheme of Delegation		

## CONTENTS PAGE

Paragraph	Description	Page Number
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Policy Aim & Objectives	3
3.0	Policy Scope	3
4.0	Linkage to Corporate Plan	4
5.0	Procedure & Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire &amp; Availability</li> <li>• Exclusions to Hire</li> </ul>	4
6.0	Roles & Responsibilities	6
7.0	Impact Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Screening &amp; Impact</li> <li>• Rural Needs Impact</li> <li>• Staff &amp; Financial Resources</li> </ul>	6
8.0	Support & Advice	7
9.0	Communication	7
10.0	Monitoring & Review Arrangements	8

Appendices	Description	Page Number
A	Mid Ulster District Council Civic Offices Mid Ulster District Council Rooms and Facilities	9
B	Booking Procedure and Requirements	10

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The provision of meeting and function rooms for hire permits Mid Ulster District Council to provide areas designated for a range of council service related meetings, activities and events.
- 1.2 The Council has agreed that arrangements be implemented to facilitate the provision of room hire within its buildings and facilities to organisations or individuals external to the Council and those requiring access to same for the delivery of Council services, as outlined in this policy.

## **2.0 POLICY AIM & OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 **Policy Aim:** To set out the permission, circumstances and criteria in which rooms may be hired for use.
- 2.2 **Policy Objectives:**
  - To provide a mechanism that enables Council to designate facilities for hire and availability for meeting reservation;
  - To outline the process on how to access the facilities available and the general conditions under which they are made available by Council;
  - To set the criteria for room hire and availability of Council facilities for use by internal and external users;
  - To support and facilitate meetings, activities or events through the provision of facilities for hire and use; and
  - To manage financial resources in terms of the cost to hire council facilities within departmental budgets and the recoupment of income from the hire of facilities.

## **3.0 POLICY SCOPE**

- 3.1 This policy relates specifically to room hire and availability of Council Civic buildings and facilities, as those outlined in Appendices A and B. Council Civic buildings extend to Council buildings at Burn Road, Cookstown; Circular Road, Dungannon; and Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt as detailed in Appendix A. Council facilities refers to all other buildings under the Council's management.

- 3.2 This policy does not deal with the specific terms and conditions of hire for rooms within Council Civic buildings and other buildings under the management of Council. Terms and conditions will be subject to each venue and must be adhered to by internal and external users, as defined below. A consistent approach will be developed around which civic buildings and facilities will be hired. The process will require a completed booking form being completed and provided to the relevant member of staff by all internal and external hirers

#### **4.0 LINKAGE TO CORPORATE PLAN**

- 4.1 Referring to Mid Ulster District Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024, this policy contributes toward the delivery of corporate Theme 2 on *Service Delivery* where the council has a focus on its resources (people and finances) and priorities to ensure the Council is a high-performing organisation, where excellence is standard.

#### **5.0 PROCEDURE & IMPLEMENTATION**

- 5.1 This section confirms the framework for considering requests received for room hire and subsequent reservation of council facilities with adherence to general principles and criteria, which must be met to be considered eligible.

##### **5.2 Hire & Availability**

5.2.1. In the application of this policy the Council will apply the following:

###### **(i) Council Civic Buildings**

	Internal (Council) Hirers	Elected Members	External Hirers
Eligibility to Hire	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>	No <sup>2</sup>
Hire Charge Levied	No	No	Yes <sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Elected members shall be permitted to book a room during normal opening hours for the purposes of council business and must be in attendance at those meetings

<sup>2</sup> Except where the organisation requesting the hire has a direct linkage with the delivery of council business or local government sector

<sup>3</sup> No charge shall apply where the council has Elected Member representation from the council on the body hiring



## (ii) Council Facilities

	Internal (Council) Hirers	Elected Members	External Hirers
Eligibility to Hire	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hire Charge Levied	Yes <sup>4</sup>	Yes <sup>5</sup>	Yes <sup>6</sup>

## (iii) Catering

Catering for meetings and events within either of the Council's Civic buildings and Facilities shall be provided by those organisations, as advised by the relevant facility and Civic Building. Those making bookings shall not be permitted to bring catering from providers other than those advised.

## (iv) Procedure for Booking

Bookings must be in writing and observe the general principles as detailed at Appendix C to this policy

### 5.3 Limitations as to Hire

5.3.1 As a local government body, the Council is cognisant that from time to time its civic offices and facilities will be sought for hire for political purposes.

5.3.2 The hire of council owned premises for events, activities or otherwise which could be viewed as promoting the profile and interests of a political party over other political parties shall be permitted i.e. for political purposes. This refers to all political parties and independent representatives irrespective if they have representation on Mid Ulster Council or not. Hires identified as such shall be limited to the following, as detailed:

(i) That such hires be restricted to council facilities only and not extend to the hire of rooms in either of its three civic offices

(ii) That such hires of a room within a council facility are restricted to rooms that are available to the public generally and paid for at the same hire rate levied on any other member of the public

---

<sup>4</sup> Council services shall be levied the relevant hire charge. Internal (council) hirers should give priority to booking council facilities before consideration is given to the hire of non-council facilities

<sup>5</sup> Elected members will be levied the facility hire charge, except when a room in one of the Civic Buildings was sought but not available.

<sup>6</sup> Shall be levied the relevant hire charge except in instances where the council has Elected Member representation on the outside body hiring

(iii) That any banners, posters, leaflets or any other paraphernalia forming part of the event be displayed and made available within the room only under hire within the facility

(iv) Block bookings shall not be permitted for such hires

(v) Hiring of a room within any of the council facilities shall be accepted and permitted except for events, activities or otherwise which are linked to elections and political party campaigning

5.3.3 This section (5.3) will not preclude an elected member of the council or group of elected representatives from booking a room during normal opening hours for the purpose of progressing council business in their representative role, as referred at 5.2.1 above.

5.3.4. Decisions on the use of all premises, except for the three civic buildings, shall be delegated to any Director of Council as referenced within Council's *Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers*. The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for the civic buildings.

5.3.3 When it is felt that requests for the use of rooms within either of the civic buildings or facilities require council consideration, for events deemed as controversial these will be reported to Council. Where there is not sufficient time for Council to be consulted approval shall only be given following consultation with the Chair of the relevant Committee and Council.

## **5.4 Charging for Hire**

5.4.1 Charges for the use of Council facilities and civic buildings, where applicable, shall be set and reviewed by Council.

5.4.2 Charges, where set, for the use of Council facilities and civic buildings shall apply in all circumstances except when used for the provision of civic hospitality hosted by the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of Council. In such circumstances, the hire charge will be capped at £100, or less where the charge levied is of a lesser amount.

## **6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

6.1 **Chief Executive:** has authority with regard to the hire of facilities in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers on approving holding

of non-controversial events, conferences or promotions and applying any necessary hire charges

- 6.2 **Departments:** are responsible for; day to day managerial accountability for hire within Council Civic Offices and facilities; adherence to this policy and the associated terms and conditions within facilities; and adequate provision of training for members of staff involved in the delivery and associated administration of room hire and reservations to provide a high quality service.
- 6.3 **Elected Members:** consider requests for room hire brought to Council, where it is deemed necessary that Council consider whether or not to permit hire on the basis that they are deemed as controversial events.

## **7.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

### **7.1 Equality Screening**

This policy has been equality screened with no adverse impacts identified requiring mitigating action.

### **7.2 Rural Needs**

A rural needs impacted assessment has been undertaken in line with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. The council has a plethora of facilities and offices across the district council area available for hire, with all its civic offices located within the three urban centres of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.

### **7.2 Staff & Financial Resources**

No issues have been identified which will impact on the delivery of Council business as a result of this policy being implemented.

## **8.0 SUPPORT AND ADVICE**

- 8.1 Advice and guidance on the implementation of this should be sought from Democratic Services, Chief Executive's Section.

## **9.0 COMMUNICATION**

- 9.1 This policy shall be communicated to all elected members and relevant staff internally using a range of appropriate internal communication methods.

## **10.0 MONITORING & REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**

- 10.1 Implementation of this policy will be routinely monitored and a formal review undertaken 24 months from its effective date.

## Appendix A

- Mid Ulster District Council Civic Offices**

Location	Room	Indicative Seating Capacity
Council Offices, Dungannon	Glass Pod	4
	Committee Room	20 boardroom style
Council Offices, Cookstown	Room 4	8
Council Offices, Magherafelt	Committee 1	10-12 boardroom style
	Committee 2	10-12 boardroom style
	Committee 3	24 Boardroom style

- Mid Ulster District Council Meeting Rooms & Facilities**

Location	Room	Seating Capacity (indicative)
Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre, Dungannon	Tower Room	60
	Square Box	98
	Art Studio	40
	Gardner's Hall (book via Ranfurly)	Large Rm: 60 Small Rm: 30
	Ranfurly Events Space	Indoor: 200 Outdoor: 500
Leisure Centre, Dungannon	Meeting Room	40
	Minor Hall	100
Burnavon, Cookstown	Exhibition Area	60
	Studio	50
	Auditorium	350
Leisure Centre, Cookstown	Dance studio	60
	Committee Room	30
	Conference Room	50
Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Committee Room	15
	Mobile Unit	20
Bridewell, Magherafelt	Small meeting room	7
	Main Hall	150
Meadowbank, Magherafelt	Meeting Room	30
	Pavilion	60
	Cafeteria Area	120
Recreation Centre, Maghera	Conference Room	70
Northland Row, Dungannon	Interview Room	8
HomePlace, Bellaghy	The Helicon	180

## **Appendix C**

## **Booking Procedures & Requirements**

The following principles shall form the basis for the booking process.

- Bookings must be made in writing on the prescribed form
- Receipt of a booking request does not constitute acceptance of the booking
- Confirmation must be received from the Council to constitute a booking
- The Council reserves the right to cancel or amend any room hire or hire of council facility provided that adequate notice has been given to the hirer
- Notice of cancellation by the hirer and any charges levied will be as agreed
- Booking periods must be stated on the application and must include any time needed to install or remove equipment
- Booking procedures will require prospective hirers to confirm the nature and reason of the event

### **Introduction**

Mid Ulster District Council has a statutory duty to screen its policies, procedures, practices/decisions. This Policy Screening Form and Report assists Council Departments to consider the likely equality and good relations impacts of the aforementioned, if any, placed upon our ratepayers, citizens, service users, staff and visitors to the district.

### **Section 1 – Policy scoping**

This asks the Policy Author to provide details on the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations. Reference to policy within this document refers to either of the aforementioned (policy, procedure, practice, and/ or decision).

### **Section 2 – Screening questions**

This asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and issues.

### **Section 3 – Screening decision**

This guides the Council to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

### **Section 4 – Monitoring**

This provides guidance to the Council on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

### **Section 5 – Approval and authorisation**

This verifies the Council's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

### **Appendix A          Screening Process**

## Section 1 Policy Scoping & Information

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration which sets the context and confirms the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. Scoping the policy helps to identify constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy author to work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

<b>1. Policy Name</b>		
Room on Room Hire (revised draft)		
<b>2. Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?</b>		
This is a revised policy previously reviewed in May 2018.		
<b>3. What is it trying to achieve? (aims/outcomes)</b>		
The policy assists officers of council with managing and administering the hire of rooms for the progression of business internal and external to the Council. The policy provides areas designated for a range of council service related meetings, activities and events. The policy details and develops the permission, circumstances and criteria in which rooms may be hire for use by those deemed as internal hirers and external hirers. The policy relates specifically to room hire and availability of civic buildings and facilities operated and under the control of Mid Ulster District Council. The entire policy has been revised with specific attention to room hire for political purposes across the council's offices and facilities.		
<b>4. Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?</b>	Yes	x
	No	
If so, please explain		
It has been identified that those falling within the Sec. 75 category of Political Opinion will be positively impacted by the policy.		
<b>5. Who initiated or wrote the policy?</b>		
Mid Ulster District Council		
<b>6. Who owns and who implements the policy?</b>		
Mid Ulster District Council		



## Implementation factors

		Yes	No
Are there any factors which could contribute to/ detract from intended aim/ outcome of the policy?			
• If yes, are they financial?			X
• If yes, are they legislative?			X
• If yes, Please specify	<p><b>Financial:</b></p> <p>Not applicable please refer to above.</p> <p><b>Legislative:</b></p> <p>Not applicable, please refer to above.</p>		
• Other, Please specify			

## Stakeholders

The internal and external (actual or potential) that the policy will be impacted upon

	Yes	No
Staff	X	
Service Users	X	
Other public sector organisations	X	
Voluntary/community/ trade unions	X	
Other, please specify		

## Others policies with a bearing on this policy

Policies	Owners
All Mid Ulster District Council Policies	Mid Ulster District Council

## Available evidence

Information and available evidence (qualitative and quantitative) gathered to inform the policy under each of the Section 75 groups as identified within the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information																																								
Religious belief	<p>63.77% of the population in Mid Ulster were brought up in the Catholic religion and 33.46% belong or were brought up in a Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion. Other religions comprised 690 (0.5%) and None 3,153 (2.28%) of the population (Source: 2011 Census).</p> <table><tr><th>Religion or Religion brought up in</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Catholic</td><td>88,375</td><td>63.77</td></tr><tr><td>Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)</td><td>46,372</td><td>33.46</td></tr><tr><td>Other religions</td><td>690</td><td>0.5</td></tr><tr><td>None</td><td>3,153</td><td>2.28</td></tr><tr><td><b>Total</b></td><td><b>138,590</b></td><td><b>100</b></td></tr></table>	Religion or Religion brought up in	No.	%	Catholic	88,375	63.77	Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	46,372	33.46	Other religions	690	0.5	None	3,153	2.28	<b>Total</b>	<b>138,590</b>	<b>100</b>																						
Religion or Religion brought up in	No.	%																																							
Catholic	88,375	63.77																																							
Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	46,372	33.46																																							
Other religions	690	0.5																																							
None	3,153	2.28																																							
<b>Total</b>	<b>138,590</b>	<b>100</b>																																							
Political opinion	<p>Political party representation can be used as an approximate barometer of political opinion of people within Mid Ulster council area. The table below shows the results from the May 2019 local government/council elections - percentage 1<sup>st</sup> preference vote share for each political party and current representation (seats) on Council. (Source: Electoral Office):</p> <table><tr><th>Party</th><th>Votes</th><th>Percentage</th><th>Council Seats</th></tr><tr><td>SF</td><td>23,553</td><td>39.8%</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>DUP</td><td>13,700</td><td>23.2%</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>SDLP</td><td>8,512</td><td>14.4%</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>UUP</td><td>8,021</td><td>13.6%</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Independent</td><td>3,422</td><td>5.8%</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Aontu*</td><td>846</td><td>1.4%</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance</td><td>729</td><td>1.2%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>TUV</td><td>230</td><td>0.4%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Workers' Party</td><td>95</td><td>0.2%</td><td></td></tr></table> <p><b>*A councillor who was elected as a representative of the SDLP resigned from that party and aligned with Aontu shortly after the 2019 local government elections</b></p>	Party	Votes	Percentage	Council Seats	SF	23,553	39.8%	17	DUP	13,700	23.2%	9	SDLP	8,512	14.4%	5	UUP	8,021	13.6%	6	Independent	3,422	5.8%	2	Aontu*	846	1.4%	1	Alliance	729	1.2%		TUV	230	0.4%		Workers' Party	95	0.2%	
Party	Votes	Percentage	Council Seats																																						
SF	23,553	39.8%	17																																						
DUP	13,700	23.2%	9																																						
SDLP	8,512	14.4%	5																																						
UUP	8,021	13.6%	6																																						
Independent	3,422	5.8%	2																																						
Aontu*	846	1.4%	1																																						
Alliance	729	1.2%																																							
TUV	230	0.4%																																							
Workers' Party	95	0.2%																																							
Racial group	<p>According to the 2011 Census the overwhelming majority of the population 136,485 (98.48%) were classified as ‘white’. Within this total will be migrant communities, such as Polish, Lithuanian and so forth. Statistics indicate that the number of people in Mid Ulster Local Government District (LGD) born outside Northern Ireland is:</p>																																								

	<table><tr><th>Place of Birth</th><th>No.</th></tr><tr><td>Great Britain</td><td>4,053</td></tr><tr><td>Republic of Ireland</td><td>2,250</td></tr><tr><td>EU Countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)</td><td>6,795</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>2,280</td></tr></table>	Place of Birth	No.	Great Britain	4,053	Republic of Ireland	2,250	EU Countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)	6,795	Other	2,280																		
	Place of Birth	No.																											
	Great Britain	4,053																											
	Republic of Ireland	2,250																											
	EU Countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)	6,795																											
	Other	2,280																											
	The minority ethnic language profile within the area can serve as a possible indicator of the Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) community profile within the district. The composition of language groups in Mid Ulster LGD area is also noted from the 2011 census by NISRA as:																												
	<table><tr><th>Main Languages of residents in Mid Ulster Council area</th><th>No.</th></tr><tr><td>English</td><td>125,715</td></tr><tr><td>Polish</td><td>2,008</td></tr><tr><td>Lithuanian</td><td>2,039</td></tr><tr><td>Portuguese</td><td>903</td></tr><tr><td>Irish (Gaelic)</td><td>404</td></tr><tr><td>Slovak</td><td>477</td></tr><tr><td>Russian</td><td>297</td></tr><tr><td>Latvia</td><td>261</td></tr><tr><td>Hungarian</td><td>117</td></tr><tr><td>Chinese</td><td>64</td></tr><tr><td>Tagalog/Filipino</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>Malaysian</td><td>33</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>922</td></tr></table>	Main Languages of residents in Mid Ulster Council area	No.	English	125,715	Polish	2,008	Lithuanian	2,039	Portuguese	903	Irish (Gaelic)	404	Slovak	477	Russian	297	Latvia	261	Hungarian	117	Chinese	64	Tagalog/Filipino	38	Malaysian	33	Other	922
	Main Languages of residents in Mid Ulster Council area	No.																											
	English	125,715																											
	Polish	2,008																											
	Lithuanian	2,039																											
	Portuguese	903																											
	Irish (Gaelic)	404																											
Slovak	477																												
Russian	297																												
Latvia	261																												
Hungarian	117																												
Chinese	64																												
Tagalog/Filipino	38																												
Malaysian	33																												
Other	922																												
Age	The age profile of Mid Ulster Local Government District area as at 2015 (Source, NISRA)																												
	<table><tr><th></th><th>Mid Ulster</th><th>Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><td>Total Population</td><td>144,002</td><td>1,851,621</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>0-15 years</td><td>33,123</td><td>385,200</td></tr><tr><td>16-39 years</td><td>47,646</td><td>583,116</td></tr><tr><td>40-64 years</td><td>43,621</td><td>591,481</td></tr><tr><td>65+ years</td><td>19,612</td><td>291,824</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Population Change % (2005-2015)</td><td>15.3%</td><td>7.2%</td></tr></table>		Mid Ulster	Northern Ireland	Total Population	144,002	1,851,621				0-15 years	33,123	385,200	16-39 years	47,646	583,116	40-64 years	43,621	591,481	65+ years	19,612	291,824				Population Change % (2005-2015)	15.3%	7.2%	
		Mid Ulster	Northern Ireland																										
	Total Population	144,002	1,851,621																										
	0-15 years	33,123	385,200																										
	16-39 years	47,646	583,116																										
	40-64 years	43,621	591,481																										
	65+ years	19,612	291,824																										
Population Change % (2005-2015)	15.3%	7.2%																											

Marital status	The below table sets out the marital status profile for Mid Ulster District Council area as extracted from results of the 2011 Census																																																					
		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland																																																		
		No.	%	No	%																																																	
	Single (never married or never registered a same sex civil partnership) (Aged 16+)	38,353	35.97	517,393	36.14																																																	
	Married (Aged 16+)	54,192	50.82	680,831	47.56																																																	
	In a registered same sex civil partnership (Aged 16+)	62	0.06	1,243	0.09																																																	
	Separated (but is still legally married or still legally in a same sex civil partnership) (Aged 16+)	3,369	3.16	56,911	3.98																																																	
	Divorced or formerly in a same sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved (Aged 16+)	4,139	3.88	78,074	5.45																																																	
	Widowed or surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership (Aged 16+)	6,523	6.12	97,088	6.78																																																	
Sexual orientation	No specific statistics are available from the 2011 government census for this Category and there are therefore no official statistics available in relation to persons of different sexual orientation. However, the Integrated Household Survey would include between 3% and 4% would be either gay, lesbian and/or bisexual. However, due to the nature of 'disclosure' in this area, umbrella organisations often state that the figure may be closer to 10%.																																																					
	<table><tr><th>Region</th><th>Heterosexual / Straight</th><th>Gay/ Lesbian</th><th>Bisexual</th><th>Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual</th><th>Other</th><th>Don't know /refuse</th><th>No response</th></tr><tr><td>England</td><td>92.54%</td><td>1.10%</td><td>0.51%</td><td>1.61%</td><td>0.33%</td><td>4.07%</td><td>1.45%</td></tr><tr><td>Wales</td><td>93.93%</td><td>1.04%</td><td>0.48%</td><td>1.52%</td><td>0.45%</td><td>2.99%</td><td>1.11%</td></tr><tr><td>Scotland</td><td>94.65%</td><td>0.82%</td><td>0.33%</td><td>1.14%</td><td>0.26%</td><td>2.59%</td><td>1.37%</td></tr><tr><td>N Ireland</td><td>93.00%</td><td>0.64%</td><td>0.96%</td><td>1.60%</td><td>0.26%</td><td>3.98%</td><td>1.17%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>92.80%</td><td>1.06%</td><td>0.51%</td><td>1.57%</td><td>0.32%</td><td>3.89%</td><td>1.42%</td></tr></table>							Region	Heterosexual / Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual	Other	Don't know /refuse	No response	England	92.54%	1.10%	0.51%	1.61%	0.33%	4.07%	1.45%	Wales	93.93%	1.04%	0.48%	1.52%	0.45%	2.99%	1.11%	Scotland	94.65%	0.82%	0.33%	1.14%	0.26%	2.59%	1.37%	N Ireland	93.00%	0.64%	0.96%	1.60%	0.26%	3.98%	1.17%	Total	92.80%	1.06%	0.51%	1.57%	0.32%	3.89%
Region	Heterosexual / Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual	Other	Don't know /refuse	No response																																															
England	92.54%	1.10%	0.51%	1.61%	0.33%	4.07%	1.45%																																															
Wales	93.93%	1.04%	0.48%	1.52%	0.45%	2.99%	1.11%																																															
Scotland	94.65%	0.82%	0.33%	1.14%	0.26%	2.59%	1.37%																																															
N Ireland	93.00%	0.64%	0.96%	1.60%	0.26%	3.98%	1.17%																																															
Total	92.80%	1.06%	0.51%	1.57%	0.32%	3.89%	1.42%																																															
Research also conducted by the HM Treasury shows that between 5%-7% of the UK population identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or 'trans' (transsexual, transgender and transvestite) (LGBT).																																																						

Men & women generally	<p>The gender profile of Mid Ulster LGD is detailed as;</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Mid Ulster</th><th colspan="2">Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>No.</th><th>%</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td>69,362</td><td>50.05</td><td>887,323</td><td>49.00</td></tr><tr><td>Female</td><td>69,228</td><td>49.95</td><td>923,540</td><td>51.00</td></tr></table>		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland			No.	%	No.	%	Male	69,362	50.05	887,323	49.00	Female	69,228	49.95	923,540	51.00					
	Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland																							
	No.	%	No.	%																						
Male	69,362	50.05	887,323	49.00																						
Female	69,228	49.95	923,540	51.00																						
Disability	<p>According to the 2011 NISRA census statistics 19.39% of people had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities whilst 80.43% of people within the district stated their general health was either good or very good</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Mid Ulster</th><th colspan="2">Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>No.</th><th>%</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Disability / long term health</td><td>26,870</td><td>19.39</td><td>374,646</td><td>20.69</td></tr><tr><td>No disability / long term health problem</td><td>111,720</td><td>80.61</td><td>1,436,217</td><td>79.31</td></tr></table> <p>In Northern Ireland the profile of persons with a disability has been reported by Disability Action as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More than 1 in 5 or 21% of the population have a disability</li><li>• 1 in 7 people have some form of hearing loss</li><li>• 5,000 persons use sign language - British Sign Language and/or Irish Sign Language</li><li>• There are 57,000 blind persons or persons with significant impairment</li><li>• 52,000 persons with learning difficulties</li></ul>		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland			No.	%	No.	%	Disability / long term health	26,870	19.39	374,646	20.69	No disability / long term health problem	111,720	80.61	1,436,217	79.31					
	Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland																							
	No.	%	No.	%																						
Disability / long term health	26,870	19.39	374,646	20.69																						
No disability / long term health problem	111,720	80.61	1,436,217	79.31																						
Dependants	<p>Persons with dependents may be people who have personal responsibility for the care of a child (or children), a person with a disability, and/ or a dependent older person. The below table provides a summary with respect Mid Ulster LGD.</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Mid Ulster</th><th colspan="2">Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>No.</th><th>%</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Households with dependent children</td><td>18,626</td><td>38.99</td><td>238,094</td><td>33.86</td></tr><tr><td>Lone parent households with dependents</td><td>3,485</td><td>7.30</td><td>63,921</td><td>9.09</td></tr><tr><td>People providing unpaid care</td><td>12,821</td><td>10.69</td><td>231,980</td><td>11.82</td></tr></table> <p>Of the households in Mid Ulster Local Government District with dependent children, they can be summarised as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7,407 families in households have 1 dependent child</li><li>• 6,394 families in households with two dependent children</li><li>• 5,014 families in households with three dependent children</li></ul> <p>There are 37,306 dependent children within families.</p>		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland			No.	%	No.	%	Households with dependent children	18,626	38.99	238,094	33.86	Lone parent households with dependents	3,485	7.30	63,921	9.09	People providing unpaid care	12,821	10.69	231,980	11.82
	Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland																							
	No.	%	No.	%																						
Households with dependent children	18,626	38.99	238,094	33.86																						
Lone parent households with dependents	3,485	7.30	63,921	9.09																						
People providing unpaid care	12,821	10.69	231,980	11.82																						

## Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts as an outworking from the revised policy
Political opinion	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts when reflecting back on the Room Hire Policy in place from May 2018, which excluded council facilities and civic buildings from hire for political purposes.
Racial group	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts
Age	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts
Marital status	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts
Sexual orientation	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts
Men and women generally	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts
Disability	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts
Dependants	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts

## Section 2 – Screening Questions

In making a decision as to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), the Council should consider its answers to the questions 1- 3 detailed below.

If the Council's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity categories, then the Council may decide to screen the policy out. If a

policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity, the Council should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the Council's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the Council's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

#### **In favour of a 'major' impact**

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

#### **In favour of 'minor' impact**

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity.

### In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity for people within the equality categories.

### Screening questions

<b>1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories (minor/ major/ none)</b>		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of religious belief	None
Political opinion	The revised policy places limitations on the hire rooms within council offices and facilities for political purposes but does not exclude persons with differing political opinions (political parties or other) from hire of same. The policy positively impacts upon persons with differing political opinions	Minor (positive)  It has been determined that there would be a minor impact on persons with differing political opinions but the policy has been amended to ensure equality of opportunity across all those with differing political opinion.
Racial group	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of racial group	None



Age	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of age	None
Marital status	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of marital status	None
Sexual orientation	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of sexual orientation	None
Men and women generally	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of gender	None
Disability	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of persons with disabilities	None
Dependants	No adverse impacts anticipated as the room hire of civic offices and council facilities are available to those irrespective of persons having dependents	None

**2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories? (Yes/ No)**

Section 75 category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide reasons
Religious belief		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.

Political opinion		The Council has assessed the potential impact and has been determined that the changes within it will positively impact those of varying different political opinions in providing accessibility to hire rooms in council facilities for political purposes.
Racial group		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.
Age		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.
Marital status		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.
Sexual orientation		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.
Men and women generally		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.
Disability	.	The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with

		respect to any Section 75 groups.
Dependants		The Council has assessed the potential impact of the policy and has determined it does not unlawfully directly discriminate in any way with respect to any Section 75 groups.

**3. Are there opportunities without prejudice, to the equality of opportunity duty, to better promote good relations between Section 75 equality categories, through tackling prejudice and/ or promoting understanding? (Yes/ No)**

	No	x
	Yes	
If yes, please detail the opportunities below:		

If yes is concluded to Question 3, then the policy will be referred to the Council's Good Relations Working Group for consideration. The Group will consider the potential opportunities and assess if and how the overall impact of a decision/policy can better promote good relations.

### **Additional Considerations - Multiple identity**

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities? *(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).*

All section 75 groups, including those with multiple identities will be impacted and benefit from the bringing forward of this policy. The policy makes available room hire opportunities for all persons from the Section 75 categories. There are some limitations to hire for those of a political opinion from across the section 75 groupings but no exclusions to hire are in place. It has been determined that the limitations identified are justified as a proportionate way of equal opportunity for all persons of differing political opinion.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

## Section 3 – Screening Decision

In light of answers provided to the questions within Section 3 select one of the following with regards the policy:

		Select One
1	Shall not be subject to an EQIA - <i>with no mitigating measures required</i>	1
2	Shall not be subject to an EQIA - <i>mitigating measures/ alternative policies introduced</i>	
3	Shall be subject to an EQIA	

If 1 or 2 above (i.e. not to be subject to an EQIA) please provide details of reasons why.

This is a review of an existing policy undertaken 24 months from the conclusion of the previous policy. A review has been undertaken on the entire policy with a focus on the section of hire for political purposes. The review has amended the policy to facilitate the hire of rooms within council facilities for political purposes with some limitations in place. No mitigations are required with the policy in the current proposed form.

If 2 above (i.e. not to subject to an EQIA) in what ways can adverse impacts attaching to the policy be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

Not applicable refer to above

If 3 above (i.e. shall be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons.

Not applicable refer to above

## Mitigation

When it is concluded that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy:

- It is not determined that this would be the case the. The revised policy in itself allows for the promotion of equality of opportunity, particularly of those with differing political opinions.

## Timetabling and prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the below to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

- **On a scale of 1-3 (1 being lowest priority and 3 being highest), assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.**

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity	N/A
Social need	N/A
Effect on people's daily lives	N/A
Relevance to a Council's functions	N/A

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the Council in timetabling. Details of the Council's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the Screening Reports.

- **Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?**

Yes	N/A
No	N/A

## Section 5 – Monitoring

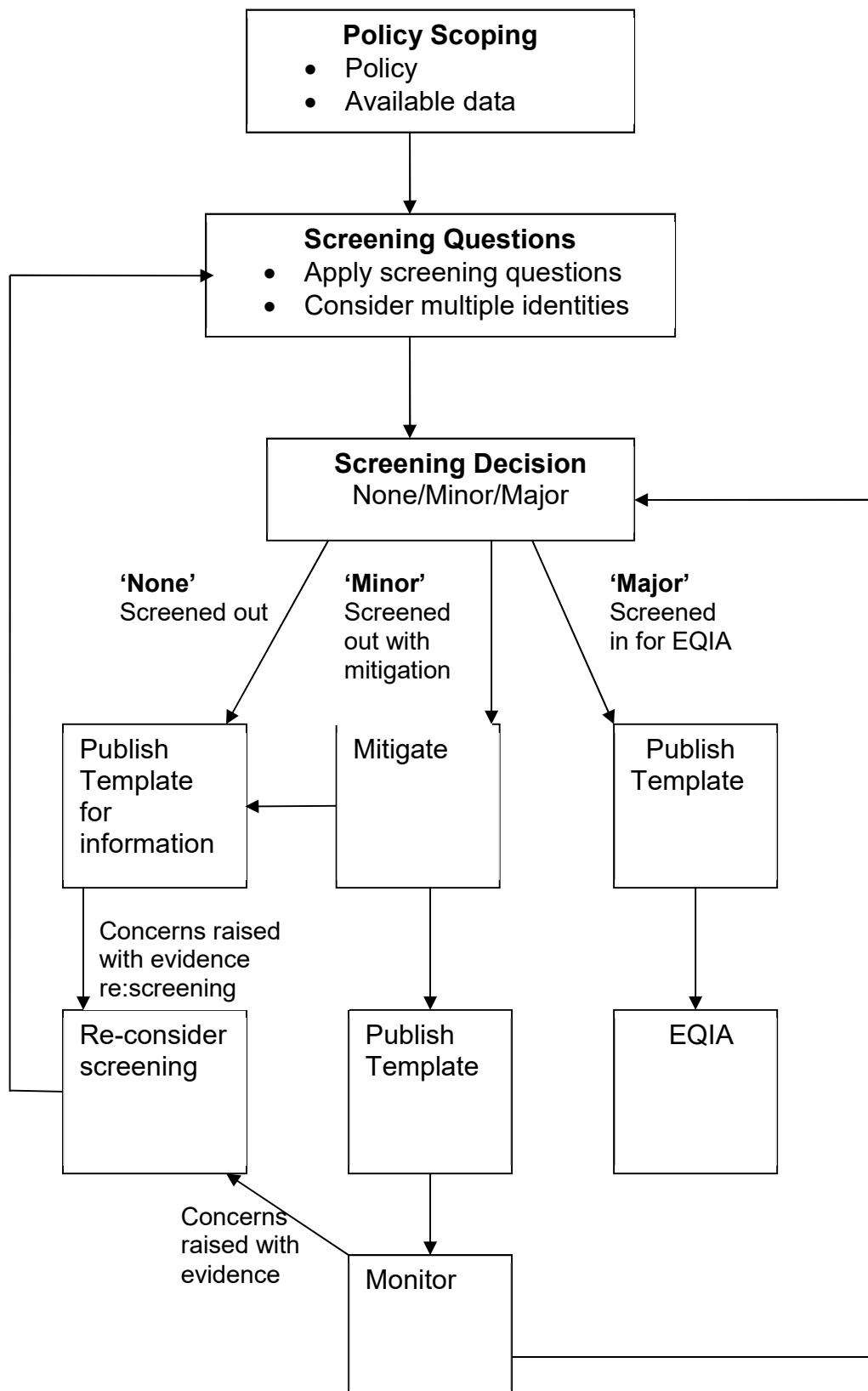
Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the Council to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development. Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

Corporate and departmental monitoring on the application and implementation of the policy will be undertaken to identify any negative impacts to be addressed in a future review.

## Section 6 – Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/ Job Title	Date
Ann McAleer	Corporate Policy& Equality Officer	05-01-21
Approved by:	Position/ Job Title	Date
Philip Moffett	Head of Democratic Services	06-01-21

**Note:** A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy; made easily accessible on the council website as soon as possible following completion and be available on request.





<b>Report on</b>	Member Audio Device Management for Remote Working
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 13 January 2021
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Barry O'Hagan
<b>Contact Officer</b>	same

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	NO	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon		

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To advise members on the provision of audio device management for remote working
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Following discussions from Council it was requested to refer the matter to P&R for resource and financial consideration.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Members currently have the personal choice for a mobile computing device for the committees and management system for papers ( CMIS ). These devices range from Apple mac and windows laptops to Apple I pads and Android devices and tablets.
3.2	<p>Dungannon and Magherafelt chambers have been adopted with echo cancelling hardware , streaming and Cisco webex to stream meetings successfully during periods where social distancing is required.</p> <p>The chambers were never envisaged as a complete remote meetings forum with interactive camera tracking and live streaming and the current solution is currently an affordable adaptation of the current chamber and the technology to provide remote meeting and streaming to the wider public.</p> <p>The wider public stream is not widely used nor requested. Attendance at meeting by representations, individuals and groups has been successfully for the wider part.</p> <p>The success of remote and hybrid Council and Committee meetings is reliant on a number of critical factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadband Connectivity for Participants</li> <li>• The Hosted service ( Cisco Webex,Zoom ,Teams)</li> <li>• Participant knowledge , Skill and Devices used</li> <li>• Host physical Environment</li> </ul>

	<p>Overtime the skills of many participants within committee and council have allowed then to become proficient in the use of video technology and fully participating in the proceedings.</p> <p>To improve the experience and sound quality issues it is recommended that Council issue a compatible headset to each Council member or Officer requiring same to improve voice audio input into hybrid meetings. It should be pointed out to all participants that mobile phones is not a suitable device for a satisfactory hybrid meetings experience for prolonged committee use and that all participants should use their allowance to acquire Ipad or laptop. All participants are encourage to use a headset.</p> <p>Furthermore there continues to be a number of members and Officers whose domestic broadband connectivity is unreliable and insufficient to provide a full satisfactory experience and participation from home. Whilst this issue is very much beyond the control of Council and members , I'd urge officers and members to assess their connectivity and where possible use Council or alternative facilities to access meetings to avoid unnecessary technical disruption to meeting proceedings.</p> <p>The current skills and ability of officers and members to navigate through remote meeting has significantly improved with experience, use and familiarity. The head of ICT had provided some webex training in March and April to members and officers . The learning and Development manager has been piloting further Teams training for the wider staff and members to make the use of the features, improve home working and alow remote meetings which continue to be a part of Council operations. Details of wider training in Microsoft Teams will be issued in the weeks ahead.</p> <p>The current host environment in the two chambers now operates with ICT support for each committee and Council meeting for hybrid activity. Whilst meeting are probably slower to complete ,with counts and registers taking more time , the quality of proceeding has improved significantly. It is hoped that headset devices and mobile device choice can play a part in continuing to improve and review our processes as they place demands of of elected members to adopt to new ways of governance</p> <p>A comprehensive revamp and replacement of the current chamber hardware and fittings to facilitate remote hybrid meeting , streaming and interaction would require a significant 6 figure investment that would only go some way to satisfying social distancing , hybrid meeting processes and member physical participation within the current rooms allocated. A wider consultation with members around all the issues and impact of covid on future Council meetings and governance should be considered if members are minded to do so.</p> <p>Members are requested complete their requirement to democratic services as soon as possible.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications:</b></p> <p><b>Financial:</b> Headset typically cost £35-50 . it is proposed to provide any additional headset and existing members ICT allowances from revenue reserves as required. Training 1.5 hours remote session for 10 participants £350</p>

	<b>Human Resources:</b> Training for Microsoft Teams to be provisioned by Learning & Development Manager ( Org Development )
	<b>Risk Management:</b> The impact of covid is continuously assessed at a senior management level and measures taken to reduce any adverse impact.
4.2	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments :</b> Not applicable
	<b>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications:</b> Not applicable
	<b>Rural Needs Implications:</b> Not applicable currently
5.0	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>Members are requested to note the report and approve necessary revenue reserves as per above for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the provision of additional headset and mobile devices as required by members</li> <li>• The provision of training to members on remote meeting technology (for OD) .</li> </ul>
6.0	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References:none</b>



**Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 3 December 2020 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means**

**Members Present**

Councillor Quinn, Chair

Councillors Ashton (7.05 pm), Buchanan\*, Cuddy\*, Doris\*, Elattar\*, Forde\*, Gildernew\*, Hughes\*, McFlynn\*, S McGuigan, McKinney, McLean\*, S McPeake\*, Molloy, Totten\*

**Officers in Attendance**

Mr McCreesh, Acting Chief Executive  
Mrs Campbell\*\*, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation  
Mrs Canavan\*\*, Director of Organisational Development  
Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property  
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure  
Ms Mezza\*\*, Head of Marketing and Communications  
Mrs McNally\*\*, Council Solicitor  
Mr Moffett\*\*, Head of Democratic Services  
Mr O'Hagan, Head of IT  
Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance  
Mrs Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

\* Denotes members present in remote attendance

\*\* Denotes Officers present by remote means

\*\*\* Denotes Others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

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

**PR201/20 Apologies**

None.

**PR202/20 Declarations of Interest**

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

**PR203/20 Chair's Business**

None.

## **Matters for Decision**

### **PR204/20 Policy on Room Hire**

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report and asked for further consideration on the application and review of the Council's current general policy on Room Hire, with specific reference to Section 5.3 of existing arrangements – exclusions to hire.

Councillor Molloy referred to five points which were included to be considered and discussions around party leads stated that his party would be happy to take this away and include the five reference points into a new updated policy.

Councillor McLean felt there was enough information tabled and was a start to bring something together and would be happy to progress on that basis.

Councillor Cuddy stated that during discussions with his group on this issue, it was felt that when the original was previously presented they were content with that. He said that his party's position would be that they would be happy to progress on with the existing policy as it was fit for purpose moving forward

Councillor McFlynn said that the report was quite detailed and a good starting point with the five bullets points being very good and concurred with previous comments and proposed to progress ahead.

Councillor McKinney concurred with Councillor Cuddy and stated that banners, posters and paraphilia wouldn't be something that he would encourage behind closed doors and not something that should be encouraged within Council buildings. He felt that whatever domination or party a person adheres to, those sort of activities are not for Council property.

Councillor McLean advised that his party looked at this on the point of view based on the party which proposed the change that if it come to the full Council that there would be a very strong possibility that it would be approved. He said that his party looked at it on the point of view that whilst they were happy with the existing policy and if there was going to be a change, then they would like to be part of the influence in that change, so therefore on that basis he said what he did. He felt that it was inevitable based on the previous comments and those made tonight, that there was going to be some change and stated that his party would be reasonable happy with what was set out but would wait to see the final paper when it was brought forward.

Proposed by Councillor McFlynn  
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to revise the Policy on Room Hire to incorporate issues referred to 3.3 of the officers report and be brought back to the next available Policy and Resources Committee meeting for final consideration.

**PR205/20    Members Services**

No issues.

**Matters for Information**

**PR206/20    Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 5 November 2020**

Members noted Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 5 November 2020.

**PR207/20    Rural Community Network Membership Subscription**

Members noted report on Rural Community Network Membership Subscription which provided members with an opportunity to consider if Mid Ulster District Council would nominate a Member to join RCN's Board.

**PR208/20    General Duty to Improve Update - Guidance from Department of Communities and NI Audit Office**

Members noted update on Council's General Duty to Improve in the context of Covid-19 and guidance received from the Department of Communities and Northern Ireland Audit Office.

*Live broadcast ended at 7.10 pm.*

**Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business**

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor McKinney and

**Resolved**    In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Member consider items PR209/20 to PR222/20.

**Matters for Decision**

- PR209/20    Village Extension Programme – Maghera Leisure Centre
- PR210/20    Staffing Matters for Decision
- PR211/20    Technical Services Staff Restructuring
- PR212/20    Off Street Car Parking: Debt Write Off
- PR213/20    Development of Ann Street – Update re Shared Access Agreement and Request for Phasing
- PR214/20    2021/22 Rate Estimates
- PR215/20    Proposed Council response to NIAO consultation in relation to the draft Code of Audit Practice
- PR216/20    Maghera Sports Pitch
- PR217/20    Coalisland Public Realm
- PR218/20    SEUPB Projects

**Matters for Information**

PR219/20 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee  
Meeting held on 5 November 2020  
PR220/20 Staff Matters for Information  
PR221/20 Financial report for 7 months ended 31 October 2020  
PR222/20 Contracts and DAC

**PR223/20 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 9.40 pm

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



<b>Report on</b>	Marketing & Communications Update
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	7 January 2021
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Ursula Mezza
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Ursula Mezza

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	The report provides an update on key areas of recent marketing and communications activity.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
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.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
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 2020.
3.2	From October, the service's focus shifted from support for recovery and re-opening to managing COVID-19 communications and the impact of restrictions.
3.3	Digital platforms have continued to be priority communication channels and the Council's Facebook page has shown the highest levels of performance to date, with statistics for November and December showing our posts reached over 700,000 people and engaged almost 67,000 users.
3.4	Significant work to meet new regulatory accessibility standards for web sites resulted in the Council's site achieving an 8.1/10 score in a UK-wide index of councils, ranked 24 <sup>th</sup> in the UK and 2 <sup>nd</sup> of the 11 local councils here.
3.5	A bespoke 'culture of compliance' video campaign on social media with the hashtags #BackToBasics #BackToBusiness directly reached 83,521 people (representing approximately 57% of the local population) and engaged 12,730 unique users of Facebook.

3.6	The service developed the #WeLoveLocal concept to support shop local and shop safe messages, delivering a comprehensive and strategic communications plan for a radically different looking Christmas. Particular highlights were the switch-on video which premiered on Facebook and the 12 Gifts of Christmas competition which showcased local retail and achieved substantial reach and engagement over a sustained 12-day period in December.
3.7	Internal communications, at both elected member and staff levels, continued to be a priority in the period.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That the Committee notes the report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	Marketing & Communications Update

## **Policy & Resources Committee – January 2021**

### **Marketing & Communications Update**

This update relates to the four-month period from September 2020 to December 2020.

#### **Summary**

- From October, the service's focus shifted from support for recovery and re-opening to managing COVID-19 communications and the impact of restrictions.
- Digital platforms have continued to be priority communication channels and the Council's Facebook page has shown the highest levels of performance to date, with statistics for November and December showing our posts reached over 700,000 people and engaged almost 67,000 users.
- Significant work to meet new regulatory accessibility standards for web sites resulted in the Council's site achieving an 8.1/10 score in a UK-wide index of councils, ranked 24<sup>th</sup> in the UK and 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 11 local councils here.
- A bespoke 'culture of compliance' video campaign on social media with the hashtags #BackToBasics #BackToBusiness directly reached 83,521 people (representing approximately 57% of the local population) and engaged 12,730 unique users of Facebook.
- The service developed the #WeLoveLocal concept to support shop local and shop safe messages, delivering a comprehensive and strategic communications plan for a radically different looking Christmas. Particular highlights were the switch-on video which premiered on Facebook and the 12 Gifts of Christmas competition which showcased local retail and achieved substantial reach and engagement over a sustained 12-day period in December.
- Internal communications, at both elected member and staff levels, continued to be a priority in the period.

#### **COVID-19 Response**

Throughout the summer period and into September, the service's focus had turned to supporting recovery following the easing of restrictions and the re-opening of the Council's own facilities and the wider economy.

The re-opening of our leisure centres received significant marketing and communications support, including delivery of the first part of a previously postponed membership campaign.

In the same period, the 'reconnect with...' concept continued to be used to support recovery messaging for the tourism sector and for town centres.

Plans for the opening of OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory were revised and refreshed, and the opening campaign re-worked in support of a new opening date of Friday 16 October 2020.

However, at that point, further pandemic-related restrictions came into force and the opening plans for OM had to be suspended and the service's work once again centred on COVID-19 related issues.

### **'Culture of Compliance'**

The service has had a strong role in promoting public health messages since the beginning of the pandemic, as well as communicating the impact of the pandemic on the Council's services. From October 2020, there was an increasing shift towards the promotion of a 'culture of compliance' and closer cooperation and sharing of approaches between the local government sector and central government.

This entailed not only sharing the core messages of 'Hands-Face-Space' but creating our own local, bespoke messaging, using Mid Ulster statistics on infection rates where possible and using authentic Mid Ulster voices.

As a specific example, the service delivered a 2-week video campaign on social media (19 October – 1 November). This was focussed on behaviour change, encouraging the general public to follow new restrictions (introduced on 16 October) and using local voices to engage residents and reinforce the importance of sticking with the guidance to help local businesses re-open sooner, with the hashtags #BackToBasics #BackToBusiness used throughout.

- In total, the video campaign directly reached 83,521 people (representing approximately 57% of the local population) and engaged 12,730 unique users of Facebook.
- The participation of a local GP, Dr Grainne Shaw, was particularly effective, accounting for almost 30% of the campaign reach. Dr Shaw was viewed as a trusted messenger and qualitative feedback from the practice also indicated that the positive reaction to the post on social media gave practice staff a real boost at an especially difficult time. Other participants also fed back how appreciated it was that they could be involved.
- Campaign tweets were seen a total of 8,255 times, and platform users interacted with tweets a total of 378 times.
- Engagement rates across campaign tweets were extremely high at 8.2% compared to the @MidUlster\_DC account averages of 1.6% in October and 1.2% in November to date.

### **Enterprise Week 2020**

The delivery of Enterprise Week during a pandemic radically altered both the traditional method of staging the events and the focus of activity.

Events moved from face-to-face delivery and interaction in a physical location to a virtual environment and the marketing and communications service delivered a supporting plan.

The plan continued the Council's 'digital first' approach, with a greater emphasis on video, while also using traditional media (press and radio) to support core messaging.

- Social media support for the week via Facebook achieved a reach of 98,795 with engagement of 4,802 and video views of over 22,000. Impressions on Twitter reached more than 47,000 with engagement of just over 1,200.
- The designated [www.midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek) webpage received 1,834 page views and ranked in the top 20 of our webpage views during this time, with business grants and business recovery webpages taking the top spots during this period.
- 11 pieces of editorial were carried in local press, with a Mean Advertising Value Equivalent of £36.5K.

### **Christmas 2020**

Christmas 2020 was always going to look radically different, particularly in relation to Christmas Light Switch On events, which this year took place with no public gatherings in place. This change needed to be communicated to residents, while managing expectations and discouraging any non-organised gathering of people in contravention of the regulations in place.

A structured and strategic approach to communications with a plan which encompassed a range of activity issues was developed and focussed on the concept of 'We Love Local', helping to reinforce both the shop local and shop safe messages.

A full evaluation of the complete Christmas campaign will be delivered in due course. However, the highlights were:

- A 'click for Christmas' video featuring the Chair and Santa switching on the Christmas lights across Mid Ulster which premiered on Facebook and across 2 posts reached 40,000 people with an engagement rate of 4,500.
- The '12 Gifts of Christmas' competition, promoting the shop local message, showcasing local retailers and offering a package of prizes. This generated significant reach and engagement over a sustained 12 day period and a huge amount of positive responses from competition entrants who talked about was so special to them about their shop local experiences. This first post to launch the initiative was the top performer on Facebook in December.

### **Digital Platforms**

In a fast-moving environment, the Council's digital platforms were of paramount importance for reflecting changes and updates to services and engaging with customers both with speed and accuracy.

#### *Web Site*

From the beginning of the pandemic, the Council's website has functioned as key source of online coronavirus-related content, which has adapted and changed in line with the changes to the restriction-recovery-restriction cycle and the changing range

of support schemes available to support people individually impacted by the pandemic and businesses directly affected.

However, the service also contended with a significant change in accessibility standards from September 2020 and considerable resources were allocated to ensuring that the Council's website was exceeding compliance standards.

The concentration of effort showed a remarkable result. Based on the Sitemorse index (Q4 2020) which compares the performance of Councils across the UK, Mid Ulster's score rose to 8.1/10, resulting in an upward movement of 146 places to be ranked 27<sup>th</sup> in the UK and 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 11 councils here.

#### *Social Media: Facebook*

Significant work has gone into developing the Council's corporate Facebook page as a 'go-to' and trusted source of information and a means of engaging with local residents since its launch in August 2018.

The page now has just under 10,000 followers and, as intended, has out-performed and now replaced the legacy town Facebook pages (Visit Cookstown, Visit Magherafelt and Discover Dungannon) which were unpublished in November 2020.

A snapshot of the levels of reach and engagement across the page in November and December 2020 demonstrates the impact of the channel in the Council's marketing and communications activity.

#### **Overview: November and December 2020**

	Nov 2020	Dec 2020 (to 21/12/20)
No of posts	78	87
Reach	444,554	267,438
Engagement (comments, shares, likes)	40,874	25,937

#### **Top 5 posts: November and December 2020**

Date	Topic	Reach	Engagement (comments, shares, likes)
3 Nov	Mid Ulster has highest COVID-19 infection rate: Not a league table anyone wants to top	31,700	5,500
5 Dec	First post to announce 12 Gifts of Christmas competition	29,600	4,900

1 Nov	#BackToBasics #BackToBusiness GP Video	24,800	4,200
13 Nov	10p parking present for Christmas	24,100	2,800
6 Nov	Closure of Meadowbank play park as a result of a mobile COVID-19 testing unit	22,400	4,200

- Reach and engagement are at their highest levels to date.
- November's statistics are substantially greater as a result of 7 individual and high-performing posts which collectively reached 195.2K people.
- Encouragingly, the top 5 posts show that a variety of topics are appealing to local people, emphasising again that content which adds value, seeks to engage and is locally-relevant and people-focussed performs best.
- While one of the top five posts provoked a negative response about facilities generally in Magherafelt and the surrounding area, it nonetheless gave an opportunity for the Council to respond and engage in conversations with local people about what facilities were available and what facilities were included in new plans.

### Internal Communications

Timely internal communications continued to be as critical as external activity in the period under review.

Nine elected Member briefings were issued in the period under consideration to ensure, insofar as possible, that all councillors were receiving up-to-date and accurate information on a broad range of issues, building on their own knowledge base and facilitating informed onward communication with their constituents.

A total of 5 briefings and an issue of In Focus also went out to staff. At all stages, while briefs must convey key corporate messages to staff, where possible, communications were personalised to spotlight the people behind the services.

### Core Service Activity Levels

*News releases issued from September to December 2020.*

*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:
<b>Sept 2020</b>	14	Leisure & Outdoor Recreation 5; Economic Development 3; Chair's Business 2; Community

		Development 1; Tourism 1; Planning 1; General Council 1.
<b>Oct 2020</b>	14	General Council 4; Leisure & Outdoor Recreation 3; Economic Development 2; COVID-19 2; Planning 1; Environmental Health 1.
<b>Nov 2020</b>	14	Economic Development 3; COVID-19 2; Environmental Health 2; Community Development 2; Environment & Property 2; Chair's Business 1, Planning 1; Tourism 1.
<b>Dec 2020</b>	10 (to 21/12)	Chair's Business 4; Leisure & Outdoor Recreation 2; COVID-19 1; General Council 1' Economic Development 1, Environment & Property 1.

### *Media Enquiries*

	<b>No received</b>	<b>No answered in 4hrs</b>	<b>Fastest response time</b>	<b>Slowest response time</b>	<b>Top Topic(s)</b>
<b>Sept 2020</b>	30	24	Immediate	6hrs 53mins	OM opening; Planning issues
<b>Oct 2020</b>	29	20	5mins	2days 4hrs 20mins	VAT case; COVID-19
<b>Nov 2020</b>	21	18	15mins	2 days 2hrs 52mins	Christmas events; COVID-19
<b>Dec 2020</b>	18 (to 21/12)	12	Immediate	1day, 5hr 54mins	COVID-19; New CE

Ursula Mezza  
21 December 2020