



05 September 2019

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to be held in  
The Chamber, Cookstown at Mid Ulster District Council, Council Offices,  
COOKSTOWN, BT80 8DT on Thursday, 05 September 2019 at 19:00 to transact the  
business noted below.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Tohill  
Chief Executive

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## AGENDA

### OPEN BUSINESS

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

### Matters for Decision

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 4. | Upgrade of current Lighting at Magherafelt Depot and adjacent Carpark.  | 3 - 8   |
| 5. | Council Estate Capital Refurbishment Funding  | 9 - 26  |
| 6. | Beechland Park, Clady - Proposed Transfer to Northern Ireland Housing Executive of Lands for Community Development Scheme | 27 - 32 |
| 7. | Request to Illuminate Council Property  | 33 - 34 |
| 8. | NILGOSC Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Local Government Pension Scheme for Northern Ireland (LGPS (NI))           | 35 - 84 |

### Matters for Information

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| 9  | Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of meeting held on 4 July 2019 | 85 - 90  |
| 10 | Marketing & Communications Update                                     | 91 - 96  |
| 11 | Annual Report, Self-Assessment and Benchmarking on the                | 97 - 174 |

## Performance Improvement Plan 2018-19

**Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.**

### Matters for Decision

12. Land Acquisitions and Disposals
13. Staffing Matters for Decision
14. Reservoirs Safety Management
15. Transfer of Council Owned Lands situated at Railway Park, Ballysaggart
16. Agreements Required for the Purposes of Sewer Adoption for Mr Desmond Ryan in relation to Council owned Lands situated at Shore Road, Ballyronan
17. Review of Financial Statements 2018-19

### Matters for Information

18. Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 4 July 2019
19. Staffing Matters for Information
20. Managing Attendance
21. Appointment of Political Members to PCSPS
22. Financial report for 3 months ended 30 June 2019
23. Contracts and DAC
24. Planning System Replacement Update

<b>Report on</b>	Upgrade of current lighting at Magherafelt Depot and adjacent Carpark.
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	10th September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Terry Scullion - Head of Property Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Eamon McDonnell, Technical/Compliance Officer

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To seek members' approval to upgrade and fund the replacement of existing exterior lighting at Magherafelt Council Depot and Council Offices Car park to energy efficient LED lighting.
	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Magherafelt Council Depot and adjacent Car park consists of a busy yard and a large council staff car park servicing both the Council offices and Depot. Both of these areas have a considerable amount pedestrian and vehicular traffic entering, and exiting the property throughout each daily.
2.2	The external lighting is on for a considerable amount of time over the winter period. The depot is a busy facility that operates seven days per week, including early mornings. There are a significant number external lights covering these areas.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	In total there are 102 external lights ranging in wattage with the vast majority 400w. Currently repairs and replacement of the existing lighting is carried out as required through a third party electrical contractor, from a Council procurement framework. The current lights range in age from 1995 to 2011. Due to the age of the existing lighting, the cost of repairs are expected to increase in future years. A small section of lighting was recently upgraded to LED to improve the quality of CCTV footage. New LED Lights are recommended to last for 50,000 hours compared to standard lights lasting 2,000 hours.
3.2	Following completion of a similar scheme at Meadowbank Sports Arena, there are a number of locations across the Council estate that would benefit from a similar 'Spend to Save' lighting upgrade. However this site has been selected due to the number of lights, consumption and maintenance demands.

3.3	Having reviewed the level of energy consumption and lighting application, LED lighting is considered as a viable alternative. A full breakdown of the costs associated with replacing the existing lights with new energy efficient LED's is included in Appendix 1. This includes a breakdown of the running costs for the existing lights; material and labour costs for replacement LED lights; the expected running costs of the new lights; and the anticipated payback period of investment in the new lighting.
3.4	<p>This 'spend to save' lighting scheme advantages include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy efficiency improvement of approximately 48.7% compared to the existing lights, reducing the annual spend on electricity,</li> <li>• LED lighting has been proven to last longer than conventional lighting, reducing maintenance costs over the longer term,</li> <li>• The lighting illuminates immediately on start-up, no warming up period required,</li> <li>• The light fittings are physically more durable as they are not manufactured from glass.</li> <li>• Significant improvement in light quality at ground level</li> </ul>
3.5	The main disadvantage is the initial investment requirement on the LED lighting and the associated installation costs. However there is a payback period of 3.84 years. In addition there is currently a grant available from Energia for up to 20% on the cost of the materials. This grant is based on a first come first served basis until the allocated funds have been committed or expended. There is no guarantee that if an application was made that funding would still be available, but if submitted and successful the investment required would be lower.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p><b>Financial:</b> This work is considered to be a significant energy improvement initiative, rather just than planned or reactive maintenance. Therefore, funding is requested from Council revenue reserves. The investment required is £27,000 excluding any potential grant. However, a grant application is proposed.</p> <p>An ongoing annual saving of some £7,000 in electricity costs is anticipated from this investment as set out in the attached Appendix.</p>
	<p><b>Human:</b> Officers time in preparing and managing the scheme, including making the grant application and coordinating the work programme to minimise the impact on facility operations.</p>
	<p><b>Risk Management:</b> Council has a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Order to its staff and the public who use the facility to provide a safe and adequately lit</p>

	environment. This project will help mitigate that risk by upgrading lighting provision in the facility.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications:  None.
	Rural Needs Implications:  None.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members are asked to approve the release of £27,000 plus 10% contingency totalling £29,700 to undertake the LED lighting upgrade as outlined at Magherafelt Council Depot and adjacent Car park using an approved Council procurement framework Contractor.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix 1 – Summary Lighting costs



## Appendix 1 – Summary Lighting costs

### Running Costs per year for the Existing Lighting at Magherafelt Council Depot and adjacent Council Carpark

Section	Existing lighting	No. Req'd	Average (mode) Watts	Approx Power Used (W)	Total Power Used (W)	Annual Run Hours	Total kWh consumption	Unit cost of electricity (based on winter peak)	Total Cost
Magherafelt Council Depot Yard and adjacent Car park	54No. Metal Halide	102	400	3876.4	40328.2	2000	80,656	£0.17	<b>£13,711.59</b>
	28No. Highbay								
	6No. IP65								
	2No. ARF								
	12No. Lowbays								

### Forecasted Running Costs per year based on Energy Efficient LED Lighting

Section	Proposed Lighting	No. Req'd	Average (mode) Watts	Approx. Power Used (W)	Total Power Used (W)	Annual Running Hours	Total kWh consumption	Unit cost of electricity	Total Cost
Magherafelt Council Depot Yard and adjacent Car park	47 No. 150watt LED Floodlight	102	150	150	13790	2000	39,344	£0.17	<b>£6,688.60</b>
	6No. 5ft LED Twin IP65 CP55								
	2No. 5ft LED Single IP65 CP30								
	40No. 150watt LED Highbay								
	7No. 50watt LED Floodlight								

## Installation Costs for the new Fittings

- Estimated material costs for new LED fittings - **£14,235.00**
- Estimate cost for the labour and plant hire costs - **£12,765**

## Summary of Costs without Energia grant on Materials

Project Investment (materials only)	£14,235
Project Investment (labour & plant hire)	£12,765
<b>Total Project Spend</b>	<b>£27,000</b>

Current electric Spend	£13,711.59 (based on peak rate)
Post investment electric spend	£6688.60 (based on peak rate)
Potential annual saving	<b>£7,022.99</b>

**Payback on total overall investment – 3.84 years**

## Summary of Costs including 20% Energia grant on materials

Project Investment (materials only)	£11,388
Project Investment (labour & plant hire)	£12,765
<b>Total Project Spend</b>	<b>£24,153</b>

**Payback on total overall investment – 3.43 years**



<b>Report on</b>	Council Estate Capital Refurbishment Funding
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Terry Scullion, Head of Property Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Terry Scullion, Head of Property Services

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To seek members approval for Capital funded refurbishment work of council assets across the Council Estate.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Property Services have significant repair and maintenance undertakings across the council estate, both in terms of Grounds and Property. At present maintenance is undertaken daily on a reactive basis due to the size, age and condition of the Estate, in line with annual revenue budget setting cycle.
2.2	<p>However there are lot of areas that fall out of the scope of daily maintenance that it isn't, prudent or sustainable, to fund through revenue budget provision such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement and upgrading to meet new service needs.</li> <li>• Refurbishment to new condition to extend the capacity of an asset</li> <li>• Capital replacement of major components.</li> <li>• Upgrading to meet statutory requirements.</li> <li>• Operational tasks to enable occupancy and use (cleaning, security, waste removal).</li> <li>• Construction of new assets;</li> <li>• Major restoration as a result of natural or other disaster.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	In April 2019 Council approved £250,000 from Council's Capital Programme for property infrastructure repairs in the 2019/20 financial year. This funding is being used to address defective, or non-compliant assets in need of refurbishment or replacement, and cannot be defined as routine or annual maintenance funded from revenue

	<p>reserves. The works approved were not an exhaustive list of the total refurbishment needs of the Estate, but reflected the immediate requirements to enable forward planning of resources at the start of the current financial year. See appendix 1 for an update on progress on these schemes using the funding previously approved.</p>
3.2	<p>However there are a number of council assets in need of additional investment and refurbishment. Those proposed for refurbishment have been identified in appendix 2 enclosed.</p>
3.3	<p>The appendix outlines what is driving the need for works proposed, the estimated investment required ranked in the following order of priority based on risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority 1 - Maintenance in respect of health and safety issues</li> <li>Priority 2 - Statutory maintenance requirements; security, fire, gas, electrical and access systems</li> <li>Priority 3 - Structural maintenance for all MUDC owned property assets</li> <li>Priority 4 - Building fabric maintenance for all MUDC owned building assets except unoccupied assets, assets identified for disposal and ancillary assets, and</li> <li>Priority 5 - Maintenance of unoccupied assets, assets identified for disposal and ancillary assets</li> </ul> <p>The list categorized work into the first three priorities, with the Prior one being the most critical.</p>
3.4	<p>A further £220,350 (excluding VAT) of capital funding is sought to carry out Priority 1 works, and progress with Priority 2 works until funding provision is exhausted. It is proposed to utilise existing Council framework contractors to ensure works are delivered during the current and next financial year, were feasible to do so and within agreed framework rates. Other works may require quotation or public tender, depending on value.</p>
3.5	<p>Other property enhancements identified during the year that can't be defined as maintenance will continue to come before Committee to seek funding, either from revenue or capital reserves as necessary.</p>

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p>Financial: The total funding required is estimated to be £220,350 (excluding VAT), however these are subject to value engineering through Council framework contractors, quotation or tender.</p>
	<p>Human: Staff resources to procure, deliver and supervise works as detailed, and engagement with any Client services to minimise any facility inconvenience as a result of work. Works scheduling will be dependent on staff resources.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: Risks associated with maintenance of the estate will be managed in the following order of priority as detailed within section 3.3 of the main report.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	N/A
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: N/A</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members are requested to note the content of the report and approve the release of up to £220,350 (excluding VAT) from the Capital Programme for the refurbishment works outlined for Priority 1 and Priority 2 works.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix 1 – Implementation Update on previous Estate Infrastructure Capital Refurbishment funding approved in April 2019
6.2	Appendix 2 – Current Estate Infrastructure Capital Refurbishment requirements



**Appendix 1 - Implementation Update on Estate Infrastructure Refurbishment Proposals 2019/20 approved through the Capital Programme (April 2019)**

<b>Work Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Refurbishment/Enhancement Details</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Status (August 2019)</b>
Maghera Leisure Centre	Oil Tank/bund replacements  Tank upgrades are required to comply with the Oil Storage regulations	On this site there is no future opportunity to convert to gas. Heating Oil tank and bund replacement works to meet environmental compliance legislation. Tank capacity will be upgraded.	£20,000	Cost £19,725  Replacement tank ordered through Council framework contractor. Civil works and Installation planned for mid-September '19.
Clogher Old School	Oil Tank/bund replacements  Tank upgrades are required to comply with the Oil Storage regulations	On this site there is no future opportunity to convert to gas. Oil tank and bund replacement works to meet environmental compliance legislation. Tank capacity may be adjusted.	£2,250	Cost £2,250  Completed w/e 16 <sup>th</sup> August 2019
Cookstown Office Roof	Cookstown office roof is at the end	One flat roof on the original part of the building is currently leaking at a number of locations. An	£45,000	Tender process completed among Council Joinery

	<p>of life and a size section of roof requires replacement.</p> <p>There also needs to be a fall arrest system installed to ensure safe access is available at the roof, and guarding to prevent unauthorised access.</p>	<p>independent survey has confirmed the roof is at the end of life and needs replaced. Patching has been undertaken in recent years to ensure leaks are not affecting the office accommodation but are no longer a sustainable solution.</p> <p>In order to comply with health and safety regulations the roof should be fitted with a fall arrest system and guarding to prevent unauthorised access.</p>		<p>framework contractors in June 2019.</p> <p>Cost £63,600. Due to replacement technique of wood-wool-slab it must remain in situ. Due to building being occupied, simple removal and replacement isn't feasible.</p> <p>Funding shortfall requested and subject to approval work will be scheduled.</p>
Planting and Landscaping at Hill of the O'Neill's	This is a high profile council site were planting on the sloped banks along the access route is failing.	It is proposed that the bank to the rear of the site is re-landscaped to improve the visual appearance of aces to the rear of the site. At present the planted area is failing and is being chemically sprayed to prevent weeds from growing as a temporary maintenance solution until a replacement scheme is established.	£26,000	<p>£29,910 following a quotation in July 2019</p> <p>Works scheduled for autumn/winter during bare root season.</p>
Reservoir Towers, Thomas Street	This listed structure is council owned and it is in a poor state at present.	Reservoir tower is a listed structure sited along the public footpath at Thomas street and it is also the entrance to the town pathway. Due to the state of the structure major refurbishment is required to prevent the further decay of the structure and in turn protect the public based on a detailed survey.	£27,000	£27,000 following a quotation in June 2019 the successful specialist organisation subsequently withdrew on 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2019 due to workload pressure.

				A new quotation exercise will be carried out in September from organisations with conservation experience.
Cookstown Leisure Centre	Full fabric and structural condition survey required.	<p>Due to the age of this building a condition survey of the building structure and M&amp;E is required. This will provide necessary direction in what current maintenance and future refurbishment is needed.</p> <p>The condition survey shall be completed by a surveyor and a structural engineer with comment being needed on condition and long/short term maintenance requirement. This will complete the suite of condition surveys in place for the three largest leisure centres in Council's estate.</p>	£20,000	£17,500 following quotation exercise. Survey commenced 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2019.
Tobermore Football Pitch	Sewage tank and drainage infrastructure upgrade for foul sewage	<p>At present due to the low water table at the site the sewage system is not operating to required standards. The drainage infrastructure to the sewage treatment plant needs replaced.</p> <p>A full drainage project is required to ensure consent to discharge conditions are being met at the site.</p>	£17,000	Specification being prepared for quotation in September 2019 through Council Civils contractors in September 2019.
Northland Row, Dungannon	Essential repairs required at the Organisational	There have been a number of repairs identified via the following methods:	£35,000	Further intrusive building survey obtained from specialist in August 2019

	development office situated at Northland row, Dungannon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire risk assessment and also the</li> <li>• Periodic electrical inspection at this building</li> <li>• Condition survey of the building (Dry rot and damp proofing)</li> </ul> <p>These surveys and reports have concluded that significant works need to be undertaken to ensure the building is safe for its occupants.</p>		<p>identifying more extensive dry rot.</p> <p>No electrical work has been completed due to identification of dry rot in the building. Quantity Surveyor is currently providing costings for remedial works for the entire building, including specialist services and builders attendances.</p>
Dungannon Office	Upgrade of the fire alarm system	<p>Following an insurance inspection at the council offices in Dunganon it was highlighted that the existing fire detection system was not up to current safety standards and not enough detectors are present.</p> <p>It is recommended that the fire detection system is upgraded within the building.</p>	£28,000	Work under review due to periodic electrical inspection report in August 2019 identifying that major switchboards require replacement to meet current standards.
Multiple Sites	Resurfacing and lining of parking bays with directional/instructions to be completed.	<p>At present council are in ownership of a number facilities that have tarmac entranceways and parking areas.</p> <p>The below facilities require replacement wearing courses and lining as wearing courses are at the end of life:</p>	£40,000	<p>Work agreed at tendered rates through Council Resurfacing contractor.</p> <p>The cost for both sites is £36,500. Work in Dungannon is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup></p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance avenue to Magherafelt Office</li> <li>• Entrance and front car parks at Dungannon Offices</li> </ul> <p>Regular patching is being undertaken at these sites but replacement-wearing courses are required, including white lining for parking bays and instructional markings are required.</p>		September. Work in Magherafelt is scheduled for 28 <sup>th</sup> and 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2019.
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>			<b>£260,250</b>	

## Appendix 2 - Capital Funding Request for Refurbishment Works (August 2019)

	Work Location	Description	Refurbishment/Enhancement Details	Estimated Cost (excl VAT)	Budget requirement	Risk Management Priority
1	Drumglass Old Burial Ground	Repair retaining wall and Tree removal	<p>Existing retaining stone wall is showing signs of structural failure and an adjacent mature tree is contributing to this defect. If this retaining wall fails it may burst onto the public road way and expose grave contents. The mature tree is also near an overhead electric line. Remediation works are required in order to prevent further damage following an engineer's report on the wall and arboricultural report on the mature trees on site.</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p>	£17,000	<p>Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.</p> <p><i>'Refurbishment to extend the life of asset'</i></p>	Priority 1: Public safety remedial works to prevent exposing graves. In addition to statutory requirements under Burial Grounds Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992
2	Various Operational Cemeteries	Cemetery Memorial Safety Testing in Operational Cemeteries	Due to the nature of this public facility testing of memorials over 3 metres high may be required to be carried out by a structural engineer to ensure they are safe. The purchase of	£12,500	Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as	Priority 1: Maintenance in respect of health and safety issues and associated duty of care to staff,

			specialist equipment (e.g. gantry) and testing aids for in house operatives in also required.  <b>Drivers for this proposal:</b>  <b>Health &amp; Safety</b>		this falls out of the remit of maintenance.  <i>'Upgrade to meet Health and Safety Requirements'</i>	visitors and other members of the public to ensure memorial safety as per BS 8415
3	Cookstown LC and Maghera LC	Pool & Spa pool Filter replacement at two leisure centres	Sand filter replacement and general filter replacement required at each of the swimming pool in Cookstown LC, and the Spa Pool in Maghera LC. This is required every four years and was last replaced in 2015.  <b>Drivers for this proposal:</b>  <b>Health and Safety</b>	£45,000	Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.  <i>'Upgrade to meet a statutory requirement'</i>	Priority 1: Maintenance in respect of health and safety issues and associated with water hygiene standards and Legionella Management
4	Dungannon Garage	Replacement and installation of a HGV Vehicle & Diverse Plant Lift	Existing HGV 40,000Kg vehicle lift in Dungannon depot installed in 1996 is at end of life and this is highlighted on recent LOLER inspections. Parts are not manufactured anymore and repair is not possible.	£50,000	Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of	Priority 1: Health and Safety priority to the operatives using the lift and maintenance of Council's fleet to ensure

			<b>Drivers for this proposal:</b>  <b>Health &amp; Safety to carry out essential vehicle maintenance safely</b>		the remit of maintenance.  <i>'Upgrade to meet a statutory requirement'</i>	Roadworthiness. There is also a statutory requirement under Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
5	Magherafelt Council Office	Replacement and upgrade of the water storage Tank	A 3,000 litre cold water storage tank located in Magherafelt office has corroded to the extent that it is now leaking. It was installed as part of the original building in the early '90's. This leak started in June 2019 and if not replaced could prevent the plumbing system within the building from operating.  <b>Drivers for this proposal:</b>  <b>Capital replacement of major components.</b>  <b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	£18,500	Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.  <i>'Upgrade to meet Health and Safety requirements'</i>	Priority 1: Maintenance in respect of health and safety issues and associated with Legionella Management and bacterial growth in water which increases with tank corrosion

6	Cookstown Council Office	Replacement and upgrade of ground floor roof area, including a fall arrest system and roof guarding to prevent unauthorised access	<p>Approximately £45,000 has already been secured to carry replace and existing flat roof area over the ground floor office of the Cookstown Office. The section of roof has reached the end of its serviceable life with ongoing water ingress into the offices below.</p> <p>Following a mini-competition exercise amongst Council's Joinery framework contractor's the actual cost of work has increased to £63,600. Resulting in a shortfall in the estimated cost of £18,600.</p> <p>In light of subsequent discussions on Council's Estategy Strategy, in relation to this building, an investment decision is required on whether to proceed with this work and fund the shortfall required.</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>To enable continued service delivery to the public.</b></p>	£18,600	<p>Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.</p> <p><i>'Capital replacement of major component</i></p>	<p>Priority 1: Maintenance in respect of health and safety for all the daily users of the building which is directly related to the Health &amp; Safety at Work Act. In addition to security of the building.</p>
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			<b>Health &amp; Safety to ensure continued operation</b>			
7	Dungannon Council Office	Electrical compliance refurbishment and upgrade	<p>Electrical upgrades and building rewire required due to extent of maintenance and repair following periodic electrical inspection. This inspection report outlines significant defects with the original wiring infrastructure installed over 40 years old.</p> <p>The appointment of a M&amp;E Specialist to provide an independent condition report on current electrical and wiring infrastructure with indicative upgrade and refurbishment costs, and a specification for system refurbishment works and upgrade to meet future business needs</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>To enable continued service delivery to the public.</b></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p>	£7,000	<p>Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.</p> <p><i>'Refurbishment to new condition to extend the capacity of an asset</i></p>	Priority 1: Enabling works with consider Health and Safety requirements for building users

8	Dungannon Depot (Oaks Road)	Upgrade of Fire Detection System and Fire Risk Assessment compliance works.	<p>The fire alarm and detection system has deteriorated to the extent major upgrade/repairs are required to ensure the system is operational and effective.</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p>	£8,000	<p>Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.</p> <p><i>'Upgrade to meet a statutory requirement'</i></p>	Priority 1: Health and Safety requirement for building users
<b>ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE FOR PRIORITY 1 WORKS</b>				<b>£178,350</b>		
10	Dungannon Park	Tree Remedial Works & Replanting	<p>Arborist's report obtained specifying the clearfell of mature conifer trees at back laneway due to disease (i.e. <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i>) in planting (0.84 hectares). This needs to be done at the earliest opportunity for ground preparation and replanting with</p>	£9,000	Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.	Priority 2: Statutory maintenance requirement under the Forestry Act (NI) 2010 and the Forestry (Felling of Trees) Regulations (NI) 2013

			<p>native species before the current bare root planting season to minimise the biodiversity impact.</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>Environmental restoration following natural event</b></p>		<i>'Upgrade to meet an Environmental requirement'</i>	
11	Multiple Council Locations (i.e. Greenvale LC, Meadowbank SA, Cookstown LS & Burnavon)	Condition Report & Specification for Upgrade/Replacement	<p>Appointment of a M&amp;E Specialist to provide an independent condition report on each heating installation, costed options for replacement to alternative fuel types (e.g. Gas), and a specification for respective system upgrades or replacement, including fuel storage compliance to inform future investment decisions.</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Compliance</b></p>	£25,000	<p>Funding required from Council's Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.</p> <p><i>'Capital replacement of major components'</i></p>	Priority 2: Statutory requirement under Legionella Management Regulations, Oil Storage regulations, and prudent use of Council's energy resources.
12	Magherafelt Garage	Diverse Plant Lift required.	A small plant and vehicle lift is required to ensure safe access	£8,000	Funding required from Council's	Priority 2: Statutory requirement under



			<p>is provided to technicians within the garage. At present the Magherafelt garage is lacking a lift of this size and this is a Health and Safety inspection and manual handling issue.</p> <p><b>Drivers for this proposal:</b></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety to carry out essential small plant maintenance safely</b></p>		<p>Capital Programme for estate refurbishment as this falls out of the remit of maintenance.</p> <p><i>'Upgrade to meet a statutory requirement'</i></p>	<p>Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)</p>
<b>ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE FOR PRIORITY 2 WORKS</b>				<b>£42,000</b>		
<b>Priority 1 Total</b>				<b>£178,350</b>		
<b>Priority 2 Total</b>				<b>£42,000</b>		
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR ALL PRIORITIES (Excl VAT)</b>				<b>£220,350</b>		



<b>Report on</b>	Beechland Park, Clady – Proposed Transfer to Northern Ireland Housing Executive of Lands for Community Development Scheme
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Claire McNally, Council Solicitor
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Nigel Hill, Head of Parks

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

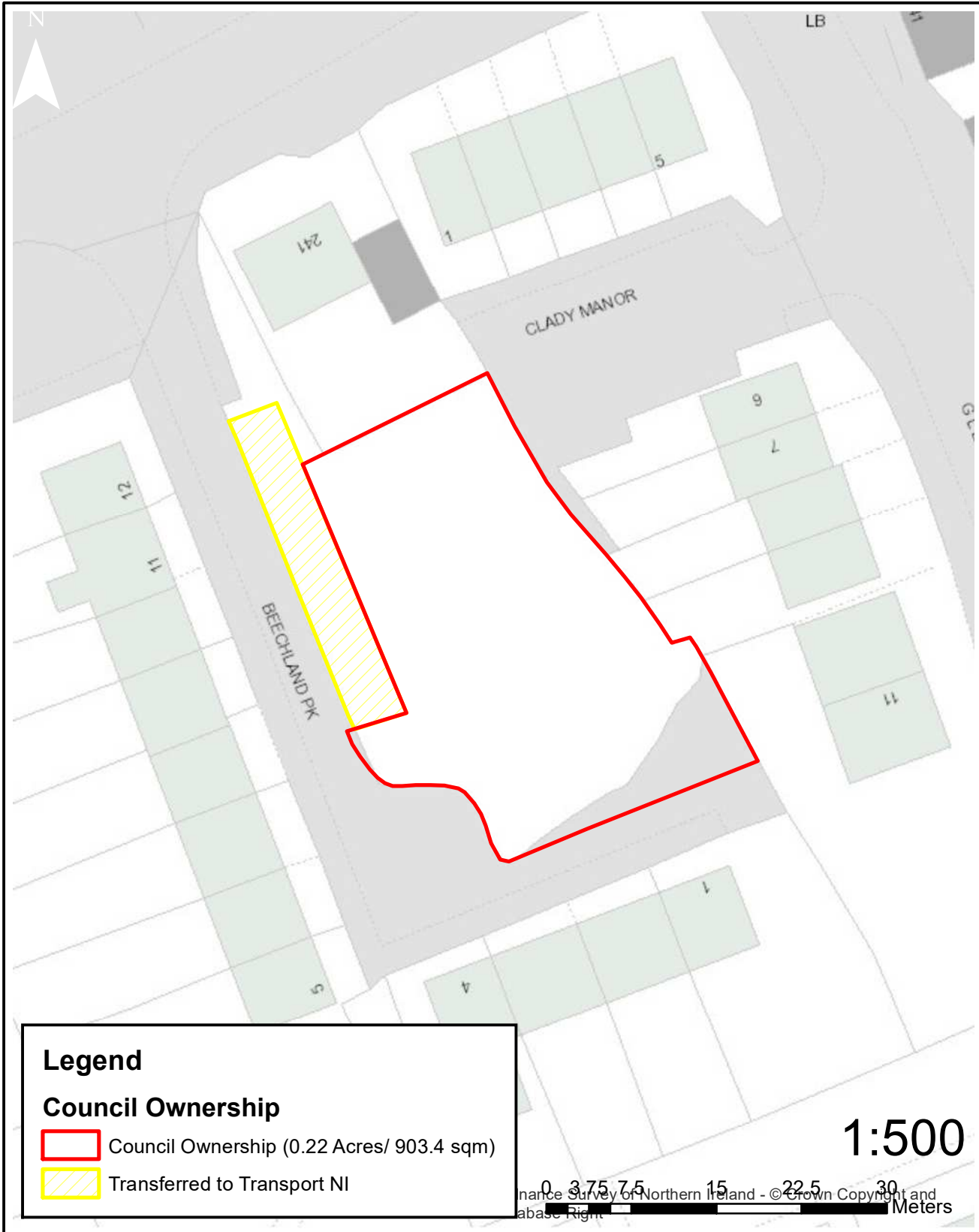
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To update Members' in relation to the transfer of lands situated at Beechland Park, Clady to Northern Ireland Housing Executive ("NIHE") in order to progress the proposed Community Development Scheme at Beechland Park, Clady; and
1.2	To seek Members' approval in relation to options regarding the transfer of these lands.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The Council owns an area of green space within Beechland Park, Clady. This is a parcel of land in the Beechland area surrounded by houses, which is currently undeveloped and sections are being used for unofficial car parking for residents of Beechland Park. Discussions identified the open space area as potentially surplus to requirements and therefore could be considered as available for an alternative development proposal.
2.2	An opportunity arose to link this land with NIHE's Community Development Scheme in order to create a local resource for the community, addressing current issues associated to car parking and recreational greenspace. This required the Council to enter into discussions with NIHE regarding the possibility of a transfer of land to enable the site to be set aside as a community area.
2.3	The Council has no current plans to develop this section of land. It is currently maintained by the Council's Property Services. The Council had previously considered disposal of the lands to the former Department of Rural Development (DRD) for the extension of private car parking at Beechland but this was not progressed due to budget constraints

2.4	A previous report was taken to Council in October 2018, where approval was granted for the Council to agree in principle to transfer lands at Beechland Park, Clady, to NIHE and for the Council to agree the engagement with Land and Property Services to seek a valuation and to approve that negotiations with NIHE are progressed in relation to the proposed transfer.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The Market Value of the lands were considered by LPS at the amount of £3,500. The lands were valued by LPS in the same approach as they would be valued for NIHE when they are disposing land to the Council.
3.2	NIHE has confirmed that they are not willing to pay to have the lands transferred, given there is a community benefit and in addition, NIHE would have to bear the costs for development of the lands and ongoing maintenance.
3.3	Property Services confirmed that the Council's approximate annual holding costs in relation to lands at Beechland Park, Clady, are in the region of £3,000 in terms of maintenance. LPS were asked to reconsider the Market Value of the lands in light of such holding costs to the Council, however, the valuation remained unchanged.
3.4	Under section 96(5) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 ("1972 Act"), it is a statutory requirement of a council, <i>'that any disposal of land shall be at the best prices or for the best rent or otherwise on the best terms that can be reasonably obtained'</i>
3.5	<p>The options available to the Council, in the circumstances, are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Council reengage with NIHE to ascertain whether they'd be willing to take a lease of these lands instead of a transfer. However, there will still be a rental value/premium attached to such a situation and so it is unlikely that NIHE will find this option attractive;</li> <li>(ii) Do not transfer the lands to NIHE unless NIHE agree to pay the Market Value amount of £3,500 as considered by LPS. However, this is likely to signal an end to the proposed Community Development Scheme;</li> <li>(iii) Transfer the lands to NIHE for less than the LPS Valuation. In this instance, the Council is likely to have to seek consent from the Department for Communities in order to ensure compliance with its obligations under Section 96(5) of the 1972 Act.</li> </ul>
3.6	Members are asked to consider the above options in relation to proceeding with the transfer of the lands situated at Beechland Park, Clady.

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: The Council will be responsible for the payment of LPS valuation costs. It will also be responsible for its own legal fees in respect of the sale of the lands from existing legal services budget.
	Human: Officer time within existing staff.
	Risk Management:
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That Members' confirm the option on how they require the Council to proceed in relation to the transfer of lands situation at Beechland Park, Clady.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix A – Map delineating the lands situated at Beechland Park, Clady.



## Beechland Park Clady



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

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Author: Nicky Doris

Date: 01/03/2019

Dept: ICT

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<b>Report on</b>	Request to Illuminate Council Property – Sept 2019
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To consider requests to (i) illuminate/light-up the Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre on Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> October in support of Baby Loss Awareness Week and (ii) illuminate/light-up all designated properties on 6 <sup>th</sup> October in support of Motor Neurone Disease (MND) to mark 40 years since the Association was established.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
	<b><u>Baby Loss Awareness Week</u></b>
2.1	Representatives from the Dungannon Sands Support Group have corresponded with the Council requesting that Ranfurly House be lit up pink and blue in support of Baby Loss Awareness Week, which takes place during 9 <sup>th</sup> to 15 <sup>th</sup> October. Sands stands for - stillbirth and neonatal death. Sands is an abbreviation for Stillbirth and Neonatal Death.
2.2	The requesting organisation has confirmed that Baby Loss Awareness Week is an alliance of more than 60 charities organised to raise awareness and break the taboo of baby loss. Throughout the week, bereaved parents, their families and friends unite to commemorate the lives of babies who died during pregnancy, at or soon after birth and in infancy. The week is also a platform to call for tangible improvements in policy, research, bereavement care and support.
	<b><u>Motor Neurone Disease Association</u></b>
2.3	The Chairman of the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association Northern Ireland has corresponded with the Council requesting that its buildings be lit-up/illuminated in blue and orange colours of the MND Association on 6 <sup>th</sup> October to raise awareness on MND and 40 years from when the Association was established.

2.4	The requesting organisation (Motor Neurone Disease Association Northern Ireland) has confirmed that MND is a rapidly progressing disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. It kills a third of people within a year and more than half within 2 years of diagnosis. It affects up to 5,000 adults in the UK at any one time, killing six people every day for which there is no cure.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Requests:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To light up/illuminate Hill of The O'Neill &amp; Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre pink and blue on 15<sup>th</sup> October for Baby Loss Awareness Week</li> <li>To light up/illuminate all designated properties (Ranfurly, Burnavon and the Bridewell) blue and orange on 6<sup>th</sup> October to raise awareness on MND and 40 years from when the Association was established.</li> </ul>
3.2	No other requests have been approved for the specified dates.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: Not applicable
	Human: Not applicable
	Risk Management: Not applicable
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Not applicable
	Rural Needs Implications: Not applicable
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That the Committee approves requests to illuminate Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre pink and blue on 15 <sup>th</sup> October for Baby Loss Awareness Week and all designated properties blue and orange on 6 <sup>th</sup> October to raise awareness on MND.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	None

<b>Report on</b>	NILGOSC Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Local Government Pension Scheme for Northern Ireland (LGPS (NI))
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday, 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Director of Finance
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Director of Finance

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide Members with an update in relation to NILGOSC Circular 06/2019 issued on 19 July 2019 and to recommend a response to the NILGOSC consultation in relation to proposed amendments to the Local Government Pension Scheme Northern Ireland (LGPS (NI)), which was requested in Circular 06/2019.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p>The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee is a statutory body established by the Local Government (Superannuation) Act (Northern Ireland) 1950 to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administer a pension scheme for local authorities and admitted bodies</li> <li>• Manage and maintain a fund out of which the benefits of the scheme are met.</li> </ul>
2.2	The Management Committee is appointed by the Department for Communities, which makes statutory regulations setting out the constitution and powers of the Committee and the rules governing the pension scheme and the management of the Fund.
2.3	With effect from 1 April 2015, the governing regulations are the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014, the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014, the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, as amended.
2.4	Paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 of the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 states that Scheme regulations for local government workers may be made by the Department of the Environment (now Department for

2.5	<p>Communities (DfC)). Section 21(1) of this Act requires the DfC to consult such persons (or representatives of such persons) as appear to the authority as likely to be affected by them before making such regulations.</p> <p>Circular 06/2019 is intended to facilitate the DfC's duty to consult on the proposed changes to the LGPS (NI).</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p>Circular 06/2019 is concerned with notifying district councils (as employing authorities participating in the LGPS (NI)) of the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consultation on proposed amendments to the LGPS (NI), which is seeking responses by 30 September 2019;</li> <li>2. Implementation of forthcoming changes in early retirement strain cost factors previously notified in Circular 04/2019; and</li> <li>3. Forthcoming advertisement seeking applications for NILGOSC Committee member positions</li> </ol>
3.2	Consultation:
3.2.1	<p>The DfC is proposing to amend the LGPS (NI) by making regulations to amend the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014. It is proposed that these amendments will be effected by the currently draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 (the 2019 Regulations), which are attached to this report.</p>
3.2.2	The main proposals are as follows:
3.2.2.1	<p>(i) Part 1 of the 2019 Regulations – concerned with removing the requirement for a nomination form to qualify for a survivor pension.</p> <p>This amendment is proposed as a consequence of the Supreme Court's decision of 8 February 2017 to overturn the NILGOSC decision in relation to Denise Brewster's claim on her deceased partner's pension.</p> <p>The NILGOSC decision was based on regulations introduced in April 2009 which provide for a surviving cohabiting partner to become eligible for payment of a survivor's pension. In order to qualify, the cohabiting partner must meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) At least 2 years cohabitation up to the date of the partner's death; and</li> <li>2) A nomination form completed in favour of the surviving cohabiting partner. If a nomination form was not</li> </ol>

	<p>completed, the claim would fail as there was no trustee discretion to allow for payment in such a case</p> <p>Although Ms Brewster satisfied the first requirement, failure to comply with the latter requirement of completing the form nominating her to be a beneficiary, resulted in her claim being refused.</p> <p>The Court, by unanimous decision, held the requirement for a nomination form to be completed should be removed from pension schemes. Further, a refusal to pay out was unlawful and incompatible with Article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights.</p> <p>A further consequence of this decision is that NILGOSC will be required to visit past decisions as many cohabitants could have been refused payment of a survivor's pension between 2008 and 2014 by not completing a nomination form.</p>
3.2.2.2	<p>(ii) Part 2 of the 2019 Regulations – concerned with making what the DfC refer to on its website as “a number of minor policy amendments, technical amendments and drafting improvements for the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI)”. In relation to “drafting improvements”, the DfC, in its consultation document state “The proposed amendments in Part 2 of the draft Regulations make a number of drafting improvements that clarify the original policy intent and introduce a number of minor policy changes”. The officers’ comments in relation to same are detailed in paragraphs 3.2.2.2.1 to 3.2.2.2.13 inclusive below.</p>
3.2.2.2.1	<p>Regulations 35 to 40 (together with a number of subsequent Regulations) inclusive generally deal with amending the extant regulations to widen the types of schools which can be included in the list of bodies eligible to be admitted to the NILGOSC Scheme, for example, they provide for the inclusion of grant maintained integrated schools. These proposed amendments appear to be irrelevant to Council and are not referenced in the DfC’s consultation document.</p>
3.2.2.2.2	<p>Regulation 41(a) amends Regulation D11(2)(c) of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 to remove employing authorities’ involvement in determining (with the agreement of the Committee) on compassionate grounds that deferred pension benefits are payable any date after a former local government employee has attained the age of 50 years. This amendment, while relevant to district councils, may or may not be something that Council wishes to comment on. On the one hand prudent fund management would seem to be best achieved by delegating all such authority to the Management. However, Council may feel that it wishes to continue to have an input into</p>

3.2.2.2.3	<p>such decisions concerning its former employees. <b>Members' opinion is sought in relation to this point.</b></p>
3.2.2.2.4	<p>Regulations 41 and 42 also do not appear to be referenced in the DfC's consultation document.</p>
3.2.2.2.5	<p>Regulation 41(c) effectively amends Regulation D11(4)(a) to allow former council employees aged 60 and above to elect to that portion of their preserved benefits at any time. The wording of the extant regulations requires former council employees to make this election within 3 months of becoming 60. This amendment appears reasonable and not worthy of particular comment.</p>
3.2.2.2.6	<p>Regulation 42 only applies where a former local government employee, aged 60 and above, has made the necessary election to receive the relevant deferred pension benefits earlier than their Normal Retirement Date, which could be post age 65. This regulation removes the defined statutory reductions of pension and pension lump sum that are generally applicable to such amounts when drawn early. The removal of the specified adjustments and replacement with a reference to guidance issued by the Government Actuary is a positive development in that the officers understand that this will enable the DfC to ensure that the reductions continue to be relevant and, where necessary, non-discriminatory between men and women generally. However, Council may wish to comment on the fact that all necessary transparency will now only be preserved if relevant Government Actuary advice is appropriately communicated to participating bodies on a timely basis. <b>Members' opinion is sought in relation to this point.</b></p>
3.2.2.2.7	<p>Regulation 43 is interesting in that it suggests that it is amending a regulation that is clearly incorrectly referenced. Although the officers have asked NILGOSC to confirm what the regulation referred to should be, the amendment is relatively innocuous from a council perspective. It is in fact referring to "pension credit members" who are spouses/partners of Scheme members who have been subject to a Court imposed pension sharing order. As such, the Scheme beneficiary was not previously a Scheme member, and the fact that the amendment makes any payment of benefits pre the pension credit member attaining age 55 subject to actuarial adjustment, will serve to maintain parity with benefits payable to Scheme members who have not been subject to a pension sharing order. This amendment is included, albeit somewhat opaquely, within the first bullet point within paragraph 4.1 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 Consultation Document, which is attached.</p> <p>The remaining amendments appear, given the time available to review the various pieces of relevant legislation, appear to be</p>

	<p>'broadly' summarised in pages 7 to 9 inclusive of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 Consultation Document and or Circular 06/2019, both of which are attached. However, it is the officers' view that even this 'plain English' summary may be incomprehensible, at least in parts to Members. To this end, it may be useful to note that, except as noted in this report, the officers, on reading both pages 7 to 9 inclusive and Circular 06/2019, have found the summary to be understandable and uncontroversial in relation to their understanding of the various pieces of relevant legislation and their assessment of Council's interest in the LGPS (NI).</p>
3.2.2.2.8	<p>Of the bullet points detailed in pages 7 to 9 inclusive, the officers would draw Member's attention to the last two bullet points on page 9. These deal with the introduction of a discretionary voluntary scheme pays facility (penultimate bullet point) and the removal of the requirement for employer consent for Scheme members aged between 55 and 60 to draw benefits under the 85-year rule (last bullet point).</p>
3.2.2.2.9	<p>Neither of these issues are controversial in the sense that the first one is concerned with the settlement of Scheme member's tax liabilities (to be recouped from the member by deduction from pension paid) and the second seeks to guarantee Scheme protections to a limited number of employees who satisfy the 'Rule of 85' by virtue of their age and length of service.</p>
3.2.2.2.10	<p>However, although uncontroversial, the amendment in relation to the removal of consent, if subsequently enacted, will require Council to amend its discretionary policies in relation to early termination of employment, etc. The officers suggest that Members recommend to Council that it directs this matter to the Human Resources department with the instruction to amend the relevant policies as required if and when the draft 2019 Regulations become operative.</p>
3.2.2.2.11	<p>NILGOSC is currently operating a voluntary scheme pays arrangement under cover of two letters of support from the DfC which need to be regulated by way of legislation in due course.</p>
3.2.2.2.12	<p>The officers also note the proposed reintroduction of the 30-day rule that requires employee and employer contributions to be paid for the first 30 days of a period of absence with permission. This will replace using Additional Pension Contracts (APCs) for the first 30 days absence with permission e.g. career breaks, breaks in service, unpaid leave etc. currently allowed by Regulation 18 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Primary Regulations). For short term absences, i.e. up to 30 days, this should guarantee that the Scheme member takes steps to protect their future pension entitlement. However,</p>

	<p>the officers are unclear if the amendment will prevent Scheme members absent with permission for in excess of 30 days seeking to use APCs for the period in excess of 30 days and, if not, whether Council continues to be obliged under Regulation 17 of the Primary Regulations to meet 2/3 of the cost of the APC.</p>
3.2.2.2.13	<p>In summary, in relation to the consultation aspect of Circular 06/2019, the officers recommend that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members consider the two matters on which their opinion is sought at paragraphs 3.2.2.2.2 and 3.2.2.2.5 above, together with the proposed draft response to the consultation (attached);</li> <li>2. Subject to the amendment, if necessary, of the draft letter to reflect their comments requested at 1 above, the Committee recommends that Council adopt the proposed draft response to the consultation and authorise the officers to submit it to the DfC by the stated deadline of 30 September; and</li> <li>3. Committee recommends that Council direct the Human Resources department to be alert to the potential future need to amend the Council's policy discretions in relation to early termination of employment, etc.</li> </ol>
3.3	Implementation of early retirement strain cost factors
3.3.1	NILGOSC Circular 04/2019 issued on 29 May 2019 notified employing authorities of the introduction of revised strain costs factors from 1 July 2019. Circular 06/2016 merely reminds employing authorities that the relevant factors have now been implemented.
3.4	Notice of forthcoming advertisement of NILGOSC Committee member positions
3.4.1	Self-explanatory – positions will be advertised at the end of August.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A



<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members consider the two matters on which their opinion is sought at paragraphs 3.2.2.2.2 and 3.2.2.2.5 above, together with the proposed draft response to the consultation (attached);</li> <li>2. Subject to the amendment, if necessary, of the draft letter to reflect comments requested at 1 above, Committee recommends that Council adopt the proposed draft response to the consultation and authorise the officers to submit it to the DfC by the stated deadline of 30 September; and</li> <li>3. Committee recommends that Council direct the Human Resources department to be alert to the potential future need to amend the Council's policy discretions in relation to early termination of employment, etc.</li> </ol>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	NILGOSC Circular 06/2019 "The Local Government Pension Scheme for Northern Ireland (NI) dated 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2019
6.2	The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 Consultation Document
6.3	Draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019
6.4	Draft response to NILGOSC consultation



To: Chief Executives  
Salaries and Wages  
Human Resources  
Pension Contacts  
NIC-ICTU

Circular 06/2019  
19 July 2019

At: All Employing Authorities

Dear Colleagues,

### **The Local Government Pension Scheme for Northern Ireland ("LGPS (NI)")**

This Circular has been issued to highlight the following:

- The current Department for Communities consultation on proposed amendments to the LGPS (NI)
- Implementation of revised strain cost factors from 31 July 2019
- Advertising for new NILGOSC Committee Members.

The information in this Circular is based on NILGOSC's understanding of the proposed regulations and their implementation. Employers should refer to the consultation document for full detail on the proposed amendments.

#### **1. The current Department for Communities consultation on proposed amendments to the LGPS (NI)**

The Department published the above [consultation](#) on 8 July for a 12 week consultation period closing on 30 September 2019.

The key amendment, following a Supreme Court judgement in February 2017, removes the requirement to nominate a cohabiting partner for them to be entitled to a survivor's pension. The other proposed amendments are mainly technical, administrative or minor policy updates. A summary of the amendments categorised into those mainly affecting members, employers and minor technical/administration amendments is set out below. As expected, there is some overlap across the three categories and they should not be read in isolation.

### 1.1 Amendments affecting members

- Removes the requirement to nominate a cohabiting partner for them to be entitled to a survivor's pension. The Department has also proposed a new amendment going forward to remove the two-year qualifying period where the member and the cohabiting partner were able to marry or form a civil partnership. It is still necessary for them to be able to marry or form a civil partnership at the date of death. The two- year qualifying period remains in place for the other criteria. The proposed criteria are set out in the Appendix.
- Re-introduces the 30-day rule that requires employee and employer contributions to be paid for the first 30 days of a period of absence with permission. This will replace using Additional Pension Contracts (APCs) for the first 30 days absence with permission e.g. career breaks, breaks in service, unpaid leave etc.
- Clarifies that a previous regulation that stated an employer determines which of an employee's emoluments (apart from those specifically excluded by the Regulations) are pensionable has continued to apply.
- Allows NILGOSC to offer Voluntary Scheme Pays to those members who have incurred Annual Allowance tax charges and cannot use Mandatory Scheme Pays.
- Extends the statutory underpin giving final salary protection to those who have transferred in from other Public Service Pension Schemes.
- Confirms that a non-pensionable non-consolidated payment paid as part of an annual pay award is not pensionable.
- Clarifies that a retirement pension must be paid from age 75 even if the member remains in employment after that age.
- Confirms that all pension credit members can access their benefits from age 55.

### 1.2 Amendments affecting Employers

- Re-introduces the 30-day rule that requires employee and employer contributions to be paid for the first 30 days of a period of absence with permission. This will replace using Additional Pension Contracts (APCs) for the first 30 days absence with permission e.g. career breaks, breaks in service, unpaid leave etc. ***Employers may need payroll software amendments to facilitate this change.***
- Confirms that Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP) can be based on notional pay if the calculated APP figure is materially higher or lower than normal pay.
- Clarifies that a previous regulation that stated an employer determines which of an employee's emoluments (apart from those specifically excluded by the Regulations) are pensionable has continued to apply.

- Allows NILGOSC to receive returns from an employer at regular periods of less than one year. This gives statutory permission to introduce monthly electronic returns of pay and contributions.
- Allows NILGOSC, with the Department's approval, to vary the pre-set exit date during a period of deferral of an exit valuation.
- Allows the Actuary to vary an employer's contributions between valuations if there has been a relevant change in its circumstances e.g. secured a guarantee.
- Confirms that a non-pensionable non-consolidated payment paid as part of an annual pay award is not pensionable.
- Clarifies that a retirement pension must be paid from age 75 even if the member remains in employment after that age.

### 1.3 Minor technical/administration amendments

- Allows payment of death benefits after two years.
- Removes the requirement that Additional Pension Contribution (APC) factors are gender specific. This will result in revised unisex APC factors.
- Clarifies that ill-health enhancements are included in the calculation of survivors' benefits.
- Clarifies that the LGPS (NI) is part of the Public Sector Transfer Club.
- Aligns the benefits relating to pre and post-2015 AVCs with the exception that pre-2015 AVCs retain a normal pension age of age 65 and saves the provisions relating to elections regarding AVCs made before 1 February 2003.
- Retrospectively lists Grant Maintained Integrated Schools as employing authorities that can be admitted to the Scheme.

1.4 The closing date of the consultation is 30 September 2019 and comments should be sent to [lgpdconsultations@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:lgpdconsultations@communities-ni.gov.uk). Full details are on the consultation page of the [Department's website](#).

## **2. Implementation of revised strain cost factors from 31 July 2019**

2.1 Circular 04/2019 notified employers of forthcoming changes in early retirement strain cost factors. These will be implemented for early retirements with a leaving date on or after 31 July 2019. The actuary has advised that these updated unisex factors will generally result in a reduction in redundancy strain costs. However, employer costs will increase where consent is being given to draw benefits payable from the Rule of 85 age where this is reached before age 60. These factors will be reviewed following the outcome of the 2019 Scheme valuation.

### **3. Advertising for new NILGOSC Committee Members**

- 3.1 At the end of August, the Department for Communities will be advertising to recruit several new NILGOSC Committee Members to fill vacancies that will arise over the next 12 months. The NILGOSC Committee is composed of a chairperson, two independent members, five employee representatives and five employer representatives. The new appointments will be for one independent member, four trade union (employee) representatives and five employer representatives. The term of office is usually for four years from appointment.

Further information on the appointments and recruitment process will be circulated once it becomes available.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this Circular, please contact either myself or any member of the Pensions Development Team.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zena Kee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Zena Kee  
Pensions Manager

## **Appendix**

### **Proposed retrospective criteria for Cohabiting Partner's Pension**

A cohabiting partner is someone who NILGOSC is satisfied meets the following condition:

- a) The person has fulfilled the condition in paragraph (b) for a continuous period of at least two years on the date the member died;
- b) The condition is that:
  - (i) The member and the person are able to marry, or form a civil partnership with, each other<sup>1</sup>;
  - (ii) The member and the person are living together as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners;
  - (iii) Neither the member nor the person is living with a third person as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners; and
  - (iv) Either the person is financially dependent on the member, or the member and the person are financially interdependent

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<sup>1</sup> It is proposed that the two-year qualifying period will not apply to b(i) from 21 days after the commencement date of the regulations but will continue to apply to the other criteria.

NB. Cohabiting partner pensions only apply to the survivor of anyone who was any active member after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

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# The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019

## Consultation Document

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This consultation document seeks views on proposed amendments to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland).

**Comments should be sent by 30 September 2019 to:**

**Department for Communities  
Local Government and Housing Regulation Division  
Level 4, Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Town Parks  
Belfast, BT2 7EG**

or email: [LGPDConsultations@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:LGPDConsultations@communities-ni.gov.uk)

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# 1. Purpose of the consultation – scope and timeframe

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1.1 This consultation covers proposals to amend the legislation governing the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) (“LGPS (NI)”).  | (or representatives of such persons) as appear to the Department likely to be affected.        |
| 1.2 The proposed amendments cover both the changes required by a Supreme Court judgment in relation to survivor benefits, and a number of technical amendments and minor policy updates. | 1.4 The closing date for submitting responses is <b>30 September 2019</b> .                    |
| 1.3 Section 21(1) of the Public Service Pensions Act (NI) 2014 requires the Department to consult such persons   | 1.5 The Department will consider and respond to comments it receives during this consultation. |
|  | 1.6 Responses are invited to this consultation about any aspect set out in this paper.         |

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## 2. Background

- 2.1 The LGPS (NI) is a defined benefits scheme under the Public Service Pensions Act (NI) 2014. It is also a funded scheme. The 2014 Act introduced pension reforms across public sector pension schemes to address the impact of long term scheme costs for taxpayers and employers.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of the Department to update the legislative framework for the LGPS (NI) taking account of developments in public sector pension policy.

## 3. Survivor Benefits

- 3.1 The Supreme Court handed down a judgment on 8 February 2017 in relation to a decision not to award the Applicant a survivor's pension under the LGPS (NI) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 ("the 2009 Regulations") upon the death of her cohabiting partner.
- 3.2 The Supreme Court concluded unanimously that the imposition of the nomination requirement in the 2009 Regulations had given rise to an unjustified difference in treatment of the Appellant as a surviving cohabiting partner and that she was entitled to receive a survivor's pension under the LGPS (NI).
- 3.3 The Department has identified the changes to legislation to give effect to the Supreme Court judgment and to remove the nomination requirement in existing LGPS (NI) Regulations for cohabiting partners to be entitled to a survivor's pension. These changes will be retrospective to allow for a review of previous cases as necessary.

3.4 The remaining criteria for a cohabiting partner's retrospective eligibility for survivor benefits will be:

- “(a) the person has fulfilled the condition in paragraph (b) for a continuous period of at least two years on the date the member died; and
- (b) the condition is that—
  - (i) the member and the person are able to marry, or form a civil partnership with, each other;
  - (ii) the member and the person are living together as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners;
  - (iii) neither the member or the person is living with a third person as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners; and
  - (iv) either the person is financially dependent on the member, or the member and the person are financially interdependent;”.

This meets the requirements of the court judgment.

3.5 Moving forward, from the time these regulations come into force, it is proposed to make a further amendment to these qualifying criteria to remove the two year period for 7 (b)(i) i.e. the ability to marry or form a civil partnership. It is proposed that this change should only apply going forward as it is not covered by the court order. **The other criteria would remain the same.** It would remain necessary for a member to be free to marry or form a civil partnership at the time of their death as, if they remain legally tied to another person, that person has the survivor rights. The purpose of this amendment is to ensure the fulfilment of the policy intent i.e. that where a member dies, those financially dependent on them at the time of their death should have access to financial support in proportion to the member's pension entitlement.

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## 4. Other amendments

4.1 The proposed amendments in Part 2 of the draft Regulations make a number of drafting improvements that clarify the original policy intent and introduce a number of minor policy changes. These amendments cover the following areas-

- each member may now access their pension from age 55, subject to an actuarial reduction for early payment, should that member decide to do so (see regulations 43,47,92(b) and 92(e));
- the removal of the 2 year limit within which a death grant has to be paid – this reflects the repeal of legislation which stated that a payment had to be made within 2 years to be considered an authorised payment. This had previously meant that, in cases which could not be resolved within the 2 year limit, NILGOSC had to make the payment to the member’s personal representatives, something which had significant tax implications. The proposed amendment means that NILGOSC can take the necessary time to ensure that the payment goes directly to the intended recipient (see regulations 46,48, 50-52,55,56,63, 68,69 and 70);
- clarification of the definition of a pension credit member (see regulation 58);
- clarification of the contributions that members and employers make during absences from work (see regulation 60);
- clarification that, where a member is absent on reserve forces service leave, it is the Ministry of Defence who pays the employer contribution (see regulation 61(a));
- deletion of an incorrect reference to actuarial guidance (see regulation 61(c));
- removing the gender link from the factors used for Additional Pension contributions (see regulation 62);
- clarification that a non-consolidated non-pensionable payment made to a member resulting from the settlement of an annual pay award is excluded from pensionable pay (see regulation 64);
- permitting employers to adopt a revised reference figure for the calculation of assumed pensionable pay where it would otherwise be unfair (see regulation 65);
- clarification that a member must receive their pension from age

75 even if they remain in local government employment (see regulation 66(a));

- clarification that only active membership relating to that employment, in relation to a post being made redundant, is allowed to be considered in the calculation of early access to pension as part of a redundancy payment (see regulation 66(b));
- clarification that where a pension in payment is split through a pension sharing order, the person who is provided with the pension credit will not be able to take a tax-free lump sum from the benefit rights that are acquired. This reflects new tax legislation and is on the basis that when the member's ex-spouse or former civil partner's benefits first came into payment, that ex-spouse or former civil partner will have taken (or had the opportunity to take) a tax-free lump sum in respect of the benefits, so it would not be appropriate to allow a lump sum to be taken free of income tax from the pension credit rights. This applies regardless of whether a lump sum was actually taken by the pension debit member (see regulation 67);
- ensuring that the calculation of survivor benefits for partners and children of pensioner members

includes any tier 1 or tier 2 ill-health enhancement (see regulation 71);

- correcting references which apply in respect of lifetime allowance statements (see regulation 72);
- providing for an amendment of the rates and adjustments certificate between valuations where there is material improvement in the employer's circumstances (see regulation 73);
- clarification that it is the employing authority's responsibility to determine which of the employee's emoluments are remuneration on which contributions are payable (see regulation 74);
- accommodating the faster exchange of information between the Committee and employing authorities (see regulation 75);
- clarification of the recipients to whom payments may be made under the scheme when a person dies (see regulation 76);
- making provision for the Scheme to comply with its membership obligations to the Public Sector Transfer Club (see regulation 78-81);
- amending the definition of "partner" (see regulation 81(b));
- inserting references to a grant maintained integrated school to ensure that this category of school

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may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI). A new sub-paragraph will be inserted to ensure that an admission agreement may take effect on a day before it is executed (see regulations 36, 38, 40, 45, 54 and 82(a));

- removing a reference to a repealed provision regarding expense and allowances payable to the Committee (see regulation 83);
- clarification that the normal pension age in relation to deferred benefits in respect of membership that ceased before 1 October 2006, is age 65 (see regulation 85);
- clarification that a person who has been a deferred member accruing final salary benefits under previous LGPS (NI) Regulations, who then becomes an active member of the reformed LGPS (NI) without a disqualifying break in membership, may continue to accrue final salary benefits under the statutory underpin arrangements, if notification is given to the administering authority within a certain period of time (see regulation 86);
- ensuring that members of other public service pension schemes who are entitled to transitional protection under those schemes and who are continuing to accrue final salary

benefits can obtain final salary benefits within the LGPS (NI) if they transfer those benefits in and can benefit from the statutory underpin (see regulation 87);

- introducing a 12 month time limit (which may be extended at the discretion of the administering authority) if a former member of the Earlier Schemes takes up active membership of the Scheme and wishes to aggregate the benefits (see regulation 88);
- clarification that the term “contributions” includes additional contributions (see regulation 89);
- altering the administration of AVC benefits in regulation 19 (additional voluntary contributions) of the 2014 Regulations, so that the date the AVC arrangement was established is disregarded (see regulation 90);
- enabling the administering authority to offer members, at its discretion, the voluntary scheme pays facility where the value of the member’s accrued benefits exceeds the annual allowance (see regulation 91); and
- removing the requirement for employer consent for members aged between 55 and 60 to draw benefits under the 85 year rule (see regulation 92).



## 5. Human Rights

- 5.1. The Department believes that the proposals set out in the draft Regulations are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

## 6. Equality

- 6.1. The Department considers that the draft Regulations do not contain proposals to change policy in a substantive way, therefore, no adverse impact on the categories of person in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 are identified.

## 7. Regulatory Impact Assessment

- 7.1. The Department considers that the proposed amendments will not have a direct impact on businesses, charities, social economy enterprises or the voluntary sector.

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## 8. Regulatory Impact Assessment

- 8.1. The Department considers that the proposed amendments in the draft Regulations will not have any differential impact on people living in rural areas.

## 9. Freedom of information – confidentiality of responses

- 9.1. The information you send us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland (“the Department”).

questions, please contact Information Management Branch (IMB).

Email **foi@communities-ni.gsi.gov.uk**

- 9.2 To find out more about the general principles of Freedom of Information and how it is applied within the Department, please read Annex A and, if you have any further

- 9.3 IMB cannot advise on specific consultation exercises, only on Freedom of Information issues. Read more information about the **Freedom of Information Act**.

## 10. Alternative Format

- 10.1 Should you require a copy of this document in an alternative format, it can be made available on request in large print, disc, Braille and audio cassette. The Department’s text phone

number has also been included below to assist the hearing impaired. It may also be made available in minority languages for those not proficient in English.

## 11. Consultation responses

11.1. Please email your consultation response to: **lgpd@communities-ni.gov.uk**

11.2. Postal address-

**Local Government and Housing  
Regulation Directorate  
Level 4  
Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Townparks  
BELFAST  
BT2 7EG**

11.3. Please ensure your response reaches the Department by **30 September 2019**.

11.4. When responding, please state whether you are doing so as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents, and where applicable, how the views of members were assembled. The Department will acknowledge your response.

11.5. The following persons will be able to answer your queries in relation to the consultation.

Siobhan McKelvey - Tel: 028 9082 3409  
**Siobhan.mckelvey@communities-ni.gov.uk**

William Dobbin - Tel: 028 9082 3360  
**William.dobbin@communities-ni.gov.uk**

11.6 The Department will consider the responses received and publish a synopsis of those responses and the Departmental response on the Departmental website.

11.7 In line with good practice and sustainable development this document has been published electronically.

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## 12. How we consult - Consultation principles

12.1. This consultation is being conducted in line with the Fresh Start Agreement – (Appendix F6 – Eight Steps to Good Practice in Public Consultation – Engagement). These eight steps give clear guidance to Northern Ireland Departments on conducting consultations.

## Annex A: Assessment Criteria

# The Freedom of Information Act 2000 – confidentiality of consultations

1. The Department may publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation may be disclosed on request. The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.
2. The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have a responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation including information about your identity, should be made public or be treated as confidential.
3. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that-
  - the Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
  - the Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence" which is not confidential in nature;
  - acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.
4. For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see website at [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)).

## LIST OF CONSULTEES

1. All Members of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly
2. All Northern Ireland political parties, MPs and MEPs
3. All Northern Ireland District Councils
4. The Chief Executive of the Education Authority
5. The Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive
6. The Chief Executive of Translink
7. Employing Authorities contributing to the LGPS (NI)
8. Northern Ireland Local Government Association
9. National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region)
10. Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee
11. Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions
12. Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance
13. Unite
14. GMB
15. Unison
16. Various representative groups and bodies
17. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
18. SOLACE NI (the Irish Branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (UK)).

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**2019 No. 00**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment)  
Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019**

*Made* - - - - - \*\*\*

*Coming into operation* - - - - - \*\*\*

The Department for Communities(**a**), with the consent of the Department of Finance(**b**), makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 1, 3 and 25 of, and Schedule 3 to, the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014(**c**).

In accordance with section 21 of that Act, the Department has consulted with such persons or representatives of such persons as appear to the Department likely to be affected by these Regulations.

**Citation, commencement, interpretation and retrospection**

**1.**—(1) These Regulations may be cited as The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 and except as provided for by paragraph (2), shall come into operation on XX month year.

(2) These Regulations shall come into effect as follows—

- (a) regulations 2, 3 and 5 to 20 from 1st April 2009;
- (b) regulation 4 from 31st December 2009;
- (c) regulations 35 and 36 from 19th February 1990;
- (d) regulations 37 and 38 from 1st March 1993;
- (e) regulations 39 and 40(a) from 1st August 2000;
- (f) regulation 40(b) from 2nd April 2001;
- (g) regulations 44 and 45(a) from 1st February 2003;
- (h) regulation 45(b) from 1st May 2005;
- (i) regulations 53 and 54 from 1st April 2009; and
- (j) regulations 21 to 34 and 69(b) and 82(a) from 1st April 2015.

- 
- (a) Formerly known as the Department for Social Development; *see* the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 c.5 (N.I.), Article 8 of and Schedule 5 to the Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 76) transferred functions to the Department for Communities which were previously exercisable by the Department of the Environment.
- (b) Formerly known as the Department of Finance and Personnel; *see* the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 c.5 (N.I.).
- (c) 2014 c. 2 (N.I.).



(3) In these Regulations—

“the 1981 Regulations” means the Local Government (Superannuation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1981(a);

“the 1992 Regulations” means the Local Government (Superannuation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992(b);

“the 2000 Regulations” means the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000(c);

“the 2002 Regulations” means the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002(d);

“the Benefits Regulations” means the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009(e);

“the Administration Regulations” means the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009(f);

“the 2009 Transitional Regulations” means the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009(g);

“the Principal Regulations” means The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014(h); and

“the 2014 Transitional Regulations” means The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014(i).

## PART 1

### Survivor Benefits Amendments

#### Amendment of the Benefits Regulations

2.—(1) Regulations 3 to 8 have effect in relation to the Benefits Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The Benefits Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 3 to 8.

3. In regulation 1(2) (citation, commencement and interpretation)—

(a) after the definition of “admission agreement fund” insert—

““cohabiting partner” means a person whom the Committee is satisfied fulfils the following condition—

(a) the person (P) has fulfilled the condition in paragraph (b) for a continuous period of at least two years on the date the member (M) died;

- 
- (a) S.R. 1981 No. 96 as amended by S.R. 1982 No. 58, S.R. 1984 No. 175, S.R. 1984 No. 355, S.R. 1985 No. 315, S.R. 1986 No. 294, S.R. 1989 No. 345, S.R. 1991 No. 19, S.R. 1991 No. 418 and S.R. 1991 No. 492.
- (b) S.R. 1992 No. 547 as amended by S.R. 1998 No. 41, S.R. 1998 No. 133, S.R. 1998 No. 337, S.R. 1999 No. 218 and S.R. 2000 No. 23.
- (c) S.R. 2000 No. 177 as amended by S.R. 2001 No. 61, S.R. 2001 No. 63, S.R. 2001 No. 64, S.R. 2002 No. 115, S.R. 2002 No. 353, S.R. 2009 No. 34, S.R. 2014 No. 189 and S.R. 2016 No. 128.
- (d) S.R. 2002 No. 352 as amended by S.R. 2002 No. 353, S.R. 2004 No. 139, S.R. 2005 No. 206, S.R. 2005 No. 274, S.R. 2006 No. 6, S.R. 2006 No. 112, S.R. 2007 No. 152, S.R. 2007 No. 448, S.R. 2007 No. 479, S.R. 2009 No. 34, S.R. 2016 No. 128 and S.R. 2016 No. 329.
- (e) S.R. 2009 No. 32 as amended by S.R. 2010 No. 164, S.I. 2010/234, S.R. 2010 No. 410, S.R. 2011 No. 117, S.R. 2012 No. 85, S.R. 2012 No. 183, S.R. 2013 No. 71, S.R. 2014 No. 189, S.R. 2016 No. 128 and S.R. 2016 No. 329.
- (f) S.R. 2009 No. 33 as amended by S.R. 2010 No. 164, S.R. 2010 No. 410, S.R. 2011 No. 117, S.R. 2012 No. 183, S.R. 2014 No. 189, S.R. 2016 No. 128 and S.R. 2016 No. 329.
- (g) S.R. 2009 No. 34 as amended by S.R. 2010 No. 410, S.R. 2013 No. 71 and S.R. 2014 No. 189.
- (h) S.R. 2014 No. 188 as amended by S.R. 2015 No. 77, S.R. 2015 No. 162 and S.R. 2016 No. 128.
- (i) S.R. 2014 No. 189 as amended by S.R. 2015 No. 162, S.R. 2016 No. 128 and S.R. 2016 No. 329.

- (b) the condition is that—
    - (i) M and P are able to marry, or form a civil partnership with, each other;
    - (ii) M and P are living together as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners;
    - (iii) neither M nor P is living with a third person as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners; and
    - (iv) either P is financially dependent on M, or M and P are financially interdependent; and
  - (c) in this definition “member” means an active member or a former active member who has become a deferred or pensioner member in accordance with these Regulations or the 2009 Regulations.”; and
  - (b) omit the definition of “nominated cohabiting partner”.
- 4.** In regulation 14A(a) (election to pay additional contributions: survivor benefits)—
- (a) in paragraph (1) for “nominated cohabiting partner (within the meaning of regulation 25)” substitute “cohabiting partner”;
  - (b) omit paragraph (2); and
  - (c) in paragraph (5) omit “nominated”.
- 5.** In regulation 24(1) (survivor benefits: active members) omit “nominated”.
- 6.** Omit regulation 25 (meaning of nominated cohabiting partner).
- 7.** In regulation 33(1) (survivor benefits: deferred members) omit “nominated”.
- 8.** In regulation 36(1) (survivor benefits: pensioner members) omit “nominated”.

#### **Amendment of the Administration Regulations**

**9.**—(1) Regulations 10 to 16 have effect in relation to the Administration Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The Administration Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 10 to 16.

**10.** In regulation 42(2) (exclusion of rights to return of contributions) omit “nominated”.

**11.** In regulation 45B(1)(b) (survivor benefits: guaranteed minimum pension) omit “nominated”.

**12.** In regulation 54(2)(a) (right to apply for an appointed person to review a decision) omit “nominated”.

**13.** In regulation 72(5)(b) (transfer of sums from the fund to compensate for former member’s misconduct) omit “nominated”.

**14.** In regulation 76(5)(a) (contracting-out requirements affecting transfers out) for “nominated co-habiting” substitute “cohabiting”.

**15.** In regulation 81(2)(b) (community scheme transferees) omit “nominated”.

**16.** In Schedule 1 (interpretation)—

(a) after the definition of “cancelling notice” insert—

““cohabiting partner” has the meaning given in regulation 1 (citation, commencement and interpretation) of the Benefits Regulations;” and

(b) omit the definition of “nominated cohabiting partner”.

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(a) This regulation was inserted into S.R. 2009 No. 32 by regulation 15 of S.R. 2010 No. 410.

(b) This regulation was inserted into S.R. 2009 No. 32 by regulation 40 of S.R. 2010 No. 410.

### **Amendment of the 2009 Transitional Regulations**

**17.**—(1) Regulations 18 to 20 have effect in relation to the 2009 Transitional Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The 2009 Transitional Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 18 to 20.

**18.** In regulation 1(3) (citation, commencement, interpretation and retrospection)—

(a) after the definition of “the Benefits Regulations” insert—

““cohabiting partner” has the meaning given in regulation 1 (citation, commencement and interpretation) of the Benefits Regulations;”; and

(b) omit the definition of “nominated cohabiting partner”.

**19.** In regulation 3(4) (membership accrued before 1st April 2009: active members) omit “nominated”.

**20.** In Schedule 5 (transitional and transitory provisions and savings) in paragraph 4(3), in the definition of “benefit” omit “nominated”.

### **Amendment of the Principal Regulations**

**21.** The Principal Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 22 to 31.

**22.** In regulation 21(2) (exclusion of rights to return of contributions) omit “nominated”.

**23.** In regulation 41(1) (survivor benefits: partners of active members) omit “nominated”.

**24.** Omit regulation 42 (meaning of “nominated co-habiting partner”).

**25.** In regulation 47(1) (survivor benefits: partners of deferred members) omit “nominated”.

**26.** In regulation 52(1) (survivor benefits: partners of pensioner members) omit “nominated”.

**27.** In regulation 58(8) (guaranteed minimum pensions) omit “nominated”.

**28.** In regulation 84(2)(a) (right to apply for an appointed person to review a decision) omit “nominated”.

**29.** In regulation 109(4)(a) (contracting-out requirements affecting transfers out) omit “nominated”.

**30.** In regulation 114(2)(b) (EU scheme transfers) omit “nominated”.

**31.** In Schedule 1 (interpretation)—

(a) before the definition of “the Committee” insert—

““cohabiting partner” means a person whom the Committee is satisfied fulfils the following condition—

(a) the person (P) has fulfilled the condition in paragraph (b) for a continuous period of at least two years on the date the member (M) died;

(b) the condition is that—

(i) M and P are able to marry, or form a civil partnership with, each other;

(ii) M and P are living together as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners;

(iii) neither M nor P is living with a third person as if they were a married couple or as if they were civil partners; and

(iv) either P is financially dependent on M, or M and P are financially interdependent; and

(c) in this definition—

- (i) “member” means an active member or a former active member who has become a deferred or pensioner member in accordance with these Regulations or the 2009 Regulations; and
- (ii) the qualifying time period, under paragraph (a), of a continuous period of at least two years on the date the member died as it applies in relation to the condition in paragraph (b)(i) (ability to marry or form a civil partnership) no longer applies from [DN date to be entered when known – the 21 days after the commencement date of these amending Regulations] XX Month 2019;”;
- (b) omit the definition of “nominated co-habiting partner”; and
- (c) in the definition of “partner” omit “nominated”.

#### **Amendment of the 2014 Transitional Regulations**

**32.** The 2014 Transitional Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 33 and 34.

**33.** In regulation 17(7)(c) (survivor benefits) omit “nominated”.

**34.** In paragraph 4(3) of Schedule 5 (transitional and transitory provisions and savings), in the definition of “benefit” for “nominated cohabiting partner (as defined in regulations 42 of the 2014 Regulations)” substitute “cohabiting partner”.

## **PART 2**

### **Minor amendments**

#### **Amendment of the 1981 Regulations**

**35.—**(1) Regulation 36 has effect in relation to the 1981 Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The 1981 Regulations are amended in accordance with regulation 36.

**36.** For regulation 13(4)(e) (admission of other persons to participation in superannuation benefits), substitute—

“(e) the managers of a voluntary school or grant maintained integrated school within the meaning of Article 2(2) of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986(a).”.

#### **Amendment of the 1992 Regulations**

**37.—**(1) Regulation 38 has effect in relation to the 1992 Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The 1992 Regulations are amended in accordance with regulation 38.

**38.** In regulation B5(10)(e) (power to admit employees of other bodies), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”.

#### **Amendment of the 2000 Regulations**

**39.—**(1) Regulations 40 to 43 have effect in relation to the 2000 Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The 2000 Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 40 to 43.

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(a) S.I. 1986/594 (N.I. 3).

**40.**In regulation B6(a) (agreements to enable employees of non-LGPS employers to be members (“admission agreements”))—

- (a) in paragraph (9)(e)(b), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”; and
- (b) in paragraph (3)(g)(c), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”.

**41.** In regulation D11 (entitlement to deferred retirement benefits)—

- (a) in paragraph (2)(c), for “employing authority” substitute “the Committee” and omit “with the agreement of the Committee,”;
- (b) in paragraph (2)(e) omit “, has ceased to be employed in local government employment”;
- (c) in paragraph (4)(a) after “on” insert “or after”; and
- (d) omit paragraph (4)(b).

**42.** In regulation D13 (reduction of pensions payable early by virtue of elections etc.)—

- (a) in paragraph (2) for “by the appropriate percentage for the member’s pension advancement period” substitute “in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary”; and
- (b) omit paragraphs (3) to (5).

**43.** After regulation N9(1)(d) (payment of benefits), insert—

“(1A) A pension credit member may apply in writing to the Committee for the early payment of benefits from age 55 up to normal benefit age and such benefits must be reduced in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary.”.

#### **Amendment of the 2002 Regulations**

**44.**—(1) Regulations 45 to 48 have effect in relation to the 2002 Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The 2002 Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 45 to 48.

**45.** In regulation 4(e) (employees of non-Scheme employers: community admission bodies)—

- (a) in paragraph (3)(g)(f), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”;
- (b) in paragraph (2)(f)(g), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”;

**46.** Omit paragraph (7) of regulation 41 (death grants).

**47.** After regulation 140(1) (payment of benefits) insert—

“(1A) A pension credit member may apply in writing to the Committee for the early payment of benefits from age 55 up to normal benefit age and such benefits must be reduced in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary.”.

**48.** Omit paragraph (5) of regulation 141 (death grants).

#### **Amendment of the Benefits Regulations**

**49.**—(1) Regulations 50 to 52 have effect in relation to the Benefits Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

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- (a) This regulation was substituted by regulation 3 of S.R. 2001 No. 64.
  - (b) Regulation B6(9)(e) was effective from 1st August 2000 to 1st April 2001 at which point it was replaced by regulation B6(3)(g) by S.R. 2001 No. 64 - Regulation 3.
  - (c) Regulation B6(3)(g) was effective from 2nd April 2001 to 31st January 2003.
  - (d) This regulation was inserted into S.R. 2000 No. 177 by regulation 2 of S.R. 2001 No. 61.
  - (e) This regulation was substituted by regulation 3 of S.R. 2005 No. 206.
  - (f) Regulation 4(3)(g) was effective from 1st February 2003 to 30 April 2005 at which point it was replaced by regulation 4(2)(f) by S.R. 2005 No. 206 - Regulation 3.
  - (g) Regulation 4(2)(f) was effective from 1st May 2005 to 31st March 2009.

(2) The Benefits Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 50 to 52.

**50.** Omit paragraph (5) of regulation 23 (death grants: active members).

**51.** Omit paragraph (4) of regulation 32 (death grants: deferred members).

**52.** Omit paragraph (4) of regulation 35 (death grants: pensioner members).

#### **Amendment of the Administration Regulations**

**53.**—(1) Regulations 54 to 56 have effect in relation to the Administration Regulations to the extent that they continue in operation by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

(2) The Administration Regulations are amended in accordance with regulations 54 to 56.

**54.** In regulation 4(2)(f) (employees of community admission bodies), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”.

**55.** Omit paragraph (10)(a) of regulation 22 (use of accumulated value of AVCs and SCAVCs).

**56.** Omit paragraph (3) of regulation 92 (death grants: pension credit members).

#### **Amendment of the Principal Regulations**

**57.** The Principal Regulations(b) are amended in accordance with regulations 58 to 83.

**58.** After regulation 10(1) (pension credit members and survivor members) insert—

“(1A) A reference to a pension credit member is always a reference to that member before benefits come into payment; at that point the pension credit member becomes a pensioner member.”.

**59.** In regulation 13 (contributions during absence from work) after paragraph 3 insert—

“(3A) An active member shall pay contributions under regulation 11 (contributions) or 12 (temporary reduction in contributions) during an absence from work with the permission of the member’s employing authority (otherwise than because of illness or injury) in accordance with regulation 16A (contributions during absences with permission).”.

**60.** After regulation 16 (contributions during absence for illness or injury) insert—

##### **“Contributions during absences with permission**

**16A.** An active member who is absent from work with permission from the member’s employing authority and receiving reduced pay or no pay—

- (a) shall pay contributions in accordance with regulation 11 (contributions) or regulation 12 (temporary reduction in contributions) on the pensionable pay the member would have received but for the member’s absence; and
- (b) may continue to pay APCs, AVCs or SVAVCs that the member was paying prior to the period of absence,

where the absence, is for a period of 30 consecutive days or less, in respect of the period of that absence; or is for a period longer than 30 consecutive days, in respect of the first 30 days of that absence only.”.

**61.** In regulation 17 (employing authority contributions during absence)—

- (a) in paragraph (3)(b) after “are payable” insert “by the Ministry of Defence”;
- (b) after paragraph (3) insert—

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(a) This paragraph was inserted into S.R. 2009 No. 33 by regulation 20(e) of S.R. 2012 No. 183.

(b) S.R. 2014 No. 188; those Regulations have been amended by S.R. 2015 No. 77, S.R. 2015 No. 162, and S.R. 2016 No. 128

“(3A) Where an active member is absent from work under regulation 13(4)(c) and makes contributions under regulation 16A the employing authority shall make contributions in accordance with regulation 73(4) for the same period as the active member makes contributions under regulation 16A.”; and

- (c) in paragraph (6)(a) omit “, which amount shall be calculated in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Department where the amount of pensionable remuneration cannot be readily determined”.

**62.** For regulation 18(7) (additional pension contributions), substitute—

“(7) The amount of the contributions to be paid in respect of arrangements under this regulation is to be determined in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Department based on the age of the active member at the time the arrangements commence.”.

**63.** In regulation 19 (additional voluntary contributions)—

- (a) in paragraph (13) for “paragraphs (12) or (14)” substitute “paragraph (12)”; and
- (b) omit paragraph (14).

**64.** In regulation 22(2) (meaning of “pensionable pay”)—

- (a) at the end of sub-paragraph (h) omit “or”;
- (b) at the end of sub-paragraph (i) for “leave.” substitute “leave; or”; and
- (c) after sub-paragraph (i) insert—

“(j) any non-consolidated non-pensionable payment paid to a member as part of an annual pay award.”.

**65.** In regulation 23(b) (assumed pensionable pay)—

- (a) in paragraph (4), for “Subject to paragraph (4A)” substitute “Subject to paragraphs (4A), (5A) and (5B)”; and
- (b) after paragraph (5) insert—

“(5A) Where the pensionable pay received by a member during any period specified in paragraph (4)(a)(i) or (4)(b)(i) was, in the opinion of the employing authority, materially different than the level of pensionable pay that the member normally received, for the purposes of this regulation the employing authority may substitute for the pensionable pay the member received, a revised level of pensionable pay to reflect the level of pensionable pay that the member would normally have received.

(5B) In determining what the level of pensionable pay a member normally receives for the purposes of paragraph (5A) an employing authority must have regard to the level of pensionable pay received by a member in the previous 12 months.”.

**66.** In regulation 31 (retirement benefits)—

- (a) after paragraph (3) insert—

“(3A) A member who is an employee in local government employment on the day before attaining age 75 must have their retirement pension paid from age 75 even if the member remains in local government employment beyond that age.”; and
- (b) in paragraph (7)(b) for “that employment” substitute “that active member’s pension account in respect of that employment”.

**67.** For regulation 34(5)(a) (election for lump sum instead of pension) substitute—

“(a) a pension credit where, on the date upon which the pension credit member becomes entitled to the pension credit, the member of the Scheme subject to the

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(a) Regulation 17(6) was substituted by regulation 5 of S.R. 2016 No. 128.  
(b) Regulation 23 was amended by regulation 8 of S.R. 2016 No. 128.

corresponding pension debit has an actual (rather than a prospective) right to payment of the retirement pension under the Scheme; or”.

**68.** Omit paragraph (4) of regulation 40 (death grants: active members).

**69.** In regulation 46 (death grants: deferred members and pension credit members)—

- (a) omit paragraph (4); and
- (b) for paragraph (5) substitute—

“(5) This regulation shall apply to pension credit members as it applies to deferred members, subject to paragraph (6).

(6) Where a person entitled to a pension credit dies before the Committee awards a pension credit, the calculation of the death grant under paragraph (3), shall be modified so that the multiplier is three.”.

**70.** Omit paragraph (5) of regulation 51 (death grants: pensioner members).

**71.** In regulations 52(4)(a), 54(3)(a), 54(4)(a), 55(3)(a) and 55(4)(a) (survivor benefits: partners and children of pensioner members) after “earned pension” insert “(including any amount added under regulations 39(1)(a) or 39(2)(a) (enhancement of member’s tier 1 and tier 2 ill-health benefits))”.

**72.** For regulation 57(2) (limit on total amount of benefits payable) substitute—

“(2) In this regulation “lifetime allowance” is to be construed in accordance with section 218 of, and Schedule 36 to, the 2004 Finance Act, and section 44 of, and Schedule 6 to the Finance Act 2014<sup>(a)</sup> and, where applicable, is to include primary protection, enhanced protection, fixed protection or individual protection within the meaning of those provisions.”.

**73.** In regulation 70 (special circumstances where revised actuarial valuations and certificates shall be obtained)—

- (a) after paragraph (12) insert—

“(12A) Where in the opinion of the Committee there is a relevant change in circumstances of an employing authority, the Committee may, with the approval of the Department, vary the date at which an actuarial valuation and exit certificate is determined under paragraph (12).”; and

- (b) after paragraph (13D)<sup>(b)</sup> insert—

“(13E) Where in the opinion of the Committee there has been a relevant change in the circumstances of an employing authority (including an admission body), the Committee may with the agreement of the employing authority obtain from an actuary a certificate specifying the percentage or amount by which in the actuary’s opinion it is appropriate that:

- (a) the contribution at the common rate of employer’s contribution should be adjusted; or
- (b) any individual adjustment should be made or any prior individual adjustment should be increased or reduced in respect of that employing authority.

(13F) Where the actuary is producing a certificate under paragraph (13E), the actuary shall take into account the current version of the Committee’s funding strategy statement and any other matter which the actuary considers relevant.

(13G) A relevant change in circumstances for the purpose of paragraph (13E) includes any one or more of the following:

- (a) the employing authority, since the date of the existing rates and adjustments certificate, has secured a guarantee in a form satisfactory to the Committee of its

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(a) 2014 c.26

(b) Regulations 70(13A) to (13D) were inserted by regulation 19(b) of S.R. 2016 No .128.



entire liabilities to the pension fund from a Department which is established by or under any enactment and where that enactment enables the Department to make financial provision for that employing authority;

- (b) the employing authority, since the date of the existing rates and adjustments certificate, has provided security, in a legally binding form satisfactory to the Committee, for its entire liabilities to the pension fund;
- (c) an assessment carried out to the satisfaction of the Committee and taking account of actuarial advice, of the level of risk arising on the premature termination of the provision of service or assets by reason of insolvency, winding up or liquidation of the admission body demonstrates that the risk has reduced significantly since the existing certificate was issued;
- (d) at the time that the existing rates and adjustments certificate was obtained there were circumstances which in the opinion of the Committee made it likely that the employing authority would become an exiting employer but there has been a change in those circumstances so that in the opinion of the Committee it is likely that the employing authority's participation in the scheme will be indefinite; or
- (e) there was an error and/or omission in the information provided to the actuary for the purposes of calculating the existing rates and adjustment certificate, which in the opinion of the actuary has had a significant impact upon the contributions certified for that employing authority, or where there has been a substantive or typographical error in the existing rates and adjustments certificate.”.

**74.** In regulation 80(3) (first instance decisions - general) at the end insert “including which of the employee’s emoluments are remuneration on which contributions are payable”.

**75.** After regulation 90(3) (exchange of information) insert—

“(3A) The Committee may, in respect of one or more employing authorities, determine that the statement referred to in paragraph (3) shall be provided at regular intervals of periods of less than one year and where it so determines—

- (a) the Committee shall notify in writing each relevant employing authority of the revised intervals at which the statement is to be provided; and
- (b) each employing authority so notified shall provide the statement within one month of the expiry of each of the revised intervals, containing the information in respect of that period.”.

**76.** For regulation 92(2) (payments due in respect of deceased persons) substitute—

“(2) The Committee may, at its absolute discretion, pay the whole or part of the amount due from the pension fund to a person’s personal representatives, any person or persons appearing to the Committee to be beneficially entitled to the estate or any person appearing to the Committee to have been a relative or dependent of the person at any time.”.

**77.** For regulation 96 (joint liability in respect of annual allowance charge) substitute—

**“Annual allowance charge**

**96.**—(1) This regulation applies where—

- (a) a member gives notice to the Committee of joint and several liability under section 237B (liability of scheme administrator) of the 2004 Finance Act in respect of the member’s annual allowance charge; or
- (b) the Committee satisfies all or part of a member’s liability to the annual allowance charge on a voluntary basis(a).

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(a) See S.I. 2011/1791.

(2) Where the member's annual allowance charge is met by the pension fund, the Committee shall reduce the value of the member's rights accrued under the Scheme in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Department.”.

**78.** In regulation 108 (rights to payments out of the fund)—

(a) in paragraph (1) for “Chapter 4 or 5 of Part 4” substitute “Chapters 1 or 2 of Part 4ZA(a)”; and

(b) after paragraph (1) insert—

“(1A) Where a transfer under paragraph (1) is a Club Transfer, the Committee must comply with the provisions in the Club Memorandum in relation to that transfer.”.

**79.** In regulation 112 (inward transfers of pension rights), at the end insert—

“(8) Where a relevant transfer is a Club Transfer, the Committee must comply with the provisions in the Club Memorandum in relation to that transfer.”.

**80.** In regulation 113 (effect of acceptance of transfer value) for paragraph (2) substitute—

“(2) The calculation of the appropriate amount of earned pension for the purposes of the paragraph (1) is—

(a) in the case of a transfer of employment between members of the Public Sector Transfer Club, in accordance with the Club Memorandum; and

(b) in any other case, in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Department.”.

**81.** In Schedule 1(b) (interpretation)—

(a) after the definition of “children's pension” insert—

““Club Memorandum” means—

(a) in respect of a Club Transfer completed before 1st April 2015, the memorandum published by the Cabinet Office under the title “The Public Sector Transfer Club – Memorandum by the Cabinet Office – effective from 1st March 2012;

(b) in respect of a Club Transfer completed in the period from 1st April 2015 to 28th February 2017, the memorandum published by the Cabinet Office under the title “The Public Sector Transfer Club – Memorandum by the Cabinet Office – effective from 1st April 2015; and

(c) in respect of a Club Transfer completed on or after 1st March 2017, the memorandum published by the Cabinet Office under the title “The Public Sector Transfer Club – Memorandum by the Cabinet Office – effective from 1st March 2017(c);

“Club Transfer” means a transfer of employment between members of the Public Sector Transfer Club;”;

(b) in the definition of “partner” omit “in relation to an active member”;

(c) after the definition of “permanently incapable” insert—

““Public Sector Transfer Club” means the arrangement approved by the Department and detailed in the Club Memorandum as providing reciprocal arrangements between the Scheme

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(a) Part 4ZA was inserted into the Pension Schemes Act (Northern Ireland) 1993 (c. 49) by section 67 of and Schedule 4, Part 2, paragraphs 49 and 50, to the Pension Schemes Act 2015 (c. 8).

(b) There are amendments to Schedule 1 which are not relevant to these Regulations.

(c) The Club Memorandum is published on the Cabinet Office website and can be accessed at the following addresses-  
[http://lgpsregs.org/timelinereg/UK%20Wide%20Guidance/Public\\_Sector\\_Transfer\\_Club\\_Mar2012.pdf](http://lgpsregs.org/timelinereg/UK%20Wide%20Guidance/Public_Sector_Transfer_Club_Mar2012.pdf)  
<http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/media/95419/club-memorandum-december-2015.pdf>  
<http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/media/213390/club-memorandum-march-2017.pdf> and hard copies can be obtained from: The Secretary, Public Sector Transfer Club, Cabinet Office, Lower Ground Floor, Priestley House, Priestley Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG24 9NW.

and other registered occupational pension schemes for making and receiving transfer value payments;”; and

(d) for the definition of “revaluation adjustment” substitute—

““revaluation adjustment” means—

- (a) in the case of a balance transferred under a Club Transfer, the adjustment that would have applied to that balance if it had not been transferred; and
- (b) in any other case the percentage specified as the change in prices in the relevant Treasury Order made under section 9(2) of the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 which applied to a sum in a pension account at the beginning of the next scheme year;”.

**82.** In Schedule 2 (admission agreements with admission bodies)—

(a) in paragraph 2(1)(f) of Part 1 (admission bodies), after “school” insert “or grant maintained integrated school”; and

(b) after paragraph 15 insert—

“(16) An admission agreement may take effect on a date before it is executed.”.

**83.** In paragraph 3(2) of Part 3 (expense and allowances payable by the Committee) of Schedule 3 (the committee: preliminary provisions) omit “under section 36 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972”.

#### **Amendment of the 2014 Transitional Regulations**

**84.** The 2014 Transitional Regulations(a) are amended in accordance with regulations 85 to 92.

**85.** In regulation 3 (membership before 1st April 2015) after paragraph 6 insert—

“(6A) Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(a), where deferred benefits are aggregated in accordance with paragraph (6), the normal pension age in relation to deferred benefits in respect of membership that ceased before 1st October 2006, is age 65.”.

**86.** For regulation 5(5) (membership of the scheme) substitute—

“(5) A person who was a deferred member of one of the earlier Schemes whose benefits under those Schemes have not come into payment and who becomes an active member of the Scheme by virtue of regulation 3(1) (active membership) of the 2014 Regulations without a disqualifying break, may choose, by notice in writing to the Committee to be treated as if he or she had become an active member of the Scheme by virtue of paragraph (1)—

- (a) within 12 months of becoming a member of the Scheme; or
- (b) within such longer period as the employing authority permits.”.

**87.** In regulation 9 (transfers)—

(a) in paragraph (1)—

(i) omit “before 1st April 2015”; and

(ii) at the end, insert “since ceasing active membership in the Scheme from which the transfer payment is received”; and

(b) after paragraph (1) insert—

“(1A) Regulation 4 (statutory underpin) applies to a person of the description in paragraph (1) as if that person had been an active member of the 2009 Scheme in respect of the service in the different public service pension scheme.”.

**88.** In regulation 9A(a) (aggregation adjustments etc.) for paragraph (6) substitute—

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(a) S.R. 2014 No. 189 as amended by S.R. 2015 No. 162, S.R. 2015 No. 128 and S.R. 2016 No. 329.

“(6) A member with deferred benefits relating to the Earlier Schemes, who did not become a member of the 2014 Scheme by virtue of regulation 5(1) (membership of the 2014 Scheme), but who subsequently becomes an active member of the 2014 Scheme may—

- (a) within 12 months of the active member’s pension account being opened; or
- (b) such longer period as the Committee permits,

elect to receive a transfer value payment in relation to the deferred benefits to be credited to the active member’s pension account to purchase earned pension in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Department.”.

**89.** In regulation 13(2) (contributions) after “is entitled to a refund of contributions” insert “(including additional contributions)”.

**90.** In regulation 14 (additional contributions)—

- (a) omit paragraph (1)(b);
- (b) for paragraph (1)(d) substitute—

“(d) regulation 14 (election in respect of additional pension) and regulation 14A (election to pay additional contributions: survivor benefits) of the Benefits Regulations and regulations 19 (payment of additional regular contributions (ARCs)), 20 (discontinuance of ARCs), regulation 20A (payment of additional contributions: survivor benefits (ASBCs)) and 20B (discontinuance of ASBCs) of the Administration Regulations<sup>(b)</sup> as they apply to a member who has elected before 1st April 2015 to pay additional contributions under those regulations.”; and

- (c) after paragraph (2) insert—

“(2A) Regulation 19 of the 2014 Regulations (additional voluntary contributions) applies to an AVC arrangement entered into before 1st April 2015 as it applies to an AVC arrangement entered into on or after that date save that—

- (a) the normal pension age in an AVC arrangement entered into before 1st April 2015 is the normal retirement age under the 2009 Scheme; and
- (b) regulation 68(8) of the 2002 Regulations (persons making elections in relation to AVC’s prior to 1st February 2003 continues to have effect in relation to persons of the description in that regulation.”.

**91.** For regulation 15(1) (annual allowance) substitute—

“**15.**—(1) The Committee may adjust the member’s benefits accrued within the earlier Schemes in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Department, where—

- (a) a member gives notice to the Committee of joint and several liability under section 237B (liability of scheme administrator) of the 2004 Finance Act in respect of the member’s annual allowance charge; or
- (b) the Committee satisfies all or part of a member’s liability to the annual allowance charge on a voluntary basis<sup>(c)</sup>.”.

**92.** In Schedule 3<sup>(d)</sup> (the 85 year rule: transitional provisions and savings)—

- (a) in paragraph 1(1)(a) after “the Benefits Regulations” insert “if the member is aged 60 or over at the date of early retirement”;
- (b) after paragraph 1(1)(a) insert—

“(aa) regulation 30(1) (choice of early payment of pension) of the Benefits Regulations, if the member is aged 55 or over but aged under 60 at the date of

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(a) Regulation 9A was inserted by regulation 28 of S.R. 2016 No. 128.

(b) Regulations 20A and 20B were inserted by S.R. 2010 No. 410.

(c) See S.I. 2011/1791.

(d) There are amendments to Schedule 3 which are not relevant to these Regulations.

early retirement and the former employing authority agrees that paragraph 1(3) should apply;”;

(c) in paragraph 1(1)(c) after “of the 2014 Regulations” insert “, or regulation 30(1) (choice of early payment of pension) of the Benefits Regulations;”;

(d) after paragraph 1(1)(c) insert—

“(d) regulation 33(1) (other early leavers: deferred retirement benefits and elections for early payment) of the 2002 Regulations if the member is aged 60 or over at the date of early retirement; or

(e) regulation 33(1) (other early leavers: deferred retirement benefits and elections for early payment) of the 2002 Regulations if the member is aged 55 or over but aged under 60 at the date of early retirement and the member’s employing authority agrees that paragraph 1(3) should apply.”;

(e) in paragraph 1(2) for “1(1)(b)(ii)” substitute “1(1)(aa), 1(1)(b)(ii) or 1(1)(e)”;

(f) in paragraph 1(5) for “References” substitute “In this Schedule, references”; and

(g) in paragraph 2—

(i) in sub-paragraph (1A)(a) after “waive” insert “in whole or in part”; and

(ii) for sub-paragraph (3) insert—

“(3) Where an employing authority agrees that paragraph 1(1)(aa), 1(1)(b)(ii) or 1(1)(e) should apply to a member, or determines to waive a reduction under sub-paragraph (1), the Committee shall require the employing authority concerned, or itself, to make additional payments to the fund in respect of any extra charge on the fund, as calculated by an actuary appointed by the Committee, resulting from the agreement or waiver of the reduction.”.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department for Communities on XXth Month 2019.



*Anthony Carleton*

A senior officer of the Department for Communities

The Department of Finance consents to the making of these Regulations

Sealed with the official Seal of the Department of Finance on XXth Month 2019.



*Name Surname*

A senior officer of the Department of Finance

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(a) Sub-paragraph (1A) was inserted by S.R. 2016 No. 128.

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations amend a number of Statutory Rules which provide for the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) (LGPS (NI)).

Part 1 of these Regulations amend—

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (“the Benefits Regulations”);
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (“the Administration Regulations”);
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (“the 2009 Transitional Regulations”);
- The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (“the Principal Regulations”); and
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (“the 2014 Transitional Regulations”).

These Regulations are made under the powers contained in the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. Section 3(3)(b) of that Act provides that scheme regulations may make retrospective provision.

The amendments remove the requirement to complete a nomination form as part of the criteria which must be fulfilled to qualify for a survivor pension. The Benefits Regulations, the Administration Regulations and the 2009 Transitional Regulations came into operation on 1 April 2009 and the amendments to those 3 sets of Regulations will take effect from that date with the exception of regulation 4 (election to pay additional contributions: survivor benefits) which was introduced by amendment to the Benefits Regulations by S.R 2010 No. 410 with an effect date of 31 December 2009.

The definition of “cohabiting partner” as substituted in regulation 31(a) includes a new subparagraph at (c)(ii) which removes the 2 year qualifying period as it applied to the member’s ability to marry or enter a civil partnership from the date the member died. This modification will not have retrospective effect.

Part 2 of these Regulations amend—

- the Local Government (Superannuation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1981 (“the 1981 Regulations”);
- the Local Government (Superannuation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 (“the 1992 Regulations”);
- the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 (“the 2000 Regulations”);
- the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 (“the 2002 Regulations”);
- the Benefits Regulations;
- the Administration Regulations;
- the Principal Regulations; and
- the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

All of the amending regulations in Part 2 come into operation on the same date as these Regulations with the exception of those listed in regulation 1(2).

Regulation 35 introduces amendments to the 1981 Regulations in so far as they remain extant by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulation 36 substitutes regulation 13(4)(e) (admission of other persons to participation in superannuation benefits) to clarify that a grant maintained integrated school may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI).

Regulation 37 introduces amendments to the 1992 Regulations in so far as they remain extant by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulation 38 amends regulation B5(10)(e) (power to admit employees of other bodies) to clarify that a grant maintained integrated school may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI).

Regulation 39 introduces amendments to the 2000 Regulations in so far as they remain extant by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulation 40 amends regulation B6(3)(g) (agreements to enable employees of non-LGPS employers to be members (“admission agreements”)) to clarify that a grant maintained integrated school may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI).

Regulation 41 amends regulation D11 (entitlement to deferred retirement benefits) to remove the requirement for an employer to give consent for a member to elect for early payment of benefits where a member left with deferred benefits before 1st April 1988 and is aged 55 to 59. The consent of the LGPS (NI) the Committee – the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee (“the Committee”) remains a requirement.

Regulation 42 amends regulation D13 (reduction of pensions payable early by virtue of elections etc.) to enable the early payment of pensions from age 55 subject to an actuarial reduction for early payment in line with guidance issued by the Government Actuary’s Department.

Regulation 43 amends regulation N9 (payment of benefits) to allow a pension credit member to apply in writing to the Committee for the early payment of benefits from age 55. These benefits must be reduced for early payment in line with guidance issued by the Government Actuary’s Department.

Regulation 44 introduces amendments to the 2002 Regulations in so far as they remain extant by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulation 45 amends regulation 4(3)(g) (employees of non-Scheme employers: community admission bodies) to clarify that a grant maintained integrated school may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI).

Regulation 46 omits regulation 41(7) (death grants) to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 47 makes an amendment to regulation 140 (payment of benefits) to allow a pension credit member to apply in writing to the Committee for the early payment of benefits from age 55. These benefits must be reduced for early payment in line with guidance issued by the Government Actuary.

Regulation 48 omits regulation 141(5) (death grants) to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 49 introduces amendments to the Benefits Regulations in so far as they remain extant by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulations 50, 51 and 52 omits regulations 23(5) (death grants: active members), 32(4) (death grants: deferred members) and 35(4) (death grants: pensioner members), respectively, to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 53 introduces amendments to the Administration Regulations in so far as they remain extant by virtue of the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulation 54 amends regulation 4(2)(f) (employees of community admission bodies) to clarify that a grant maintained integrated school may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI).

Regulations 55 and 56 delete regulations 22(10) (use of accumulated value of AVCs and SCAVCs) and 92(3) (death grants: pension credit members), respectively, to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 57 introduces amendments to the Principal Regulations by regulations 58 to 83 of these Regulations.

Regulation 58 inserts a new paragraph into regulation 10 (pension credit members and survivor members) clarifies that a reference to a pension credit member is always a reference to that member before benefits come into payment and at that point that member becomes a pensioner member.

Regulations 59, 60 and 61(b) amend regulation 13 (contributions during absence from work), insert a new regulation 16A (contributions during absences with permission) and amend regulation 17 (employing authority contributions during absences) respectively, to clarify the contributions that members and employers make during absences from work.

Regulation 61(a) amends regulation 17 (employing authority contributions during absences) to clarify that, where a member is absent on reserve forces service leave, it is the Ministry of Defence who pays the employer contribution.

Regulation 61(c) makes a minor amendment to regulation 17 (employing authority contributions during absences) to delete an incorrect reference to actuarial guidance.

Regulation 62 substitutes regulation 18(7) (additional pension contributions) to clarify the basis on which the Government Actuary's Department calculates the amount of contributions in respect of these arrangements by removing the gender of the member from consideration. The age of the member at the time these arrangements commence remains a factor.

Regulation 63 deletes regulation 19(14) (additional voluntary contributions) to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 64 amends regulation 22 (meaning of pensionable pay) to provide clarification that a non-consolidated non-pensionable payment made to a member resulting from the settlement of an annual pay award is excluded from pensionable pay.

Regulation 65 amends regulation 23 (assumed pensionable pay) permits employers to adopt a revised reference figure for the calculation of assumed pensionable pay where it would otherwise be unfair.

Regulation 66 amends regulation 31 (retirement benefits) to clarify that a member must receive their pension from age 75 even if they remain in local government employment and regulation 31(7)(b) (retirement benefits) to clarify that only active membership relating to that employment in relation to a post being made redundant is allowed to be considered in the calculation of early access to pension as part of a redundancy payment.

Regulation 67 amends regulation 34 (election for lump sum instead of pension) by updating the rules regarding election for lump sum instead of pension to reflect the Finance Act 2004. It ensures that where a pension in payment is split through a pension sharing order, the person who is provided with the pension credit will not be able to take a tax-free lump sum from the benefit rights that are acquired. This is on the basis that when the member's ex-spouse or former civil partner's benefits first came into payment, that ex-spouse or former civil partner will have taken (or had the opportunity to take) a tax-free lump sum in respect of the benefits, so it would not be appropriate to allow a lump sum to be taken free of income tax from the pension credit rights. This applies regardless of whether a lump sum was actually taken by the pension debit member.



Regulation 68 deletes regulation 40(4) (death grants: active members) to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 69(a) amends regulation 46 (death grants: deferred members and pensioner credit members) to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment and regulation 69(b) substitutes regulation 46(5) to clarify the formula used for the calculation of the death grant payable to a pension credit member.

Regulation 70 amends regulation 51 (death grants: pensioner members) to remove the 2 year limit within which a death grant had to be paid in order to be considered an authorised payment.

Regulation 71 amends regulations 52(4)(a), 54(3)(a), 54(4)(a), 55(3)(a) and 55(4)(a) (survivor benefits: partners and children of pensioner members) to ensure that the calculation of survivor benefits for partners and children of pensioner members include any ill-health enhancement under regulations 39(1)(a) or 39(2)(a) (tier 1 or tier 2 ill-health benefits).

Regulation 72 amends regulation 57 (limit on total amount of benefits payable) to correct references which apply in respect of lifetime allowance statements.

Regulation 73 amends regulation 70 (special circumstances where revised actuarial valuations and certificates shall be obtained) to provide for an amendment of the rates and adjustments certificate between valuations where there is material improvement in the employer's circumstances.

Regulation 74 amends regulation 80 (first instance decisions – general) to make it clear that it is the employing authority's responsibility to determine which of the employee's emoluments are remuneration on which contributions are payable.

Regulation 75 amends regulation 90 (exchange of information) to accommodate the faster exchange of information between the Committee and employing authorities.

Regulation 76 amends regulation 92 (payments due in respect of deceased persons) to clarify the recipients to which payments may be made under the scheme when a person dies.

Regulation 77 amends regulation 96 (annual allowance charge) to clarify that voluntary scheme pays may be offered to members who qualify.

Regulations 78-81 (except regulation 81(b)) amend regulations 108 (rights to payments out of the fund), 112 (inward transfers of pension rights), 113 (effect of acceptance of transfer value) and Schedule 1 (interpretation) to make provision for the Scheme to comply with its membership obligations of the Public Sector Transfer Club.

Regulation 81(b) amends the definition of "partner" in Schedule 1 (interpretation).

Regulation 82(a) amends Schedule 2 (admission agreements with admission bodies) to clarify that a grant maintained integrated school may be an admission body of the LGPS (NI). Regulation 82(b) inserts a new sub-paragraph to ensure that an admission agreement may take effect on a day before it is executed.

Regulation 83 amends Part 3 (expense and allowances payable to the Committee) of Schedule 3 (the committee: preliminary provisions) to remove a reference to a repealed provision.

Regulation 84 introduces amendments to the 2014 Transitional Regulations.

Regulation 85 amends regulation 3 (membership before 1 April 2015) to clarify that the normal pension age in relation to deferred benefits in respect of membership that ceased before 1 October 2006, is age 65.

Regulation 86 amends regulation 5 (membership of the scheme) to clarify that a person who has been a deferred member accruing final salary benefits under previous LGPS (NI) Regulations, who then becomes an active member of the reformed LGPS (NI) without a disqualifying break in membership, may continue to accrue final salary benefits under the statutory underpin arrangements, if notification is given to the Committee within a certain period of time.

Regulation 87 amends regulation 9 (transfers) to ensure that members of other public service pension schemes who are entitled to transitional protection under those schemes and who are continuing to accrue final salary benefits can obtain final salary benefits within the Local Government Pension Scheme if they transfer those benefits in and can benefit from the statutory underpin.

Regulation 88 amends regulation 9A (aggregation adjustments etc.) to introduce a 12 month time limit (which may be extended at the discretion of the Committee) if a former member of the Earlier Schemes takes up active membership of the Scheme and wishes to aggregate the benefits.

Regulation 89 amends regulation 13 (contributions) to clarify that the term “contributions” includes additional contributions.

Regulation 90 amends regulation 14 (additional contributions) to alter the administration of AVC benefits in regulation 19 (additional voluntary contributions) of the 2014 Regulations, so that the date the AVC arrangement was established is disregarded.

Regulation 91 substitutes regulation 15(1) (annual allowance) to enable the Committee to offer members, at its discretion, the voluntary scheme pays facility where the value of the member’s accrued benefits exceeds the annual allowance.

Regulation 92 makes an amendment to the provisions in Schedule 3 to the Transitional Regulations (“the 85 year rule”) to remove the requirement for employer consent for members aged between 55 and 60 to draw benefits.

These Regulations are made under the powers contained in the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. Section 3(3)(b) of that Act provides that scheme regulations may make retrospective provision.

XX September 2019

Your ref:

By email to: [lgpd@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:lgpd@communities-ni.gov.uk)

W Dobbin  
Pensions Manager  
Local Government and Housing  
Regulation Directorate  
Level 4  
Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Townparks  
**BELFAST**  
BT2 7EG

Dear Mr Dobbin,

**Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Local Government Pension Scheme for Northern Ireland (LGPS (NI))**

Thank you for the opportunity to reply to the above consultation exercise.

From a practical perspective, Council found the consultation documentation to be onerous to read and requiring of consideration by individual(s) with a detailed working knowledge of the current NILGOSC Scheme.

Nonetheless, the publication of the Department's Consultation Document on its website and the detailing of main proposed amendment impacting upon employers and Scheme members within the NILGOSC Circular 06/2016 did help to make Council's consideration of the draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 more efficient and effective than would otherwise have been the case.

In summary, for the most part, Council has no objection to and welcomes the proposed amendments. Council notes the proposal to amend the Regulations to fully implement the Supreme Court's decision of 8 February 2017 in relation to the rights of cohabiting partners.

In addition, Council is pleased to see that the proposed amendments seek to give legislative authority to the Department's letters of comfort to NILGOSC in relation to current voluntary scheme pay arrangements.

Council also notes the proposed reintroduction of the 30-day rule that requires employee and employer contributions to be paid for the first 30 days of a period of absence with permission. This will replace using Additional Pension Contracts (APCs) for the first 30 days absence with permission e.g. career breaks, breaks in

service, unpaid leave etc. currently allowed by Regulation 18 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Primary Regulations). Council notes that, for short term absences, i.e. up to 30 days, this should guarantee that the Scheme member takes steps to protect their future pension entitlement. However, Council is unclear if the amendment will prevent Scheme members absent with permission for in excess of 30 days seeking to use APCs for the period in excess of 30 days and, if not, whether Council continues to be obliged under Regulation 17 of the Primary Regulations to meet 2/3 of the cost of the APC. Perhaps the Department could clarify this uncertainty?

However, Council, in relation to draft Regulation 41(a), opines, that, as the former employer of deferred Scheme members seeking early payment of deferred pension benefits on compassionate grounds at any time after the member has attained the age of 50 years, it should continue to be at least consulted in relation to any such application.

Council would also suggest that, if the Regulations are revised (as is proposed, for example, by draft Regulation 42) to refer to guidance issued by the Government Actuary, arrangements are put in place to ensure that any such guidance is promptly circulated to the appropriate contact(s) within employing authorities.

Should you have any queries in relation to this response please do not hesitate to contact JJ Tohill, Director of Finance in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

**Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 4 July 2019 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt**

<b>Members Present</b>	Councillor Molloy, Chair  Councillors Buchanan, Colvin, Doris, Elattar (7.04 pm), Forde, Gildernew, Hughes, McFlynn, S McGuigan, McKinney, McLean (7.25 pm), S McPeake, Totten
<b>Officers in Attendance</b>	Mr A Tohill, Chief Executive Mrs Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation Mrs Canavan, Director of Organisational Development Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure Ms McNally, Council Solicitor Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services Mr O'Hagan, Head of IT Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer
<b>Others in Attendance</b>	<b>Agenda Item 4 – Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission</b> Les Allamby, Chief Commissioner Eddie Rooney, Commissioner

The meeting commenced at 7.01 pm.

**PR116/19 Apologies**

Councillors Ashton and Quinn.

**PR117/19 Declaration of Interest**

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

Councillors Buchanan, Forde and Gildernew declared an interest in Agenda Item 6 – RDP Co-Operation Projects.

**PR118/19 Chair's Business**

None.

**PR119/19 Deputation – Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission**

The Chair welcomed representatives from Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr Allamby stated that the Human Rights Commission are involved in community engagement days several times a year and prior to tonight's meeting they had met with Neighbourhood Police officers, had visited the Superstars Café in Cookstown and had met with STEP.

*Councillor Elattar entered the meeting at 7.04 pm.*

Mr Allamby continued with his presentation which focused on how the Commission was formed, its powers and functions, their strategic priorities and the current research, investigations and legal cases being undertaken by the Commission.

*Councillor McLean entered the meeting at 7.25 pm.*

The Chair, Councillor Molloy commented on the worthwhile engagements the Commission had been involved with today and opened the floor to Members questions.

Councillor S McPeake stated that the Human Rights Commission had an important remit but he was not sure how effective they were and it was good to hear an outline of their work. Councillor McPeake referred to minority language rights and asked what the Human Rights Commission does in terms of this, he stated that this Council does have a Language policy but that not all Councils have this.

Councillor S McGuigan referred to the range of issues being faced by ex-prisoners and stated that some of these issues have been brought to the attention of the Human Rights Commission but that they were not progressed.

Mr Allamby stated there was a framework convention and treaty bodies on minority languages and that there should be recognition of cultures. Mr Allamby stated there should be statutory protection that deals with Irish Language and Ulster Scots and that the Human Rights Commission have made a number of public statements in this regard. Mr Allamby stated that the Human Rights Commission have also done work on parades and flags and emblems.

Mr Allamby stated that if there had been instances in which someone felt the Human Rights Commission had not responded satisfactorily to issues brought to them they were happy to look at the matter again.

Councillor McKinney referred to this Council's logo which had Irish first and then English and no Ulster Scots. The Councillor also referred to road signage which part of the community felt was being imposed on them and asked what the position was on this.

Mr Allamby stated that the minority have rights and protections and still have the right to express their objection and that democratically signage should be inclusive of all. Mr Allamby highlighted that the Mid Ulster District has a minority ethnic population which goes beyond English, Irish and Ulster Scots.

Councillor McFlynn asked if the Human Rights Commission had any remit in relation to zero hours contracts or minimum hours contracts.

Mr Allamby stated that there are potentially some human rights issues at play with zero/minimum hours contracts but is more likely to be an employment legislation issue.

In response to Councillor Colvin's question Mr Allamby stated that the Commission has worked and engaged with all political parties in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

Councillor Colvin welcomed the opportunity to meet with the Human Rights Commission to discuss Irish Language and Ulster Scots, the Councillor stated he also welcomed that the Commission was addressing religious prosecution. Councillor Colvin referred to Abortion and stated he was proud that there was still some control on this issue in Northern Ireland.

*Councillor Molloy thanked the Human Rights Commission for their attendance at tonight's meeting following which they withdrew from the meeting at 7.48 pm.*

## **Matters for Decision**

### **PR120/19 Request to Illuminate Council Property - July 2019**

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered requests to light up/illuminate Council's designated properties.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney  
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the requests to light up Ranfurly House & Visitor Centre, Dungannon and Burnavon Arts & Cultural Centre, Cookstown from 2-8 September 2019 for Organ Donation Week and all designated properties on 21 November 2019 for World Pancreatic Cancer Day.

### **PR121/19 RDP Co-operation projects: International Appalachian Trail and Infrastructure Developments on Lough Neagh and its Waterways**

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation presented previously circulated report which sought approval to take forward applications for Rural Development Programme funding under the Local Action Groups Co-Operation Scheme in which Council will act as lead partner with Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership (the LAG) as co-applicant. The applications will relate to –

- The International Appalachian Trail – Ulster Section and,
- Infrastructure Developments on Lough Neagh and its Waterways.

Proposed by Councillor S McPeake  
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to progress RDP Co-Operation Scheme funding applications on the International Appalachian Trail and Infrastructure Developments on Lough Neagh and its Waterways with Council acting as lead partner with Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership as co-applicant. Council to provide match funding for the projects as detailed in the report and below –  
International Appalachian Trail – £12,875  
Infrastructure Developments on Lough Neagh and its Waterways - £38,500

*The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation left the meeting at 7.52 pm.*

**PR122/19 Full Fibre Northern Ireland Consortium (FFNI) Programme – Consortium Agreement**

The Council Solicitor presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the Council to enter into a Consortium Agreement in respect of the Full Fibre Northern Ireland Consortium (FFNI) Programme with other Councils within the Consortium as listed within the report.

Councillor McKinney asked how the grant would be spent and what areas would benefit from the fund.

The Council Solicitor advised that the funding would improve fibre connectivity through the Council area.

Councillor S McPeake stated he was aware there were routes identified through Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt and asked how far off these routes improved connectivity could be achieved.

The Head of IT advised that the primary design of the scheme is to connect public sector buildings and that surrounding buildings will potentially be able to gain from this through their own supplier. The officer advised that the scheme will bring added speed to the NI network and help to reduce operating costs. Members were further advised that there were draft maps of routes which are subject to review and finalisation.

Proposed by Councillor Colvin  
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to enter into a Consortium Agreement in respect of the Full Fibre Northern Ireland Consortium (FFNI) Programme with the other Councils identified at section 2.2 of report along with the terms set out in Appendix A of report.



#### **PR123/19    Release of Burden on Non-Council owned Land**

The Council Solicitor presented previously circulated report which sought approval to release a burden registered against non-Council owned lands situated at 5 Sixtowns Road, Draperstown and registered in Land Registry under Folio 16991, County Londonderry.

Proposed by Councillor McLean  
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

**Resolved**    That it be recommended to Council to agree to release the burden registered against the lands registered in Land Registry under Folio 16991, County Londonderry and that the Council enters into any agreement or deed as appropriate to effect said release.

#### **Matters for Information**

#### **PR124/19    Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 6 June 2019**

Members noted Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 6 June 2019.

#### **PR125/19    Corporate Plan 2020-2023: Timetable**

Members noted previously circulated report which detailed the draft timetable for the development of the Council's new Corporate Plan 2020-2023.

#### **P126/19    Organisational Development Service Improvement Plan 2019-2020**

Members noted previously circulated report which detailed Organisational Development Service Improvement Plan for 2019-2020.

#### **P127/19    Democratic Services Service Improvement Plan 2019-2020**

Members noted previously circulated report which detailed Democratic Services Service Improvement Plan for 2019-2020.

#### **P128/19    IT Service Improvement Plan 2019-2020**

Members noted previously circulated report which detailed IT Service Improvement Plan for 2019-2020.

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

Proposed by Councillor Buchanan  
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

**Resolved** In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items PR129/19 to PR139/19.

### **Matters for Decision**

PR129/19 Staffing Matters for Decision  
PR130/19 Weekend Street Cleansing Review Project  
PR131/19 Environmental Services – Supervision of Weekend Work  
PR132/19 Estates Strategy  
PR133/19 Tender Award: Appointment of Newspaper/Newspaper Group to carry weekly planning advertisements  
PR134/19 Seamus Heaney HomePlace Trails Projects: Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 – Lease and Purchase of various Lands  
PR135/19 Development Opportunity  
PR136/19 Development Site – Dungannon

### **Matters for Information**

PR137/19 Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 6 June 2019  
PR138/19 Staffing Matters for Information  
PR139/19 Contracts and DAC

## **PR140/19 Duration of Meeting**

The commenced at 7pm and concluded at 9.25 pm.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Report on</b>	Marketing & Communications Update
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	5 September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Ursula Mezza
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Ursula Mezza

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	The report provides an update on key areas of recent marketing and communications activity.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The Marketing & Communications service works corporately as well as across departments and services, to develop and deliver effective external and internal marketing and communications activity which supports the Council's vision, values and strategic direction.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The update report records core activity levels and key areas of recent work undertaken by the Marketing and Communications service and covers the period May to August 2019.
3.2	The development of the Council's new web site, which went live on 5 August 2019 represents more than 6 months of substantial work and initial feedback and analytics are extremely positive with an increase in first time active users (+36%) and page views (+40%).
3.3	In the period under consideration, the service supported 6 strategic events in June and August, with pre-event campaigns and live social media coverage at each.
3.4	The 16 page residents' magazine, Insight, was drafted, edited, designed and distributed to 55,000 homes w/c 5 August 2019.
3.5	Communications planning has continued with plans developed in outline or full for Seamus Heaney Trails Experience Pre-launch; Connecting Pomeroy; 3 leisure-related campaigns; Cemetery memorial testing programme.

3.6	Brand development for the Davagh Dark Skies has reached initial naming and concept stages and web development work on a project-specific web site has begun.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That the Committee notes the report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	Marketing & Communications Update

## **Marketing & Communications Update May – August 2019**

### **Summary**

This update relates to the 4 month period from May 2019 to August 2019.

- The new web site went live on 5 August 2019 after more than 6 months of substantial work. Initial feedback and analytics are extremely positive with an increase in first time active users (+36%) and page views (+40%).
- The service supported 6 strategic events in June and August, with pre-event campaigns and live social media coverage at each.
- The 16 page residents' magazine, Insight, was drafted, edited, designed and distributed to 55,000 homes w/c 5 August 2019.
- Communications plans have been developed in outline or full for Seamus Heaney Trails Experience Pre-launch; Connecting Pomeroy; 3 leisure-related campaigns; Cemetery memorial testing programme.
- Brand development for the Davagh Dark Skies has reached initial naming and concept stages and web development work has begun.
- Core activities in terms of general departmental and service communications, speech-writing and the management of media enquiries continue.

### **New Web Site**

The design, technical build and content review, edit and curation for the new web site has been a substantial body of work for the service.

June and July were time-critical in terms of the content element of the project and also the most challenging for a small team managing annual leave, as well as unplanned absence.

More than 800 pages of content, including hundreds of downloadable documents, were reviewed during this period for accuracy and relevance (i.e. customer focus), before being edited to suit the new site in terms of both style and mobile-responsiveness.

Go-live was scheduled for Monday 5 August and the site launched successfully that afternoon. A further two-week period of intensive activity followed to identify and remedy snags, as well as to finalise last pieces of content.

Promotional support took place online (social media channels) and offline (featured in Insight, our residents' magazine which was distributed during launch week).

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive internally and externally:

- Analytics show that in the first 10 days of the site going live (5 – 15 August 2019) the new site had 15,181 active users, 11,092 of these were first time

users of the site with a total of 77,960 page views (an increase of nearly 4000 users and 22,000 page views on the same period last year).

- In its first 2 weeks, a new 'sign up to our newsletter' function resulted in 130 registrations without any specific 'push' activity.
- In our web poll, 98.8% of users liked the site, found it easy to use and to find information, 1.2% didn't know and no respondents expressed a preference for the old site.
- Staff from across departments and services are actively engaging with the site, commenting on the ease of use and navigation, reviewing content and liaising with the service to update information. Staff have also reported positive comments from their customers (e.g. Environmental Services have reported customers commenting on ease of use and visibility of information they are seeking).

The project has been led by the Design and Digital Media Officer, whose design and wire-framing work in the initial stages saved over £5K in consultancy costs. She deserves specific mention for her role as primary liaison at all points during the process. Her valuable expertise has been commented on by the external web development team.

### **Event Marketing & Promotion**

June was event-heavy, with 4 significant events supported by the service and a further 2 in August.

- *Cookstown Continental Market (1-2 June 2019)*
- *Tafelta Festival (21-22 June 2019)*
- *Jaipur Literary Festival (23 June 2019)*
- *FIPSeD European Coarse Angling Championship (27 – 30 June 2019)*
- *Lumarina (16 – 17 August 2019)*
- *Maghera Walled Garden (24 August 2019): Pirates and Princesses*

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

### **Direct Communication: Residents' Magazine**

The summer issue of Insight, the residents' magazine, was distributed to 55,000 homes in Mid Ulster w/b 5 August 2019.

The publication now stretches to 16 pages and the latest issue included:

- A feature on the new council
- Investment in leisure (spin studios, Dungannon LC refurbishment)
- Davagh Dark Skies outdoor experience

- Plastics recycling
- Summer events
- First term review
- New web site.

### **Davagh Dark Skies**

Pre-opening promotional activity around the new project continues, highlighting construction milestones and new developments (e.g. confirmation of phase 2 featured in residents' magazine).

The first stage of the brand development process has completed and presentation of initial naming and concept proposals is scheduled for the end of August.

The specification for project's web development has been completed and issued, with an appointment anticipated by early October. A web workshop has taken place in the interim to develop a content wireframe which will remove this element of the build from the externally appointed company, representing a saving of over £5K to the project.

### **Communications Planning**

Marketing and Communications' plans, in outline or in full, have been completed for:

- Seamus Heaney Trails Experience Pre-Launch, to build awareness and anticipation of the new offering and to continue to profile Mid Ulster's investment in tourism, particularly rural tourism.
- A range of leisure-focussed campaigns, including:
  - the new Cookstown Leisure Centre Pool Pod
  - investment in spin studios at Cookstown and Greenvale Leisure Centres
  - the new partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support 'Move More Mid Ulster' which aims to promote an active lifestyle for those living with cancer.
- Connecting Pomeroy, based on milestones identifiable as part of the pre-construction and during-construction process as a starting point to build promotional and PR opportunities as the project develops.
- Town centres, developing unique value propositions for the 3 main towns as a foundation for future campaigns and to inform resource allocation.

**General communications support** continues to be provided across departments and services, encompassing a wide range of projects and issues. In the period under consideration, the town and village spruce up scheme and flowerbed sponsorship scheme have received notable support.

## Core Service Activity Levels

News releases issued in May, June and July 2019.

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

	No issued	Breakdown by service area:
<b>May 2019</b>	8	4 Events; 2 Council General; 1 Environment Health; 1 Parks
<b>June 2019</b>	18	4 Economic Development; 3 Events; 3 Environment & Property; 2 Leisure; 2 Parks; 1 Good Relations; 1 Environmental Health; 1 Public Realm; 1 Council General
<b>July 2019</b>	12	4 Parks; 2 Events; 2 Leisure; 1 Environmental Health; 1 Economic Development; 1 Rural Development; 1 Environment & Property

## Media Enquiries

	No received	No answered in 4hrs	Fastest response time	Slowest response time	Top Topic(s)	Top Source(s)
<b>May 2019</b>	34	22	Immediate	4days, 2hrs, 43mins	No significant single issue enquiries during May	8 Irish News; 8 Tyrone Courier; 6 BBC; 5 Dungannon Herald
<b>June 2019</b>	29	22	Immediate	7hrs 42mins	9 Greenvale Hotel; 7 Bonfires	8 Irish News; 6 Tyrone Courier; 4 BBC; 4 News Letter
<b>July 2019</b>	27	17	Immediate	28hrs 30mins	6 July Council Meeting; 4 Bonfires	10 Irish news; 7 Tyrone Courier; 7 Dungannon Herald

Ursula Mezza  
21 August 2019



<b>Report on</b>	Annual Report, Self-Assessment and Benchmarking on the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	L Jenkins, Performance and Quality Officer

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To inform members on the progress made towards the delivery of the 2018/19 (Year Two) Performance Improvement Plan (2017/18 to 2018/19) by way of a self-assessment report.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p><b>Council Discharging Duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014</b></p> <p>Council has a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement and to account for it under the 2014 Local Government (NI) Act. This paper offers details of our progress in delivering the Improvement Objective and activities described in Corporate Improvement Plan 2017/18 to 2018/19 (Year Two).</p> <p>In line with Council's statutory duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. We are required to publish two documents each year; the first is the "forward looking" improvement plan by the end of June, setting out our improvement priorities/objectives for the financial year ahead and the second is an annual report (an assessment report) to reflect back on the performance of that plan, to be published by the 30<sup>th</sup> of September. The report is intended to comply with requirements and provide an assessment of performance on outcomes for citizens. Council is also required to compare against Council's previous year's performance and so far as is practicable, to compare our Performance against other Councils (in the exercise of the same or similar functions.)</p>
2.2	<p><b>Choosing and Consulting On our Improvement Objectives</b></p> <p>The Council's Policy and Resources Committee oversaw the development of this 2017-18 &amp; 2018-19 Two Year Improvement Plan to ensure the plan's publication as soon as practicable following the 1st April 2017, in line with Department for Communities guidance. The process of developing the Council's improvement objectives involved engagement between Senior Management and Heads of</p>

Service culminating in a workshop in February 2017. This engagement identified 19.

Potential areas for improvement from which four proposed improvement objectives were identified for consideration and approved by elected members as a focus for continuous improvement. To lead the delivery of our improvement objectives council has established project teams to drive the objectives forward; under the direction of a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO's) from senior management team, appointed by the Chief Executive. The improvement plan spans over a two-year period and the SRO's undertake a review of their improvement projects at end of the financial year.

The proposed improvement objectives, rationale and associated links to the Community and Corporate Plan were considered and approved by elected members at their March 2017 Policy & Resources committee meeting for public consultation. Senior Management considered the outcome of the consultation undertaken throughout March to May and the associated report on the final improvement objectives. Elected members then considered the consultation report for approval at their June Policy and Resources Committee before being endorsed by Council.

Consultation undertaken on our proposed improvement objectives for year two, a rationale for their inclusion and associated activities for the period of the plan, was undertaken between the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Our consultation involved a survey made available for completion and submission online and by post to the council.

To ensure maximum engagement, promotion of the process used a variety of communication channels including; council social media outlets, internal staff meetings, the council website and local press releases, 48 responses were received.

There was significant endorsement for the four proposed improvement objectives, together with additional commentary provided the council then developed its 2018-19 Corporate Improvement Plan around them. The outcome of the consultation and report on the final improvement objectives and indicators, were considered at the P&R Committee, and confirmed by Council. Our Services areas subsequently undertook the final development of their Service Improvement Plans containing the related improvement activities and measures and four improvement project plans were also developed to track and monitor activity.

The Improvement Objectives for 2018/19 were:

- Assist in the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district
- Help manage our waste and environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online</li> <li>• Support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing the usage of recreational facilities</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<p><b>Annual Self-Assessment of Performance Improvement report 2018- 2019</b></p> <p>The annual self-assessment report 2018/19 has been prepared and is set out in Appendix One to the paper, in summary it covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction, <b>Section 1</b></li> <li>• Improvement and Council's hierarchy of plans., <b>Section 2</b></li> <li>• Choosing and consulting on our improvement objectives, <b>Section 3</b></li> <li>• Council's self-assessment of improvement objectives , <b>Section 4</b></li> <li>• Improvement Objectives – Projects progress and Self-Assessment, <b>Section 5</b></li> <li>• Council's self-assessment of statutory indicators and standards 2018/19, <b>Section 6</b></li> <li>• Council's self-assessment of self-imposed indicators/standards 2018/19, <b>Section 7</b></li> <li>• Overall Assessment for 2018-19, <b>Section 8</b></li> <li>• Have your Say, <b>Section 9</b></li> </ul> <p>The report provides a self–assessment of how Council has performed and delivered against our commitments, priorities and measures. Our work is scrutinised by the Local Government Audit Office to ensure that public money effectively delivers benefits to our communities.</p> <p>It should be noted that in respect of the requirement to compare performance with that of other Councils (benchmarking), the Department of Communities in correspondence to Councils have asked, that in addition to benchmarking the statutory indicators among the 11 Councils, that Council also benchmarks Absenteeism and Prompt Payments. The Department of Communities supplied data of all 11 Councils for comparison.</p> <p>We have ensured that this annual self-assessment report presents a picture of performance for the year. The following table is a summary of the four improvement projects and overall assessment:</p>

	Achievem ent	Explanation	No	%
	Fully Achieved	All actions/measures were achieved	2	50%
	Substantial ly Achieved	Actions/associated measures were mostly achieved, one or two falling marginally short of planned targets	2	50%
	Partially Achieved	Some actions and measures were achieved	0	0%
	Not Achieved	Actions and measures were not achieved as planned	0	0%
	<p>All improvement work activities/measures which contributed towards the fulfilment of the council's four Improvement Objectives for 2018/19 have seen the majority (100%) being "Fully Achieved/Substantially Achieved". This is the same as last year's figure (100% either fully or substantially achieved in 2017/18) and compares with 92% of improvement work streams/activities for 2016/17 being achieved and 82% in 2015/16. Four out of the seven statutory performance indicators/standards were fully achieved and two out of the three self-imposed indicators were fully achieved.</p>			
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>			
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>			
	Financial: none identified			
	Human: none identified			
	Risk Management: none identified			
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>			
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: none identified			
	Rural Needs Implications: none identified			

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	To note, review and comment as necessary on the Improvement Plan 2018-2019 Annual Report and Self-Assessment
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix 1: Performance Improvement Plan Self-Assessment 2018/19 Report



**Mid Ulster District Council**

**Annual Report**

**Performance Improvement Plan**

**Self-Assessment**

**2018 – 2019**

**August 2019**

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## Foreword

Like all parts of the public sector across Northern Ireland, the Council has increased expectations to deliver essential services as funding continues to decrease. As a Council, we are confronted with significant challenges such as meeting the needs of a growing number of residents, legislative changes as well as challenges such as Brexit, and how we best embrace new technology in the way we deliver services. Improving the outcomes for Mid Ulster's citizens and businesses is at the top of the Council's agenda.

Our Annual report looks back at what we did in 2018-19 to improve people's lives in the District and how we worked towards meeting our improvement objectives. The objectives are intended to help us make progress now, but also consider the longer-term impact of our decisions and actions and how they will affect the people living in Mid Ulster in the future. This plan assesses how well we have delivered the objectives that councillors set in 2018 to 2019.

We have worked together with our partners across the public, business and voluntary sectors through our Community Planning Partnerships and through collaborative means in order to meet shared challenges that face Mid Ulster and its Communities.

Working as a whole council, we ensure that every service can play a part in contributing to our improvement objectives and that we share resources and expertise. The needs of our residents and the major challenges facing Mid Ulster can only be tackled through productive partnerships, greater integration of our services and pooling of resources.

You can read about the improvements we made and what we achieved in more detail in each improvement objective in this report. The report also includes more detailed data (performance measurement), about service provision and sections relating to our performance amongst the other ten local Councils. Benchmarking with other Council post the Review of Public Administration is in its initial stages, as a regional performance framework is yet to be agreed, and the 11 Councils, along with the Department of Communities have a working group whose aim is to realise a framework moving forward.

Despite diminishing resources and an ever-increasing demand on our services, we are proud of what we have achieved and we remain committed to continue to innovate and transform the Council, working with our partners and local communities to do so. We do this so that we can provide those services that are important to our citizens in the most effective way. Please take a look and let us know what you think. We welcome comments on how we have done and how we can further improve our services for those, we serve.

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**Councillor Martin Kearney**  
Chair

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**Anthony Tohill**  
Chief Executive

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Annual Performance Report**

The report is a statutory document and a retrospective review of the work we have undertaken to improve our services through our Corporate Improvement Plan 2018-19 (available to view on our website). The report sets out our self-assessment of the progress made against our commitments, priorities and measures. Our work is scrutinised by the Northern Ireland Audit Office to ensure that we use public money effectively to deliver benefits to our communities (Annual Audit Reports are available to view on our website - Northern Ireland Audit Office Report). We have ensured that this annual report on progress presents a fair and balanced picture of performance for the year.

The annual report on progress sets out the following:

<b>Section 1</b>	Introduction
<b>Section 2</b>	Duty to Improve, Council's hierarchy of plans and performance management
<b>Section 3</b>	Choosing and consulting on our improvement objectives
<b>Section 4</b>	Council's self-assessment of improvement objectives
<b>Section 5</b>	Improvement Objectives – Projects progress and Self-Assessment
<b>Section 6</b>	Council's self-assessment and benchmarking of statutory indicators and standards 2018/19
<b>Section 7</b>	Council's self-assessment and benchmarking of self-imposed indicators/standards 2018/19,
<b>Section 8</b>	Overall Assessment for 2018-19
<b>Section 9</b>	Have your Say

## **2.0 DUTY TO IMPROVE, COUNCIL'S HIEARCHY OF PLANS & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **2.1 General Duty to Improve**

Part 12 of The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 sets out that all Councils are under a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. It sets out a number of Council responsibilities under a performance framework.

Improvement is defined in statutory guidance as 'more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement for councils should mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities'. Essentially, improvement is about making things better and our focus is on how we can deliver better services for the benefit of our residents and service users.

### **2.2 What is improvement?**

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, put in place a new framework to support continuous improvement in the delivery of council services, in the context of strategic objectives and issues that are important to those who receive the services. Councils are required to gather information to assess improvements in their services and to report annually on their performance against indicators, which they have either, set themselves or that have been set by departments.

The Local Government (NI) Act 2014, (hereafter referred to as ‘The Act’), is supported with guidance from the Department of Communities and “improvement” in the context of the Act means that Improvement is no longer limited to economy, efficiency and effectiveness but rather embraces the following:

- Making Progress towards a Council’s strategic objectives (as set out in the community plan)
- Improving the quality of services
- Improving the availability of services
- Improving fairness by reducing inequality in accessing or benefitting from services, or improving the social wellbeing of citizens and communities
- Exercising functions in ways which contribute to sustainable development
- Improving the efficiency of services and functions
- Innovation and change, which contributes to any of the above objectives.

The Act specifies that Council must make arrangements for the publication of:

A. Its assessment of its performance during a financial year:

- In discharging its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement
- In meeting its improvement objectives which are applicable to that year
- By reference to the statutory performance indicators and self-imposed indicators which are applicable to that year.

B. Its assessment of its performance in exercising its functions during a financial year as compared with:

- Its performance in previous financial years
- So far as is reasonably practicable, the performance during that and previous financial years of other Councils.

Mid Ulster District Council is committed to driving continuous improvement and performance across all service areas within the organisation. Council is steadfast in ensuring that our improvement objectives are relevant, that the best arrangements for delivering them are in place, and that we can demonstrate the impact on the outcomes for citizens. The vision to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Mid Ulster District is at the heart of everything the Council does.

### **2.3 Mid Ulster District Council’s Corporate Planning Framework**

A network of plans (key plans in a clear hierarchy) that work together to create a ‘line of sight’ to deliver key outcomes for Mid Ulster, informs the Council’s Strategic Planning framework (refer to figure 1.0- Mid Ulster District Council’s Strategic Planning Framework).

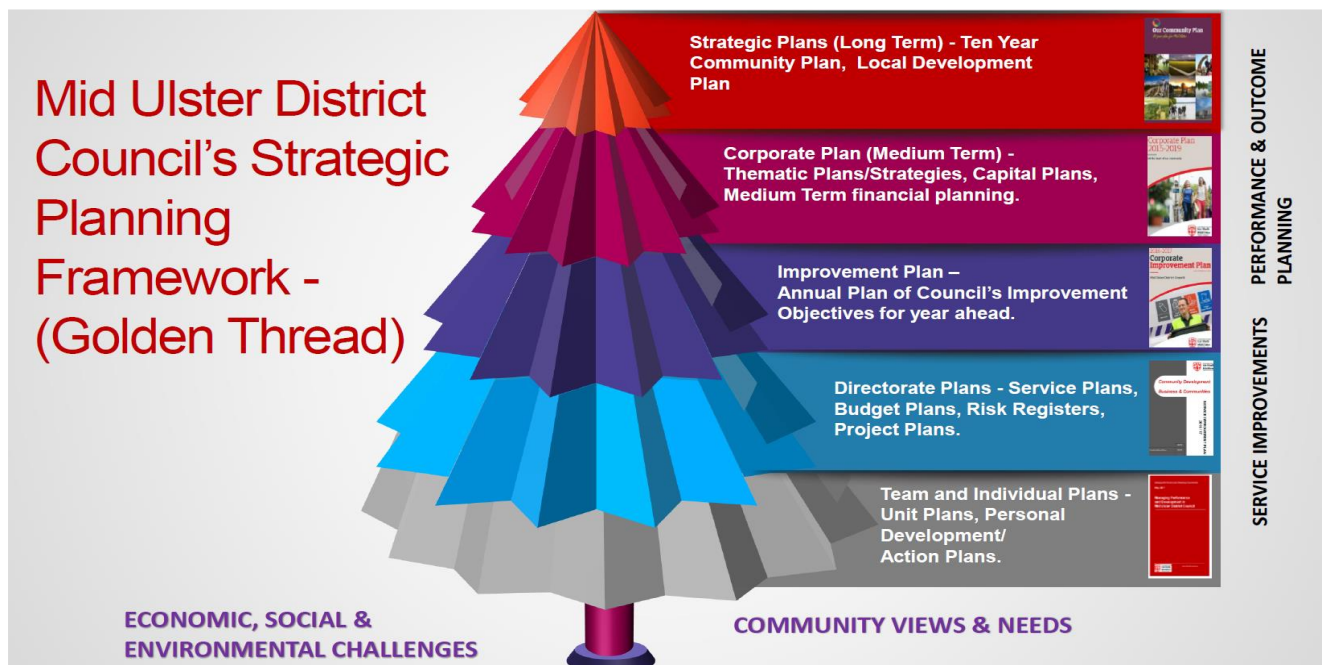
The plans show the relationship between the long term future of the area, the vision for the Council, mid-term plan of action, plan for Council finances, all the way down to what each Council service plans to achieve in the next year and how each employee understands how they contribute to the organisation achieving its goals and priorities.

Evidence linked to existing and forecasted data will inform the Council's policy framework, which in turn will inform our planning process. It is important that elements within Council's planning and reporting activities are monitored and reviewed within an annual cycle.

Planning is an essential component of good performance management and the delivery of effective and efficient services. It acts as a tool for making decisions about resource allocation and assists services/teams in staying focused on delivering ambitions, even during time of change. The business planning process translates high-level objectives (e.g. Community and Corporate Plan) into management action linked to performance measures. This process will be undertaken at all levels of the organisation, producing a hierarchy framework of plans that all feed up wards (the "golden Thread") and are aligned to the Council's overarching vision (as outlined in the Corporate plan).

**Figure 1 Mid Ulster District Council's Strategic Planning Framework (Golden Thread)**

Our Performance Management framework set against the statutory background of Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) 2014 Act is to:



- Issue an Annual Corporate Improvement Plan
- Issue a Community Plan in conjunction with our partners
- Set objectives and targets which; make a difference to our customers, reflect their needs and expectations as well as values of the Council
- Stretch and motivate our employees and partners
- Convert top level outcomes into specific actions at appropriate levels
- Assign clear ownership and accountability
- Measure and review overall council progress at least quarterly and take action to address shortcomings
- Engage all areas of the Council in performance improvement
- Scrutinise what we do to ensure value for money

We will ensure through our performance management process that the Community plan outcomes and corporate plan priorities and annual improvement objectives (where relevant) are reflected through our service delivery and through our appraisal scheme, this is reflected for individual staff

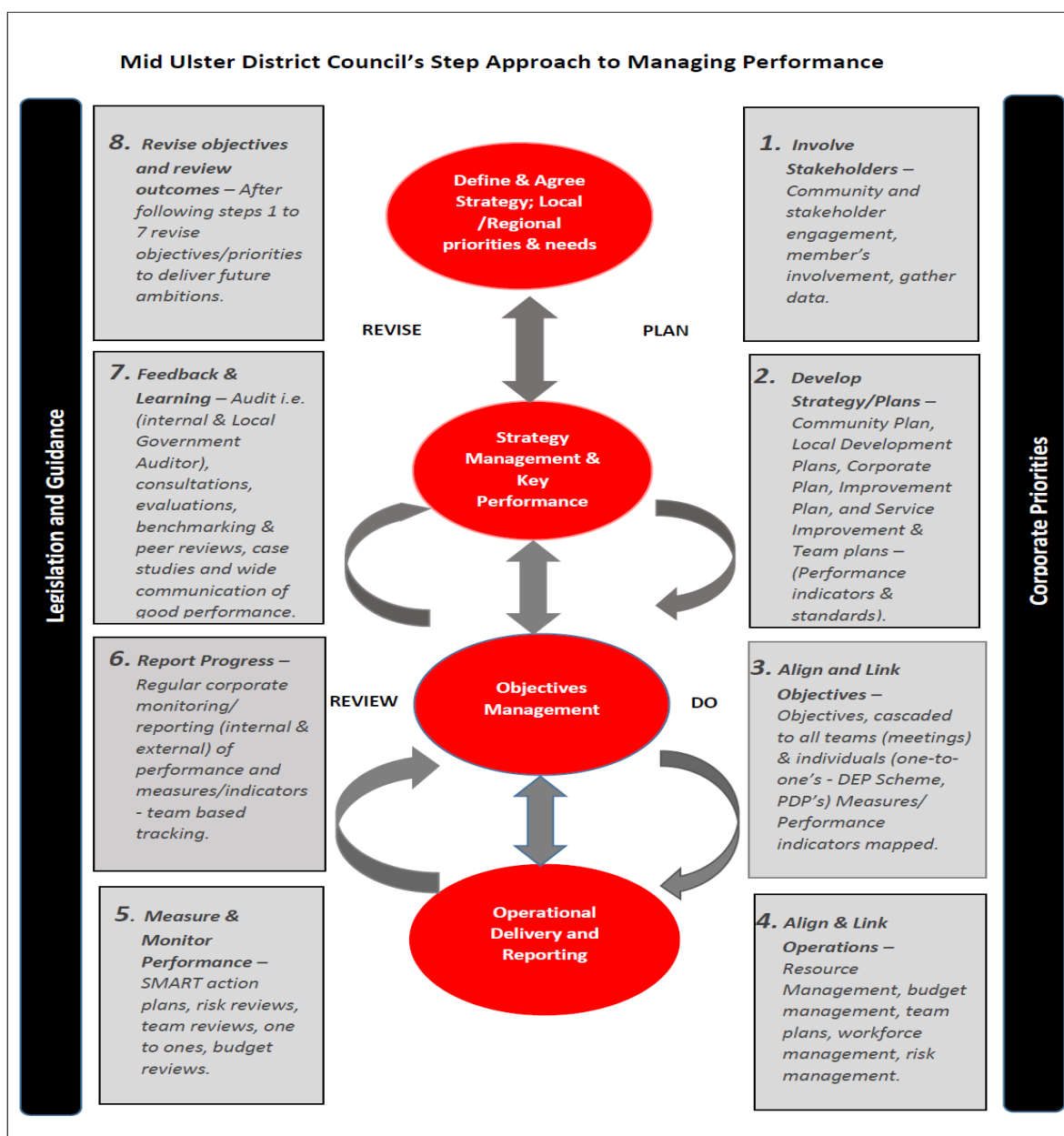
members through their personal development plans (refer to figure 2.0 - Mid Ulster District Council's approach to managing performance).

### 2.3.1 Community Plan

The 10-year plan for Mid Ulster "Our Community Plan" is the sovereign plan for Mid Ulster and forms part of the new statutory duty, which requires Council to "initiate, maintain, facilitate, and participate in community planning for the district", (the Community Plan is available on our web site). Community planning is a new responsibility for Councils in Northern Ireland. This brings local authorities in Northern Ireland into line with counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales. Community planning involves integrating all the various streams of public life e.g. education, community safety, health, the voluntary sector, arts, leisure etc. to produce a plan that will set out the future direction of the Mid Ulster District Council area.

**Figure 2.0 - Council's Step Approach to Managing Performance**

The Community Plan reflects what has outlined in at the regional level in documents like the Programme for Government Framework 2016 – 21, the regional development strategy and others. The Community Plan describes what the Community Planning Partners' aim to achieve by working together, over and above what partners could do as individual organisations and partners include



statutory bodies/agencies and the wider community including the voluntary, community and business sectors. The plan sets out the Community Planning partner's strategic priorities for action, and is a shared commitment to tackle these challenges. The plan sets out the vision for Mid Ulster as,

*"...a welcoming place, where people are content, healthy and safe, educated and skilled; where our economy is thriving, our environment and heritage is sustained, and where our public services excel".*

The Community Plan resonates around five themes (refer to figure 3.0), and running across the five themes are cross cutting guiding principles. All of our strategic actions must incorporate the principles of sustainable environment, equality and the highest standard of public service. The five themes have aligned outcomes associated with each, fifteen outcomes in total:

The Community Plan is the key strategic document for Council and an integral element of the performance management framework and performance improvement, community planning will inform, and be informed, by each other. The Community planning partners and Council must put in place arrangements for monitoring progress and publish a statement every two years, which outlines progress made against the identified outcomes and performance indicators.

**Figure 3.0 – Mid Ulster's Community Plan Themes and Outcomes**

Community Plan Theme	Community Plan Outcomes
1. Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We prosper in a stronger and more competitive economy</li> <li>• We have more people working in a diverse economy</li> <li>• Our towns and villages are vibrant and competitive</li> </ul>
2. Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are better connected through appropriate infrastructure</li> <li>• We increasingly value our environment and enhance it for our children</li> <li>• We enjoy increased access to affordable quality housing</li> </ul>
3. Education and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our people are better qualified and more skilled</li> <li>• We give our children and young people the best chance in life</li> <li>• We are more entrepreneurial, innovative and creative</li> </ul>
4. Health and Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are better enabled to live longer healthier and more active lives</li> <li>• We have the availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time</li> <li>• We care more for those most vulnerable and in need</li> </ul>
5. Vibrant & Safe Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are a safer community</li> <li>• We have a greater value and respect for diversity</li> <li>• We have stronger communities with less disadvantage &amp; poverty</li> </ul>

The Community plan must also be reviewed before the fourth anniversary on which it was published and every four years thereafter.

### **2.3.2 Corporate Plan**

The Council's corporate plan 2015 – 2019 is the key Council policy document and has been extended into the 2019/20 financial year. The current plan sets out how the Council achieves its vision and key priorities as outlined from community consultation.

All Council plans should be consistent with corporate priorities, improvement objectives and values in existence at the time of publication. The Corporate Plan covers improvement priorities and high-level actions, identified to achieve those priorities. The vision and priorities that are set out in the Corporate plan have a direct relationship with directorate business/service delivery plans at all levels, to ensure we are unified in working towards delivering our vision.

We reviewed our Corporate plan in 2017/18 (the Community Plan was launched in the spring of 2017) and priorities with the key outcomes of the Community plan, thereby ensuring that the Council is able to deliver its commitments we have made alongside our partners, and enable a clear golden thread to be demonstrated within and across our partner organisations. Council undertakes annual monitoring and reporting of the corporate plan's performance. The Council developed a suite of Corporate Indicators in late 2017/18 and are set out in Appendix One, performance status and updates are reported to Senior Management and Council on a regular basis.

The new term of the Council (local Council elections were held in May 2019, will realise a new Corporate Plan, based on the needs and the priorities of the District and the newly elected members that will take the Council in the 2020's

### 2.3.3 Corporate Improvement Plan

The purpose of the Corporate Performance Improvement Plan is to enable the council to evidence it has discharged its duty to, "*...make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.*" (Section 84 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014). Councils are required to identify, consult upon and publish improvement objectives on an annual basis. To ensure Council discharges its improvement duty it prepares an annual improvement plan containing improvement objectives, (Councils can set improvement objectives spanning more than one year).

Whilst we constantly strive to improve all our services, it is important for us to identify a small number of areas where we want to focus our attention in order to achieve improvements more quickly. These are our Improvement Objectives, set out in our Annual Corporate Improvement Plan. Each year the Council identifies, consults upon and publishes a set of improvement objectives, which set out what we will do in the year ahead to deliver on our statutory duty to secure continuous improvement. Council ensures that the improvement objectives and associated improvement activity/measurement, ideally describes the overall purpose and scope of the action to deliver it and it ensures that the objectives are:

- **Legitimate:** making a demonstrable contribution to at least one (or probably more than one) of the aspects of improvement listed in the Act.
- **Clear:** setting out the visible improvement that citizens can expect
- **Robust:** with defined terms of success (whether quantitative or qualitative)
- **Deliverable:** with established links to individual service programmes and budgets; and
- **Demonstrable:** capable of being supported by objective (but not necessarily measured or quantitative) evidence

The Improvement plan is published in two parts. Part one is to be published as soon as is reasonably practicable after the 1<sup>st</sup> of April each year and details the Council's improvement objectives, the



associated narrative around the plan and is forward looking, with part two published by 30<sup>th</sup> of September (this report) detailing the Council's assessment of its performance over the past year (retrospective or backward looking).

#### **2.3.4 Service Plans**

Service plans describe the core services and objectives/activities of services and how these are sustained and agreed within an agreed annual budget. They also provide the mechanism for further planning within services through which requirements resulting from; new legislation or statutory guidance, political or management priorities, improvements identified in the corporate performance improvement plan and recommendations resulting from statutory inspection, internal/external audit and service reviews are progressed to the extent possible with time available resources. They can also include elements within the Community plan, Corporate Plan, and Performance Improvement plan.

Service plans provide the essential link between the Council's high-level objectives and the individual employee's contribution towards the achievement of these known as the "golden thread". The service plans are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis, as "living documents" (minimum bi-monthly by Heads of Service/Directors), to ensure they are achieving their aims, and mitigating actions are developed in response to identified risks. The plans are considered (approval of draft annual service plans) and reviewed (progress reports) by the appropriate overview committee within Council. Service plans should be placed as an agenda item for service team meetings, which should be held as a minimum on a bi-monthly basis and with staff undertaking their one to ones with line management (appraisal and personal development planning through the Council's Developing, Engaging and Performing scheme). An annual retrospective overview of the previous year's performance (service review) is detailed in the annual service plan.

#### **2.3.5 Statutory Indicators/Standards and Self-Imposed indicators**

In addition to the improvement, objectives and associated actions used to measure our performance the Northern Ireland Government Departments has set a series of performance measures (indicators and standards) which the council will report on annually. Where relevant, the council's improvement objectives incorporate statutory performance standards and indicators for Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management.

Arrangements for managing, improving and tracking Council's performance in relation to set statutory indicators has been progressed through our service plans, which are developed on an annual basis and endorsed by Council, or if relevant may appear in the annual corporate performance Improvement plan as aligning with one of Council's chosen Improvement objectives. Quarterly reviews and update reports relating to Council's statutory indicator performance are collated and forwarded to our Senior Management Team, respective committees and Council. Unless otherwise highlighted in the annual corporate performance improvement plan, statutory performance indicators are managed at a directorate performance management level.

#### **2.3.6 Staff Engagement, Appraisals, and Personal Development Plans (PDP's)**

Appraisals are individual plans that translate the service plan objectives (Service Plans and team plans i.e. how they will be delivered) into working measures and targets for all members of staff within the Council. They ensure employees understand the contribution and accountability towards meeting the Council vision and objectives. Once performance expectations and targets are agreed, managers will regularly review progress with meetings throughout the year or through a short appraisal refresh meeting, with each employee six months later. Council has developed and adopted a performance management appraisal scheme, called "Developing, Engaging and Performing" (DEP's).

Relevant parts of the Community Plan, the Corporate Plan, Corporate Performance Improvement Plan and Service Plans forms the basis of personal objectives set for each SMT member, Heads of Service, Managers and individuals, and achievement against are discussed at regular one to ones.

Good personal development planning will result in the best use of time and resources, both for the individual, and the organisation and should deliver better performance and results. Within Council, a personal development plan sets out the actions staff propose to take to deliver on objectives, and how to learn/develop themselves. The Council views attaining business objectives as the core of personal development planning, as it is through the achievement of staff's personal objectives that they can apply their learning and see the results. All staff take responsibility for formulating and implementing their PDP plans (i.e. taking responsibility for their own performance), and all staff will receive support from the Council and their managers in completing them. Council envisages that Personal Development Planning will provide staff with knowledge and a portfolio of transferable skills that will help progress their careers. Council believes that "People improve Performance".

### **3.0 CHOOSING & CONSULTING ON OUR IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2018 - 2019**

#### **3.1 Developing the Improvement Objectives: 2018 to 2019**

The Council's Policy and Resources Committee oversaw the development of a two year improvement plan 2017-18 & 2018-19 to ensure the plan's publication as soon as practicable following the 1st April, in line with Department for Communities guidance. The process of developing the Council's improvement objectives involved engagement between Senior Management and Heads of Service culminating in a workshop in February 2017. This engagement identified 19 potential areas for improvement across the council from which four proposed improvement objectives were identified for consideration and approved by elected members as a focus for continuous improvement.

To lead the delivery of our improvement objectives council has established project teams to drive the objectives forward; under the direction of a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO's) from senior management team, appointed by the Chief Executive. The improvement plan spans over a two-year period and the SRO's undertake a review of their improvement projects at end of the financial year.

The proposed improvement objectives, rationale and associated links to the Community and Corporate Plan were considered and approved by elected members at their March 2017 Policy & Resources committee meeting for public consultation. Senior Management considered the outcome of the consultation undertaken throughout March to May (2017) and the associated report on the final improvement objectives. Elected members then considered the consultation report for approval at their June Policy and Resources Committee before being endorsed by Council.

Our Improvement Objectives 2017-18 and 2018-19:

- One** To assist in the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district.

- Two** To help manage our waste and environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.
- Three** To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online
- Four** To support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing the usage of Council recreational facilities

### 3.2 Consultation

Consultation was undertaken on our proposed improvement objectives during the second year of the plan 2018-2019. The consultation exercise ran from the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and provided a rationale for the improvement objectives inclusion. 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

Our consultation involved a survey made available for completion and submission online and by post to the council. To ensure maximum engagement, promotion of the process used a variety of communication channels including, council social media outlets, internal staff meetings, the council website and local press releases.

### 3.3 What the Consultation told us

- **92%** of respondents agreed with Objective One: - *To assist in the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district*
- **92%** of respondents agreed with Objective Two: - *To help manage our waste and environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill*
- **90%** of respondents agreed with Objective Three:- *To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online*
- **96%** of respondents agreed with Objective Four: - *To support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing the usage of Council recreational facilities*

With such significant support for the four proposed improvement objectives, together with additional commentary provided, the council developed its 2018-19 Improvement Plan around them. When reviewed, respondent commentary did not warrant the removal, amendment to or addition to the objectives proposed. Additional commentary and views provided is informing our wider improvement activity across services.

## **4.0 COUNCIL'S SELF – ASSESSMENT OF IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2018-2019**

### **4.1 Council's Improvement Plan**

Our Improvement Plan acts as a 'business plan' and links to the priorities in the District's Community Plan and Council's Corporate Plan (2015-2019) through our Strategic Objectives. Under each of the four improvement objectives, the council has given a clear rationale for the following:

- why the objective has been chosen
- what has been carried out thus far in relation to the objectives (performance)
- what Council's planned improvement activities are for the year (actions, measures & targets)
- the outcomes citizens can expect from the completed activities (the difference they will make)
- ensuring improvement aspects contained within the Act are embraced in the improvements, and
- demonstrates how our improvements align with Council's strategic objectives (or our strategic effectiveness).

### **4.2 Self-Assessment**

The following sections review and gives a progress commentary under each of the four improvement objectives in tabular format with associated narrative. The improvement objectives, provides a summary of what the council sought to achieve, how well the Council has performed, and an overview on the impact or outcomes for citizens.

The following tables also set out and refers to the improvement aspects, community plan and corporate plan themes, which align and link to the improvement activities/measures.

Where some actions have deviated from plan, there is an explanation and a narrative to explain the way forward in completing the activity (column 5 – commentary). The achievement status of each is presented on the basis of: Fully Achieved, Substantially Achieved, Partially Achieved or Not Achieved as explained below in; Figure 4.2 – *Legend for self-assessment (evaluation) of progress made on key actions and measures of achievement*.

<b>Evaluated As</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Fully Achieved	All actions and measures were achieved
Substantially Achieved	Actions and measures mostly achieved, one or two falling marginally short of planned targets
Partially Achieved	Some actions and measures were achieved

Not Achieved	Actions and measures were not achieved as planned.
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**Figure 4.2: Legend for Self –assessment of progress made on for key actions and measures achievement (performance rating/status).**

## **5.0 IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES – PROJECTS PROGRESS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT**

### **Improvement Objective 1**

#### **5.1 *To assist in the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district***

*“I think this is extremely important for everyone who lives locally as tourism has seen such an exponential increase, if we can tap into new and expanding tourist markets then the trickle effect will help us all”.*

(Resident; Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey; May 2018)

**Link to Mid Ulster Community Plan Theme:** *Economic Growth*  
*We have more people working in a diverse economy*

**Link to Corporate Plan Theme:** *Sustaining our Environment*  
*Realising tourism potential of Mid Ulster, being clear upon the opportunities and targeting resources.*

**Performance Improvement Aspects, which this improvement objective aims to deliver against**  
*Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Efficiency, Innovation*

**Lead Officer:** *Director, Business & Communities.*

#### **Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?**

The economy of the District is at the heart of our thinking. A strong, vibrant, enterprising economy will provide quality jobs for our young people, create and nurture local companies and attract leading businesses to Mid Ulster. We all know that Mid Ulster provides a natural attraction for thousands of visitors every year. Tourism has been recognised as an economic driver by the Council. We need to build on our considerable strengths and make it a place to live, work and visit.

Enhancing the role of tourism as an economic activity will require local agencies, stakeholders and residents to understand its' potential to sustain and increase the 3,000 plus tourism and tourism related jobs in the district. The industry currently helps to sustain local facilities such as outdoor visitor attractions, arts centres, cafes and restaurants and assists businesses to realise tourism as a year round sector. Opportunities for tourism growth lie in building on existing and new tourism propositions into a single tourism product or destination by capitalising on Mid Ulster's central position in Northern Ireland, within an hour's drive of the Causeway Coast, North West, Fermanagh Lakes, Belfast and many cross border destinations. The council realises that tourism destinations only succeed when public and private sectors

work together and commits which will require a new approach to partnership working and building on previous successes.

No single statistic can provide a definitive measure of how tourism industry is performing due to the complexity of tourism. A number of factors can influence tourism such as initiatives from government, tourism agencies, events, additional routes and passenger capacity through airports or sea routes, as well as the economic situation, where the value of sterling against foreign currency has started to decrease in recent years. All these factors will influence the volume, type and nature of our local tourism.

### **What have we done so far – Our Improvements?**

- The Council launched five new visitor experiences during the year, including the following; Tafelta festival, Roller Dome at the Bridewell, Craft Markets at the Bridewell, Great Days Out Fair at Corick House and US Grants Interpretation.
- New centre accreditations/awards included the Sandford Award, the Excellence in Heritage Education and Learning Outside the Classroom were both awarded to Council's Hill of the O' Neill and Ranfurly Arts Centre. The Sandford award recognises "the outstanding contribution to heritage education and learning within the historic environment", made by an education programme. The Learning Outside the Classroom Quality badge is based on a robust assessment of an education programme, which is designed to ensure that the education programme provided by the centre is meeting school's learning, and risk management needs. Both of these awards are externally judged and are recognised as important quality marks for education programmes.
- Council through various training programmes have upskilled 130 staff from various trades within the District, this is a dramatic increase from the previous year of 59 trades upskilled. Training organised by Council included Shows and Exhibition Training, Communications & sales Skills, Mentor Programme, two Learning Journeys (where 50 participants attended) and World Host Principles of Customer Service Training was attended by 45 participants.
- Familiarisation Trips took place at Seamus Heaney HomePlace that included representatives from Tourism Northern Ireland, the U.S. consulate and Tourism Ireland Ltd (GB team), as well as Audley travel. Seventeen International Tour Operators attended the Meet the Buyer Event.
- In addition to last year's successful grant applications for the Davagh Forest Dark Skies project Phase 1, whereby Council secured £500K in the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and £250K from Landfill Communities Fund for a "Dark Skies Observatory and Visitor Centre" at Davagh Forest. In 2018/19, the Council have also been successful in applying for an additional £500k from DAERA for the outdoor Phase 2 element of the project and have also been invited to apply for a further £500k for Phase 3 for the outdoor Solar Walk.
- During 2018/19 Council Visitor Information Centres achieved an average 98% rating score from the mystery shoppers' visits.
- Staff and trades within the district attended five consumer and trade shows during the year. Local trades were able to avail of space and the marketing/promotional "bounce" from Council's promotional stands at the consumer show events, which ranged from attending Balmoral Show, Antrim Garden Show, Clogher Valley Show, Holiday World Belfast, Holiday World Dublin and GT Days Out Fair. In total 55 trades promoted their products services through the exhibition/promotional space.

- An application was made in April 2018 to Tourism NI for grading U.S. Grant Homestead (U.S.G). In June 2018. following the report from the Assessor, U.S.G. was successfully awarded a “3 star” grading under the category “Historic Attractions”
- The year saw the formation of an additional hotel cluster, with all nine hotels meeting and agreeing a training needs analysis to ascertain the skills shortage within the sector. To address these needs a Hospitality Mentor Programme for the cluster was delivered in the spring of 2019.
- Between 2017/18 & 2018/19 the Council achieved the target of an increase of 5% attendance across all the Councils Corporate events.
- The Tourism Development Group has met 5 times over the past year and continues to grow and develop. The group are currently reviewing the Mid Ulster Council Tourism Strategy document. The clusters namely Seamus Heaney, Outdoor and Events, Archaeology, History & Heritage and Hotels having completed a review also continue to work successfully. The Seamus Heaney Cluster have just completed a Market Ready Programme with Invest NI and are also finalising an Invest NI Collaborative Growth programme and scoping study. The Outdoor & Events Cluster have this year piloted an Great Outdoors weekend with 12 outdoor sites across Mid Ulster participating and given the success of the weekend, this will rerun in 2020. The Archaeology, History & Heritage cluster have run a successful series of Hidden Heritage tours across the district with 180 people participating and feedback on these excellent.

**Progress Status against performance – 14 Activities & 9 Measures – What we did in 2018/19.**

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What are we going to do?	Timescale	What difference will it make?	Progress	Comments
<b>Visitor Information and Interaction</b>				
1. Develop Corporate Visitor Information Centre (VIC) action plan in order to improve the quality and quantity of VIC's in the district.	March 2019	Enhance and extend visitor information centre offering		Achieved - Visitor centre attractions audit completed, Benchmark review paper completed, Performance data audit complete, Baseline report of visitor figures complete,



2. All Council VIC's to obtain Tourism Northern Ireland's Minimum standard and achieve 90% positive rating from mystery shopper surveys	March 2019	Centres achieve industry excellence standard and improves their mystery shopper scores.		Achieved - All 3 MUDC VIC centres attained an average mystery shopper score of 98%; to include Burnavon, Bridewell, Ranfurly
3. As part of 5-year strategy achieve "World Host Destination Status" for two areas within the District: (i) Clogher Valley by 2021 (ii) Review Cookstown/Coalisland by 2019 and prioritise one destination.	March 2021	Introduce a destination wide focus on quality and service delivery		Partially achieved - The NI World Host accreditation body went into receivership during 2018, this has greatly delayed this project, Council has sought an alternative accredited body in the interim, awaiting this outcome the project will move forward
4. Mid Ulster to adopt a "Digital First" approach to Tourism delivery, marketing & promotion through implementation of digital content channels and a tourism portal	March 2019	Industry leading utilisation of digital and content channels		Achieved Tourism Hub Operational, many of trade actively now using hub. New tourism content/web development & workshops undertaken Council web site launch due in 2019/20
<b>Improve &amp; Increase visitor experience</b>				
5. Baseline current Heritage, Culture & Arts facilities Visitor Attractions, Tourism related facilities and their	October 2018	Increased understanding of customer experiences, customer		Visitor Experience and Audit Report undertaken and completed,

associated product in relation to current visitor experience and journey.		journeys and customer offerings.		customer mapping journeys identified and now implemented – Ranfurly & HomePlace
6. Develop a plan to improve the visitor experience at Council's Heritage, Culture & Arts facilities, Visitor Attractions and Tourism Related Facilities.	October 2018	Focused and innovative tourism facilities and products.		Achieved - Arts & Culture Improvement and Marketing Plans – based on audit of Visitor Experience & Journeys now win place
7. Lead the Heritage Lottery Fund £3 million " <i>Heart of Ancient Ulster</i> " Project Phase One.	November 2018	Development of Landscape Community Plan to include new and evolving products, services		Achieved - Partnerships developed with Mid Ulster Heritage Cluster & Heart of Ancient Ulster Board, stage 2 application to HLF submitted 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec and Landscape HLF submitted
8. Complete the Phase 2 upgrading of " <i>US Grants</i> " to achieve 4/5 star Tourism NI grading and increase visitors	March 2019	Creation of high quality memorable experience to include redevelopment and improvement of product to wider audience.		Substantially Achieved - Obtained grant and achieved 3 star rating
9. Deliver 20 Corporate Strategic events across the district per	Annually	Attract and grow hallmark events, raising		Achieved - This year our total audience figures

anum and increase attendance figures by 5% by 2019.	March 2019	the profile of the area and bringing economic benefits to the district.		were 103,732 up from last years' figure of 98,793, which also realised an increase of 3.9% from previous year (2016/17)
10. Undertake a series of travel industry shows and familiarisation visits to upskill trade staff in sales promotion	Annually  March 2019	Enhance brand promotion, product visibility and upskill local tourism trade on a world stage.		Achieved - 130 trade staff upskilled, 55 trades promoted their products services at 6 trade shows. There were familiarisation visits undertaken by a wide variety of interested groups/parties relating to Mid Ulster tourism products
11. Support & engage the Tourism Development Group and established 5 tourism cluster groups	Bi-monthly	Places tourism as an economic driver in the Mid Ulster Economy by creating stronger partnerships.		Achieved - Tourism Development Group met 5 times during year, as did the five cluster groups which include, Seamus Heaney, Heritage, Food, Outdoor Hubs, Events
12. Achieve as a minimum 4 and 5 star visitor attraction grading's for <i>Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Burnavon, Ranfurly House &amp; Hill of the O'Neill</i> (As designated by Tourism NI) by 2020.	March 2019	Attainment of excellence standard ratings scheme recognised by the tourism industry		Achieved - Seamus Heaney HomePlace has achieved 4 star rating, and is endeavouring to move forward to 5 star attainment. Burnavon along with Ranfurly House & Hill of

				the O'Neill achieved 4 star rating
13. Establishment of an inter service Working Group between Arts, Culture and Tourism teams and establish joint working priorities/schedule of work	June 18	To establish synergy of working practice and communications within Councils Culture & Arts and Tourism Services		Achieved - This team has been established with a TOR and schedule of meetings (every 2 months) and regular agenda items in place
14. Design deliver and Seamus Heaney Trails	Sept 2019	Assists in the Growth of the Arts, Culture and Heritage sector by promoting participation and supporting networking.		Partially achieved Working with interpretive design team and in conjunction exploring land acquisitions relating to overarching trails interpretation

### How will we know?

Measure	Comparative Performance 2017/2018	Comparative Performance 2018/2019	Target	Performance
Numbers of visitors who participate in and access Council tourist, cultural facilities & natural attractions	(baseline year)	201,082	-----	Achieved
Increase visitation numbers due to Corporate Events	3.9%	5%	By 5% to 2019	Achieved
Number of new visitor experiences launched	1	4	5	Achieved

Number of operators and centres accredited under recognised quality schemes	3	4	4	Achieved
Increased visitor satisfaction (Mystery Shopper)	90%	98%	95%	Achieved
No. of Tourism Development Group meetings p.a.	6	5	5 p.a	Achieved
No. Of visitor attraction upgrades	1	3	1	Achieved
No. of trade staff upskilled	59	130	20	Achieved
No. of Inter Service Working Group Meetings	15	27	1	Achieved

### Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

Delivering a destination wide focus on excellent customer care, intelligent quality information, enhanced product development and improved access at our Visitor Information Centres. Engaging with our tourism partners and local traders through participation opportunities in trade and industry shows/events and availing them of acquiring accredited quality schemes and training, thereby placing tourism as an economic driver, by attracting investment, visitor numbers and tourism spend into the Mid Ulster economy.

### Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland, DfC (Historic Environment Division), NISRA, National Trust, Transport NI, Sport NI, Sperrins Gateway Partnership, Ancient Heart of Ulster, Lough Neagh Partnership, Tourism Development Group, DAERA, Councillors, Strategic Arts Partners, Mid Ulster residents and visitors, schools, colleges, universities, Arts Culture & Heritage groups, local traders, and local authorities

### What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk rating
Failure to reach Milestones identified within timeframes	Regular internal meetings and delivery team structures with identified project leads to ensure timely achievement of milestones identified	Low

Failure to secure adequate resources to deliver proposed activity	Ensure all activity is adequately resourced and secured observing the appropriate internal protocols and procurement processes	Moderate
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Assessed/Evaluated As	Explanation
Substantially Achieved	Actions and measures mostly achieved, one or two falling marginally short of planned targets

## Improvement Objective 2

### 5.2 To help manage our waste and environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill

*“Reduction in waste going to landfill is important, but so is littering, notably in rural areas where it is a risk to wildlife and livestock. I would like to see a more aggressive litter campaign”.*

(Resident; Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey, May 2018)

**Link to Mid Ulster Community Plan Theme:** *Infrastructure*

*We are better connected through appropriate infrastructure*

**Link to Corporate Plan Theme:** *Delivering for Our People*

*High performing services focused on customer and value for money*

**Performance Improvement Aspects, which this improvement objective aims to deliver against**

*Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Sustainability, Efficiency, Innovation*

**Lead Officer:** *Director, Environment & Property*

### Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

The UK has agreed to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill to prevent as far as possible any damage to the environment caused by landfilling. Legislation aims to reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill by finding ways to recover value from waste and developing sustainable management practices. Disposal to landfill is the least preferred option in the waste hierarchy and is only be used as a last resort after re-use, recycling and recovery options, as an escalating scale of taxation on materials being sent to landfill has made this an increasingly expensive option. We generate tonnes of waste every year and all councils are set targets for the amount of waste that goes to landfill and these are lowered every year. Recycling is more sustainable than landfill. The overall cost of recycling is lower than landfill and creates greater economic benefits

### What have we done so far – Our Improvements?

From the overarching Community Plan to its specific Corporate Improvement Objectives, Mid Ulster has a clear protection commitment to the protection and enhancement of the environment.

- A very clear emphasis on waste and their reduction of our dependency on landfill has meant Mid Ulster has not only been at the top of the Northern Ireland recycling table

every year since 2015, but was also the first Council to meet the statutory 50 % for household waste recycling – three years ahead of the target date 2020.

- Mid Ulster District Council has a strong performance in waste diversion and this has only been made possible with strategic investment in the infrastructure that supports waste collection and disposal. This area of the Council's work accounts for over 30% of its annual expenditure and the financial imperative to manage our waste effectively as possible remains imperative to how we provide services.
- Dungannon has been at the centre of this investment, both in terms of public –facing recycling service and the Council's internal service arrangements. In June 2015, Drumcoo Recycling Centre saw the start of a major refurbishment programme to improve recycling facilities at this site, as well as the introduction of a new traffic management system.
- Drumcoo Recycling Centre has had a £750 K of redevelopment works, of which £500K was funded by the Council and a further £250k from the Rethink Waste Capital Fund. This has completely transformed the facility make it easier, quicker and more convenient to use, increasing safety and minimised congestion when it re-opened to the public in July 2016
- In September 2018, at the rear of the recycling centre, a new state of the art £1.8M waste transfer station opened, modernising how waste services are managed in Mid Ulster. The facility now acts as a central point for refuse collection and street cleansing vehicles to deposit their waste treatment and processing plants. The transfer station deals with each of the four main waste streams completely separately. This significant investment in waste transfer followed the Council decision to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill and provided a direct replacement for the now mothballed Tullyvar site. Magheraglass landfill site (near Cookstown) accepted its last lorry load of waste the previous year.
- Mid Ulster has also made significant investment in ensuring householders have access to the collection of food waste through the kerbside brown bin collection which so part of the integrated "three bin system".
- The Council continues to make capital investment in maintain up-to-date refuse collection and street cleansing fleet with some £4.4M committed during the first four years
- The provision of enhanced facilities to enable increases in recycling and reduction in landfill has been supported with wide ranging education, awareness and communities n campaigns to help householders aware of what they can recycle and how.
- Our Annual recycling awareness communication plan delivered wide and varied programmes to local schools and communities within the District. We translated educational literature to target the top seven non-English speaking communities within the District. We supported the Big Spring Clean campaign with 36 clean up events across Mid Ulster. The Council launched an in-house recycling "hero" campaign to coincide with recycling week in September, and this continued into December with online quizzes/competitions/advertising in three Mid Ulster Cinemas.



**Progress Status against performance – 8 Activities & 2 Measures – What we did in 2018/19.**

<b>What are we going to do?</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>What difference will it make?</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>1. Recycle/compost at least 52% of household waste by:</p> <p>Processing additional residual waste by diverting waste from landfill and extracting more recyclates</p> <p>Diverting residual waste to other waste streams</p>	March 2019	Recycling is more sustainable than landfill. The overall cost of recycling is lower than landfill and creates greater economic benefits		56.01% of household waste recycled in 2018/19 (40,757 tonnes)
2. Restrict the amount of Household Waste landfilled as a percentage of total amount to no more than 30% (25,000 tonnes)	March 2019	Demonstrates the Councils commitment to Sustainable Development and the Circular Economy		11,850 tonnes of household waste landfilled (16.29% of total)
3. Ensure that our Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) annual allocation of 18,032 tonnes is not exceeded.	March 2019	Demonstrates the Councils commitment to Sustainable Development and the Circular Economy		5,687 tonnes of LACBMW landfilled – only 31.54% of annual NILAS allocation utilised
4. To complete capital/project works necessary for the final closure and capping of Magheraglass Landfill Site.	Complete Capping by October 2018	Demonstrates the Councils commitment to environmental regeneration, Sustainable Development and the		Landfill site closed and final capping in place

		Circular Economy		
5. Lose /Mothball Tullyvar Landfill Site in conjunction with Fermanagh & Omagh District Council & undertake	October 2018	Demonstrates the Councils commitment to environmental regeneration, Sustainable Development and the Circular Economy		Landfill operations ceased at Tullyvar in October 2018 and the Department completed report on NI Landfill Capacity review
6. Complete construction of the Waste Transfer Station at Drumcoo Recycling Centre, Dungannon in preparation for the Closure of Tullyvar Landfill Site	August 2018	Demonstrates the Councils commitment to a more sustainable waste collection service by reducing vehicle mileage and by bulking waste close to its source		The site was opened and operational from October 2018 and capital project delivered within budget.
7. To award new contracts for the processing of residual wastes, bio wastes and mixed dry recyclates		Demonstrates the Councils commitment to a more sustainable waste collection service by utilising third party processes & contracts to increase recycling rates		All waste related contracts procured and operating satisfactorily e.g. £20m+ five year contract with Regen Waste for processing of residual waste commenced 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2018
8. To deliver the annual Recycling Awareness Communication Plans to local schools and communities	March 2019	More awareness of schools and communities to the environmental and economic benefits of		Communication Plan delivered e.g. Recycling Hero campaign

		landfill diversion and recycling		
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## How will we know?

Measure	Comparative Performance 2015/2016	Comparative Performance 2016/2017	Comparative Performance 2017/2018	Performance 2018/19	Target for 18/19
<b>How Much Did We do? (number)</b>					
Tonnes of Household Waste Landfilled	26,745 tonnes	26,701 tonnes	20,636 tonnes	11,850 tonnes	25,000 tonnes (based on 2016/2017 total)
<b>How Well did we do It? (%)</b>					
% of Household Waste Landfilled	38.01%	36.11%	28.05%	16.29%	30%

## Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

Enhanced convenient, easy to use and safe recycling Centre provision. Modernised waste service provision through a completed Waste Transfer station at Drumcoo, which has led to increase in recycling and reduction in landfill. Access to the collection of food waste through kerbside brown bin collection service. High media profile in relation to recycling, composting and food waste segregation and collection, helping to ensure householders are aware of what they can recycle and how. Delivery of recycling and waste awareness sessions within local schools and communities. A reduction in the wider environmental impacts of landfill particularly in the proximity of Magheraglass and Tullyvar landfill sites (closures).

## Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Other Councils, Private sector waste management companies and Northern Ireland Environment Agency, schools, and local communities.

## What risks do we need to manage?

RISK	Mitigation Activity	Risk rating
Failure to meet statutory landfill diversion and	(1) Contracts in place for treatment of residual waste arising and processing of recyclable	Low

household waste recycling targets	<p>material across Council area</p> <p>(2) Network of Recycling Centres in operation across Mid Ulster</p> <p>(3) Environmental Education Programme delivered across local schools, community groups etc.</p> <p>(1) Reporting of landfill diversion and recycling performance via Waste Dataflow system</p> <p>(2) Extension of bio-waste kerbside collections, improvements to Recycling Centres to increase recycling materials being collected.</p> <p>(3) Implementation of Recycling Environmental Education Awareness Communications Plan</p>	
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**Overall Assessment of Improvement Objective 2 - To help manage our waste and environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill**

Assessed/Evaluated As	Explanation
Fully Achieved	All actions and measures were achieved

## Improvement Objective 3:

### 5.3 To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online

*“Only certain services should be available on line. It is important that council maintain a strong front line service with staff. Mid Ulster has a high percentage of mature citizens who do not wish to avail of services online.”*

(Resident; Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey, May 2018)

#### **Link to Community Plan Theme: Health and Wellbeing**

*We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.*

#### **Link to Corporate Plan Theme: Delivering for Our People**

*Increase Access to services and customer experiences across the district.*

**Performance Improvement Aspects which this improvement objective aims to deliver against**  
*Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Fairness, Efficiency, Innovation*

**Lead Officer:** Director, Finance

### Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

Our customers, communities and businesses want to experience the Council, which provides a single seamless journey from initial enquiry right through to the required support. The council wants to increase the range of on-line transactions, simplify our processes and engage with our customers, whilst providing appropriate support for those who interact with our services in non-digital ways such as face-to-face, written correspondence or by telephone. We will not leave anyone behind, however, over time, the success of better-designed digital services will allow Council to reduce the scale and profile of less convenient, less effective and less efficient contact methods

### What have we done so far?

- Council now has an operational online presence for paying invoices, which can be located on the web site at <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/online-services/pay-online>.
- In order to store, prepare, distribute or sell food on premises you need to be registered with the local authority. Premises include restaurants, cafes, hotels, shops, canteens, market stalls, mobile catering vans and food delivery vans. Food businesses can now go online and register to do this. The premises will be inspected within 28 days of receipt of an application for registration which save applicants time using hard copy and postage
- Online dog licence applications have increased by 79% from 2016/17 and Building Control Regularisation online applications have risen from 28% in 2017/18 to 57% by the end of 2018/19. The total number of dog licences issued for the MUDC area in 2016/2017 was 6,322. Online dog licence applications in 2016-2017 was 1,319 (online

licences 20.86% of total dog licenses) and in 2015/2016 was 687. By the close of 2018/19 there were 2,363 online dog licence applications.

- We have made available online information and how to apply for work placements within Council on our web site at . <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/jobs>. The Council provides work placement opportunities for post-primary students/trainees throughout the academic year in various areas including: Administration, Building control, Culture and Arts, Environmental Health, Human Resources, ICT, Leisure, Parks, Planning, Tourism & Waste Management. Placements will normally last from 1 to 5 days (longer-term opportunities may be available for college/university students in specific occupational areas).
- You can now pay for Bulky waste collection on line via Councils' website <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/Services/Bins-Recycling/Bulky-Waste-Collections>.
- With regards to Council developing a council –wide “Digital First” customer engagement and communication plan we have completed the following. Developed Digital KPI's which are now included in every Marketing and Communications Plan. Engagement workshops have been completed with tourism and parks. Upskilling requirements have been identified & upskilling workshops undertaken during 2018-2019. The Customer facing media campaign pending outcome of web development project has been included as part of 2019-2020 campaign work if appropriate progress made. Social media channel evaluation continued to be carried out on a regular basis following specific marketing campaigns and events, demonstrating successes and where the service added value, as well as identifying areas for improvement. An overall 360-degree social media channel evaluation is currently being undertaken and should be complete by the end of June 2019.
- Mid Ulster continues to work with other councils on a new Planning Portal, providing key staff to the project as required. The new Portal's proposed implementation is 2020. Work on a replacement-planning portal appears to be delayed due to issues on procurement and is not expected to be complete until 2022. This is outside Council control as being led by Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and includes 10 other councils. The Council is exploring other options to establish if a Mid Ulster stand-alone system would provide a cheaper option.
- The Council now operates a pre-paid system for the disposal of commercial waste at Cookstown, Drumcoo and Magherafelt Recycling Centres. From the 10th June 2019, the Council will no longer accept cash payments for the disposal of commercial waste. This means that that our commercial customers can use a swipe card, credited in advance with sufficient funds, to pay their waste disposal charge. Registering for a swipe card is customers, simply complete and return the Commercial Customer Recycling set up form. Once you have received your card, you will be able to add credit online or contact Environmental. Further Information is available at: <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/resident/bins-recycling/commercial-waste>
- E-ordering was introduced to Council in the last quarter of 2017/18 and 1,409 e-orders were raised in the system, during 2018/19 this was raised to 11,820 electronic orders

**Progress Status against performance – 12 Activities & 12 Measures – What we did in 2018/19.**

What are we going to do?	Timescale	What difference will it make?	Progress	Comments
1. Create operational online service to commission and pay for Bulky Household Collections	March 2019	Ease of customer service bookings		Achieved - payment page for bulky collection taking payment now complete and operational. Payment notifications now going to income@midulstrcouncil.org
2. Implement an online facility to pay invoices	June 2018	Mid Ulster Website operating a payment interface for the customer		Achieved - Customers can now pay invoices online
3. Implement an online facility to submit service requests for Environmental Health (EH) Complaints and EH Registrations	March 2019	Reduced administration for back office systems and processes.		Partially achieved – on line food registration implemented & operational for food premises, a complaints package business case has been presented and going live has been delayed until 2019/20
4. Consistent presentation of online services	June 2018	Consistently presented online services, which are easily found, user friendly and responsive to mobile devices.		Achieved - Online services documented 2. Consistent presentation of online services agreed 3. Implementation and tests completed satisfactorily for all services by June 2018
5. Increase online leisure activity bookings across facilities.	September 2018	Consistent online leisure facility offering		Achieved - The following services were offered online by the various centres Maghera Leisure Centre - continues to offer gymnastics for on line registration with over 90% of the participants availing of this service in the last enrolment. Plans to include Kirsty Dance and bookings

				<p>for new 3G pitch. Greenvale – majority of bookings referred to on line registration for specific classes and courses e.g. Yoga, Pilates, and Spinning</p> <p>Dungannon – continue to offer swimming lessons as well as 5-a-side and squash.</p> <p>Cookstown – swimming lessons, squash and 5-a-side</p> <p>Meadowbank Sports Arena - has offered on line registration for its latest couch to 5K programme and is progressing online bookings for 5-a-side. Online demand for Swimming registration has declined as participants now transfer into the next set of lessons without the need to rebook; this is as a result of the new Swimming Programme and is viewed as a positive by customers.</p>
6. To continue working with other councils on a new Planning portal and to provide key staff to the project as required, Portal proposed implementation 2020	April 2020	Progress made on new planning portal		<p>Partially achieved, However the majority of the Work is being driven by the Department of Infrastructure and Mid Ulster is now exploring other options to establish if a Mid Ulster stand-alone system would provide a cheaper option</p>
7. Provision of Digital Heaney Experience (formerly Trails)	March 2020	The addition of an engaging digital experience for tourism industry, visitors and citizens across mid ulster		<p>On track - This action has had some slippage and has had a revised date of March 2020. A letter of offer received from DAERA, completion date subject to the entire project being completed. Because of the delay in receiving Letter of Offer from DAERA, new completion dates are currently being negotiated with DAERA.</p>



8. Provide work placement opportunities online	September 2018	Consistent and online advertisement of work placement opportunities		Achieved - Work placement opportunities now registered on Careers Portal (re: NI Careers Service on-line service for schools) and added generic placements in various depts. within Council including: - environmental health, planning, leisure, arts, parks, business/admin etc. (made similar to NICS & BCC). Application form and Indemnity form have been uploaded under 'Work Placement Opportunities' (more user friendly), within Jobs section of Council Website so students, trainees can download, complete & return all electronically.
9. Create a new Economic Development Portal online presence for businesses	March 2019	Improved accessibility to all Council's Economic Development online services		Achieved - All content for the new Economic Development Section has been completed. The Communications Department have the Structure and Content of the website refreshed for the Economic Development Section
10. An annual increase of 2.5 % p.a of no. of online dog licences issued and Building and Regularisation Applications	March 2019	Increase utilisation of current online facilities for Dog Licensing/Building Notices and Regularisation Applications.		Achieved – online dog applications have increased by 79% from 2016/17 and Building Control Regularisation online applications have risen from 28% in 2017/18 to 57% by the end of 2018/19
11. To develop a Council-wide "Digital First" customer engagement and communication plan	January 2019	A more digitally-enabled, consumer facing organisation with a more digitally engaged population		Achieved - Digital KPIs are now established and digital KPIs included in every marketing & communications plan. There is an Improved understanding of digital first agenda of staff involved in Marketing &

				Communication plans. We have now identified Upskilling requirements and a Customer facing media campaign has been developed (6) Social Media Channel effectiveness re-evaluated
12. Facility to pre-pay and account manage commercial waste disposal at the main Recycling Centres**	June 2019	Customers can access 24/7 payments system.		Achieved – Prepaid Operational Online Portal for civic amenity site commercial waste disposal

**\*\* Added in year**

## How will we know?

Measure	Comparative Performance 2017/2018	Comparative Performance 2018/2019	Target	Performance
Percentage progress against “Online accessible services project plan” - actions by March 2019	90%	86%	85%	Achieved -
No. of Additional Online Council Services; such as report it, pay for it, book it and request it online	2	4	6	Achieved
No. of customers completing transactions online	9,899	16,665	15K	Achieved
No. of electronic orders issued	1,409	11,820		Achieved
No. of invoice payments received	80	80		Achieved
% increase in online Dog Licensing and	34%	34%	30% increase from 2016/17	Achieved 79% increase from 2016/17
% increase Building Control Regularisation applications	28%	57%	50% by March 2019	Achieved
%. of work placements advertised online	100	100	100%	Achieved

No. of apps available	2	0	2	Achieved
No of Tenders advertised online	61	99	Increase 30%	Achieved
No. of digital projects completed	1	0	1	Achieved
No. of Portals developed	1	1	1	Achieved

### Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

Providing the platforms to support online applications is a must for us as an organisation, as our customers increasingly expect “always on services”. Residents, visitors and businesses will have access to a greater range of consistent and user-friendly online services, which will increase accessibility and availability 24/7, utilising a self-service approach to pay, report, book and request services. This will let members of the public interact with our services using the Internet at their convenience, even when we are closed.

### Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Staff from various service areas across Council, web designers (depending on functional capability of existing website), Citizens, Statutory/voluntary/community groups/bodies to ensure online functionality satisfies their requirements.

### What risks do we need to manage?

RISK	Mitigation Activity	Risk rating
Failure to reach key milestones by agreed timeframes	<p>Lead Officer appointed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assume responsibility for delivery of each milestone.</li> <li>Selection of appropriate team to deliver milestone.</li> <li>Report back regularly to Senior Responsible Officer.</li> </ul> <p>Senior Responsible Officer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend bi-monthly meetings and escalate areas of uncertainty to appropriate authority where required.</li> </ul>	Low
Failure to secure adequate resources (human and financial) to deliver in year milestones	<p>Senior Responsible Officer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that resource implications are identified and fully explained to relevant authority (Chief Executive and Senior Management Team) prior to Rate estimates being finalised in February 2018</li> </ul>	Low

Assessed/Evaluated As	Explanation
Substantially Achieved	Actions and measures mostly achieved, one or two falling marginally short of planned targets

## Improvement Objective 4

### 5.4 To support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing usage of Council Recreational facilities

*“Could develop programmes to promote healthier lifestyles that would encourage citizens who at present would not use Council recreational sites e.g. short 12 week beginner courses in various disciplines.”*

(Resident; Mid Ulster Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Survey, May 2018)

#### **Link to Community Plan Theme: Health & Wellbeing**

*We are better enabled to live longer healthier more active lives.*

#### **Link to Corporate Plan Theme: Delivering for Our People**

*High quality responsive indoor and outdoor recreational services with increased customer numbers and satisfaction.*

**Performance Improvement Aspects this improvement objective aims to deliver against.**  
*Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Fairness, Efficiency, Innovation*

**Lead Officer:** *Director, Leisure & Outdoor Recreation*

### Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

The important role that sport and physical activity plays and the availability of accessible, high quality sport and leisure programmes is recognised as enhancing the quality of life, health and well-being of our district's citizens. It is key to helping the council build strong and safe communities with active and healthy people. Participation is a major contributor to personal health and wellbeing with the potential to develop personal lifelong physical and social skills.

Locally, core wellbeing levels are below Northern Ireland averages and while 80% of the population rate their health as good (Northern Ireland wide those rating their health as good stands at 79.5%), approximately 20% of the population have life limiting illnesses. In absolute terms, long-term health issues continue to exert pressure on communities, affect overall health outcomes and create challenges for the public services.

Within our district, obesity rates in children and adults are increasing coupled with it being an area with the highest proportion of deaths due to circulatory diseases, pointing us towards a need to increase participation in local health and well-being programmes. Council wants to help people to adopt and continue to develop healthy lifestyles and is a pillar within the district's Community Plan. We have chosen this objective based on what our local communities have told us, whilst taking into account our identified health inequalities within the district, accessibility opportunities and participation rates.

### What have we done so far – Our Improvements

The Council has been investing to grow active and healthy communities by continuing to invest in its programme of capital works. The Council has been steadily enhancing its leisure facilities across its first term, with allocated investment to date of over £3M. However improving opportunities for wellbeing goes beyond the infrastructure of providing quality, customer focused leisure facilities. The Council recognises that we contribute to our resident well-being by opening up opportunities to participate in a broad range of physical, community and cultural activities.

- Drumcoo Playing fields benefitted from a £230K refurbishment and upgrade in 2016
- New visitor facilities, including a cafe, showering and laundry facilities for the 200,000 visitors tot Dungannon Park, in 2016 following an investment of over £700K.
- In 2017, a new Disability Sports Hub was opened at the Mid Ulster Sports Arena in Cookstown. It provides a range of sports equipment including wheelchairs, inclusive bikes and inclusive sports equipment, to enable children and adults with disabilities to participate in a t least 14 different sports and activities
- In 2018, work was completed on improvements at Moneymore Recreation Centre, brining two additional meeting rooms, one of which is large enough to act as a studio for leisure classes, adding air extraction, modernising the reception, kitchen and toilets. Over £340K was secured for the project with £270K from the Social Investment Fund and £70K provided by the Council.
- Investment close to £120K was also made in Maghera Leisure Centre, with a sports hall floor resurfaced, a new 3G surface installed ate the existing synthetic pitch and new dug outs on the grass soccer pitch (which are required for league matches)
- Late 2018 saw consultation begin on proposals for a multi-million pound development of the Gortgonis leisure complex in Coalisland. The plans include a new leisure centre, incorporating changing rooms, meeting rooms and a gym, with planned outdoor facilities to include a running track, 3G pitch, walkways, Play Park and car parking.
- Early in 2019, brought the announcement, of a £1.5M refurbishment programme for Dungannon Leisure centre. The centre’s swimming pools, fitness suite, changing facilities and reception area will all benefit from upgrades as a result of the work. Renovations are planned for the pool, while the gym will be fitted out with a completely new range of fitness equipment and the centres squash court will be revamped.
- Investment in outdoor recreation saw the first phase of the Lower Bann Blueway delivered in a partnership project between the Council, Waterways Ireland and angling stakeholders. A new multi0-use public path along the riverbank at Portglenone was developed, accessing an additional 25 coarse angling stands in addition to the 89 already on site.
- A programme of investment in Council-managed forest sites at the latter end of 2018 into 2019 saw areas such as Brantry Wood and Knockmany Forest receive enhancements that will make a marked difference tot eh recreational value of the forest, and have a positive knock-on effect on the health and well-being of those who use them.
- Our sports arenas, parks and open spaces have become increasingly important as venues for walking, park runs, Couch to 5K programmes and the delivery of everybody Active 2020 programme which encourages more physical activity among harder to reach groups.
- Our wellbeing programmes promote healthier lifestyles, from smoking cessation to cooking lessons for those who may be less likely to eat well.
- Our annual grants programmes supports athletes, sports clubs, arts groups, community groups, cultural groups and health groups, funding projects , programmes and events. In the first four years, the Council has provided close to £2M in grant aid for eh voluntary and community sector in Md Ulster.

What are we going to do?	Timescale	What difference will it make?	Progress	Comments
1. Development of proposals to implement a programme of work for key capital schemes to include:  I. Gortgonis II. Dungannon Leisure centre III. Moneymore Recreation Centre IV. Maghera Leisure Centre	March 2019	Production of high quality, responsive indoor and outdoor leisure facilities.		Achieved – programme of work established, Gortgonis Economic appraisal drafted, refurbishment Dungannon Leisure centre to proceed May 2019, Moneymore complete and site operational, Maghera complete and operational
2. Audit of Leisure facility usage to achieve 2018/19 target of 1,600,000 users: – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop facility activity programmes/promotions.</li> <li>• Implement customer surveys for users &amp; non-users.</li> </ul>	March 2019	Increased participation and healthier lifestyles by more people being aware of recreational facilities/ Programmes.		New programmes developed and delivered e.g. “shred it” , family fun days, Mystery Shopping achieved overall result of 82% across Parks & Leisure & a cross partner working group “Ulster recreation & Active Lifestyle “ established
3. Improve the accessibility of online services, with increased and improved booking availability online.	March 2019	Improved customer satisfaction by delivering efficient 24/7 online services		Achieved – XN Leisure IT system installed improving online capability – all leisure centres now on one operating system and online services available to customers across facilities

4. Review of the Leisure Marketing Framework and associated centre plans for Leisure facilities, programmes and events.	March 2019	Increased participation and healthier lifestyles by more people being aware of recreational facilities and programmes		Leisure strategy completed and marketing action plans agreed and non-user survey completed
5. Delivery of Key Capital Improvement Programmes to include: I. Railway Park II. Play Parks III. Parks	March 2019	Improved quality outdoor recreational facilities in Mid Ulster		Achieved – Programme of work established, projects at various stages
6. Develop appropriate Parks Marketing Framework and associated action plans	Oct 2018	Increased participation and healthier lifestyles by more people being aware of outdoor recreational facilities and programmes.		Achieved – Parks strategy agreed and associated marketing plans in place
7. Revision of Parks, Play and Outdoor recreation Plans; • Parks & Play • Outdoor Recreation	May 2018 June 2018	Improved quality and accessible recreational facilities in Mid Ulster.		Achieved – Consultation undertaken with Councillor working groups & Planning Dept. Strategies in draft format for presentation to SMT & Council approval
8. Audit of Planned Outdoor Recreation, Events and Programmes to increase target set for 2018 to 2019 of 616,660 users.	March 2019	Increased participation and healthier lifestyles by more people being aware of recreational facilities and programmes delivered through Mid Ulster Council's Parks Service.		Achieved - Usage figures 756, 979 and new programmes have been developed e.g. Dungannon Park Run, Bann fishing with over 35 events/programmes delivered.
9. Milestone: Review, revise and report end of year project plan	April 2019	Implementation of developed		Achieved - Review completed



(year two) Key Actions: (1) Senior responsible Officer and Key members of project team review and report on year 2 project plan progress by April 2019		project plan on target.		
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## How will we know?

Measure	Comparative Performance 2017/2018	Comparative Performance 2018/2019	Target	Performance
Number of participants within "Make a Change "programme.	200	312	200	Target exceeded
Number of community groups engaged to raise awareness of increasing physical activity	20	New plan developed	20	Target achieved
Number of participants within sports development programmes	17,200	33,202	17,200	Target exceeded
Number of sports development programmes	9	9	9	Target achieved
Usage figures of current facilities	1.6m	1.5m*	1.6m	* reduction due to MLC & MRC closures & DLC service reduction due to imminent renovation
% increase satisfaction rate from Mystery Shopping exercises	76%	83%	85%	Performance increased
Number of compiled programmes and events both external and internal	177	194	165	Target exceeded
Production of up to date Marketing plans by April 2019	Leisure review completed, Parks review delayed.	2 Plans (Leisure & Parks)	2 Plans	Target achieved
7 Capital Project designs developed.	3 DLC, Gortgonis Railway Park	5 Previous plus MLC & MRC	7 Previous plus MUSA & Portglenone	Gortgonis, DLC, Railway Park, MLC, MRC, MUSA, Portglenone

### Visible improvement residents, businesses or visitors expect to see

Residents, businesses and visitors have seen increased and improved leisure, sport facilities provision, through improved planning via enhanced capital projects. Increased customer awareness of health, fitness and wellbeing programmes designed around our communities, targeting specific health inequalities and growing knowledge of how to increase physical activity and improve wellbeing. An increase in the number of participant experiences, in sport, leisure and healthy living. Continued collaboration with a host of stakeholders and improved working relationships and plans with our Community Planning Partners in the wider Health and Wellbeing communities. Council's usage figures have increased year on year with new marketing and promotional programmes to make citizens and communities aware of our product offer.

### Partnerships: Who do we need to work with?

Community groups, General Public, Sports Governing bodies, Sports groups and organisations, Internal Council staff (e.g. Capital projects team, Marketing & Communications team, Finance), External consultancy teams, other council improvement projects groups (on-line accessibility & facilities).

### What risks do we need to manage?

RISK	Mitigation Activity	Risk rating
Increased competition from private sector	Strategic marketing plans developed and implemented. Sales and Marketing Officer appointed. Ongoing monitoring of performance and competition by management teams	Moderate
Resource availability & usage – staff, funding and infrastructure	Ensure the resource implications are identified and explained to Chief Executive and senior management team prior to rates estimates being finalised. Provide rationale and business case to support allocation of capital and revenue costs.	Moderate

Assessed/Evaluated As	Explanation
Fully Achieved	All actions and measures were achieved

## 6.0 COUNCIL'S SELF – ASSESSMENT OF STATUTORY INDICATORS/STANDARDS 2018 to 2019

### 6.1 Statutory Indicators/Standards (Set For Us)

In addition to the objectives and aligned improvement actions, the Council is using to measure its performance the Department for Communities (Previously the department of the Environment) has set performance measures (indicators and standards) for Council on which it annually reports. The progress/status update and self-assessment of how Mid Ulster performed against the statutory indicators in 2018/19 appears in this section, as well as over time from 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. Commentary on how the other 10 Councils performed in relation to their statutory targets is also included.

## **6.2 The Numbers of Jobs Promoted through Business Start Up Activity in 2017/18 and Benchmarking amongst Northern Ireland Councils 2018/19**

### **Background**

Northern Ireland Business Start Programme (NIBSUP also known as 'Go for It') is a regional business start programme), through which entrepreneurs receive support to develop a quality assured business plan. Business start was one of the functions, which transferred to Councils in April 2015, following Local Government Reform. Through the Programme, delivered by the Councils since 2015, NIBSUP's key outputs are completed and approved business plans, with the 'jobs promoted' then calculated at a conversion rate, determined by previous programme evaluations of actual jobs created. Following RPA in 2015, statutory targets were allocated to each of the new Councils, totalling 1,625 jobs, as required by the Programme for Government. Mid Ulster's target was 210 jobs, the highest of all Councils outside of Belfast, accounting for 12.9% of the overall 1,625 jobs target.

### **Legislation and the Business Start Up Programme**

The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out an economic development indicator and standard. The indicator (ED1) is the number of jobs promoted through business startup activity and each Council area has been designated standards (or targets) to be achieved each financial year, each Council has its own target (number of jobs promoted through start up activity ) to achieve.

The current business start-up programme ('Go for It') is part funded by Invest NI, the EU Investment for Growth and Jobs Fund Invest and local councils and delivered by Local Enterprise Partners in Northern Ireland.

Go for It provides individuals who wish to start a business with free advice, guidance and capability to produce their own business plan. A business plan is a written document that describes the client's business. It covers objectives, strategies, sales, marketing and financial forecasts. A business plan helps to; clarify a business idea, spot potential problems, set out goals, measure progress and access finance to start and grow the business.

Until October 2017, this Programme was managed by Invest Northern Ireland via a Contract with Enterprise NI (ENI) and was delivered by the Local Enterprise Agencies; from 1 November 2016 to 1 September 2017, with Councils had their own interim programmes; from 1 Sept 2017.

The current NI Business Start Up Programme ('NIBSUP') is managed by a lead Council (Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council) on behalf of the 11 Councils, and delivered by Enterprise NI (ENI) via Service Level Agreements (SLA's) with the Local Enterprise Agencies. The delivery, marketing and enquiry handling Contracts of the NIBSUP are 80% EU funded through the EU Growth and Jobs Fund and Invest NI and 20% through Councils. Councils also contribute towards the costs of programme management (lead: Lisburn) and MIS (lead Belfast) as these were deemed not eligible for EU funding.

The delivery agent (ENI) reports monthly to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (L&CCC) via the Management Information System (MIS) and uploads Plans to the system. L&CCC collate figures of approved Plans monthly and supply to Councils and the Department for the Economy. Plans are vouched at 20% by L&CCC; Councils review two Plans monthly.

#### **6.2.1 Northern Ireland Business Start Up (NIBSUP) – Mid Ulster District Council Performance**

Department for the Economy (DfE) / Invest Northern Ireland permitted Councils to use what was known as a “RSI conversion rate” (Plans - Jobs) of 0.75762 until 31/08/17. A lower conversion rate (of 0.6147) was then applied for the new NIBSUP (post 1/09/17). The reduced conversion rate effectively means that a higher number of Plans are required to achieve the same outputs (jobs promoted).

When we analyse the performance this year, Quarters 1,2&3 Business Plans delivered figure is significantly lower than last year (173 vs 135) resulting in lower jobs (174vs 135). Department for the Economy (DfE) / Invest Northern Ireland required Councils to use the lower conversion rate (Plans - Jobs) of 0.6147 (not RSI rate 0.75762). However, following meetings with Council Quarter 4 saw a significant uplift in performance, higher than Quarter 4 of 2017/18, but due to the underperformance of 1 Agency this left Mid Ulster 10 Plans (& six jobs) short of achieving the statutory target.

This performance, along with the reduced conversion rate, has resulted in Quarters one, two and three figures being lower than previous years. The number of Plans delivered totalled 332 (seven more than 2017/18) but due to the use of the lower conversion rate, this equated to 204 jobs promoted. Currently Mid Ulster-was one of four Council areas underperforming; however, Quarter 4 saw an uplift in delivery.

At meetings with Council Officers, the three Enterprise partners have cited low levels of unemployment, foreign nationals returning home and concern causing uncertainty as the causes of this reduced level of demand for startup support in Mid Ulster. Further meetings will be held with the three partners to ensure Quarter four's strong performance is sustained to ensure the target is achieved in 2019/20.

The Statutory 'Jobs promoted' target was not achieved by March 2019 (refer to figure 6.2.1). However, the 'Programme targets' for NIBSUP are increasing this year (closing the gap between the NIBSUP targets and the statutory targets) so that should also contribute to higher performance. While this year's Quarter 3 shows some short-term improvement, Quarters 1-3 Plans and Jobs figures overall are lower than previous year, Quarters1-3 (51 fewer jobs promoted).

**Figure 6.2.1. – ED1 Self-Assessment of the Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity Mid Ulster District Council**

Statutory Indicator	Standard/ Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2015/16	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2018/19

<b>ED1:</b> The number of jobs Promoted through business start-up activity**.	210	250	256	223	204
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***\*\* (Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client led business plans under the Department for the Economy Regional start initiative or its successor programmes).***

Mid Ulster currently has the highest conversion rates from Initial Client Assessment meeting to Business Plan (c90% against NI average of 65%), contributing to maximising number of Plans delivered. Further meetings will be held with the three partners to ensure Quarter four's strong performance is now sustained to ensure the target is achieved in 2019/20.

The overall figures from 2016 to 2019 show a small but steady decline over the 3 years (with a sharp dip occurring in Autumn 2018). In discussions with the Agencies, it was agreed that the Statutory Target for Mid Ulster (210 jobs) is too high, given the local economic conditions (almost full employment and concern re Brexit). This is in line with the recommendations in the Review of Statutory Targets Report (independent Report completed by Capaxo to proposing a formula to be used to develop the 11 Council's statutory jobs targets). In June 2019, Council agreed to accept the lower target of 157 jobs to be promoted. Lisburn Council will now submit these proposed revised targets to the Department for the Economy.

## **6.2.2 Benchmarking NIBSUP – Northern Ireland Councils**

Seven Councils during 2018/19 achieved the standard set by the The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council percentage of jobs created versus their statutory target realised an achievement of 163%, which represented the creation of 139 jobs over their target of 85 jobs (alongside the development of 226 business plans).

Mid Ulster District Council attained the creation of 204 jobs in 2018-19 with 332 business plans created (the third highest after Belfast, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Councils), however Mid Ulster District Council along with three other Councils reported that the number of jobs promoted through business startup activity did not meet their specified target. The other Councils not reaching their target were, Belfast, Derry and Strabane, Fermanagh and Omagh (refer to figure 6.2.2 Yellow column denotes the target set for each individual Council and the green columns identify Councils that fell below their target).

**Figure 6.2.2 - 2018-19 Year to Date Performance – The number of jobs promoted through Business start-up activity in Northern Ireland Councils**

Year to Date Performance					
	BPA Year to Date	Jobs Created Year to Date	Statutory Jobs Target	Balance of Jobs to be created	% Jobs Created Vs Statutory Target
Antrim & Newtownabbey	171	105	80		131%
Ards & North Down	181	111	85		131%
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	360	221	165		134%
Belfast	429	264	325	61	81%
Causeway Coast & Glens	230	141	125		113%
Derry & Strabane	226	139	140	1	99%
Fermanagh & Omagh	273	168	170	2	99%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	226	139	85		163%
Mid & East Antrim	201	124	85		145%
Mid Ulster	332	204	210	6	97%
Newry Mourne & Down	300	184	155		119%
Total 2018 -19 (Financial Year)	2,929	1,801	1,625	70	111%

### 6.3 Planning – Statutory Indicators and Benchmarking Amongst Northern Ireland Councils 2018/19

From the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2016, Ministerial responsibility for planning transferred from the former Department of Environment to the new Department for Infrastructure (the Department) following departmental re-organisation. The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the Act), sets out the legislative framework for development management in Northern Ireland and provides that from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, Councils now largely have responsibility for this planning function. Planning applications for development are categorised as being either major, or local determined by the Councils e.g.:

- Major development or (majority are multiple housing, commercial and government and civic type developments. They also have important economic, social and environmental implications).
- Local development (mostly residential and minor commercial applications received and determined).

The Department has set statutory targets; three of which relate to planning (as outlined in the Local Government {Performance Indicators and Standards} Order {Northern Ireland} 2015). It is a statutory target for each Council that:

- P1 --Their major development planning applications will be processed from the date valid to decision issued or withdrawal date within an average of 30 weeks.
- P2 - Their local development planning applications will be processed from the date valid to decision issued or withdrawal date within an average of 15 weeks.
- P3 - That 70% of all enforcement cases dealt with by Councils are progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaints.

Council undertakes to carry out benchmarking with the other 10 Councils in Northern Ireland in relation to the statutory planning indicators and this is available in the section below. Council also conducts internal time series benchmarking with all the statutory indicators. These are available in the tables presented in the following sections. The number of planning applications received generally declined between its peak in 2004/05 and 2013/14, when it reached the lowest level for the series.

## Applications Received

During 2018/189, 12,541 planning applications were received in Northern Ireland (NI), by Councils and the Department; a 3.0% decrease from the previous year of (12,933) – further detail is available in figure 6.3.1. Three quarters of the planning applications received in 2018/19 were for full planning permission (74.5%), similar to the position last year (75.9%). In 2018/19, the number of planning applications received varied across Councils, ranging from 1,756 in Belfast (accounting for 14% of all applications received across NI). Mid Ulster District Council, had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of applications received at 1,337 or 10.66% of all applications received and the number of applications received had reduced from the previous year where 1,415 were received a drop of 78). Antrim and Newtownabbey received the lowest amount of planning applications at 744 or 5.93% of all applications received.

**Figure 6.3.1 Planning Applications Received by Authority 2018/19**

	Newtownabbey	Antrim & Ards & North Down	Banbridge & Craigavon	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	Belfast	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry City & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Castlereagh	Lisburn & Castlereagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Mourne & Newry, Division 5	Strategic Planning	Northern Ireland
Received <sup>d</sup>	Apr-Jun 2018	209	244	358	507	301	219	254	229	229	342	349	2	3,243	
	Jul-Sep 2018	160	246	324	392	289	202	278	238	192	278	335	2	2,936	
	Oct-Dec 2018	182	231	325	440	334	229	248	234	211	353	404	5	3,196	
	Jan-Mar 2019	193	240	341	417	275	207	284	259	193	364	392	1	3,166	
	2018/19	744	961	1,348	1,756	1,199	857	1,064	960	825	1,337	1,480	10	12,541	
	Apr-Jun 2017	199	274	390	422	344	210	249	260	219	330	405	7	3,309	
	Jul-Sep 2017	183	231	289	495	320	223	253	242	197	376	413	0	3,222	
	Oct-Dec 2017	172	229	355	420	331	226	270	266	249	355	389	3	3,265	
	Jan-Mar 2018	176	235	297	471	291	207	264	252	226	354	363	1	3,137	
	2017/18	730	969	1,331	1,808	1,286	866	1,036	1,020	891	1,415	1,570	11	12,933	
Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19	14	-8	17	-52	-87	-9	28	-60	-66	-78	-90	-1	-392		
Mid year pop. estimates 2017 (NISRA)	141,697	160,098	211,898	340,220	143,920	150,497	116,289	142,640	138,152	146,427	178,996	n/a	1,870,834		
Mid year estimate 2017 per 10,000	14	16	21	34	14	15	12	14	14	15	18	n/a	187		
2018/19 Per 10,000 pop. <sup>4</sup>	52.5	60.0	63.6	51.6	83.3	56.9	91.5	67.3	59.7	91.3	82.7	n/a	67.0		

The volumes of planning applications received decreased in 2018/19 in eight of the 11 Councils, when compared to 2017/18. The largest decrease in percentage terms occurred in Mid East Antrim (-7.4%), Fermanagh and Omagh (2.7%) recorded the largest increase over the year.

## Applications Decided

During 2018/19 there were 12,156 planning decisions issued, representing a decrease of 1.3% from 2017/18 (12,314). In 2018/19 just over three quarters of planning decisions (76.7%) were for full planning permission; similar to the proportion in 2017/18 (76.5%).

### **Applications Decided by Council & Approval Rates**

Across all councils, the number of decisions issued in 2018/19 ranged from 1,767 in Belfast, to 743 in Antrim and Newtownabbey. Three of the Councils issued more decisions than they received: Mid and East Antrim (+7.8%); Mid Ulster (+5.7%) and Belfast (+0.6%). The overall Northern Ireland approval rate for all planning applications was 92.3% in 2018/19; similar to the rate in 2017/18 (93.8%). Approval rates varied across councils, from a high of 98.4% in Mid Ulster to a low of 80.2% in Newry, Mourne and Down. Seven of the Councils reported an increased approval rate over the year, with the increase in Antrim and Newtownabbey up 1.7% points to 95.5%. Four Councils reported a decreased approval rate when compared to 2017/18, with Newry & Mourne reporting the greatest decrease down 8% points to 80.2%.

#### **6.3.1 Major Planning Applications**

The number of major planning applications received in 2018/19 (all of Northern Ireland) was 137 a decrease of 14.9% from 2017/18 (161). Mid Ulster in conjunction with Causeway Coast and Glens received (joint) second highest amount of applications (18) after Belfast (2). The average processing time for major applications to a decision or withdrawal was 50.2 weeks, down from 68.6 weeks reported in 2016/17.

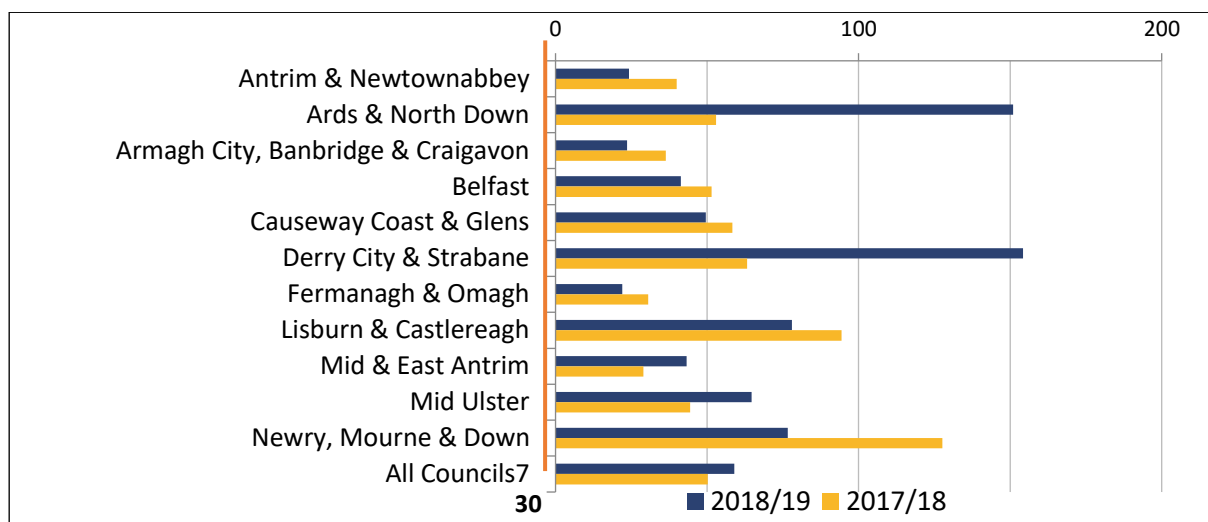
The number of major planning applications received across Councils ranged from 30 in Belfast to 5 in Ards & North Down (refer to figure 6.3.1- Major Development Processing Times by Council 2017/18 to 2018/19- Less is better). Belfast also reported the largest increase in major applications received; compared with the previous year, up from 10 to 30.

During 2018/19 Mid Ulster Council received 17 major planning applications a drop of 1 from the previous year and was in receipt of the third highest number of major applications, after Belfast (30) and Causeway Coast and Glens (18).

Mid Ulster approved 14 of the major applications (an approval rate of 87.5%) which was down from the previous year's approval rate of 90.9%. The overall Northern Ireland approval rate for major applications was 92.7% in 2018/19 similar to the rate for 2017/18 (92.6%)

**Figure 6.3.1 – Major Development Processing Times by Council 2017/18 and 2018/19**





During 2018/19 the average processing time to bring major applications to a decision or withdrawal was 59.0 weeks across all the Councils; an increase of 8.8 weeks from the 50.2 weeks reported in 2017/18. This is in excess of 29 more weeks than the statutory processing time target of 30 weeks. Three Councils met the statutory target of 30 weeks in 2018/19' Fermanagh and Omagh (22.0 weeks). Armagh City, Banbridge, Craigavon, Antrim, and Newtownabbey (24.2 weeks)

**Figure 6.3.2 – P1 Self-Assessment of The average processing time pf major planning applications Mid Ulster District Council**

Statutory Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2015/16	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2018/19
<b>P1:-</b> The average processing time of major planning applications**	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an <b>average of 30 weeks</b>	52.3 weeks	73.6 weeks	44.4 weeks	64.7 weeks

**\*\* An application in the category of major development within the meaning of Planning (Development Management regulations (NI) 2015(a)**

In 2018/19, the average processing time for major applications, which were processed entirely by Councils (i.e. received on or after 1st April 2015), is considerably shorter (41.4 weeks) than for those, which had been partially processed by the Department, (i.e. received before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 at 228.4 weeks). Legacy cases accounted for 1/5<sup>th</sup> (21%) of all major applications processed across Councils in 2018/19. Mid Ulster did not achieve the standard of 30 weeks (refer to figure 6.3.2). in order to bring this back on track, the Mid Ulster Planning Team will continue the operation of a dedicated Major applications group meeting chaired by Planning Manager to improve the performance, while monitoring staff resources.

## 6.4 Local Planning Applications

The number of Local planning applications received in Northern Ireland during 2018/19 was 12,404; a decrease of 2.9% from the 12,770 applications received during 2017/18 (refer to figure 6.4.2). Across Councils, Belfast City (1,726), Newry, Mourne & Down (1,474), Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon (1,335) and Mid Ulster (1,320) received the highest number of local applications during 2018/19 equating to 47% of all 11 councils local applications received. The number of local planning applications decreased in Mid Ulster from the previous year, which saw 1,397, a drop of 77.

During 2018/19, the number of local planning decisions issued ranged from 1,746 to 729 in Antrim and Newtownabbey. Although the volume of local planning decisions issued across NI decreased over the year, six councils reported an increase over the same period. The greatest increase in percentage terms occurred in Mid Ulster (17.5%). Five Councils reported decreases over the year, with the largest occurring in Newry, Mourne and Down.

During 2018/19, the average processing time to bring local applications to decision and withdrawal was 14.8 weeks across all councils, meeting the statutory target of 15 weeks. During 2017/18, the average processing time to bring local applications to decisions or withdrawal had been 15.2 weeks. The average processing time in Mid Ulster during 2018/19 was 16.9 weeks (during 2017/18 the figure for Mid Ulster was 14.4 weeks – refer to figure 6.4.1). Other Councils ranged from 7.8 weeks in Mid East Antrim to 21.6 weeks in Causeway Coast and Glens.

During 2018/19, the average processing time for local applications, which were processed entirely by Councils (i.e. received on or after 1st April 2015), is considerably shorter (14.8 weeks) than those, which had already been partially processed by the Department (i.e. received before 1st April 2015; at 213.8 weeks).

**Figure 6.4.1 – P2 Self-Assessment of The average processing time for Local Planning applications Mid Ulster District Council.**

Statutory Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2015/16	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2018/19
<b>P2:</b> The average processing time for local planning applications**	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 15 weeks	15.2	14.4	14.4	16.9

**\*\* Local applications means an application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and any other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under the Act).**

Moving forward the Council has included improving the performance of Local Planning within their performance improvement plan, as an improvement objective for 2019 to 2020, with associated activities and measures.

**Figure 6.4.2 - Local Development (Planning) applications received, decided, withdrawn and average processing times by Council**

		Antrim & Newtownabbey	Ards & North Down	Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry City & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Lisburn & Castlereagh	Mid & East Antrim	Newry, Mourne & Down	Mid Ulster	All Councils <sup>6</sup>	
Received <sup>3</sup>	Apr-Jun 2018	208	243	351	498	297	217	251	227	228	336	348	3,204
	Jul-Sep 2018	157	245	323	386	284	200	277	237	191	274	334	2,908
	Oct-Dec 2018	176	229	321	432	329	227	248	228	208	347	402	3,147
	Jan-Mar 2019	191	239	340	410	271	207	281	257	191	363	390	3,140
	2018/19	732	956	1,335	1,726	1,181	851	1,057	949	818	1,320	1,474	12,399
	2017/18	717	961	1,320	1,788	1,268	850	1,024	1,004	875	1,397	1,562	12,766
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19	15	-5	15	-62	-87	1	33	-55	-57	-77	-88	-367
Decided <sup>4</sup>	Apr-Jun 2018	148	208	337	415	291	179	244	271	240	315	330	2,978
	Jul-Sep 2018	209	245	312	513	286	183	250	182	226	350	281	3,037
	Oct-Dec 2018	194	279	320	390	307	186	270	211	189	347	276	2,969
	Jan-Mar 2019	178	209	267	428	278	197	286	236	222	385	348	3,034
	2018/19	729	941	1,236	1,746	1,162	745	1,050	900	877	1,397	1,235	12,018
	2017/18	705	979	1,108	1,779	1,050	928	998	939	861	1,189	1,597	12,133
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19	24	-38	128	-33	112	-183	52	-39	16	208	-362	-115
Approved <sup>5</sup>	Apr-Jun 2018	144	197	327	368	274	175	235	262	225	311	286	2,804
	Jul-Sep 2018	194	238	302	470	264	182	235	173	214	343	240	2,855
	Oct-Dec 2018	191	269	300	353	284	177	252	199	171	342	230	2,768
	Jan-Mar 2019	160	203	252	390	262	193	274	219	208	380	234	2,775
	2018/19	689	907	1,181	1,581	1,084	727	996	853	818	1,376	990	11,202
	2017/18	653	943	1,061	1,641	993	900	944	881	793	1,164	1,407	11,380
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19	36	-36	120	-60	91	-173	52	-28	25	212	-417	-178
Approval Rate <sup>6</sup>	Apr-Jun 2018	97.3%	94.7%	97.0%	88.7%	94.2%	97.8%	96.3%	96.7%	93.8%	98.7%	86.7%	94.2%
	Jul-Sep 2018	92.8%	97.1%	96.8%	91.6%	92.3%	99.5%	94.0%	95.1%	94.7%	98.0%	85.4%	94.0%
	Oct-Dec 2018	98.5%	96.4%	93.8%	90.5%	92.5%	95.2%	93.3%	94.3%	90.5%	98.6%	83.3%	93.2%
	Jan-Mar 2019	89.9%	97.1%	94.4%	91.1%	94.2%	98.0%	95.8%	92.8%	93.7%	98.7%	67.2%	91.5%
	2018/19	94.5%	96.4%	95.6%	90.5%	93.3%	97.6%	94.9%	94.8%	93.3%	98.5%	80.2%	93.2%
	2017/18	92.6%	96.3%	95.8%	92.2%	94.6%	97.0%	94.6%	93.8%	92.1%	97.9%	88.1%	93.8%
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19 (pp)	1.9	0.1	-0.2	-1.7	-1.3	0.6	0.3	1.0	1.2	0.6	-7.9	-0.6
Withdrawn	Apr-Jun 2018	14	12	18	33	21	5	9	11	5	21	29	178
	Jul-Sep 2018	6	6	16	29	18	15	9	12	5	13	18	147
	Oct-Dec 2018	2	15	22	25	22	10	12	6	2	12	17	145
	Jan-Mar 2019	8	10	21	17	15	7	15	11	10	17	17	148
	2018/19	30	43	77	104	76	37	45	40	22	63	81	618
	2017/18	39	45	71	71	89	53	45	52	25	47	75	612
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19	-9	-2	6	33	-13	-16	0	-12	-3	16	6	6
Processing Times	Average processing time (wks) <sup>7</sup>												
	Apr-Jun 2018	13.0	15.6	19.0	14.4	23.7	14.2	12.2	17.0	6.2	18.1	15.4	15.2
	Jul-Sep 2018	13.0	16.8	13.6	15.4	22.6	13.4	11.8	16.1	7.8	16.8	15.4	14.6
	Oct-Dec 2018	12.4	15.4	14.4	15.6	22.6	16.8	13.5	19.2	9.6	18.2	16.4	15.4
	Jan-Mar 2019	10.6	15.2	13.4	15.4	19.8	13.9	11.2	17.4	8.3	14.0	22.0	14.2
	2018/19	12.4	15.6	14.6	15.2	21.6	14.1	12.2	17.7	7.8	16.9	18.0	14.8
	2017/18	12.1	17.2	14.0	15.2	20.4	16.2	12.4	21.6	9.6	14.4	17.0	15.2
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19	0.3	-1.6	0.6	0.0	1.2	-2.1	-0.2	-3.9	-1.8	2.5	1.0	-0.4
	% of cases processed within 15 wks												
	Apr-Jun 2018	68.5%	48.6%	40.0%	53.3%	33.7%	53.8%	63.2%	45.0%	72.7%	35.4%	48.5%	49.5%
	Jul-Sep 2018	68.8%	46.6%	57.0%	47.4%	36.5%	59.1%	65.6%	46.4%	73.6%	41.3%	48.8%	52.2%
	Oct-Dec 2018	68.9%	46.6%	52.9%	46.5%	37.1%	45.9%	58.2%	37.8%	71.7%	38.7%	44.0%	48.5%
	Jan-Mar 2019	78.0%	49.3%	57.6%	49.2%	40.3%	56.4%	69.8%	49.0%	75.9%	54.2%	26.8%	53.2%
	2018/19	71.0%	47.7%	51.5%	49.1%	36.8%	53.8%	64.3%	44.7%	73.5%	42.9%	41.6%	50.9%
	2017/18	66.5%	41.7%	54.9%	49.9%	32.3%	47.8%	62.3%	33.2%	70.4%	53.4%	44.7%	49.7%
	Change over Year: 2017/18 - 2018/19 (pp)	4.5	6.0	-3.4	-0.8	4.5	6.0	2.0	11.5	3.1	-10.5	-3.1	1.2

## 6.5 The percentage of planning enforcement case processed within 39 weeks.

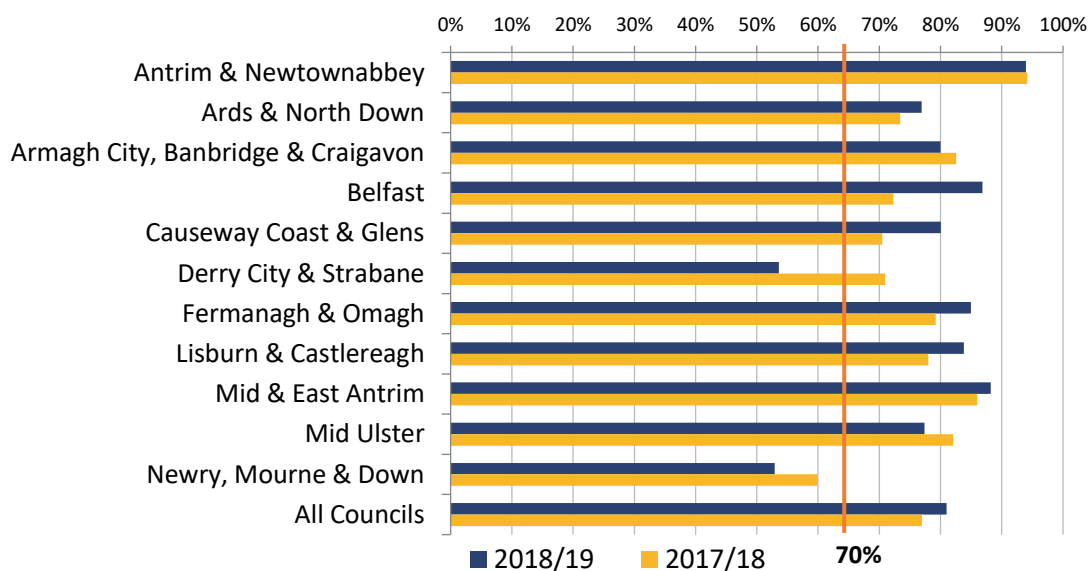
The number of enforcement cases opened in Northern Ireland during 2018/19 was 3,796; an increase of 14.9% compared with 2017/18 (3,304). Across the Councils, the number of enforcement cases opened in 2018/19 ranged from 590 in Belfast to 164 in Derry City and Strabane. Eight of the 11 councils increased in the volume of enforcement cases opened in 2018/19, compared with the previous year. The increase was greatest in percentage terms in Belfast (38.2%).

The number of enforcement cases closed during 2018/19 was 3,630; an increase of 11.5% from 2017/18 (3,257), which continues the upward trend in the number of cases closed from 2015/16. The number of cases closed varied across Councils in 2018/19, ranging from 583 in Belfast to 178 in Mid Ulster.

Eight of the 11 councils reported increases in the volume of enforcement cases closed in 2018/19 compared to the previous year. Nine of the 11 Councils met the target in 2018/19, with a high of 94% recorded in Antrim and Newtownabbey (refer to figure 6.5.1). Six councils improved the proportion of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks compared to the previous year, most notably in Belfast (up 14.5 percentage points).

Overall the annual Mid Ulster District Council figure is 77.4 %, which is well in exceedance of the statutory target of 70% (refer to figure 6.5.2). The performance in Quarter 4 and overall for the year to date is a positive position given the reduced resources in the enforcement team in the earlier part of the year. This is a positive trend, which will hopefully continue and will mean that the cases being brought to target conclusion are being done so in a reduced period of time. This trend continues to improve the level and efficiency of service provided.

**Figure 6.5.1 - Percentage of cases concluded within 39 weeks by council, 2017/18 & 2018/19**



**Figure 6.5.2 P3 – Self Assessment of The percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks Mid Ulster District Council**

Statutory Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2015/16	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2018/19
<b>P3</b> - : The percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks **	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint	79%	79.1%	82.1%	77.4%

**\*\* Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or under and orders or regulations made under the Act.)**

## 6.6 Waste Management – Statutory Indicators and Benchmarking Among NI Councils

Waste can be defined as materials or products that are unwanted or have been discarded, rejected or abandoned. Waste includes materials or products that are recycled, converted to energy, or disposed. Materials and products that are reused (for their original purpose and without reprocessing) are not waste because they remain in use. Waste typically arises from three streams: Domestic and municipal—includes all household waste and waste collected in public places; commercial and industrial waste from all business and industrial activities and public institutions; and construction and demolition—includes all waste from the building and construction industry.

The key framework underpinning waste management policy and practice in the UK and Europe is the waste management hierarchy, which ranks the ways of dealing with waste in order of preferences. The waste management hierarchy ranks strategies in order of preference from avoiding the creation of waste as the most desired outcome, and disposal as the least desired outcome.

In February 2018, the UK government published ‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’, which sets out a vision for achieving specific goals across waste and recycling. The plan sets the ambitious targets of zero avoidable waste by 2050 and the elimination of avoidable plastic waste by 2042. The adoption of the European Union’s circular economy package, which was enshrined into UK law in July 2018, reinforces the need to redouble efforts to achieve recycling targets. As a result of adopting this package, the UK is now obliged to reach a 55% municipal recycling rate by 2025.

Given this, and the ever-increasing drive for a more environmentally sustainable economy, it is more important than ever that local authorities, businesses, civil society and other stakeholders work together to improve the waste management by preventing, reusing and recycling waste. Failure to comply with emerging environmental standards risks the UK losing out on future trading opportunities; reducing its competitiveness and economic growth and risking further damage to our natural environment.

The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, sets out three statutory indicators relating to waste, which local Councils use to demonstrate their waste functions performance\*\*, refer to figure 6.6.1, the indicators/standards are:

- **W1** - The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for re-use)
- **W2** - The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled

- **W3** - The Amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings.

**\*\*Finalised data for 2018/19 are scheduled to be published on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**

The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling in 2018/19 had a cumulative position of 56.01% or 40,757 tonnes. During 2018 to 2019 Mid Ulster District Council in relation to the highest household waste recycling rate (W1) increase in rate from 47.15% to 50.82% (representing 734 tonnes) compared to same period in 2017/18

In relation to biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled (W2) there has been a drop in utilisation of allocation from 15.62% to 2.82% (representing a decrease of 2,481 tonnes during 2018 to 2019) compared to same period in 2017/18. During 2018 to 2019, there was a cumulative position of 31.54% or 5,687 tonnes. Comparative data is not available with other Local Councils as the target is specific to Mid Ulster District (i.e. each Council is given a specific target by NIEA)

The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings had a cumulative position of 78,659 tonnes at the end of 2019. There has been an increase of 254 tonnes compared to same period in 2017/18, however overall decrease of 1,334 tonnes over the whole year.

**Figure 6.6.1 W1 – Self Assessment of The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling Including waste prepared for re-use) Mid Ulster District Council**

Statutory Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2015/16	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18
<b>W1</b> - :The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)*	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) 50% by 2020	49.7% (or 39,929 tonnes)	51.6% (or 38,240 tonnes)	54.4% (or 40,096 tonnes)	56.01% (or 40,757 tonnes)
<b>W2</b> - : The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) 2017/18 19,131 tonnes	72.8% (or 15,530 tonnes)	73.38% (or 14,846 tonnes)	52.67% (or 10,077 tonnes)	31.54% (or 5,687 tonnes)
<b>W3</b> - :The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	No target set	77,562 tonnes	83,132 tonnes	79,993 tonnes	78,659 tonnes

\* *Household waste is defined in Article 2 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997(a) and the Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013 (b)*

\*\* *Local Authority collected Municipal Waste is as defined in section 21 of the Waste Emissions Trading Act 2003(c).*

\*\*\**Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings is the total amount of local authority collected municipal waste, which has been collected by a district council.*

Finalised (or validated) data for 2018/19 is scheduled to be published on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019; the report will be made available by DAERA (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs). The report presents information on the quantities of local authority collected municipal waste managed during 2018/19 (refer to figure 6.6.2).

Currently reports are provided every quarter by the Department and this provides information on the quantities and rates of local authority collected waste arisings sent for preparing for reuse, for dry recycling, composting, energy recovery and sent to landfill. [https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/lac-municipal-waste-q4-2018-19-report\\_0.pdf](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/lac-municipal-waste-q4-2018-19-report_0.pdf). Some of these measures are key performance indicators (KPI's). These are used to assess progress towards achieving waste strategy targets at Council, Waste management group and national level.

The figure below (6.6.2) shows the comparison data for recycling rate performance across the 11 Councils for 2018/19. Mid Ulster had the second highest rate – just 0.14% behind Antrim & Newtownabbey (but this could still change after validation)

**Figure 6.6.2 - KPI (a) Household Waste Recycled and Composted as a % of Household Waste Arisings**

Authority	Summary For 2018 to 2019 (Not Validated)				
	Total Dry Recycling & Composting (tonnes)	Total Household Waste Arisings (tonnes)	Average Dry Recycling Rate	Average Composting Rate	Average Household Recycling Rate
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	45,480.37	80,993.52	22.67%	33.48%	56.15%
Ards and North Down Borough Council	41,736.60	78,688.31	22.30%	30.74%	53.04%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council	50,497.58	97,916.69	24.53%	27.05%	51.57%
Belfast City Council	63,457.41	143,074.73	24.97%	19.39%	44.35%
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	34,094.73	72,874.92	23.26%	23.52%	46.79%
Derry City and Strabane District Council	31,277.69	70,915.69	29.48%	14.62%	44.11%
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	24,908.50	50,610.96	27.06%	22.16%	49.22%
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	33,798.41	70,607.81	18.39%	29.48%	47.87%
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	33,959.03	65,378.81	20.69%	31.26%	51.94%
Mid Ulster District Council	40,757.39	72,765.06	24.84%	31.17%	56.01%
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	39,140.04	76,153.62	24.65%	26.75%	51.40%

## 7.0 COUNCIL'S SELF – ASSESSMENT OF SELF IMPOSED INDICATORS/ STANDARDS 2018 to 2019

### 7.1 Performance Indicators/Standards that are Self-imposed (Set by Us)



During 2016/17, Mid Ulster District Council in the absence of an agreed region wide local authority performance management framework, decided to concentrate on ensuring the data quality of three of its proposed “set by us” or “self-imposed” performance indicators; namely:

1. Prompt Payments
2. Freedom of Information Requests (FOI) Responded to within 20 days
3. Percentage lost time rate (sickness absence)

Performance measures including Freedom of Information Requests, Prompt Payments and Absence Information is used every day across the Council to help inform management decisions, plan services, benchmark performance and cost, and inform target setting. The three “set by us” indicators are also used in 2018 to 2019 to demonstrate internal time series benchmarking.

As already outlined previously, Council is required statutorily to compare its performance for the 2018/19 year to that of previous years, legislation also requires Council, so far as reasonably practicable, to report their performance against other councils in the exercise of the same or similar functions. To date there is no agreed overarching Northern Ireland Local Government Performance Management Framework, however correspondence received from the Department of Communities during late July 2019, gave direction to Councils as follows,

*“You should, therefore, make sure to include comparisons with other councils relating to the statutory indicators plus, at the very least, for this year also include comparisons using prompt payments and sickness levels in your assessment reports due to be published by 30 September 2019”.*

The Department of Communities forwarded data regarding Prompt Payments and Absenteeism for all 11 Councils on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, the following sections include some comparisons therefore with the other 10 Councils in relation to prompt payments and absenteeism figures.

## **7.2 Mid Ulster District Council’s Prompt Payments**

The Council has set an indicator and associated standard as “set by us” within the Corporate Improvement Plan, in order to look at the effectiveness of Council’s payment framework.

Prompt payments speed up cash flow from the public sector to its suppliers, particularly SME’s. Council recognises that late payments are a key issue for business, especially for smaller businesses as it can adversely affect their cash flow and jeopardises their ability to trade and we recognise that as a Public body we should set a strong example by paying promptly. This “set by us” indicator sits within the Community Plan theme of (1.1) Economic Growth – “We prosper in a stronger and more competitive economy”. We as a Council and within partnerships will encourage continued support for micro and small medium sized enterprises across all sectors.

Currently Council’s performance in relation to Prompt Payments for 2015/16, to 2018/19 can be viewed on our website: [https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council-\(1\)/performance/financial-performance](https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council-(1)/performance/financial-performance).

The previous Department of the Environment issued guidance on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments (through Circular LG 19/2016 “Guidance on Prompt Payments”). All public authorities are required to pay suppliers within 30 calendar days of receipt on an undisputed invoice and the circular also states that. .. “*Whenever possible, Central Government bodies should endeavour to make payments to suppliers within 10 days*”.

The “Late Payment of Commercial Debts (interest) at 1988”, binds public sector organisations, (as amended by the Late Payment of Commercial Debt Regulations 2001 (SI 1674) and Late Payment of Commercial Debt Regulation’s (SI 395). By managing public money, requires Council to pay invoices



accurately and on time to avoid late payment penalties <sup>2</sup>, citizens are made aware of this through information supplied on Council's website.

<sup>2</sup>The statutory payment of interest and other compensation recovery costs and entitlements are not compulsory, it is for the supplier to decide whether or not to use the rights made available to it.

### **7.2.1 Mid Ulster District Council's Prompt Payments from 2016/17 to 2018/19 (% of invoices paid within 30 days).**

Performance during 2018/19 has been impacted by introduction of e ordering with all departments using e ordering from 1 April 2018. A new system and new way of working is continuing to bed down - further work is being done by finance to reduce number of invoices not auto clearing and performance in general has stabilised.

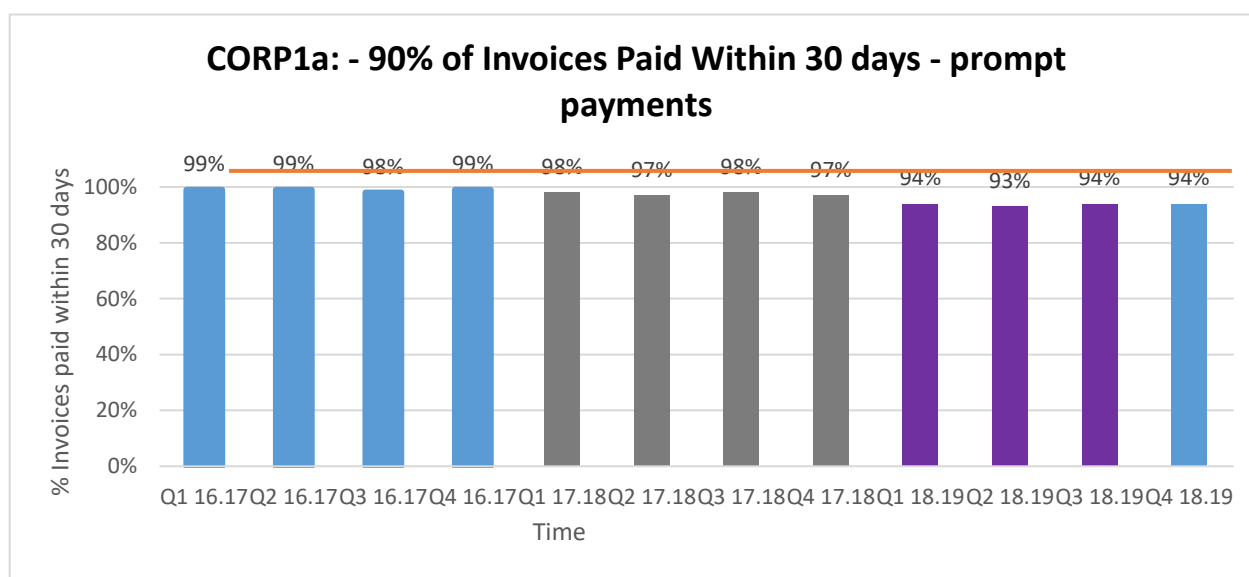
Council performance in 2018/19 averaged at 94% over the year, slightly down from the previous year's figure of 98% and 99% in 2016/17 (refer to figure 7.2.1 and 7.2.2). There were 18,838 invoices received and 17,127 invoices paid within the 30-day target during 2018/19. This was well over Council's own target of achieving 90% payment within 30 days.

When we compare our prompt payment averages with other Councils (refer to figure 7.2.3) - this means that during 2018/19 Mid Ulster Council out of all 11 Councils was the fastest, in the average number of days taken to pay suppliers during the year, standing at 10 days. Fermanagh and Omagh averaged 12 days to pay suppliers, while Derry City and Strabane Council took just over 26 average number of days to pay suppliers during the year (refer to figure 7.2.3) - data supplied by the Department of Communities.

**Figure 7.2.1 Self –Assessment of Prompt Payment by Mid Ulster (Invoices Paid within 30 days)**

Self -Imposed Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2018/19
% of invoices paid within 30 days	95%	99%	98%	94%

**Figure 7.2.1: Mid Ulster District Council's Prompt Payment (Invoices Paid within 30 days) Performance 2016/17 to 2018/19.**



**Figure 7.2.3 - Data summarising DfC Quarterly Prompt Payment Reports**

Data summarising DfC Quarterly Prompt Payment Reports

Council Name	15/16			16/17			17/18		
	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	11,435	17,180	6,444	13,433	22,573	4,546	18,320	22,505	3,772
Ards and North Down Borough Council	6,931	13,731	8,194	10,657	18,347	4,134	9,575	17,478	4,047
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	3,000	17,656	7,376	6,611	21,555	8,057	5,200	18,352	12,282
Belfast City Council	44,240	52,231	9,592	43,898	53,600	7,492	39,355	51,403	6,916
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	10,219	18,403	4,022	11,314	21,624	3,923	11,964	23,430	5,056
Derry City and Strabane District Council	9,049	19,585	6,078	8,234	18,024	6,070	12,584	18,163	4,005
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	8,836	13,900	2,679	9,914	16,487	2,395	10,692	15,935	2,367
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	10,204	18,651	3,405	10,742	20,383	4,869	11,864	20,685	6,440
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	12,491	21,517	3,690	12,227	22,563	3,050	8,597	21,194	4,015
<b>Mid Ulster District Council</b>	<b>10,714</b>	<b>15,785</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>15,979</b>	<b>18,554</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>16,676</b>	<b>19,275</b>	<b>469</b>
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	1,967	14,443	7,527	2,081	19,086	3,214	1,979	21,554	3,653
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,086</b>	<b>223,082</b>	<b>59,228</b>	<b>145,090</b>	<b>252,796</b>	<b>48,021</b>	<b>146,806</b>	<b>249,974</b>	<b>53,022</b>
			<b>282,310</b>			<b>300,817</b>			<b>302,996</b>
					<b>within 10 days</b>	<b>within 30 days</b>	<b>outside 30 days</b>		

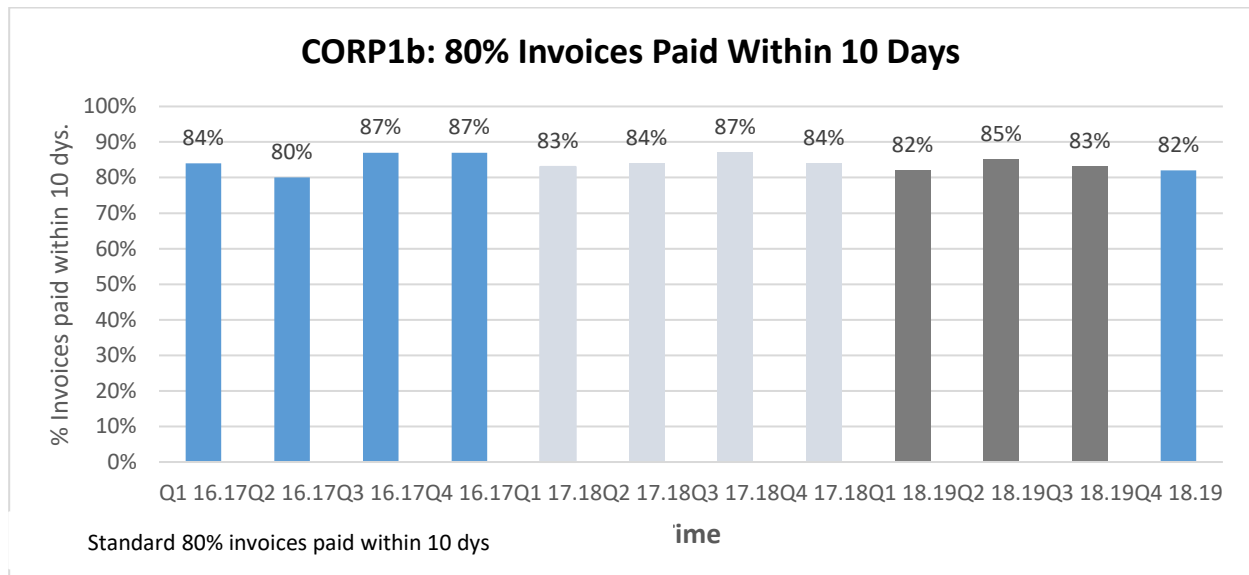
<b>15/16</b>	45.72%	33.30%	20.98%
<b>16/17</b>	48.23%	35.80%	15.96%
<b>17/18</b>	48.45%	34.05%	17.50%

Source: Unaudited data from Department for Communities quarterly publications

With regard to prompt payments made within 10 days by Council in 2018/19, Council has introduced a new system and new way of working which continued to bed down during the

year. The Finance team completed further work to reduce number of invoices not auto clearing and performance in general then stabilised. In the last quarter of 2018/19 the level of performance has decreased marginally from 83% to 82%, remained in excess of 80% target (refer to figure 7.2.4).

**Figure 7.2.1: Mid Ulster District Council's Prompt Payment (Invoices Paid within 10 days) Performance 2016/17 to 2018/19.**



### 7.3 Mid Ulster District Council's Freedom of Information Requests

The Council has set an indicator and associated standard as "set by us" within the Corporate Improvement Plan to measure business efficiencies in processing information requests, made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 <sup>1</sup>. The Council must respond to requestors making such requests within 20 working days of receiving them, (a target of 90% of information requests being responded to with 20 days has been set by Council). The indicator whilst only measuring a single routine business activity, it will nonetheless give an indication of its responsiveness to customers and effectiveness of its corporate processes. The MUDC Publication Scheme lists the range of information we proactively make available without the need for specific FOI requests. It also gives details of how the information can be obtained and any charges. An outcome for citizens in relation to FOI indicator and standard makes it easier for members of the public to get information about the Council (is an accepted part of the democratic landscape).<sup>1</sup> Full text of the [FOI Act: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents)

The measure is needed to ensure that Council meets its statutory obligations and customer requests are met within a specified timeframes. It also ensures that the Council is potentially locked into a positive cycle of use, learning and improvement, in which the request process and appeal system improve and the exemptions are clarified through interpretation.

An outcome for citizens in relation to FOI indicator and standard makes it easier (regarding transparency) for members of the public to get information about the Council in a timely manner.

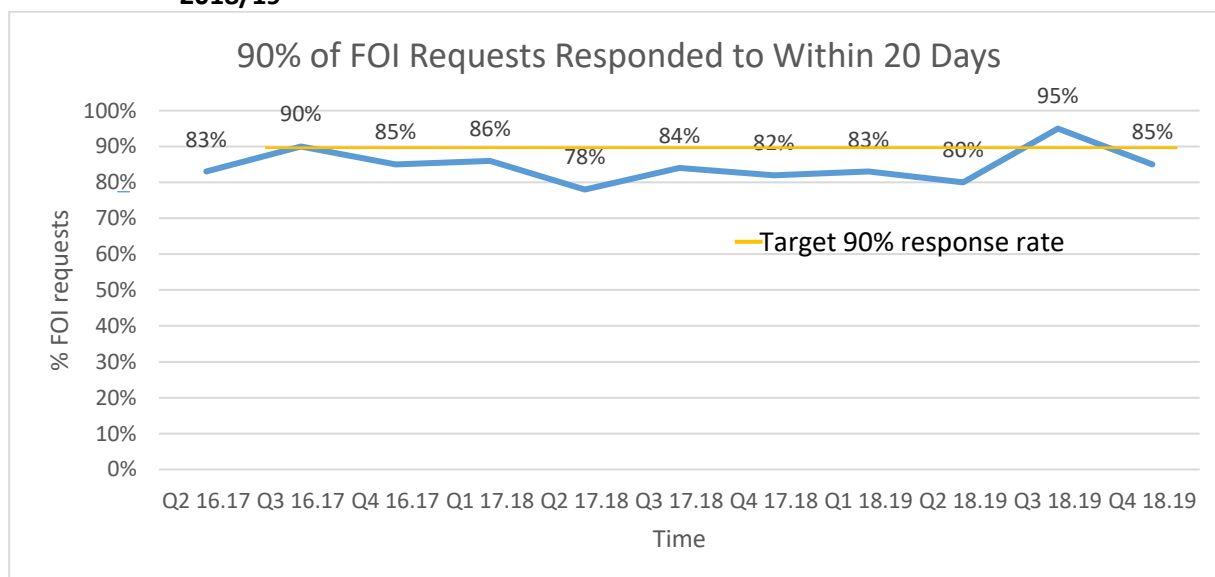
#### 7.3.1 Mid Ulster District Council's Freedom of Information (Fol) Request from 2016/17 to 2018/19

The Council has set a target of 90% of information requests are responded to within 20 days. In summary, the number of FOI requests continue to rise year on year from Council's establishment in 2015 (refer to figures 7.3.1 and 7.3.2). The Council attained a cumulative year end figure of 86%. Whilst the standard was not attained (falling short by 4%) it has been improved upon from 2017-18 - and this has been achieved with an increase of 121 on the previous year (a rise of 23%).

At year end the number of FOI's being received by Council has increased by 23% when compared to 2017-18. The number received is up by 121 to 536. Although the percentage number of those responded to within 20 days received in the Quarter 4 is down on Quarter 3 from 95% to 85% the overall year-end percentage of FOI requests responded to within 20 days is up from 83% to 86% throughout the 2018-2019 period. There has been an improvement on last year's attainment even though the council has processed an additional 121 FOI requests this year.

Comparison with last year same reporting period: In summary; the number of requests received has increased by 121 from last year; the number of requests responded to within 20 days has increased by 3%; and improvements continue to be made within existing resource

**Figure 7.3.1 Mid Ulster District Council's FOI Requests Responded to within 20 days 2016/17 to 2018/19**



**Figure 7.3.2 Self-Assessment of the % of Council's FOI requests responded to within 20 days**

Self -Imposed Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2018/19
% of FOI Requests Responded to Within 20 Days	90%	83%	82.5%	86%

## 7.4

### Mid Ulster District Councils % Lost time rate (Absenteeism)

The Council has set an indicator and associated standard as “set by us” within the Corporate Improvement Plan, in order to look at the effectiveness of the HR function in terms of impact on the overall levels of sickness absence in the organisation through the development of processes and procedures, and training for managers. As an organisation, we should aim to reduce the number of days lost through sickness absence over time.

The Chartered Institute Of Personnel Management<sup>1</sup> state that tightened policies for reviewing attendance and improved absence monitoring are, by some degree, identified as the two of the most important reasons behind reductions in absence levels. Policies and procedures if carefully considered and adapted can positively impact on the prevention of illness, management and recovery of employees within the workplace. Policies mean that practices become more formalised and hence controllable. The purpose of absence policies is to ensure compliance with legislation and those employees and managers know their basic rights, and those of the people they manage.

An outcome for citizens in relation to Lost Time Rate indicator and standard is that Sickness absence in the public sector is widely regarded as being a significant cost to councils. This indicator is important because it allows councils to compare these rates and establishes which councils are dealing effectively with this issue.

In 2015/16, we set an internal performance indicator of achieving a target absence (loss time rate) of 5% or less for, this target continued into 2016/17 and 2017/18. The indicator has been tracked since 2015/16 and as a new Council; Organisational Development (OD) had to deal with three distinct data information sets, policies, processes and procedures in relation to collecting, collating, managing and reporting absence/attendance performance data/information. During the 2016/17 year, a lot of concentrated effort was made to bring together the legacy councils absence information in order to set about a fit for purpose, robust bespoke policy and process/framework for the new Council.

<sup>1</sup> Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (2007) Measuring, Reporting and Costing Absence. CIPD

This year we have been asked by the Department of Communities\*\* to benchmark absenteeism data amongst all eleven Northern Ireland Councils and this is discussed in the following sections. The information relating to the other eleven Councils derives from the Northern Ireland Audit Office Annual Report

#### 7.4.1 Mid Ulster District Council's Lost Time Rate Due to Sickness Absence (5% or less p.a.) from 2016/17 to 2018/19

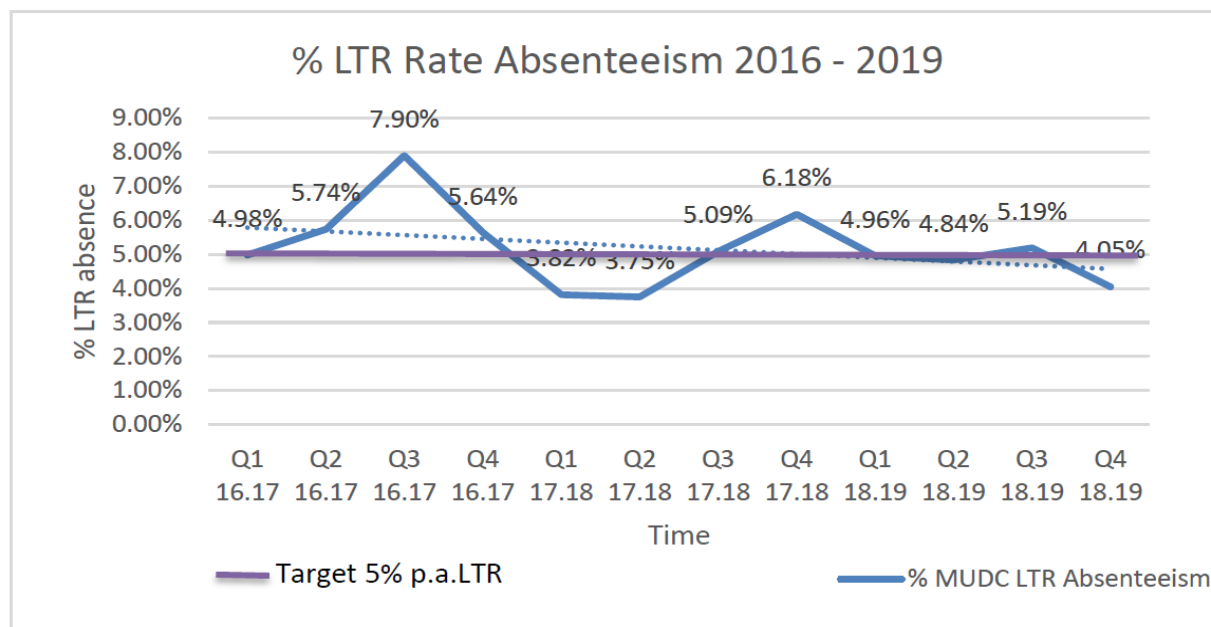
The cumulative Percentage Loss Rate for the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 is 4.76 and 0.24% below the target rate of 5% set by Council. For the same period last in 17/18 the cumulative Percentage Loss Rate was 4.71, the figures remain fairly constant for both years (refer to figures 7.4.1 and 7.4.2).

In terms of short-term absence, the most significant variance from 17/18 to 18/19 was due to "Stomach, Liver, Kidney" which increased by 6.24% from 5.6% (17/18) to 11.84% (18/19). Absence of this nature can be difficult to forecast with limited preventative measures, however line managers are expected to maintain regular contact with employees, which in turn should reduce the number of days absent going forward.

Mental health related absence remains the number one reason and accounts for almost 25% of all sickness absence. We have introduced several intervention mechanisms; firstly, we have implemented a coaching service to support our standard counselling already in place and have received encouraging positive feedback from staff. We have appointed and trained 12 Mental Health First aiders who now act as points of contacts throughout the council giving advice and signposting where appropriate.

In order to maintain/reduce our absence levels moving forward into 19/20 we have identified aligning all legacy managing attendance policies on to one new Mid Ulster Council Managing Attendance policy in conjunction with Trade Unions. We also propose to review the new policy to ensure it is effective and fit for purpose. This coincides with a review exercise, which we plan to complete within the next financial year to identify strengths/weaknesses. This should entail in part conducting process mapping exercises in relation to our attendance management, further data cleansing, and data mining as this will assist with the introduction of an electronic HR management system due to go live in 2020/21.

#### 7.4.1 Mid Ulster District Council's % Lost Time Rate (Absence) from April 2016 to March 2018



**Figure 7.4.2 Self-Assessment of the % of Lost Time Rate (Absence)**

Self-Imposed Indicator	Standard/Target	Actual Standard Achieved 2016/17	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18	Actual Standard Achieved 2017/18
% Lost Time Rate Absence	=< 5% p.a.	6.07%	4.71%	4.76%

#### 7.5 Benchmarking Absenteeism among the Northern Ireland Councils

Mid Ulster District Council, and Derry & Strabane Council have managed to reduce down the number of average days lost due to sickness absence from above the NI average to below it. Mid Ulster District Council has significantly reduced their long-term sickness absenteeism average (number of days lost) rate by 3.3 days in 2017/18 from the previous year; (refer to figure 7.5.1).

Three Councils have managed over the last three consecutive years from 2015 - 2018 to remain below the annual NI average number of days lost due to sickness absence (Antrim & Newtownabbey, Belfast City Council, and Omagh & Fermanagh).

**Figure 7.5.1 Average Annual Lost Days Rate Northern Ireland Councils 2015 to 2018 (Less is Better)**

Council	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
	Less is Better		
Antrim & Newtownabbey	12.12	14.4	11.9
Mid Ulster	12.6	15.7	12.4
Fermanagh & Omagh	11.37	12.8	12.9
Belfast City	10.3	12.4	13.7
Derry & Strabane	17	14.9	14.0
Causeway Coast and Glens	14.56	15.9	15.8
Armagh/Banbridge/Craigavon	14.16	13.1	16.1
Ards North Down	16.37	14.6	16.2
Lisburn & Castlereagh	13.6	15.0	16.7
Mid East Antrim	15.22	18.3	17.1
Newry Mourne & Down	15.94	17.3	17.1
Average	13.93	14.94	14.89

	Below Northern Ireland Annual Average
	Above Northern Ireland Annual Average

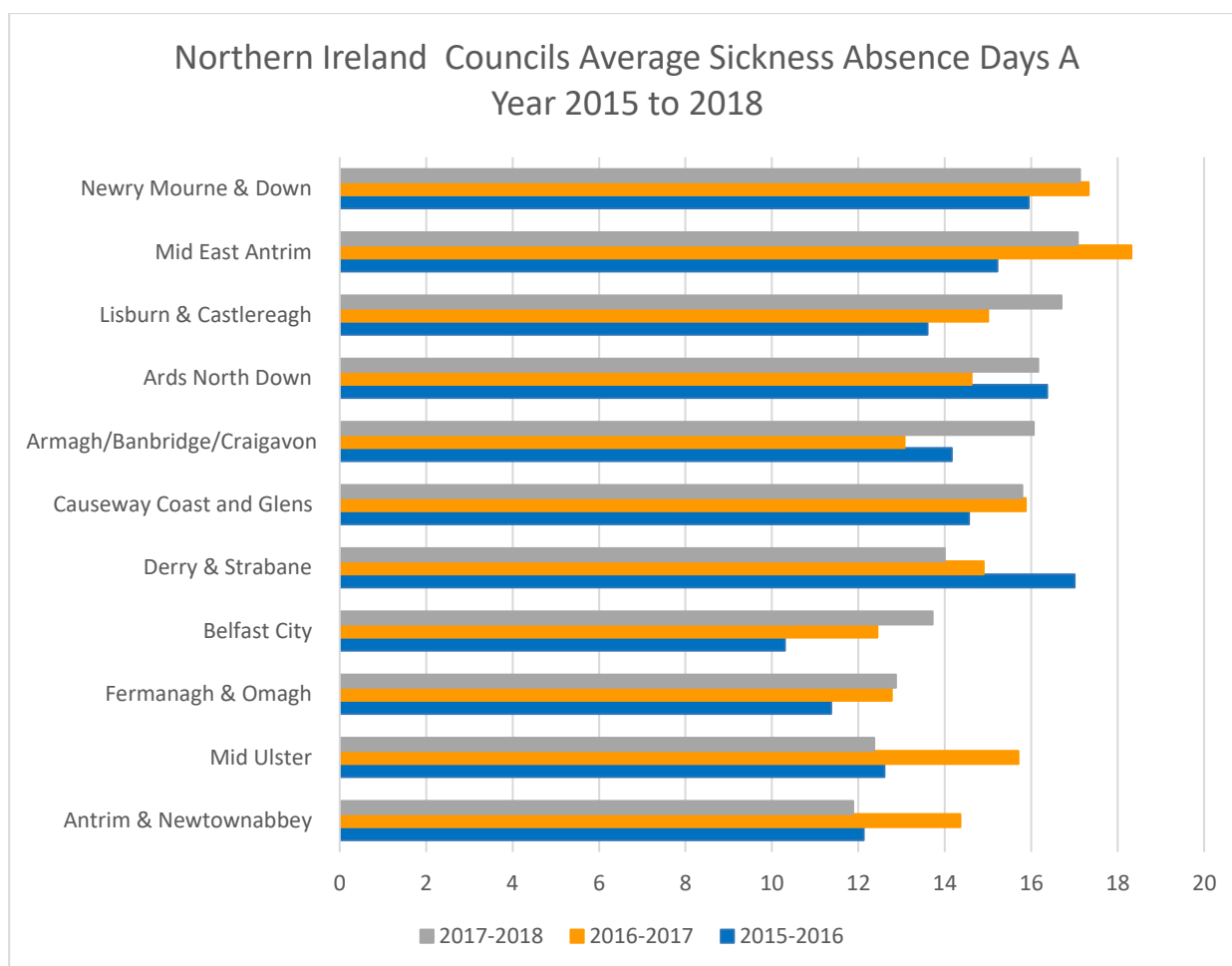
**\*\* Figures supplied by the Department of Communities forwarded by the NIAO**

Belfast City Council and Fermanagh and Omagh, while under the NI average as a year on year trend, their average annual lost days rates have increased from 2015-16 through to 2017-18 – (refer to figure 7.5.2). Ards and North Down had reduced their average number of days in 2016-17 from the previous year; however, their figures went above the average in 2017-18.

Mid Ulster was also well below the Northern Ireland Council average of 11.27 days for long-term absenteeism with a figure of 8.1 days down from the MUDC Council figure of 11.4 days in the previous year 2016-17 (refer to figure 7.5.3).

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council saw the largest increase in long-term absenteeism in 2017-18 from the previous year, at an increase of 2.6 days. Councils who managed to reduce there long term sickness absence demonstrate a reduction in the overall sickness absenteeism rate (number of average days lost

**Figure 7.5.2 Northern Ireland Councils Average Annual Sickness Absence Days p.a. from 2015 to 2018**



**Figure 7.5.3 NI Councils Long Term Absenteeism Split of Average Annual Days Lost p.a.2016 to 2018**

	2016-17	2017-18
Council	Long-term absenteeism	Long-term absenteeism
Antrim & Newtownabbey	11.8	8.89
Ards & North Down	10.88	12.16
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	9.62	12.22
Belfast City	8.09	8.81
Causeway Coast & Glens	13.32	12.92
Derry City & Strabane	12.92	11.3
Fermanagh & Omagh	9.09	8.88
Lisburn & Castlereagh	12.85	14.2
Mid East Antrim	14.68	13.96
Mid Ulster	11.4	8.1
Newry, Mourne & Down	13.04	12.58
<b>Average sickness absence</b>	<b>11.60</b>	<b>11.27</b>

Mid-East Antrim Council, although it did not reduce its long-term sickness absence, was one of only two Councils, (Mid Ulster District Council was the other Council), who managed to reduce their short-term



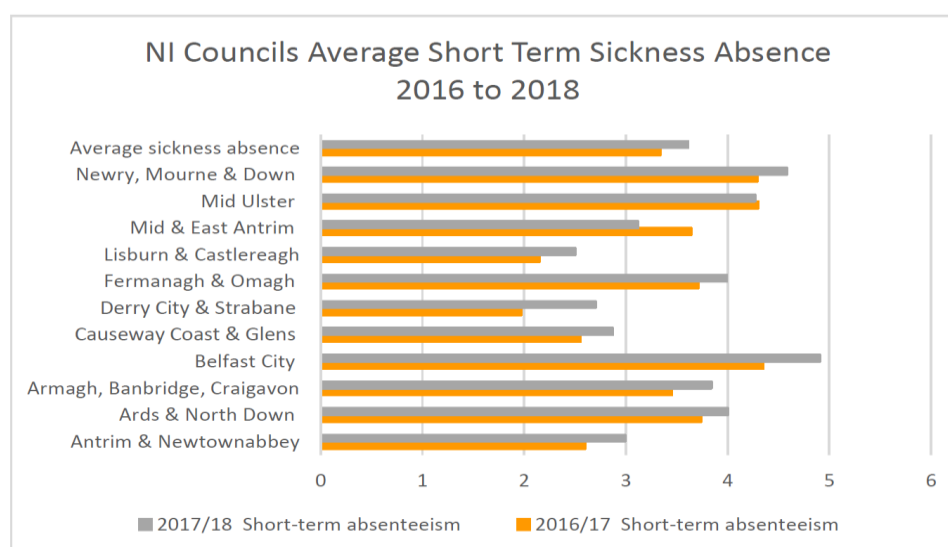
sickness absence over a two year period (2016-17 to 2017-18). This had a slight impact on decreasing their annual average number of sickness absence days lost (refer to figure 7.5.4).

**Figure 7.5.4 NI Councils Short Term Absenteeism Split of Average Annual Days Lost p.a. 2016- 2018**

Year	2016/17	2017/18
Councils	Short Term Absenteeism	Short Term Absenteeism
<i>Ards &amp; North Down</i>	3.74	4
<i>Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon</i>	3.45	3.84
<i>Belfast City</i>	4.35	4.91
<i>Causeway Coast &amp; Glens</i>	2.55	2.87
<i>Derry City &amp; Strabane</i>	1.97	2.7
<i>Fermanagh &amp; Omagh</i>	3.71	3.99
<i>Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh</i>	2.15	2.5
<i>Mid &amp; East Antrim</i>	3.64	3.12
<i>Mid Ulster</i>	4.3	4.27
<i>Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</i>	4.29	4.58
<b>Average sickness absence</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>3.61</b>

Moving forward Mid Ulster District Council can look to manage their short term sickness absence (4.3 days in 2016-17 and 4.27 days in 2017-18) in order to reduce the overall sickness absence rate further, as this continues to remain above the NI average for both 2016-17 (NI average 3.34 days) and 2017-18 (NI average 3.61 days), refer to figure 7.5.5. The Council should also keep the management of long-term sickness absence under review.

**Figure 7.5.5 NI Councils Average Short Term Sickness Absence 2016 – 2018.**



Mid Ulster District Council has moved down one rank order number in relation to its average short term sickness absence (number of lost days) from 2016-17 to 2017-18 (i.e. from 10 to 9) from 4.3 days in 2016-17 to 4.27 in 2017-18 (a reduction 0.03 days).

Ards & North Down, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon, Belfast City Council and Lisburn & Castlereagh from 2016-17 to 2017-18 have seen an increase in both their long-term and short-term sickness absence rates. Short-term sickness absence has increased slightly from the NI Council's average in 2016/17 figure

of 3.34 to the figure of 3.61 in 2017/18, while the obverse is true of the long-term NI average sickness absence rate, which dropped from 11.6 days in 2016/17 to 11.27 days in 2017/18.

## **8.0 OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR 2018 to 2019**

### **Overall Assessment for 2018-19**

For most of us, the first term of the Council has gone by at considerable speed, and as our focus is so often concentrated on the future, we often fail to take time to pause, look back and consider what has gone before. This review report does just that, documenting the highlights regarding improvement in the past year. Significant progress was made in 2018-19 to not only make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of council's functions as required by the Act but activities and associated programmes of work have also been completed to deliver improvements on how services are accessed and delivered throughout the district.

Achievements have been made across council service areas with the delivery of activities stemming from the council's 2017-18 to 2018-19 Improvement Objectives for the benefit of those receiving its services. Our priorities have been diverse and far-reaching as the District we serve, spanning the economy, health and well-being, availing customers of 24/7 on-line services and the environment. From the beginning, Mid Ulster District Council's vision has been clearly articulated; to be at the heart of the community. In the four years which have followed, we have continued to make considerable change, not just for our people, but in our policies, our processes and procedures, all with the aim of building a more efficient and effective organisation better able to meet the needs of the people of Mid Ulster

All project managed improvement activities and measures (year end there were 43 improvement activities and 32 measures in total), which have contributed towards the fulfilment of the council's 2018-19 Improvement Objectives, have been achieved to varying levels of progress with the majority (100%) being Fully Achieved/Substantially Achieved. Council has also made significant improvements in its self-imposed indicator set and has been able to reduce the amount of absenteeism to under its target of 5%, while our prompt payment performance exceeds the target for a third year in a row. The Freedom of Information indicator has remains steady in its third year against significant rises in the volume of FOI requests to Council.

The Council has also remained stable in the delivery of its Statutory Performance Indicators during its fourth year as a new local authority for the benefit of Mid Ulster District, where we have not achieved our targets we have made plans to bring activities back on track, with a re-focus of achieving standards set. Council is one of the top performing councils in the management of its waste against targets and continues to establish the Planning function within the district for customers.

## **9.0 HAVE YOUR SAY**

**We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of year**

Mid Ulster District Council is committed to improving its services and is keen to hear from the community on what it has to say. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year. There are a number of ways in which to influence Council decision-making.

You can get involved and participate in consultations being conducted by, or on behalf of the Council. Meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to the public, with the exception of those times when sensitive or confidential issues need to be discussed.

If you have any comments, would like any further information, or would like a copy of this plan in an alternative format please contact

**Democratic Services Team**

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		Appendix One – Corporate health Indications				QUARTER TWO 2018/19 (Cumulative total Q1 and Q2)	QUARTER THREE 2018/19 (Cumulative total Q1, Q2 & Q3)	QUARTER FOUR 2018/19 (Cumulative Q1, Q2, Q3 & Q4)	Commentary
Measures		Target/Standard 2018-2019	Reporting (Calculating) Officer	Responsible Lead Service	QUARTER ONE 2018/19 ( total Q1)				
1.0 Economy									
1.1	No. of jobs promoted	210	Director, Business & Communities	Economic Development	38	79	135	204	Q4 stats are unvalidated at this stage  Q4 stats are unvalidated at this stage  The % response to Building Regulation Applications so 90.5% for domestic applications and 91.5% for non-domestic applications for 2018/19
1.2	Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	15 weeks	Planning Manager	Planning: Development Management	18.1	16.8	17.8	16.9	
1.3	Average processing time for major planning applications (weeks)	30 weeks	Planning Manager	Planning: Development Management	135.6	58	68.4	64.7	
1.4	% building regulations applications determined to target	90%	Director, Public Health & Infrastructure	Building Control	81%	85%	88%	90%	
2.0 Waste Management									
2.1	% of household waste going to landfill	35%	Director, Environment & Property	Environmental Services	22.33%	21.21%	Q3 14.48% (provisional)	Not Available	
2.2	% of household waste recycled	50%	Director, Environment & Property	Environmental Services	59.73%	56.38%	Q3 56.26% (provisional)	Not Available	
3.0 Council Facilities									
3.1	Visitors to arts/cultural venues	baseline year	Director, Business & Communities	Arts & Culture	28,097	50,951	92,432	120, 247	
3.2	Users of leisure and recreation facilities	baseline year	Director, Leisure & Outdoor Recreation	Leisure	561,470	870,464	1,442,496	2,230,312	
3.3	Visitors to council offices	baseline year	Director, Organisational Development	Human Resources	Not available	Not available	Not Available	Not Available	
3.4	No. of RIDDOR incidents	baseline year	Director, Public Health & Infrastructure	Health & Safety	1	9	9	11	
4.0 Better Responses									
4.1	Fol requests responded to within target	90%	Head, Democratic Services	Democratic Services	91%	83%	86%	86%	
4.2	Complaints dealt with within target	90%	Head, Democratic Services	Chief Executive's Office	not yet available	91%	non return	non return	
4.3	Correspondence responded to within target	90%	Head, Democratic Services	Chief Executive's Office	not yet available	not yet available	not yet available	not yet available	
4.4	No. of online transactions	baseline year	Director, Finance	ICT	2,072	4,201	4,830	5,552	
5.0 Resident Satisfaction									

5.1	% of residents content with our services	80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	A district wide survey is required for this indicator to be reported on
5.2	% of residents agree that council keeps them informed	80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	A district wide survey is required for this indicator to be reported on
5.3	% of residents agree that council listens and acts on concerns	80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	A district wide survey is required for this indicator to be reported on
5.4	No. of organisations receiving Grant Aid	baseline year	Director, Business & Communities	Community Development	0	47	350	800	
<b>6.0 Staffing</b>		baseline year	Director, Organisational Development	Human Resources					
6.1	Number of Staff (FTEs) on payroll	baseline year	Director, Organisational Development	Human Resources	707.31	720.33	709.58	713.3	
6.2	Number of Casual Staff employed in past 12 months		Director, Organisational Development	Human Resources	0	50	68	70	
6.3	% Attendance	95%	Director, Organisational Development	Human Resources	95.04%	95.09%	95.01%	95.24%	
6.4	% Overtime	2.5%	Director, Finance	Finance	1.84%	1.89%	*1.77% / 2.07%	1.66%	figure of 1.66% excludes holiday entitlement paid in Q3 on regular over-time of £59.4k
<b>7.0 Engaged Workforce</b>		80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications	60.95%	60.95%	60.95%	60.95%	
7.1	% of workforce satisfied with current job	80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications	79.48%	79.48%	79.48%	79.48%	
7.2	% of workforce who take pride in working for Mid Ulster District Council	80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications	69.91%	69.91%	69.91%	69.91%	
7.3	% of workforce who understand council's priorities and how they contribute to them	80%	Head, Marketing & Communications	Marketing & Communications					
<b>8.0 Finances</b>		baseline year	Director, Finance	Finance	7,381,213	7,054,928	7,054,928	6,746,933	
8.1	Loans Outstanding	£10m	Director, Finance	Finance	7,410,932	5,704,195	14,259,361	13,029,169	
8.2	Cash Reserves	90%	Director, Finance	Finance	94%	93%	93%	94%	
8.3	Invoices paid within 30 Days								

