



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

***Organisational  
Development, Strategy &  
Performance***

**DIRECTORATE SERVICE PLAN  
2024 / 2025**

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## 1.0 OVERALL PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE DIRECTORATE

### 1.1. Purpose and Scope of the Directorate

Central to Organisational Development, Strategy and Performance is the oversight and implementation of organisational change and the provision of a range of employee related services that enable the Council to continue to deliver its services to our citizens. Key responsibilities, noted below (1.2), focus on recruitment and retention, people management, governance arrangements allowing for effective decision making by council and committees, registration services, strategic and corporate direction, compliance with statutory duties and front-line customer service delivery at our three main offices.

### 1.2 Responsibilities

**Organisational Development:** Continually improves organisational effectiveness and adherence to council's culture and values. Maximizes employees' potential, supporting them to amplify their contribution towards Council's success.

**Human Resources:** Manages the efficient organisation and various employment functions including employee resourcing, employee relations, equal opportunities, and health and well-being. Provides support to the organisation to comply with relevant employment legislation, HR best practice and professional advice on employment matters. Contributes to the development, implementation and review of relevant HR policies and procedures in conjunction with Trade Unions, staff and key stakeholders.

**Corporate Learning and Development:** Supports the delivery of a range of organisational and learning and development activities for all Elected Members and staff. Supports the development of HR policies and procedures.

**Registration Services:** Provides a suite of registration services extending to births, deaths and marriages and performs marriages and civil partnerships in the District.

**Business Support and Facility Services:** Provides administrative support, ensuring the efficient operation of Council's services and offices. Manages our buildings to ensure they are clean and well maintained.

**Customer Services and Corporate Complaints:** Provides a front-line customer service at each of our Civic Offices in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt, responds to customer enquiries and provides face-to-face advice and support. Develops arrangements to improve customer service and continues to manage and embed our Complaints Handling Procedures across the organisation.

**Community and Corporate Planning:** co-ordinates the community planning process for our district, working collaboratively with a wide range of statutory and local partners, businesses, the community and voluntary sector and residents. Oversees and co-ordinates the development and delivery of the Council’s Corporate Plan.

**Committee Services:** facilitates and manages Council and Committee meetings to include the development of agendas, compilation of meeting packs, minute taking and follow up activity on decisions resolved.

**Member Services:** provides support to Councillors in carrying out their role, including progressing towards attainment of the Elected Member Development Charter.

**Equality, Disability and Good Relations:** ensures that Council meets its Equality Scheme obligations and provides support to ensure our services are delivered in line with obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

**Rural Needs:** provides guidance and assistance on our statutory duties under the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 to consider rural needs in the development of new policies, plans or strategies and in service design/delivery decisions.

**Performance Management & Improvement:** develops and embeds arrangements to support continuous improvement in the delivery of services in accordance with the Performance Improvement obligations (Local Government Act (NI) 2014). Supports Council’s strategic planning through reporting, validation and monitoring of performance data.

**Civic Recognition:** processes Elected Members’ requests for civic recognition and makes the associated recommendations to Council.

**Corporate Policy:** provides support and advice on the formulation of corporate policies across the Council.

### 1.3 Customers & Stakeholders

Customers & Stakeholders
<b>Internal</b> – Staff, Departments, Elected Members, SMT and Local Trade Union Representatives
<b>External</b> – Job Applicants, Students, Regional Trade Union Representatives, LGSC, Training Providers, OH Providers/ Doctors, Equality Commission, Access NI, NILGA, NJCLGS, PPMA, Schools and Colleges, Labour Relations Agency, Health & Safety Executive, Central Government Departments, Media, other local authorities, recruitment agencies, customers to our Civic Offices and software suppliers

**Government Departments, Agencies & Bodies** to include the Equality Commission for NI, Community Planning Partners, NI Audit Office, Public Records Office for Northern Ireland (PRONI), General Register Office for NI (GRO), Information Commissioner's Office (ICO); a wide cross section of the public and customers of the Council, as required, outside Bodies with Councillor representation from Mid Ulster District Council, NILGOSC, NIPB

## 1.4 Performance Overview in 2023/24 (Retrospective Review)

The following provides an overview of some of our achievements and successes over the past 12 months as a Directorate.

<b>2023/2024 Performance Overview</b> <b><i>What we achieved - Measured Activities Completed</i></b>
Implementation of the Council's Corporate Plan (2020-2024) reviewed and a new Corporate Plan (2024-2028) developed
Corporate identity and Council brand embedded by the provision of uniforms for Customer Service Teams, Facilities staff and Registration team
<p>Council's digital agenda supported through improving how we connect and engage with our customers and stakeholders for an enhanced customer experience;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of existing front-line customer processes within the scope of the Business Support area across Directorates undertaken</li> <li>• High contact customer processes requiring consideration in 2023-24 prioritised</li> <li>• Process mapping to identify customer services benefits for refining and changing existing processes undertaken. Existing 'as is' processes mapped out</li> <li>• A proposal for an electronic platform accessible to all services with the capacity to upload information to help Customers Services and Business Support Officers address customers' queries investigated and developed</li> </ul>
Model Complaints Handling Process (MCHP) implemented and a digital solution to manage and process complaints across the Council, in line with NI Public Service Organisation (NIPSO) requirements developed
Elected Member Development - Induction training programme undertaken for all new Elected Members and an Elected Member Development Training Programme developed in conjunction with the EMDWG. Members updated on Individual Personal development plans
Quarterly Learning and Development Programme delivered
Phase 1 of the Personal Contribution & Support Process (PC&SP) rolled out
Mid Ulster District Council Equality Scheme Commitments including the associated Equality and Disability Action Plans completed
Rural Needs Action Plan (Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016) delivered, Rural Needs Impact Assessments completed and Rural Consultee list consulted

Next phase of Management Dashboards for Directorates developed and rolled out to enable Management Teams to make service delivery decisions based on real time people and organisational data

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP – forward looking plan) for 2023/24 developed in conjunction with public consultation, approved and ratified by Council. Annual Performance Assessment Plan for 2023/24 developed, completed, approved and ratified by Council June 2022. Northern Ireland Audit Office liaised with regarding their annual Performance Improvement Audit – unqualified audit opinion attained for 2023/24

Current arrangements for managing and processing corporate level complaints received and functionality of the current tool reviewed

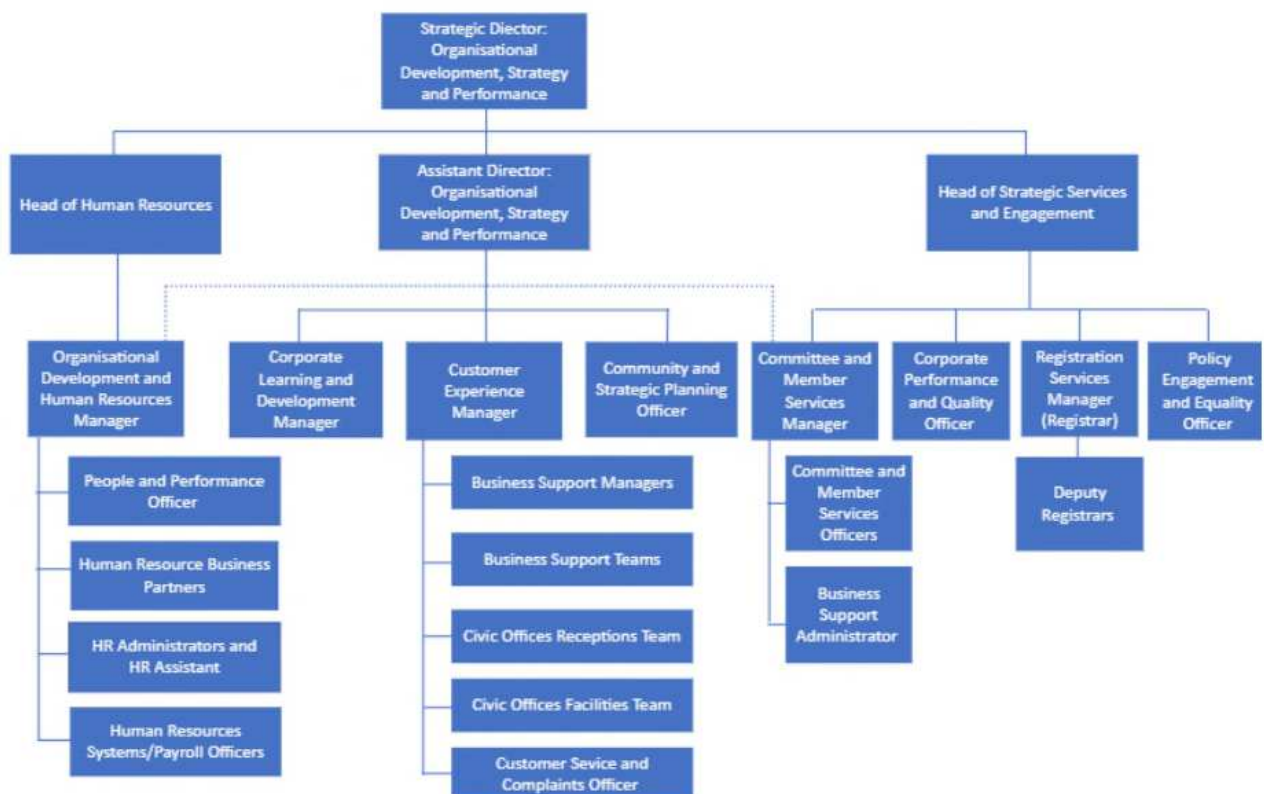
## 2.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICES AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE - 2024/25

The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Directorate has access to throughout 2024-25 to deliver its functions, activities and core business. Budgetary arrangements and allocations are subject to final variations.

### 2.1 Budget 2024/25

Budget: Service Areas	£
Organisational Development (Customer Services & Business Support)	2,187,187
Human Resources	717,739
Strategic Services & Engagement (Registration Services)	1,409,219
Gross Budget	4,314,145
Income	182,000
Net Budget ( <i>anticipated</i> ) for 2024-25	4,132,145

### 2.2 Directorate Services and Structure – 2024-2025





<b>Staffing</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>
<b>Strategic Director</b>	1
<b>Assistant Director – Organisational Development</b>	1
• Organisational Development (inc. Customer Services and Business Support) Staff	61
<b>Head of Service – Human Resources</b>	1
• Human Resources Staff	11
<b>Head of Service - Strategic Services and Engagement</b>	1
• Strategic Services and Engagement (inc. Registration Services) Staff	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>

### 2.3 Service Work Plan - 2024/25 - *Our Focus for the next 12 months*

We continue to improve how we do things, supporting the Council to deliver on its objectives and values - *to put the customer, whether internal or external, at the heart of everything we do*. The following will be our priority focus for the next 12 months. These extend to embedding service improvements within the everyday business of the Directorate.

<b><i>Supporting Staff and Members to Develop – Improve – Deliver</i></b>	
<b>Our Objectives</b>	
1	To continue to attract and retain staff, ensuring a multi-skilled and diverse workforce that is reflective of the people we serve.
2	To continue to engage and support our citizens and excel in meeting their needs and expectations through a range of initiatives, communication channels, digital systems and processes.
3	To expand the Council’s learning and development offering, promoting a culture of life-long learning.
4	To enhance employee engagement and improve our staff’s health and well-being through a range of initiatives
5	To support Directorates to make informed and timely decisions on the delivery of services.

**Service Name:** Organisation Development, Strategy & Performance

**Link to Community Plan Theme:**

**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**

*CMP 1.2 Economic Growth - We have more people working in a diverse economy*

to be aligned

<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
<p><b>1.0</b> To continue to attract and retain staff, ensuring a multi-skilled and diverse workforce that is reflective of the people we serve.</p>	<p><b>1.1</b> Align Council's corporate and local induction programme and implement a digital Corporate Induction/Welcome Pack</p>	<p>31/12/24</p>		<p>Skillgate Learning Platform introduced Managers, employees and mentors feel supported and have the information they need from Day 1 New starts have a positive, welcoming and inclusive introduction to their employment journey</p>	<p>Digital Welcome Pack in place Induction programmes aligned Decreased number of induction related queries to HR</p>
	<p><b>1.2</b> Review the Recruitment and Selection Process to ensure a streamlined effective and efficient process from start to finish for officers and applicants</p>	<p>31/03/25</p>		<p>Increased efficiency in the recruitment and selection admin processes Videos advertising and promoting opportunities Online platforms promoting available opportunities on work/student placements and apprenticeship schemes</p>	<p>Reduced number of job related queries from the public Level of public interest in MUDC vacancies Evidence-based vacancy tracking (automated Vacancy Authorisation Forms)</p>

	<p><b>1.3</b> Deliver a programme to develop Talent Management and Staff Retention within the Council</p>	<p>31/03/2025 (ongoing)</p>		<p>A succession plan based on workforce data</p> <p>A talent management programme to include mentoring opportunities</p> <p>Promotion Policy developed</p> <p>Opportunities for staff to learn and develop within the organisation</p> <p>Reduced staff turnover, increased staff retention</p>	<p>Succession plan, promotion policy and talent management plan in place</p> <p>Staff engagement in learning and development opportunities</p> <p>Staff turnover</p>
	<p><b>1.4</b> Finalise, consult on, approve and publish the new Corporate Plan 2024-2028</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor progress at 6 month intervals</li> </ul>	<p>30/06/2024</p>		<p>A Corporate Plan that sets the strategic direction of the organisation for the next four years and is reflective of the needs of our district, citizens and customers</p>	<p>Corporate Plan 2024-2028 agreed and published</p> <p>Six monthly progress review reports completed</p>
	<p><b>1.5</b> Develop and implement an integrated Equality and Diversity Plan</p>	<p>31/03/2025</p>		<p>Plan developed and implemented over a three year phased basis</p> <p>Skilled staff are attracted and retained</p> <p>Equal opportunity and diversity practices embedded within Council meeting the requirements of employment Equality legislation</p>	<p>Annual review and reporting of HR practices, policies and procedures to support equality obligations and workforce development</p>

**Service Name:** Organisation Development, Strategy & Performance

<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>	<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>
<i>CMP 4.2 Health &amp; Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.</i>	to be aligned

<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
<b>2.0</b> To continue to engage and support our citizens and excel in meeting their needs and expectations through a range of initiatives, communication channels, digital systems and processes.	<b>2.1</b> Align resources across the Business Support and Customer Services teams	31/03/25		More effective use of resources An agile workforce Upskilled staff with an embedded 'corporate' focus	Resource Plan approved and implemented
	<b>2.2</b> Support the Council's digital agenda by developing an electronic platform that supports Customer Services and Business Support Officers to address customer queries and enhance the customer experience	31/03/25 (ongoing)		Greater flexibility and accessibility - 24/7 customer access to online services More informative and up-to-date information shared with customers at point of source	Customer platform implemented and embedded for three services
	<b>2.3</b> Complete a review of the Council's Customer Service Policy Embed the Complaint's Handling Process and customer service standards across the organisation	31/03/25		Streamlined, efficient customer service practices Compliance with the NIPSO Complaints Handling requirements Improved customer understanding of Council's processes and satisfaction with the services provided	Customer Service Policy Review completed Increased use of online Complaints interface

	<p><b>2.4</b> Work with our digital agenda partners to review, develop, expand and improve internal systems and processes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment &amp; Selection Modules and statutory reporting procedures within existing systems</li> <li>• PeopleXD self-service functions</li> <li>• HR Support Ticketing</li> <li>• Skillgate and the PeopleXD Learning &amp; Development Module (training updates and refresher requirements)</li> <li>• Existing People XD Operating Procedures</li> <li>• CMIS minute function to produce action sheets</li> <li>• PeopleXD Social Hub communication streams promoting the benefits of working for Council</li> <li>• Performance improvement platform for Council</li> </ul>	<p>31/03/25 (ongoing)</p>		<p>Improved existing processes creating efficiencies to free up capacity to deliver other initiatives</p> <p>New ways of doing key tasks embedded</p> <p>Minimised duplication in IT systems</p> <p>Staff informed and communicated with in a timely manner</p> <p>Maximised use of the Council's Intranet and other online platforms</p> <p>Integrated management information system with reporting data available to management on a timely basis</p>	<p>Integrated Recruitment &amp; Selection module in place</p> <p>Skillgate and L&amp;D module in place</p> <p>Self Service functions and HR Support Ticketing tool introduced and rolled out</p> <p>Increased use of staff Intranet</p> <p>Increase in L&amp;D update and upskilled employees</p> <p>Actions sheets produced through the CMIS system</p> <p>PeopleXD Social Hub implemented</p>
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Service Name: Organisation Development, Strategy & Performance					
Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 3.1 Education &amp; Skills - Our People are better qualified &amp; more skilled</i>		to be aligned			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
3.0 Expand Council's learning and development offering, promoting a culture of life-long learning.	3.1 Provide induction training for new Elected Members (as required) and continue to provide developmental training	31/3/25		Members feel engaged and supported by participating in relevant training programmes More informed decision making	Elected Member Development Status retained Greater uptake and engagement in Members' training Progress towards achievement of Charter +
	3.2 Succession planning by role through implementation of an apprenticeship programme across the organisation	31/03/25 (ongoing)		Four apprenticeships agreed and progressing Staff retained and continuity in service delivery Continual access to a skilled workforce	Apprenticeships Procedures in place Number of apprenticeships progressing Number of mentors trained Staff retention levels

Service Name: Organisation Development, Strategy & Performance					
Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 1.2 Economic Growth - We have more people working in a diverse economy</i>		to be aligned			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
4.0 To enhance employee engagement and improve our staff's health and well-being through a range of initiatives.	4.1 Design and develop Phase 2 of the Personal Contribution & Support (PC&SP) process	31/06/24 (ongoing)		Corporate learning and development programme informed by PC&SP feedback  Targeted health and wellbeing initiatives informed by PC&SP feedback  Staff feel supported by the organisation	Process embedded across directorates  No. attending learning sessions  No. of completed PC&SP engagements  Staff/Manager satisfaction with the process
	4.2 Build on the Health & Wellbeing Business Case and Strategy  Develop and embed a culture of health and wellbeing across the Council	30/06/2024  31/03/25 (ongoing)		Reinvigorated Health & Wellbeing Working Group including representation from operational staff  Staff events promoting good mental health and well-being  Access to face to face counselling services  Improved staff health and wellbeing	Staff Engagement Survey feedback  Increased staff morale and engagement  Reduction in sickness absence  Increased presenteeism



	<b>4.3</b> Upskill Managers through the Tier 4 and Tier 3 Leaders Development Programme, better equipping them to manage, engage with and lead their staff	31/03/2025 (ongoing)		Enhanced culture of fairness, openness and transparency  Reduced day-to-day support required by managers from HR	Tier 4 and 3 Leaders Development Programme in place  Reduction in the number of formal grievances  Managers feel confident in their ability to manage staff
	<b>4.4</b> Deliver Council's commitments under its Equality Scheme and associated Equality and Disability Action Plans	31/03/2025		Compliance with Equality and Disability legislative duties placed on Council  Enhanced culture of equality and respect for diversity	Annual Progress Reports submitted to the Equality Commission NI
	<b>4.5</b> Deliver the Rural Needs Action Plan under Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016	31/03/2025		Compliance with Rural Needs legislative duties placed on Council  Completion of Rural Needs Impact Assessments and engagement with rural consultees  Enhanced understanding and due regard given to the rural needs of the district	Action plan commitments achieved  Annual Progress Report submitted to DAERA

Service Name: Organisation Development, Strategy & Performance					
Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 4.2 Health &amp; Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.</i>		to be aligned			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
5.0 To support Directorates to make informed and timely decisions on the delivery of services.	<p><b>5.1</b> Develop and Review Policies and Procedures</p> <p><b>To be developed:</b> Secondment; Leave; Drugs &amp; Alcohol; Apprenticeships; Capability; Hybrid Working procedure (part of Flexible Working)</p> <p><b>For Review:</b> Disciplinary &amp; Grievance; Management of Overtime; Management of Bereavement; Child Protection; Adult Safeguarding; Attendance management</p>	31/03/2025		<p>New and existing policies and procedures that inform and support decision making</p> <p>Staff engaged in policy development</p> <p>Management, employee and Union relations strengthened</p> <p>Risk levels offset, reduced or removed</p>	<p>Number of policies and procedures reviewed/developed and agreed by Council</p> <p>Risk mitigation measures identified and documented on the Council's risk registers</p>
	<p><b>5.2</b> Lead, co-ordinate and develop the 2024/25 PIP Plan and Annual Assessment Plan 2023 to 2024</p> <p>Review Council's Performance Framework &amp; Policy</p> <p>Liaise with the NI Audit Office (NIAO) regarding annual improvement audit (Section 95 Performance audit)</p>	<p>30/06/24</p> <p>30/09/24</p> <p>01/11/24</p>		<p>Council compliance with Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 – duty to improve</p> <p>Quality of Life for citizens improved</p>	<p>Draft NIAO Section 95 issued to Council with unqualified audit opinion by 27/11/24</p> <p>Council ratification of Plans</p> <p>Performance monitoring reports</p>

## 2.4 RISK MANAGEMENT OF DEPARTMENT/SERVICES

The purpose of risk management is to manage the barriers which prevent Council from achieving its objectives. This section includes the key risks (in summary form), which have been identified during the business planning process. The Council uses risk management to maximize opportunities and minimize risks. This improves its ability to deliver priorities and improve outcomes. This is why the Council deems it important to link business planning and risk management. Risk Management aims to:

- Help the Council achieve its overall aims and objectives.
- Manage the significant risks the Council faces to an acceptable level.
- Assist with the decision-making process.
- Implement the most effective measures to avoid, reduce and control those risks.
- Balance risk with opportunity.
- Manage risk and internal controls in the most effective way.

This table illustrates the risks identified to deliver the Directorate's business as outlined in service plan for 2024-25.

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	Levels of Sickness Absence: Failure to meet lost time sickness absence target of 5%	8	Occupational Health Service and Employee Assistance Support in place. Employee Health and Well-being Programme being further developed in 2024/2025 yr.
2.	Failure to make arrangements for employee weekly and monthly pay and salaries	8	Systems and processes in place to ensure standards are met to pass information to Payroll within timeframes.

Rating	Descriptor
16 - 25	Extreme Risk (immediate action required)
10 - 15	High Risk (urgent action required)
7 - 9	Moderate Risk (action required)
1 - 6	Low Risk (keep under review)

### **3.0 OUR STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

In carrying out our responsibilities, the Service is cognisant of the statutory duties placed upon the council in the delivery of its services. Whilst the Service operates, under various obligations it is however mindful of the changing context in which it operates and endeavours to mainstream the equality and rural needs duties in the design and delivery of our functions.

#### **3.1 EQUALITY DUTY**

The council and by consequence our Service is committed to contributing towards its part in working towards fulfilling obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to ensure adequate time, staff and resources to fulfil our duties.

The Service will also work towards adherence to the council's Equality Scheme ensuring equality duties, together with promoting positive attitudes towards persons with a disability and the participation of people with a disability in public life when carrying out our functions.

#### **3.2 RURAL NEEDS DUTY**

The Service will be mindful of the rural needs of its customers when carrying out its functions and subsequent responsibilities, particularly in developing any new policies, plans or strategies throughout the year. In line with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 we will give due regard to rurality in terms of needs in carrying out the activities within our Service.