

Report on	Performance Improvement Annual Self- Assessment Report 2021-2022: General Duty to Improve
Date of Meeting	8 th of September 2022
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Assistant Director - Org. Development, Strategy and Performance
Contact Officer	L Jenkins, Performance & Quality Officer

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform members on the progress made towards discharging its General Duty to Improve under Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) act 2014 by way of an annual self-assessment report 2021 to 2022.
2.0	Background
	Council Discharging Duties under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014
2.1	Council has a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement and to account for it under the 2014 Local Government (NI) Act. The purpose of this report is to present a summary of Council performance at the end of year 2021/22, based on statutory performance indicators, outlined in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, as well Corporate Health Indicators.
2.2	The annual assessment report includes progress made against Council's annual performance improvement plan (PIP). This plan is published each year before the 30 th of June to comply with Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 (hereby referred to as The Act). An annual assessment report is also undertaken to comply with the Act and provides a retrospective review of the work Council had undertaken to improve its services (i.e. Annual Assessment Report). The annual assessment complies with departmental guidance under the Act and is published before the 30 th of September each year. This annual assessment report for 2021/22 is attached in Appendix One.

2.3	Our work is scrutinised by the Northern Ireland Audit Office to ensure we use public money effectively to deliver benefits to our communities. Council has ensured that this annual report presents progress and performance for the year in a fair and balanced way. Where our services and activity continue to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, this has been highlighted within the report.
3.0	Main Report
	<p>Council's Annual Overall Assessment of Performance 2021 to 2022</p> <p>3.1 During 2021 to 2022, many Council services operated as normal with services embracing hybrid working to ensure the delivery of our services. As a result of the continuing restrictions in response to Covid-19, 2021/22 was again a year with large variations across communities. Services were also operating at different levels, with many opening at reduced capacity in adherence to Government Guidance in respect of legislative restrictions, which were continually reviewed and approved by the Northern Ireland Executive during 2021/22.</p> <p>3.2 As a result, comparative changes in indicator values within this year's annual assessment when compared to results from previous years should be taken in this context, given the impact and extenuating circumstances of the pandemic.</p> <p>Corporate Health Indicators</p> <p>3.3 The Council continues to perform well across many of the Corporate Health and Service indicators in what has been again another challenging year. In the remaining areas where there is scope for building on levels of performance, services are assessing targets as part of plans for re-building. Departments will continue to closely monitor progress and take appropriate action.</p> <p>3.4 Some targets could not be set for some of the Corporate Health Indicators for the year 2021-22 and indicator values would be viewed as continuing to establish baselines and reset for the period 2022-23 moving forward; regarding recovery and building out of the pandemic, while working towards achieving previous performance levels, particularly in areas where our services continued for some time during the year to be impacted by the restrictions of Covid.</p> <p>Statutory Performance Indicators, Prompt Payments and Absenteeism</p> <p>3.5 In relation to the statutory jobs promoted target, resulting in 163 jobs in Mid Ulster during 2021 to 2022, this slightly exceeded the EU Programme target of 158 jobs promoted, but not the statutory target (set in 2015 at 210 jobs promoted p.a.) and</p>

	<p>is up from last year's total of 132 jobs promoted in 2020 to 2021. Had the proposed new amended standard of 153 jobs promoted been in place in year (arising from new legislation), the target would have been achieved.</p>
3.6	<p>Mid Ulster's planning performance measures saw the pandemic continue to have an impact on planning activity/processing, similarly to other Councils. This was also re-iterated from regular feedback received by the Department from planning authorities. In addition, the planning portal was temporarily inaccessible to planning staff for periods during January and February 2022 which was likely to have impacted processing capabilities, and again caution should be used when comparing with other time periods. Council utilised the latter part of 2021/22 to configure the new Mid Ulster planning portal, which went live on the 22nd of June. The remaining 10 Councils expect their collaborative system to be implemented in Autumn 2022.</p>
3.7	<p>In referring to the corporate indicators which the Department for Communities advised that councils should benchmark against. Council continued to achieve robust performance results across areas, including maintaining excellent household recycling rates and remains a local government leader in ensuring prompt payments to suppliers of works and or services.</p>
3.8	<p>While sickness absence figures rose in 2021/22, in relation to the previous year's figures, it must be remembered that during 2020/21 large swathes of service provision was closed, staff furloughed, and vulnerable staff were shielding. The legacy of Covid has impacted our staff in relation to waiting lists for various conditions and again caution should be applied when comparing successive year's performance measures.</p>
	<p>Councils Four Improvement Projects</p>
3.9	<p>The four improvement projects within the two-year Performance Improvement Plan 2021/22 to 2022/23 have made steady progress against the completion of activities and associated measures within the first year. The project achievements were made against the backdrop of the continuing challenges faced due to the ebbs and flows of the pandemic's transmission rates and the associated changing legislative requirements placed on Council services and the wider community.</p>
3.10	<p>The Capital improvement project made steady progress against the capital programme, however due to the Council re-structure, Senior Management has sought more development time in relation to the development of new capital programmes procedural guidance and any associated learning and development programmes which was part of this area of work. This has not delayed the delivery of our wider capital programme.</p>

4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
4.2	<u>Screening & Impact Statements</u>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That members' review, note and comment as appropriate on the council's attainment as to performance reported on within its Annual Self-Assessment Report 2021 to 2022, under Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix One : Mid Ulster District Council's Annual Assessment Report 2021-22