

Outworking's from Consultation on

Mid Ulster District Council's  
Performance Improvement  
Objectives  
2021-2022 to 2022-2023

April 2021

## **Background**

As required under Section 84 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 (hereafter referred to as 'The Act'), the Council is placed under a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

Part 12 of the Act sets out a series of provisions which the Council should be mindful of in "making arrangements to secure continuous improvement", under section 85, the Council is to identify and set itself corporate level performance Improvement Objective(s) for improving the exercise of its functions and to have arrangements in place to achieve these objectives. Under section 87 of the Act, the Council is also required to consult on our improvement objectives.

This year the consultation exercise ran from Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> of March to Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2021 and focused on our proposed objectives for 2021/2022 to 2022/2023.

Under each improvement objective the Council asked whether respondents agreed with the objective or disagreed with the objective. Respondents were also asked to provide any related commentary they had regarding the proposed improvement objectives.

The consultation survey also asked respondents to outline any improvements the council should consider in the future. The final question asked respondents to provide any further comments relating to the draft Improvement objectives.

The consultation exercise was promoted via a variety of communication channels including social media, internal staff meetings, our Council website, e-mail and press releases. In total there were 55 respondents to the Mid Ulster District's Performance Improvement Objectives 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 consultation.

## Responses to Improvement Objectives Consultation Questionnaire 2021-2022

### QUESTION 1

What is your main interest in responding to this consultation?

**Figure 1.0- What is your main interest in responding to the consultation?**

Capacity in which responding to survey	Numbers (completed)
Citizen/Ratepayer	42
Local Business	3
Community /Voluntary Group	1
Statutory Sector	4
Other	4 (i.e 3 staff, 1 visitor)
Skipped question	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

### QUESTION 2 -

#### Number of consultees who provided contact details – (optional)

Number of Consultees provided details	38	69 %
Number of Consultees did not provide details	17	31 %

## QUESTION 3 -

**Do you agree that the proposed Performance Improvement Objectives are appropriate for our district?**

*Please indicate if you agree or disagree, add comments where applicable.*

### **Improvement Objective One**

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

#### ***Why we are doing it?***

As we navigate through and ultimately emerge into a post-pandemic era, how we reshape our world will have key implications for our ability to address climate change this decade. The global response to the Covid-19 crisis has had little impact on the continued rise in atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub>, says the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This year carbon emissions, have fallen dramatically due to lockdowns that have cut transport and industry severely (carbon emissions fell by 17% at their peak), but this has only marginally slowed the overall rise in concentrations, the scientists say<sup>1</sup> and the overall effect on concentrations has been very small

Climate change has been recognised internationally as the most important environmental challenge that we currently face it is a large scale, long-term shift in the Earth's weather patterns and average temperatures. Scientific consensus recognises human activity<sup>2</sup> as a major cause of recent unprecedented warming and climate projections, show that past, current and future gas emissions will influence the climate for decades. The Climate Change Act, passed in 2008, committed the UK to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050 when compared to 1990 levels. This approach has now been used as a model for action across the world, and is mirrored by the United Nations' Paris Agreement. The next world climate summit is to held in Glasgow towards the end of November 2021 and during the last 11 years, the Summit has become a key platform for connecting markets with policies, to flatten the climate curve<sup>3</sup>.

The intergovernmental panel on climate change predicts increases in extreme weather events over the twenty first century and attributes this to a result of greenhouse emissions and rising surface temperatures. The latest U.K Climate Change projections (UKC P18)<sup>4</sup> predict that Northern Ireland will experience warmer, wetter winters and hotter drier summers by the 2050's, with extreme weather events becoming more frequent<sup>5</sup>

We recognise the key role and contribution that the Council has in supporting and promoting local actions and local people, businesses and partners in the move to a

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

1. [https://library.wmo.int/index.php?lvl=notice\\_display&id=21795#.YCJTnzFxc2w](https://library.wmo.int/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=21795#.YCJTnzFxc2w)

2. <https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/>

3. <https://www.worldclimatesummit.org/>

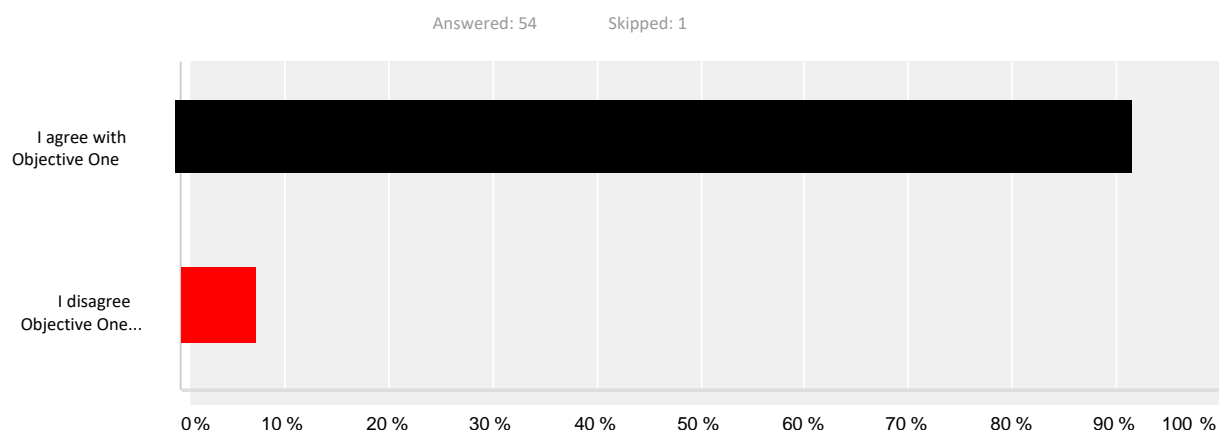
4. <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/download-data>

5. <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/UK-CCRA-2017-Northern-Ireland-National-Summary.pdf>

### Improvement Objective One:

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

<b>Number of Consultees agreed with objective one</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Number of Consultees disagreed with objective one</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Number of Consultees skipped question</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2%</b>



<b>Objective One:</b> <b>Consultee commentary:</b> - There were 35 comments in total	
<b>Hard copy</b>	
	NONE
<b>Electronic</b>	
# 1	I agree with Objective One on the basis that as a young person, how we treat the environment will have repercussions for myself and for generations after me. I believe, therefore, that it is important that we act now and don't treat it like it isn't a top priority. I am, however, particularly concerned about the lack of interest in investment in zero emissions public transport by both Mid Ulster council and indeed the NI government. In rural areas the bus may be available once or twice a day which encourages the use of cars and vans etc. as a necessity. I think its important that public transport is expanded within rural areas. For example, the lack of railway infrastructure in the area is increasingly evident and this could help rural areas in particular and help business within our constituency. There is currently a feasibility study going on for an Armagh to Portadown line. I believe that Mid Ulster council should

	<p>be pushing for the same due to the fact that no railway infrastructure has existed in the area for decades or in the North West bar Derry. Re-establishing dormant railway lines could go a long way in helping rural communities and revitalising them and seizing an opportunity to be able to travel for school and work to Belfast and Dublin using public transport and therefore removing the necessity of petrol and diesel vehicles to complete such journeys. It could also help the local economy of the likes of Dungannon and Donaghmore and Coalisland because quite honestly with business closures evident and the severe lack of thriving small businesses in the area, they need all the help they can get. This is one way, which I believe to be important, to significantly deal with the climate crisis. It is not something to be overlooked. It needs to be dealt with now.</p>
# 2	<p>It is to be welcomed that MUDC is addressing the need for a reduction in adverse environmental impacts and an improvement of the wider local environment. I would further encourage the Council to abandon plans to destroy the natural mature environment at the former High School in Maghera and, given the year that we've just had and maybe, as is being suggested, this is a repetitive event, support health &amp; wellbeing as well as individual and family life in developing this site as a shared inclusive park. Mature sites like this are to be valued for their high environmental asset value, not turned for profit, especially with an absolute deficit of quality parks serving the north of the District.</p>
# 3	<p>Agreed but real action needs to take place. For example Maghera has a population of over 5,000 and there's not a single sizeable public natural open space in the town where one can cycle a bike, run or take children for a decent walk with a pram. The council need to deliver a park for a growing population.</p>
# 6	<p>Maghera has a perfect site to help meet this objective. The former Maghera High school site would be perfect to be developed to help improve the wider environment through local action.</p>
# 7	<p>The industrialisation of Maghera high school grounds needs to be reconsidered and the peoples voices heard. It has provided us with a safe place to exercise improving mental and physical health throughout lockdown and it a valuable part of our community!</p>
# 8	<p>A healthy local environment is extremely important to me and my family. We would love If the old Maghera high grounds could be left as a park, keep the trees and keep the wildlife.</p>
# 10	<p>I look forward to the Council returning the former Maghera High School site to a parkland facility that the local community can use.</p>
# 13	<p>I feel there is a need for an open spaced in the Maghera community. There already is one available in the site of the old High school . This could be used to provide a play area , walking area , green space , there is a number of things that could be added to the space to make it a community</p>

	park/woodland. Especially now when we are encouraging good mental health for all . Somewhere people don't have to pay, especially in the current situation where families have lost incomes, and are struggling, the increased use of the local food bank has highlighted this. The area doesn't need any more empty buildings and needs an area that is inclusive for all. Ensuring an impact for the wider environment , by not cutting down mature trees , which are required and providing homes for local wildlife.
# 14	this means less building over beautiful natural landscapes that provide habitats for flora and fauna. And more back to nature.
# 15	A good start would be not to turn the old high school in Maghera into an industrial estate but instead create a much needed green space for everyone to enjoy. Given the lockdowns over the last year a park would have been ideal as we were encouraged to stay local. There is nowhere for our children to be taken for a walk safely. Keeping the trees in the area would be one way to enhance the environment.
# 16	Very much needed especially the problem of litter I would also like to see more input on nature projects.
# 17	The first thing to consider is The protection of mature trees. Maghera has trees including giant redwoods, which must be preserved. People need open green spaces away from the noise and pollution of busy roads. It is not healthy for mind or body to be walking or running next to continuous traffic. Most towns can claim that they have a green space or wooded area. Maghera which is an ever growing town can not boast of this simple necessity. It is time for change.
# 18	How can you say such a statement when you are fighting to turn the old school grounds into an industrial estate? There is NOTHING in this town for the young people. They turn to drugs and drink because they are bored to death. Build a park, implement a skate park or equivalent in it so the children can have a hobby!.
# 20	Maghera high School site should turned into a park, and not developed for industrial units.
# 21	Your objective may be achieved by not developing the old high school site in Maghera into industrial units. This site should be made into a park with facilities for wild life and citizens to enjoy open space close to where they live.
# 23	The mature woodland and play areas at the old High School should be retained and improved for the local community to use. This saves the different species in the area and saves one of the last mature woodlands in our town. I'd like to see the council promote individual litter picking (not just annual Gaa cleans) and support recycling initiatives like Recycle for KC Northern Ireland.



# 24	The Council can support the environment in Maghera by not destroying the mature woods and parkland at the former High School. The site and flood plain should be developed instead to support the surrounding ecology: bats, owls, otters, wood-peckers, buzzards etc as well as a place where the local community can access recreation without having to drive.
# 25	In line with objective one the old high school site in Maghera should obtain investment and become Parkland for the community as opposed to being sold to developers.
# 26	We need open spaces AWAY from traffic and fumes.
# 30	Council should consider the environmental impact there would be if The former high school grounds were turned in to a business park. The natural biodiversity that has developed over decades would be completely destroyed. This area should be carefully improved with consideration so as to maintain the natural ecological balance that already exists It would also keep extra traffic to a minimum as it would connect to the plantin walk, making it accessible for all the town to walk there.
# 31	Improve the environment by not wrecking the trees in leagan tóchair Park in Maghera. Literally hundreds of trees reclaiming the old school, all we have to do is not concrete over it.
# 32	Destroying the woodland and parkland at the former High School site in Maghera to provide industrial units would have a very damaging effect on the ecology and natural environment of our town and surrounding area. It will impact both by destroying mature trees and environment which support air quality and wildlife, and encourage car use by any employment it might provide as this cannot be guaranteed from the local area. The site also supports local ecology by providing shelter to a range of species which inhabit the area. The Council could lessen their impact by relocating their industrial park to a more suitable area and developing this site as a woodland, like Garvagh Forest, and give the local community a quality park for safe family use and recreation. Future generations and the climate will benefit from the Council saving the natural environment on this site.
# 33	Perhaps, a more front loading of guidance to the Public.
# 35	I agree with this objective and wonder why Council has not declared a climate state of emergency like others councils have.
# 37	Climate change is an urgent matter so it is great to see the Council doing what it can to reduce it's own environmental impacts.
# 42	We must strive for better in Mid Ulster. There isn't enough accessible green space for our communities. This is so prevalent in rural areas. Let's create walking and cycling routes, community woodlands. Empower locals to reduce management costs. Be brave and think outside the box.

# 43	The maintenance of the mature environment at the old Maghera high school site would certainly assist the council in attaining this objective.
# 44	The council's proposal to develop the old Maghera High School site as an industrial development would have a huge negative environmental impact. The removal of mature trees, the benefit of which cannot be replaced by saplings, is extremely questionable in a region with the lowest woodland cover in Europe. I am unsure how the council can justify this against objective one, when it has purchased further adjoining land that does not contain the same mature flora, and developing the additional land would have much less environmental impact.
# 45	Please ensure mature trees are not removed.
# 46	MUDC can lessen their impact on the environment by not destroying the mature ecological system on the Maghera High School site as well as the wildlife and large number of trees.
# 48	I definitely agree that mid Ulster council should reduce the environmental impacts of their activities, starting with the former Maghera high school site. Business park plans will see it's trees and habits destroyed for business. Surly there is a more suitable site for this business park. The high school site should be protected, we need to hold on to the trees we have, it is senseless to destroy this site and propose a park for residents in a field with no mature trees. Mental health and biodiversity should be at the front when moving forward with plans, especially in the current climate when people rely on outdoor facilities so much.
# 51	Think the old Largantogher high school site needs to have the beautiful flowers and wildlife kept as this will protect nature and improve the environment! The walkway is beautiful but just not long enough. It's a very calming and tranquil place to go.
# 52	The destruction of mature oaks in Maghera by MUDC concerns me. These can hosts 280 species of wildlife. The planned removal of the giant Sequoia trees also concern me. The loss of habitats cannot be reduced by tiny saplings planted elsewhere.
# 53	The Council's web-site does not seem to have an area which highlights all of the environmental work undertaken by Council, from Eco school programmes, through to conservation, managing diversity, tree planting, allotments, and sustainable work, air quality, the local development plan nor does it seem to have any data or information relating to climate change and what this means for us in the district. When I look at other Council's their members seem to be more vocal regarding climate change and are able to articulate how this will impact their local areas and what they are going to do about it now in the short, medium and long-term. The Council also need to develop green policies, particularly around procurement, fleet, assets but can start with small things we can all do look waste bins in work, turning off lights and machines at the end of the day, the use of plastics in events.

# 55	<p>As a group dedicated to campaigning for the restoration and development of the lands and woods at the former Maghera High School, we would welcome the Council's ambitions to reduce the impact on the environment of their activities. We would, in the first instance, suggest, as one of the two last remaining wooded areas in the town, the ecology of the High School site is protected, with immediate effect. Recent plans announced of land purchased alongside the site, to be developed economically as well as for recreation, are to be welcomed. However, plans to destroy mature, natural habitat to design and plant green fields for recreation purposes would have a catastrophic effect on the surrounding ecology; it would be counterproductive to destroy such an established, rich habitat only to hope to develop one which could only be replicated in 150 years time. This does not fit in with climate crisis targets. Further, the CAVAT for the High School site remains high given the situation of the site within the town planning boundary. Council plans, approved in February, 2020, to industrialise the High School site, showed little solid evidence of actual economic benefit to the town. Any projected job totals cannot be guaranteed and certainly not from the local area. It is more likely that profound local benefit will be achieved in restoring the site to community recreational and educational use, a view supported by over 1,400 of the community and all the local and surrounding schools (10). Protecting high quality natural environment for community use has been proven to support the health and well-being of families, as well as the mental health and academic achievement of children. The Council can reduce its impact by withdrawing these plans. Should Council continue to pursue economic activity as necessary on green-field adjacent land, it must take the form of sympathetic development, with environmentally, creative solutions of the highest standard and the agreement of the local community. The Glebelands form the environmental window for the majority of passing 'traffic' to the town, as well as a wildlife corridor between its floodplains and the lower Sperrins. Any development or change to their structure must be sensitive to these considerations and in keeping with the Council's wish to reduce its environmental impact. We applaud the Council's promise to contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action. By listening to and supporting this campaign, encompassing, not only this important site, adjacent Church lands, the proximity to Ballynahone Bog, but the walkways throughout the town and shared access for residents and schools to use these lands for the good, cutting down on travel and car use around outside the area, Mid Ulster District Council sends a message to other areas that it values environmental concerns and protections as priorities, not just for itself but in support of local communities. Governments, local and national, have become increasingly aware of the urgent need to attend to climate change issues. Destruction of any sites of mature ecological value must be prohibited at all costs, with government leading by example.</p>

## QUESTION 4 -

**Do you agree that the proposed Performance Improvement Objectives are appropriate for our district?**

*Please indicate if you agree or disagree, add comments where applicable.*

### **Improvement Objective Two**

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

#### ***Why we are doing it?***

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

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

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

We will have real opportunities to radically rethink, and redesign our services, as we move towards being a more agile and flexible organisation, with staff able to work from any location as we make more efficient use of physical space and mobile technology. We can and will learn lessons from innovative digital practice utilised as a response to the Pandemic. More of our high volume, low contacts that we deal with, should be completed at our customer's convenience, enabling Council staff to focus on more completed and sensitive enquiries that benefit from the human touch.

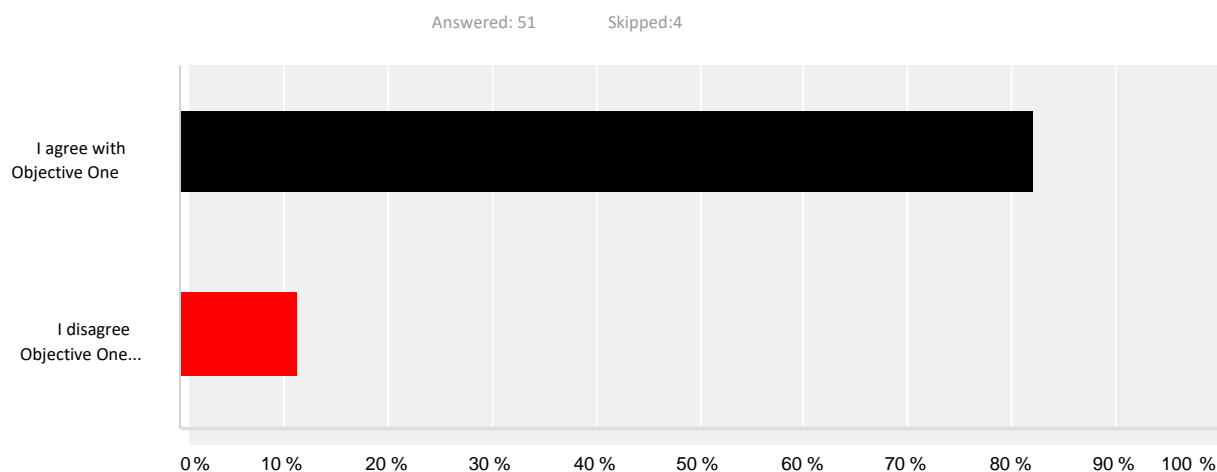
All of this can help us manage the rising cost and demand pressures the Council is facing.

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

## Improvement Objective Two:

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

<b>Number of Consultees agreed with objective one</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>82 %</b>
<b>Number of Consultees disagreed with objective one</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11 %</b>
<b>Number of Consultees skipped question</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7 %</b>



<b>Objective Two</b>	
<b>Consultee Commentary:</b> - There were 16 responses in total	
<b>Hard Copy</b>	
	NONE
<b>Electronic</b>	
# 1	Again the lack of railways is a problem needed to be addressed across Northern Ireland as it could help the whole of Northern Ireland in being more connected as well as greater connectivity for work etc. with the Republic of Ireland if it was connected with the main line.
# 2	Better broadband provision can accommodate more working from home and less car journeys, freeing up better family time.
# 15	Improving mobile signals in the area would be good and create WiFi hubs in towns in mid-ulster.

# 16	Broadband very poor especially in lough shore area.
# 17	I disagree when technologies infringe on the health, peace & beauty of the landscape. When corporations can plunder the environment in the name of progress. We have already tipped the balance considerably concerning our eco systems and all in the name of progress. More technology means more towers, more pollution, less privacy. This one goes against your previous policies.
# 18	Again... people connect in parks.
# 23	Rural communities need better connectivity.
# 30	Maghera people have consistently asked for the former high school to be given to them for a much needed green space. The council is proposing a portion of the field off the Mullagh road will be given to the townsfolk instead. This is totally unacceptable. Why would you destroy dozens and dozens of mature trees and masses of flora and fauna when you could quite easily use the field off the Mullagh road for your business park? It would also keep traffic from an already congested town that is struggling with traffic flow.
# 34	The events over 2020 to date have made this time of improvement all the more important for the public to access council services in the way that best suits their needs.
# 38	Difficult to do when DfE hold the purse strings.
# 46	MUDC can lessen their impact on the environment by not destroying the mature ecological system on the Maghera High School site as well as the wildlife and large number of trees.
# 48	I believe our current position of connectivity is sufficient.
# 52	The above statement is very vague and is a sweeping statement. New technologies are wonderful but at what cost to our natural resources?
# 53	The Pandemic has super charged the speed at which Council needs to move. Council should be looking to new technologies to assist in service development and all services need to be reviewed to meet with customers enhanced expectations' regarding instantaneous/touch of a button service delivery - pay for it, report it, download it, reference/guidance etc. The Pandemic also highlighted the lack of connectivity throughout the district and Council needs to be at the forefront of lobbying or seeking alternative funding strategies to ensure the district becomes full fibre.
# 54	I think it's vital though that a balance is sought between the digital connection of the district and the social (physical/emotional etc.) Connection. In other words, in striving to connect via technology, an even greater effort needs to be made to ensure we are more connected socially

	for our health and wellness. We can not completely substitute people/personal service with technology. People "do business" with people. People connect with people. Constant digital connection and pushing people to engage via digital means is counter productive to our values and our wellbeing. There are also inclusivity and equality issues to carefully consider.
# 55	Economic activity is now, more than ever, supported by remote working. Supporting this reduces road travel and more innovative and shared travel infrastructure (trains) need prioritised. 212 increasingly full at peak times.



## QUESTION 5 -

**Do you agree that the proposed Performance Improvement Objectives are appropriate for our district?**

*Please indicate if you agree or disagree, add comments where applicable.*

### **Improvement Objective Three.**

- 3. To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the environment.**

#### ***Why are we doing it?***

Pre pandemic we all used public spaces every time we left home. These include the footpaths and streets we walk or drive along each day, the parks our children play in and the outdoor areas we go to exercise or relax in. Many of our daily decisions and activities are influenced by our perceptions of the quality and cleanliness of the public areas we encounter.

The importance of clean, green and blue (our rivers, canals, loughs etc.) spaces, parks, cannot be underestimated. Many benefits derive from a pleasant environment. The covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns has shown just how important it is for us to have easy access to open space for recreation and exercise and has had a huge impact on everyone in the district, region and world-wide. At its peak, half of the world's population was made to stay at home or restrict movement in public (<sup>1</sup>Sandford, 2020). The importance of safe, accessible and well-connected green and blue spaces for improving quality of life has never been more pertinent, and for those without gardens the value of these spaces is amplified.

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

Regionally and locally increases in obesity, are linked to more sedentary lifestyles including lower levels of outdoor activity. Patterns of exercise in adults are set early in life, so obesity and inactivity in childhood can led to poor health in later years. Good quality public open space is required to encourage healthier lifestyles by providing opportunities for walking, cycling and other outdoor pursuits, as well as being beneficial to mental well-being.

Clean and well maintained play areas, parks and open space provide important beneficial opportunities for children to learn and develop (their social and emotional development) and stay healthy. Apart from access, the quality of green space is crucial

too. Quality of facilities – including toilets and cafes; regular maintenance; organised activities can help ensure a green space supports the wellbeing of its citizens equally.

Clean neighbourhoods engender social pride, add vibrancy, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, all of which are essential to the development of strong prosperous neighbourhoods. Anti-social behaviour can be seen through dog fouling, littering, abandoning vehicles, graffiti, and fly tipping etc. We are very much aware that many of our clean and green services are demand led, whilst much of this demand is inevitable, it is also clear some of it is avoidable. We want to be clear about our service promises, standards, and the response times we aim to achieve to ensure our communities understand what levels of service they can expect.

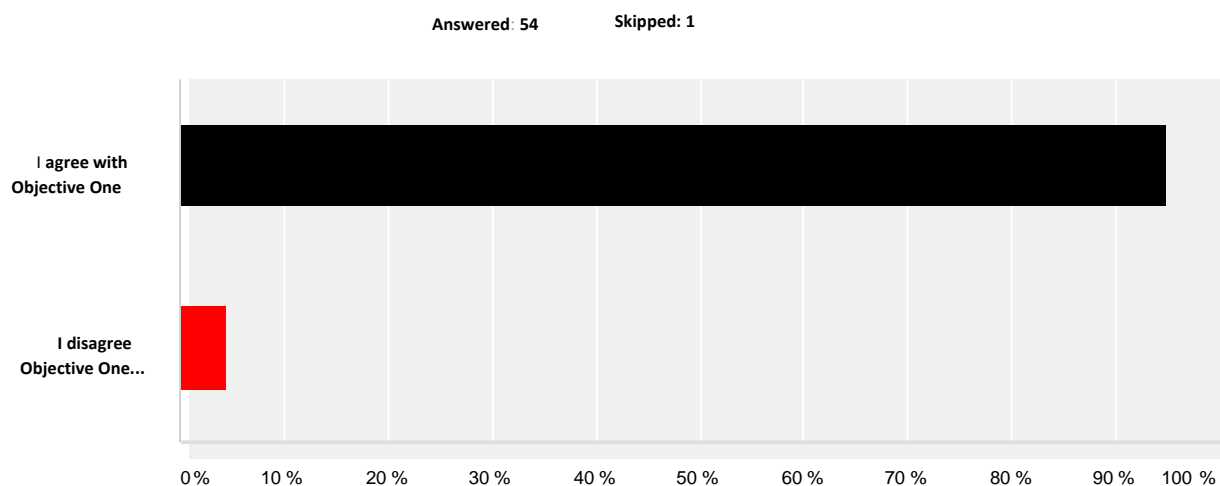
On its own the Council cannot deliver a cleaner and greener environment for residents. We want to work collaboratively, with residents, communities, visitors and businesses and through active citizenship we hope to see reduced demands on our services and more residents taking greater pride in and ownership of their local environment. This is more necessary than ever as overall public sector expenditure reduces at an unprecedented rate, combined with the economic fallout arising from the pandemic.

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

### Improvement Objective Three:

**To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the environment.**

<b>Number of Consultees agreed with objective one</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Number of Consultees disagreed with objective one</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Number of Consultees skipped question</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2%</b>



<b>Objective Three</b>	
<b>Consultee Commentary: - There were 20 responses in total</b>	
<b>Hard Copy</b>	
	NONE
<b>Electronic</b>	
# 1	Living in a rural area such as Galbally, I have noticed the level of fly tipping and just general littering at the sides of the roads have increased.
# 2	Less waste means less landfill and a saving on public expenditure.
# 7	More dog poo bins in Maghera's main walking areas e.g. crew road area would help reduce dog fouling.
# 14	More and better recycling. And more transparency on what happens to our recycling.

# 15	A good example would be for the council to educate their staff . At Christmas time when the trees were put up on the lampposts in Maghera nobody lifted the cable ties. They were just left on the street.
# 16	Litter is a big problem especially on main routes.
# 18	I'm losing the will here...
# 20	Provide more dog waste bins.
# 21	The planting of trees on the site of the old high school Maghera would help the council to achieve this objective rather than develop it into units.
# 23	But I'd also like to see bin crews be more proactive with cleaning up spills, and more joined up thinking - litter picking verges before they're cut, for example. Litter lifted when drains cleared.
# 25	An objective which people are keen to support. Communication on success of blue/brown waste recycling at present will aid this objective. This to include the error rate in splitting waste,
# 27	Use litter cameras and/or wardens to fine people who litter and do not lift dog foul.
# 30	Deprived areas need activities for all age groups. Destroying an area that people have grown to love and respect is not the answer. For the last 12 years we have used the former high school grounds for exercise activities, dog walking and socialising. We have so many species of birds including common buzzards, woodpeckers Mistle Thrush to name but a few. We do not want a portion of an empty field. We want to protect the grounds that we already use. We want to protect and enjoy the bats (yes bats) and squirrels and all the wildlife that has made their home there. We have depended on this one tranquil place since the lockdowns away from the noise of traffic. Throwing us the crumbs from your table is pitiful. Alternative offerings are never going to be acceptable.
# 32	Mid Ulster Council can reduce their environmental impact by developing the former High School site as a community woodland and park, maintaining the trees and open areas for public recreation, education and play.
# 33	Perhaps, a more front loading of guidance to the Public.
# 46	MUDC can lessen their impact on the environment by not destroying the mature ecological system on the Maghera High School site as well as the wildlife and large number of trees.
# 52	Our community did a litter pick last year and this year as the rubbish was littered everywhere. This area used to have people from the council

	collecting litter but has this been done away with?? What are we paying rates for if we can't get help to keep our area tidy? I do agree that there should be more promotion done to encourage the public to take their rubbish home with them!
# 52	Yes addressing the litter problem is very important. So much used PPE is discarded in the streets.
# 53	It would be advantageous for Council to actually highlight how much it has to respond both in time and monetary terms to anti-social behaviours such as fly tipping, dog fouling, graffiti, as well as highlighting and sign posting what Council can and more importantly cannot do regarding waste removal i.e. where other statutory bodies are actually responsible, highlight SLA's or protocols with other agencies etc, if we don't have any then get some.
# 55	Incentives for recycling?

## QUESTION 6 -

**Do you agree that the proposed Performance Improvement Objectives are appropriate for our district?**

*Please indicate if you agree or disagree, add comments where applicable*

### **Improvement Objective Four**

- 4. We will contribute to the ongoing regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people.**

#### ***Why are we doing it?***

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

Regeneration is a long-term process and is delivered through a wide range of projects, programmes, partnerships, infrastructure initiatives. Since the late 1990s, policymakers have recognised the wider social factors that affect the success of regeneration schemes, but this is even more vital in the current economic climate. Infrastructure is a valuable and efficient economic stimulus. Every £1 of investment in infrastructure generates a potential further £2.70<sup>1</sup> due to economic multiplier effects. Making the most of existing social capital and providing opportunities for local people to be involved in regeneration is a vital part of making the best use of limited resources

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

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

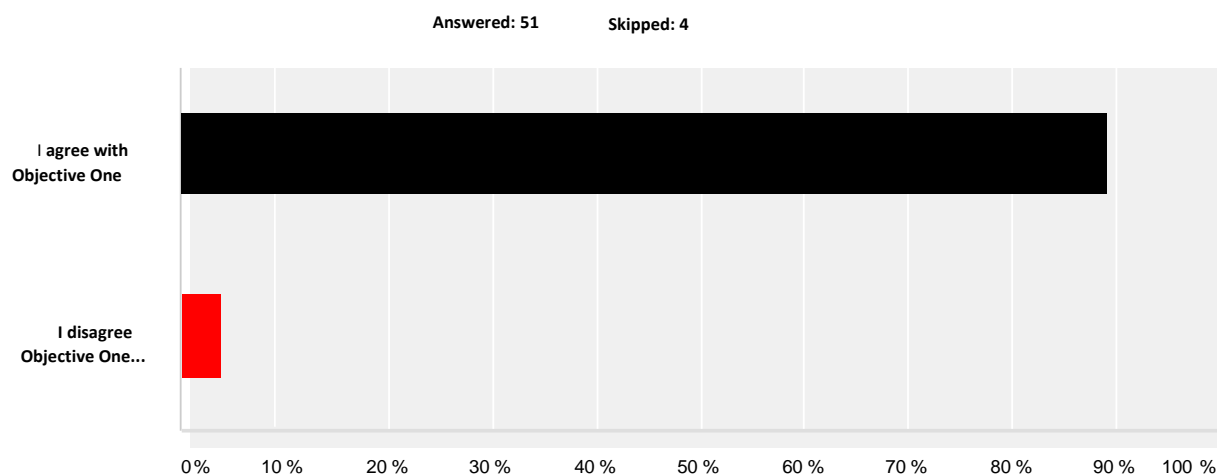
deliver the greatest impact. Building on and investing in these assets alongside complementary interventions will release the District's potential for growth and connect areas of growth with deprived places in need of regeneration. By following a planned phased approach across the District we will be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

<sup>1</sup>Further detail can be found here: [https://www.ice.org.uk/getattachment/news-and-insight/policy/infrastructure-as-a-stimulus/post-crisis-infrastructure-investment-insight-paper-covid-19.pdf.aspx#\\_ga=2.179966759.2015985077.1591167730-1129742483.1567513176](https://www.ice.org.uk/getattachment/news-and-insight/policy/infrastructure-as-a-stimulus/post-crisis-infrastructure-investment-insight-paper-covid-19.pdf.aspx#_ga=2.179966759.2015985077.1591167730-1129742483.1567513176)

## Improvement Objective Four:

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

Number of Consultees agreed with objective one.	49	89%
Number of Consultees disagreed with objective one.	2	4%
Number of Consultees skipped question	4	7%



### Objective Four

Consultee Commentary: - There were 27 responses in total

#### Hard Copy

NONE

#### Electronic

# 1

Living in rural areas the main source of social interaction is the GAA. Whilst that is all well and good there is nothing for those of us for whom the GAA is not their main thing. Greater investment in facilities for young people should be vitally important. Also the fact that areas such as Cappagh and Galbally have been left behind and there seems to be no appetite to expand local rural economies is something to be looked at. The likes of business units in Donaghmore have been successful in helping Donaghmore become better and better and the same can be replicated in other places if the investment is



	<p>there. Perhaps it is also time for the Council to take properties in Dungannon into public ownership that have been sitting and renovate and set low rent on such properties but have an application process say to decide what business the town would want and then when said business begins to see a profit perhaps raise the rent to fit the general price of commercial rent for that area. It is only by the local government taking initiative, helping local people to make a living and increase trade within the local economy that areas such as Dungannon to thrive. Businesses are closing and being replaced with flats and flats and whilst housing is required, something is to be aid that we need to preserve and revitalise the town of Dungannon. Perhaps a small cinema in the main town that doesn't need to be ran by a large corporation, or a book shop, a gaming shop, a bike shop and cafe's etc. Something to give the place character. Instead of the endless Poundlands and Tesco. If that is the only ambition that the town has, it is a waste.</p>
# 2	<p>Capital investment is to be welcomed alongside environmental protections. Where there is a conflict, natural environment must be prioritised. Local people, and not just community groups, must always be robustly consulted when investment programmes dramatically change their local environment.</p>
# 3	<p>As per comments under section 1. The council need to regenerate our towns by creating spaces and places for people rather than cars. Too many new developments are of poor design and are car centric.</p>
# 4	<p>Again the former Maghera High school site would be perfect for this objective. A proper community led development led development do this site would meet all these objectives.</p>
# 8	<p>if health and fitness could be invested in. A park area at the high would mean a large open space so families could socially distance get some fresh air and exercise. It could be easily locked at night to deter anti-social behaviour.</p>
# 10	<p>While investment in town centres and infrastructure is very welcome, these cannot come at the expense of parkland area such as the former Maghera High School site.</p>
# 11	<p>There is a severe lack of usable green space in Maghera for both the general population and especially children and the elderly. Land is available at the old high school site the would be perfect given the natural environment around the site which I think should be preserved. Think issue warrants further discussion with the people of Maghera.</p>
# 14	<p>In keeping with objective no 1.</p>
# 15	<p>Make sure leisure facilities are maintained in towns and that there is adequate green space for us all to enjoy.</p>
# 16	<p>I would like to see something done with the Cott lane in Ballinderry, this area is used by walkers and cyclists on a daily basis, presently it is very wet because of blocked pipes on lane and is full of potholes, it is getting to be a</p>

	danger to cyclist especially and not very inviting for such a beautiful place of nature to the public because of the state of the lane.
# 17	Capital investment is good if it also considers that profit should not always be the main objective New footpaths & roads are essential, but Much more needs to be done to improve the mental & physical health of our citizens. We the people need to be considered much more in to how things progress in our area. We also need to be listened to. Maghera as you know has a considerable amount of traffic passing through each day. New business ventures should be considered for areas where traffic will not further impact a town struggling with such a heavy flow of transport. Turning a small town in to an industrial nightmare. We very much need a quiet green space that is open all year. Were we can spend time away from built up areas where we can join in social events. Meet friends, walk our pets & get away from it all.
# 18	Your doing everything in your power to enhance the purse not the opportunities for the local children... the future of your district.
# 21	In the modern world people require open space relax and enjoy nature. Therefore the site at the old high school in Maghera should be made into a park area for the health of the people.
# 23	People need opportunities to connect to nature - the High school site, better access to walled garden, more outdoor activities for kids.
# 25	Capital investment to provide a Green space, park for the people in Maghera will greatly help with their well being and mental health. An opportunity exists to greatly enhance the quality of life for local people by using the high school site for a park.
# 27	I believe this is the most important point. We really need a proper green space in Magherafelt. There is only one park that is part of the cemetery, for such a large area a green area should be a requisite, like Omagh.
# 30	Let's please start with the ecological effects of destroying the biodiversity of the high school. You talk about regeneration?? Planting ornamental trees around oversized business units in place of giant oaks and sequoias is a ridiculous and destructive plan when the people have made it abundantly clear that they want to retain the high school grounds.
# 32	Maghera needs to keep as many mature trees as it can. The former High School site is the last chance the Council has to develop a high quality community park and save its trees and woodland. The open areas could be developed as play areas for families and because it's accessible for most housing it would reduce car use for recreation as well as make us a 'good well-being Town'.
# 35	Would like to see the Council getting as much funding as possible from the Assembly to offset any costs being put on the local ratepayer for this series of capital programmes.

# 43	One way to enhance facilities and opportunities is to create a public green space in the old Maghera high school site.
# 44	The regeneration and capital investment are only of benefit when local people, who's lives this has a direct impact on, are listened to and their views taken into consideration.
# 46	MUDC can lessen their impact on the environment by not destroying the mature ecological system on the Maghera High School site as well as the wildlife and large number of trees.
# 48	Regeneration is good as long as it doesn't impact the environment negatively. I believe some facilities need enhancing, especially in deprived areas. Maghera definitely needs a boost in green space and outdoor facilities, and existing facilities need to be open to the public more, the walled garden needs to be open all year and at weekends, when people asked for more access they did not mean another gate, they meant access to the garden regarding more time. Also the children's play park closing at 5 is more than inconvenient, most people work all day and would like to take their children to the park after work. It seems most facilities in Maghera are limited with restrictive entrance time.
# 51	The children's playground is lacking in facilities! It would be nice if it could get a revamp as there are a lot of young families in the area.
# 52	The residents of Maghera do not want an industrial park on the site of the former high school. We want to retain the shelter belt of trees on the green space and retain it as a conservation and recreation space for the community. The trees are our greatest natural resource as flood prevention, noise barriers, carbon stored and wildlife habitats.
# 53	This will be even more important to the district post pandemic as it feeds into our local economy.
# 55	Good work in local areas where there is real need and deprivation but investment has been traditionally poor: Coalisland, Pomeroy. Looking forward to seeing the continuation and enhancement of investment in Maghera.

## QUESTION 7.

Please outline any improvements that you feel could be made by Mid Ulster Council in the future

Comments: - There were 34 responses in total	
Hard Copy	
	NONE
Electronic	
# 1	What I have said above. Further investment in rural areas in public transport and business. Doing something more in Dungannon other than the enterprise centre. Attract more small business ownership in Scotch street etc., as it is sorely needed.
# 2	Active social media promotion of consultations offers opportunities for direct dialogue between council and ratepayers. More local district open meetings, encouraging increased participation in problem solving, would contribute to a sense that decisions were not predetermined but made in an open and transparent manner.
# 3	Deliver a new open space public park in the northern part of the council area either in Maghera, Magherafelt or ideally both. Citizens are crying out for public amenities, which are open 24-7 and are free. What targets have the council to deliver segregated cycle lanes and green aways. We are decades behind our counterparts in the south of Ireland. DFI have failed us year after year in this regard.
# 4	I feel the council could achieve all of the objectives in one place in particular. Maghera old school could be a park kept tidy by the community. If a park cafe was on site it would provide jobs. Children could learn about a wide range of nature and the importance of a zero carbon future with solar panels and renewable technology. Gardening clubs would help the elderly feel valued in the community. I have lots of ideas that could make that site a perfect public place for all.
# 5	The regeneration of the old Maghera High School site as a park for all is vital for the physical and especially mental health of the people of Maghera and the surrounding area. We have no designated park area in Maghera and this area could be developed as both a haven for wildlife and people. Benefits of this could be reaped for generations. Do the right thing for the environment and the good people of Maghera.
# 6	The former Maghera High school site could be re-developed as a green area with play park facilities for the local community.
# 7	The communication with community groups could be improved to make people feel like their voices and concerns are being heard.

# 8	Better park. High school grounds not used as business area. Hydnmans bakery closing down could business units be out there instead.
# 9	I would really like to see Maghera get a Town Park on the old high school site. Especially as it does not have a town park yet, and with all the focus on environment and exercise and wildlife and peoples wellbeing to the fore now during the pandemic. It would fulfil the aforementioned objectives to create a town park for Maghera, following in the massive success of Polepatrick park for Magherafelt.
# 11	A public park in Maghera.
# 14	Develop Maghera high school grounds as a natural park with facilities for all sections of the community.
# 16	The Cott lane is used by people from all over the north for fishing, bird watching and photography, Used by walkers and cyclists daily, it's in a terrible state and needs the council to improve this.
# 17	Give the people of Maghera what they have asked for. We want the old high school grounds as a green space for all. Plant even more trees here & all over mid Ulster. People are desperate for a piece of nature on their backdoor. After over a year of lockdowns & probably many more on the way, now is the time to help your communities.
# 18	A park in Maghera old school grounds, there is absolutely ZERO need for more of your industrial plans for that site!
# 20	Be more receptive to the wants/suggestions of the local community than is currently conveyed by some of the council's actions.
# 22	Actually pay attention to the swell of support for turning the old high school site in Maghera into a public park, instead of dismissing it, trying to pretend support doesn't exit and blundering ahead with your pre-packaged decision to build unnecessary industrial units, whilst ignoring public opinion.
# 25	Greater promotion of outdoor spaces, including Lough Neagh for sailing, swimming and other water sports. The Marina has great potential for boats and watercraft however there is a need for significant investment in facilities for water users.
# 26	We require a parkland.
# 29	Maghera needs a park for everyone and especially our children. The former high school site on the Tobermore road is the ideal location and my children would benefit greatly. My three boys are autistic which means taking them for walks on public roads can be hazardous, a park would be perfect.

# 30	Improve the mental and physical health of the people in Maghera. This is a time to give us peace of mind. We have suffered enough for over a year with lockdowns and restrictions. This is the ideal place within walking distance of all the town.
# 31	Re the new 4g pitch in Maghera, it will be a great facility but it will only really help the fitness of males from ages 16-30 who have an interest in football (I fall into that cohort) but there's a lot of the population that won't get any benefit from this, improved walking and running trails would be more economically efficient.
# 32	Council can limit their impact on the local environment by not industrialising the former High School site in Maghera. It should be maintained and developed to keep the wildlife corridors to Ballynahone Bog, the Mullagh area and through to Milltown Bridge. The site itself can be improved and used for recreation and education, supporting the community, the environment and lessening car travel.
# 38	More homeworking for employees as this will reduce need for as much office space and help reduce carbon footprint.
# 39	Needs within rural businesses, communities and towns/villages should be continually assessed and appropriate support directed to these sectors to maintain vibrant rural communities throughout the district.
# 40	I feel that the objectives set out above are realistic and achievable.
# 42	More accessible green space. More woodlands. Empower local people and utilise their talents.
# 44	Maghera could benefit from the current layby/carpark on the Coleraine Road being turned into a pedestrianised area, on street time restricted parking could be provided where the current foot path is. This would encourage the through flow of traffic to stop and spend within the town rather than passing straight through.
# 46	MUDC can lessen their impact on the environment by not destroying the mature ecological system on the Maghera High School site as well as the wildlife and large number of trees.
# 48	Improvements Mid Ulster District Council could make, would be to let people have more say in decisions of what happens in their own towns and villages. The means of the council's communication with the community is outdated, ie,(small columns in the news paper etc.). The council need to stop forcing proposals on communities and listen to what the people need. It's no wonder your consultation surveys get such little response, what is the point in feeding into public consultations if it falls on deaf ears.

# 49	Allow Maghera park to flourish and provide green space ideally located and not MORE concrete buildings!
# 50	The old High School site is beautiful and should not be destroyed and used as an industrial site. It is used by all age groups- young people playing basketball, families exercising and enjoying the wooded areas with the vast array of animals , runners using the large area at the bottom of the site, dog walkers letting their beloved pets exercise safely to name but a few. I have grown to really love this area and I know many who agree. Please hear our voices.
# 52	Retain the site of the former Maghera High School as a woodland park with gardens and green space for recreation in the centre. There are jobs to be created and tourism to be generated by such an untapped natural resource. Please listen to the residents who are strongly opposed to the industrialisation of the green space with the loss of giant Sequoias and mature Oaks and all the biodiversity of wildlife that live in them. Please move the business park elsewhere in Maghera away from the residential family areas.
# 53	Clear ring fenced investment in technology and issues arising from the climate crisis in Council budgets, scenario planning of what it will look like if Council does not invest in both.
# 55	Decision making more open and transparent with more interaction between Council and the Community.



## QUESTION 8

Please use the following space to provide any further comments relating to the draft Corporate Improvement objectives

Comments: - There were 10 responses	
Hard Copy	
#	NONE
Electronic	
# 2	A bit too specific in places, which can have the effect of preventing a more holistic interpretation of priorities for our local council.
# 16	A very good initiative all round.
# 22	Honest response to public concerns. Actually consult the public before decisions, don't make decisions then pretend to consult. Be more trustworthy, if even just a little.
# 30	So many organisations already benefit from this space. From the vintage car rally to the community centre. It has an established running track, which could be used for many other things. Economy wise it would take far less money to develop these grounds into a green space. Than to start from scratch. It is perfect for so many events. It even has a basketball court, which is very popular. Tennis courts also exist. It has so much to offer that it makes sense to listen to what the people have asked for.
# 32	The Council can support the environment in Maghera by not destroying the mature woods and parkland at the former High School. The site and flood plain should be developed instead to support the surrounding ecology: bats, owls, otters, wood-peckers, buzzards etc. as well as a place where the local community can access recreation without having to drive.
# 43	These are very broad and well-intentioned objectives. When do the rate payers get to see substantive ideas or suggestions on how the councils intends to work towards these objectives?
# 44	As stated in objective one any development given the current environmental crisis must be carefully balanced and justified against direct environmental impact.
# 46	I still have not heard any firm details about how this will benefit Maghera and why this suggested project could not be moved down the road. This is a big gamble, a gamble which should be played further out of town. This is the last big space available to what could be the centre of Maghera.
# 50	See above



# 52	The residents such as my family want to keep a woodland park in Maghera. Some of the objectives such as Objective 2 are general sweeping statements. It sounds good in theory but in real terms what exactly does that relate to?
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