



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

*Marketing & Communications  
Service  
Chief Executive's Office*

**SERVICE PLAN - 2019 / 20**

Date

Consulted within staff team

12/02/2019

Discussed & signed off by Director

/ / 2019

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## **1.0 OVERALL PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SERVICE**

### **1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Service**

Working strategically, as well as across departments and services, the service develops and delivers effective external and internal marketing and communications activity which supports the Council's vision, values and strategic direction.

### **1.2 Responsibilities**

The Marketing and Communications service is responsible for:

- The development, coordination and delivery of external marketing and communications activity, working with different council services and functions to contribute to the achievement of their objectives through positioning, messaging and planned, targeted promotional activity across a range of platforms.
- The development of systems and activities to support effective internal communications, in conjunction with the Organisational Development Department.
- The management of proactive and reactive media relations, including acting as the first point of contact for all media enquiries, advising on appropriate responses, identifying potential issues and monitoring impact.
- The provision of an internal graphic design service which ensures the Council's branding is properly applied.
- The development and content management of digital platforms (web and social media).
- The provision of communications support to elected members, specifically the Chair, Deputy Chair and Committee Chairs.

### **1.3 Customers & Stakeholders**

<b>Customers &amp; Stakeholders</b>
• Elected Members
• SMT & Heads of Service
• Council staff
• Mid Ulster District Residents
• Media
• Local community groups, traders groups, businesses and visitors.

### **1.4 Performance Overview in 2018/19**

The following table provides a progress summary and the impact made by last years' Service Plan (2018-2019). It also details key successes, a summary of the end of year progress, remaining challenges for the Service and how it made a difference.

## 2018/19 Performance Overview

- In 2018-2019, the service continued to contribute directly to all 4 of the Council's Corporate Improvement Objectives. However, of particular note was the implementation of an integrated, omni-channel recycling campaign 'Mid Ulster Recycling Heroes' which began in September 2018 and continued to year-end.
- Formal evaluation of the campaign was undertaken with key results below:
  - Media coverage secured resulted in a Mean Advertising Value Equivalent of £25,073.10.
  - 170 social media posts (Facebook and Twitter combined) had a reach of 293,809, engagement of 36,877 and video views of 3,747.
  - 3,140 page views of the recycling hero page web page which became the most visited page on the Council's web site in October and November 2018 overtaking the leisure pages for the first time.
  - Over 1,700 people have taken the online quiz.
  - Almost 420 recycling stories have been submitted.

In the first 3 months of the campaign (October – December 2018), analysis of recycling rates and waste composition when compared with the previous quarter (July – September 2018) showed:

- 1% reduction in contamination rate of blue bin material
  - a 130 tonne increase in blue bin tonnage with;
  - a 540 tonne reduction in domestic household collected black bin waste
  - a specific increase in the dry recycling rate (i.e. material in blue bins) of 4.22%
  - an overall increase in our household recycling rate from quarter 2 to quarter 3 – the first occasion when this has ever happened.
- Supporting CIO4, and also the on-going leisure review process, has been the development of a new Leisure Marketing Strategy and a new Parks Marketing Strategy. Both strategies use empirical data, industry evidence and customer insight to recommend a series of marketing objectives which focus on building market share and enhancing customer experience.
- The service's digital first approach has been further embedded in 2018-2019, reducing print requirements, encouraging internal clients to consider digital before traditional methods and actively demonstrating how the use of digital tactics, principally video, can make significant impacts on reach, engagement and reputation.
  - Digital communications is now integrated into every aspect of the service's work, particularly in support of event marketing and campaign implementation.
  - The year also saw significant work towards the development of new web site for the Council. Significant emphasis has been placed on the look and navigability of the site in mobile responsive mode, as close to 70% of people accessing the site do so from a mobile device.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Web review workshops have been held with a number of services including, arts, tourism, parks, leisure and economic development, focussing on web content reflecting the customer needs rather than departmental or service structures, while digital skills development has been ongoing via a training sessions and workshops.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new Marketing &amp; Communications Strategy 2018-2010 was also developed and agreed during the year. This strategy introduces a new dimension to the service's work, aiming to convey the sense, ethos and ambition of the Council using a series of corporate narratives to tell the Council's 'big story'. It also confirms commitment to the adoption and use of an evidence-based, customer-focussed approach to marketing and communications which demonstrates excellence and value for money.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal evaluation continues to take place for campaign and event work, demonstrating successes and where the service added value, as well as identifying areas for improvement.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media relations continues to be an extremely busy element of the service's core work and in 2018-2019 the service responded to 391 media enquiries. This aspect of the service is also highly rated by journalists for speed and quality of responses. Progress continues to be made in terms of identifying and greater anticipation and planning for potentially negative issues has aided the control of stories from the outset.</li> </ul>	
<b>2018/19 Performance Overview</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Completed/Commenced/Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop and deliver annual marketing action plans for key services.</li> </ul>	Completed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To embed a digital first approach to customer engagement and communication.</li> </ul>	Work has been on-going throughout the year and substantial progress made. The 2019-2020 objective to develop a digital strategy will see this approach formalised corporately.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To lead the development of appropriate marketing and communications strategies for leisure and outdoor recreation.</li> </ul>	Completed with on-going implementation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support Environmental Services to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill through the development and delivery of an integrated communications campaign for 2018-2019.</li> </ul>	Completed.

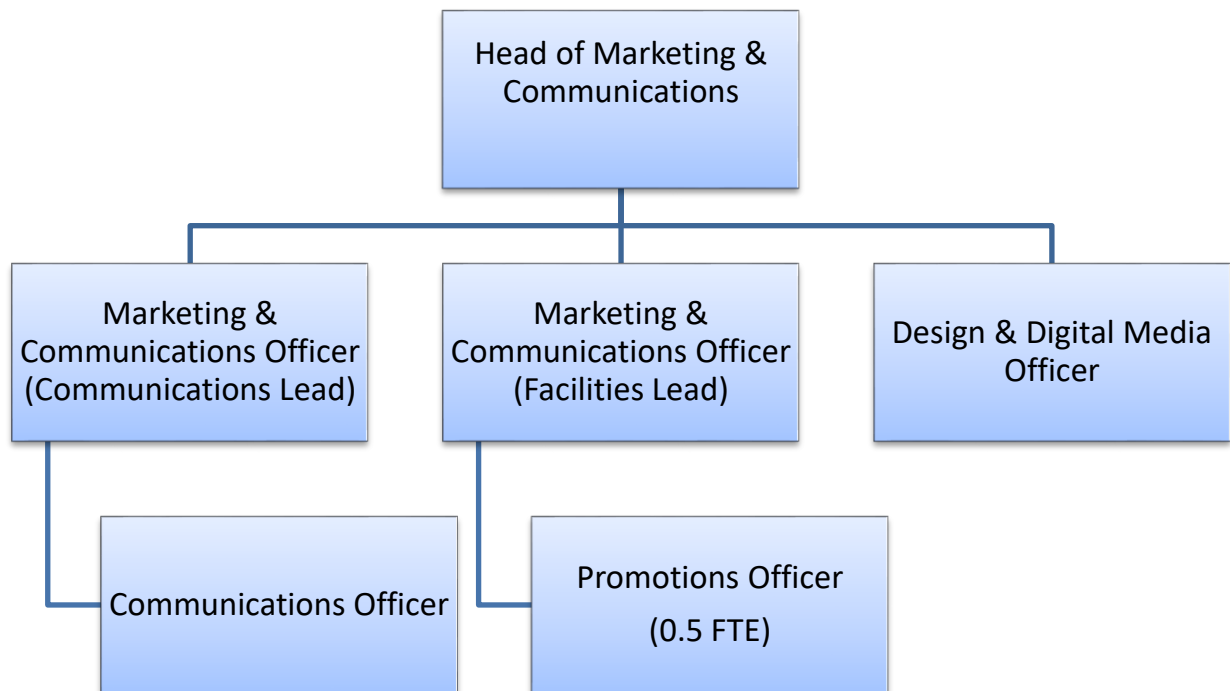
## **2.0 SERVICE WORKPLAN 2019/20**

The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Service has access to throughout 2019-20 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

### **2.1 Budget 2019/20**

<b>Service Budget Headings</b>	<b>£</b>
Salaries	234,739
Printing	35,000
Advertising	21,000
Promotional Materials	22,000
Licences	3,200
Fees	5,000
Miscellaneous (postage, mileage, training)	5,949
Gross Budget	326,888
Income	0
Net Budget for 2019-20	326,888

## 2.2 Staffing Complement - 2019/20



<b>Staffing</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>
Head of Service	1
Managers	2
Officers	2.5
Remaining Team	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.5</b>



## 2.3 Service Work Plan – 2019 - 2020

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Plan Theme						
<i>CMP 3.3 Education &amp; Skills - We are more entrepreneurial,</i>	<i>CRP 1.1 Delivering for Our People - High performing services focused on customer and value for money</i>						
Service Objective	How Will we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve? (Targets)	How Will we get there?			
				Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome
To develop and deliver annual marketing and communications action plans for key service areas.	No of plans developed, delivered and evaluated.	In 2018-2019, plans were formally in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Services (recycling)</li> <li>Leisure</li> <li>Strategic Events</li> <li>Parks</li> </ul>	In 2019-2020, the service will develop additional actions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development</li> <li>Capital Projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timely meetings with relevant services.</li> <li>Plan development and agreement.</li> <li>Plan implementation as per agreed timescales.</li> <li>Plan monitoring, evaluation and review.</li> </ul>	On-going from April 2019.	M&C Team	We will have cohesive, integrated marketing and communications plans, aligned to new corporate narratives and making a demonstrable contribution to the achievement of corporate priorities.

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Plan Theme						
<i>CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment &amp;</i>	<i>CRP 3.6 Sustaining our Environment - Reducing our dependency on landfill by increasing recycling, reusing and recovering energy from Council collected waste</i>						
Service Objective	How Will we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve? (Targets)	How Will we get there?			
				Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome
To support Environmental Services to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill through the development and delivery of a recycling campaign for 2019-2020.	Recycling Rate  Reduction in waste going to landfill  Waste composition analysis  Digital engagement	2018-2019 campaign developed and delivered with key results:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1% reduction in contamination rate of blue bin material</li> <li>- a 130 tonne increase in blue bin tonnage</li> <li>- a 540 tonne reduction in domestic household collected black bin waste</li> <li>- increase in the dry recycling rate of 4.22%.</li> </ul>	Achievement of targets associated with new recycling campaign plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019-2020 campaign concept and plan developed and agreed.</li> <li>• Plan delivery.</li> <li>• Plan monitoring, evaluation and review.</li> </ul>	By end July 2019.  Ongoing from Sept 2019.  By end March 2020.	MMcN  M&C Team  MMcN	We will have contributed to a reduction in waste going to landfill and to a more sustainable environment.

### **3.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICE AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE**

#### **3.1 Annual Improvement Objectives and Associated Programs**

The Council has set a number of annual improvement objectives and associated programs (projects and activities) for 2019/20, which aim to bring about improvement. The improvement objectives and key improvement programs, set out Council's contribution to the sustainable Community Plan for the District; against which we can monitor and report progress.

Each Council department provides resources to assist with the improvement activities contained within each improvement project (individual service improvement contribution activity linked to corporate improvement programs can be found in 3.2 of the service plan). The annual improvement objectives also align to the Council's main corporate planning document, which contains the council's strategic direction and main priorities.

The Council will focus on the following improvement objectives for 2019 to 2020:

- 1. To assist the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district.*
- 2. To improve the average processing time of Local Planning Applications (New).*
- 3. To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online.*
- 4. To support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing usage of Council Recreational Facilities.*

We utilise outcome based accountability methodology to manage our performance. This tells us the impact our services are having on communities. Further detailed information relating to Council's improvement objectives, associated activities, outcome indicators, projects and targets is available at [www.midulstercouncil.org/Council/Performance](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/Council/Performance) (*Mid Ulster Council's Improvement Plan 2019- 2020*) or by contacting the Democratic Services Team on 03000 132132.

### **4.0 Equality**

The council is committed to fulfilling its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This commitment is demonstrated by allocating the appropriate time, people and resources to fulfil our equality duties. The Equality Scheme commits us to implementing our duties effectively and in a timely way alongside implementing this Service Plan. Without impacting upon our obligations, when

carrying out our equality duties we will also take into account the desirability of promoting good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. We are also required to take into account the need to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life. Mid Ulster District Council are committed to fulfilling our disability duties and we set out how we intend to do this in our disability action plan.

### 3.2 Service Contribution to the Corporate Improvement Objectives/Projects

Link to Community Plan Theme:		Corporate Plan Theme						
CMP 2.1 Infrastructure - We are better connected through appropriate infrastructure		CRP 1.2 Delivering for Our People - Increase Access to services and customer experiences across the district						
Improvement Plan Objective	Service Objective	How Will we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve? (Targets)	How Will we get there?			
					Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome
3.0 To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online	To develop a medium-term 'digital by design' strategy.	Strategy developed and agreed.	No formal digital strategy in place.	Agreed strategy with action plan for implementation .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake digital review of current position.</li> <li>Complete desk research to inform strategy.</li> <li>Develop draft strategy.</li> <li>Agree strategy and timetable for delivery of associated action plan.</li> </ul>	By end Aug 2019  By end Aug 2019  By end Jan 2020 By end March 2020	UM KK	We will have a more digitally-enabled, consumer-facing organisation with a more digitally-enabled population.

Link to Community Plan Theme:		Corporate Plan Theme						
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy		CRP 2.5 Creating Growth - Completion of the Seamus Heaney Centre and development of a comprehensive strategy to optimise the tourism potential of Mid Ulster						
Improvement Plan Objective	Service Objective	How Will we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve? (Targets)	How Will we get there?			
					Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome
1.0 To assist in the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district	To develop and deliver a marketing and communication strategy and action plan for the new Davagh Dark Sky Observatory & Visitor Centre.	Marketing strategy and plan developed, agreed and implemented.	No formal marketing and communications plan in place.	Targets to be agreed as part of strategy and plan development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Marketing Strategy developed.</li> <li>Brand development completed.</li> <li>Web site development completed.</li> <li>Development of PR and social media content calendar for on-going communications and awareness-raising</li> <li>Development and delivery of official opening marketing &amp; communications plan</li> </ul>	End April 2019 August 2019 End Dec 2019 On-going  On-going	UM M&C Team	We will have successfully positioned the new facility and associated outdoor recreation and tourism offerings as a flagship visitor attractions in the Sperrins.

Link to Community Plan Theme:		Corporate Plan Theme						
CMP 4.1 Health & Wellbeing - We are better enabled to live longer healthier & more active lives		CRP 1.3 Delivering for Our People - High quality, responsive indoor and outdoor recreational services with increased customer numbers and satisfaction						
Improvement Plan Objective	Service Objective	How Will we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve? (Targets)	How Will we get there?			
					Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome
4.0 To support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing usage of Council Recreational facilities.	To implement Leisure Marketing Strategy and Parks and Outdoor Recreation Marketing Strategy and associated actions for each.	Delivery of strategy will be measured against agreed Objectives and associated KPIs detailed within the documents	Leisure Marketing Strategy and Parks Marketing Strategy 2018 – 21 have been developed	Each Strategy has Marketing Objectives and targets are detailed within each strategy for each objective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of action plan for Leisure Marketing Strategy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine customer contact across customer journey</li> <li>Implementation of a marketing automation programme across web site and social media channel</li> <li>Develop and implement digital marketing strategy and action plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>Delivery of action plan for Parks and Outdoor Recreation Marketing Strategy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of project and event campaign plans</li> <li>Implementation of a Play Near By campaign to focus on Play provision</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Develop and implement digital marketing strategy and action plan	Ongoing throughout the year (individual action plans are set on a quarterly basis)	UM KK	<p>We will have successfully positioned Leisure Services as a trusted authority and provider of high quality, high satisfaction opportunities for all in the Mid Ulster District.</p> <p>Our Parks and Outdoor Recreation Service will be recognised as offering access, good value and convenience for its residents, businesses and visitors who seek quality parks and outdoor recreation experiences in order to lead a healthy lifestyle.</p>

### **3.3 RISK MANAGEMENT OF SERVICE**

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

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



This table illustrates the risks identified to deliver the Services business in 2019-20.

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
MC01	Misuse or inconsistent use of the Council's branding	6	Use of brand identity as per guidelines is now embedded. Branding continues to be consistently applied and the service remains vigilant with regard to maintenance of standards.
MC02	Impact on output of small team through members of staff leaving the service or as a result of sickness absence.	9	Monitoring of sickness absence and application of attendance policy continues. Staff team remains stable and there are no anticipated staffing issues.
MC03	Inadequate management and planning of media relations issues.	8	Media relations service continues to be delivered and media monitored. The service continues to work pro-actively with departments on a project by project or issue by issue basis to pre-empt and/or manage potentially difficult media issues.
MC04	Budget pressure leading to reduced communications activity.	9	Monitoring of existing marketing & communications budget is on-going.
MC05	Ineffective internal communications leading to misinformed, demotivated staff.	12	Work is ongoing to improve internal communications. The service is installing new branded staff notice boards and the use of new animated videos for key policy areas is under development.
MC06	Delay or difficulty in converging legacy web and social media sites.	12	Monitoring and review work is continuous.

			A new web site is under development and web workshops have now been held with leisure, economic development, tourism, parks and the Burnavon.
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Rating	Descriptor
16 - 25	Extreme Risk (immediate action required)
10 - 15	High Risk (urgent action required)
7 - 9	Moderate Risk (action required)
1 – 6	Low Risk (keep under review)