

Report on	Improvement Objectives: - 2024-2025 (proposed) and Timeline for Public Consultation
Date of Meeting	Thursday 8 th February 2024
Reporting Officer	J Mc Guckin, Head of Strategic Services & Engagement
Contact Officer	L Jenkins, Corporate Performance & Quality Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To consider and agree the proposed improvement objectives for 2024/25, as set in compliance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (the Act) and subsequent guidance as issued by the Department for Communities (LG21/2016 onwards), and establish timelines for a public consultation exercise relating to the proposed improvement objectives.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>The 2014 Local Government Act, section 84, places a general duty on the Council to “...<i>make arrangements to secure continuous improvement</i>...” in the exercise of its functions. Section 85 of the Act requires a council, for each financial year, to set itself improvement objectives for improving the exercise of its functions and to have in place arrangements to achieve those objectives. Section 87 of the Act also outlines that a Council; in deciding how to discharge its duty under sections 84 and 85 of the Act, <u>must consult</u> with persons appearing to the Council, “<i>to be representative of:</i></p> <p><i>a); persons liable to pay rates in respect of hereditaments in the district; b) persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the council; and c) persons appearing to the council to have an interest in the district.</i></p>
2.2.	Each year the Council develops an annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), containing improvement objectives, with associated activity/measures and outcomes for citizens and local communities. The plan also includes the statutory performance indicators and standards as outlined in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, as well as Council’s suite of Corporate Health Indicators (measures).

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>General Duty to Improve and Departmental Guidance</u></p> <p>The Department for Communities (DfC) on taking forward the general duty on improvement requires that the council consult on their improvement objectives. This requirement on consultation falls from section 87 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. There is no statutory duty to consult on the improvement plan, but rather the improvement objectives.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Review of the current Improvement Objectives for 2024/25</u></p> <p>A self-analysis exercise was undertaken by Council to review the previous year's draft improvement objectives to establish their continued relevancy for the period 2024/25. The exercise was undertaken in order to ensure that the improvement objectives were based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thorough, evidence-based understanding of the communities Council serves, • Local needs and Council's capacity to address those needs. • Improvement objectives correspond directly with the council's priorities for improvement in the hierarchy of plans, and • The context of the current economy • Short, medium and long term needs of the Council • Many drivers and enablers both external and internal relating to improvement
3.3	<p><u>Proposed Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2024/25</u></p> <p>Senior Management were presented with an analysis/background paper by the Strategy and Engagement Team. The paper highlighted the current improvement objectives (which are viewed in the main in the medium term), the status of the current four improvement projects (and their associated activities/measures), current contextual issues relating to drivers and enablers (or push/pull factors) in deciding how to move forward with improvement objectives.</p> <p>Senior management, were content with the review of the proposed improvement objectives, which are outlined below in table one. The proposed improvement objectives will form the basis of Council's the second year of the two-year performance improvement plan (PIP plan 2023/24 to 2024/25); that is for the financial year 2024/25.</p>

Further detail of the improvement objectives is available in Appendix One (Proposed - Corporate Performance Improvement Objectives: 2024-25). Appendix One includes a summary of the rationale for undertaking the improvement objectives, how the objective links to the wider District Community plan and a brief outline of the proposed activity. Each improvement objective will have an assigned Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), along with a project team, to develop and embed a body of work to deliver improvement outcomes for citizens specific to the improvement objectives.

Table One - Proposed Improvement Objectives 2024-25

Proposed Improvement Objectives 2024/25	
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
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
3	To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and environment
4	We will contribute to the on-going regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people

3.4 Consultation & Improvement Plan 2024/25

It is recommended that arrangements to consult on the Improvement Objectives, as referred to in section 2.1 above, commence following the Policy & Resources Committee meeting and run from February to April 2024.

The following is an outline timeline for the consultation and development of the Council's 2024-25 Improvement Plan:

- Consultation from Monday 26th February to Friday 19th of April 2024.
- Outcomes Report on the Consultation considered by May P&R Committee
- Draft Performance Improvement Plan (2024-2025) to be considered at June P&R Committee

4.0 Other Considerations

4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: n/A.
4.2	<u>Screening & Impact Statements</u>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That members consider and approve the four draft improvement objectives for 2024-25, and the initiation of consultation together with associated timeline.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix One - Proposed Corporate Improvement Objectives 2024-25 rationale.