



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

# Chief Executive Service Plan Report 2023/24

**DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE  
PLAN - 2023 / 2024**

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

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

#### **Chief Executive Department**

The Chief Executive is responsible for the delivery of services across the Council as well as managing the business of the Chair and Deputy Chair. The office also holds responsibility for the following functions:

- Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes,
- Marketing and Communications and Democratic Services,

The department is headed by Adrian McCreesh, Chief Executive. Fiona McKeown is the Assistant Director for Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes, while Kate Keys holds the role of Head of Marketing and Communications. An overview of each section follows below.

#### **1.1.1 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

The Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Section provides a range of services including economic, tourism, heritage, business development initiatives, skills and employability programmes, nurturing of industry/sectoral clusters, urban and rural regeneration projects and cross border activities.

More recently, a substantial amount of work has been undertaken to progress strategic projects identified within the Mid South West (MSW) Growth Deal and preparation and submission of applications to the Levelling Up Fund. In addition, the Section leads the effective delivery of the Labour Market Partnership (LMP) initiative which has been established to improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions in the region.

The Section also builds strategic alliances with partner organisations to maximise opportunities for the economic growth of the District through leverage of additional funding or support provision. The Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes staff are located across three main towns Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt

The Tourism section is responsible for the successful leadership and management of Tourism Service in Mid Ulster District Council. Its key functional responsibilities are district wide strategic tourism development, business engagement, visitor servicing from Council sites located at Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Burnavon, Bridewell, OM Dark Sky Park & Observatory, US Grants and Ranfurly House.

#### **1.1.2 Marketing and Communications**

The Marketing and Communications service forms part of the Chief Executive's Department and provides strategic and operational marketing and communication services to the Council. Staff within this service are all based within the Magherafelt offices.

## **1.2 Department Responsibilities**

### **1.2.1 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

Economic Development is specifically responsible for the development, implementation and management of Council's Economic Development, Rural Development, Town Centre & Village Regeneration Strategies and Tourism/Heritage for the District Council area and regularly inputting towards a range of other key strategic local and regional economic development initiatives. Below is a snapshot of what this service delivers:

#### **Economic Development**

- Develop and deliver a range of programmes, projects and initiatives to support the economic development of the District on across a range of levels, including business support interventions.
- Identify and bid for sources of funding to resource and support the growth of the Mid Ulster economy.
- Lobby for and identify opportunities for significant infrastructure investments.
- Maximise opportunities for development and inward investment to the District from a range of sources, collaborating with appropriate local, regional, national and European partners and identifying suitable partners as appropriate.

#### **Urban and Rural Regeneration**

- Manage, develop and deliver a comprehensive range of initiatives relating to Town Centre Regeneration to support the growth and development of a competitive retail sector across Mid Ulster, eg, Town and Village Spruce Up Schemes, Mid Ulster Gift Card etc.
- Improve townscape quality and maximise the profile of the town centres (Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera), including reinforcing the brand identities of the main towns.
- Develop, promote, and deliver a number of key signature events that add vitality and vibrancy to the five Town Centres.
- Identify regeneration priorities from Village Plans as agreed by Council and progress revitalise / regeneration schemes across Mid Ulster's villages.
- Promote and provide support for funding opportunities that become available for rural Mid Ulster monitoring the implementation of approved projects.

#### **Strategic Programmes/Initiatives**

- Mid South West (MSW) Growth Deal
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

- Development of Strategic Opportunity Sites (Ann Street and Redevelopment of Maghera High School site)
- Community Planning – Economic Growth Initiatives
- Actions arising from Broadband Sub-Committee
- Levelling Up Fund Maghera.

### **Tourism/Heritage**

- Develop, promote, and deliver Mid Ulster District Councils Tourism Strategy.
- Manage and deliver Visitor Information Services for Mid Ulster through the Visitor Information Centres in Bellaghy, Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.
- Ensure Tourism delivery becomes more commercially, and customer focussed by maintaining and increasing domestic and international visitors.
- Build and develop relationships with a wide range of stakeholders through business engagement.
- Develop the Tourism Service through the delivery of a programme of innovative activities and experiences that promotes tourism that will make Mid Ulster attractive and competitive.
- Identify sources of external funding opportunities for tourism development, formulating fund bids and liaising with funding bodies to maximise the tourism profile in Mid Ulster.
- Provide guidance and professional advice to Stakeholders and elected members, ensuring clear communication, and delivery of Tourism objectives.

### **Marketing and Communications**

The service develops and delivers external and internal marketing and communications which supports the Council's vision, values and strategic direction.

This includes marketing and communications planning and delivery across departments and services, brand management, the development and content management of multiple digital platforms (web and social media), the management of media relations, delivery of in-house graphic design services and communications support for the Chair, Deputy Chair and Committee Chairs.

#### **1.3 Customers & Stakeholders**

Below are details of the wide number of internal and external customers and stakeholders the Chief Executive's department engages with on a daily basis to ensure high quality, inclusive service delivery.

<b>Customers &amp; Stakeholders</b>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Internal:</b></li></ul>
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Other Council Departments, Elected Members, Senior Management Team and Staff
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>External:</b></li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government Departments and Agencies (DfE, DfI, DfC, Invest NI, DAERA)</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MSW Growth Deal Councils and associated Project Partners</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local businesses, social enterprises and farmers</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Further and Higher Education Providers</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local Enterprise Agencies</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MPs and MLAs</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regional sectoral representative bodies</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local and Regional Media</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP), Chambers of Commerce, Town Centre Forums, Regeneration Partnerships</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inward Investors</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community / voluntary sectors</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourism Northern Ireland</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourism Ireland</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Trust</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport NI</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sperrins Partnership</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lough Neagh Partnership and Lough Neagh Rescue</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourism Trade</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event Organisers</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outdoor Recreation NI</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ulster Scots Agency</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ICBAN</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mid Ulster Residents</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council Service Users</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funders</li></ul>
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### 1.4.1 Performance Overview in 2022/23 (Retrospective Review)

#### Economic Development and Strategic Programmes

<b>2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Improvement- Corporate Performance Management and Improvement regularly reported through SMT and Council.</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 completed- 29 schemes completed (MUDC Grant Aid £104,424.15; Private Sector Leverage £66,378.34)</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NI Business Start Up Programme - due to deliver at least 256 Plans by 31 March 2023, promoting 153 jobs (achieving proposed new Statutory Target).</li> </ul>	Due to be completed in September 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four Business Support Programmes ongoing delivery (support due to complete February 2023)</li> </ul> <p>(Programmes funded: 60% EU/ERDF, 20% Invest NI, 20% Council)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gearing for Growth Programme</li> <li>- Tender Ready Programme</li> <li>- Digital First Programme</li> <li>- Transform Programme</li> <li>-</li> </ul> <p>695 business places taken up (of target 690) to receive support by end date of February 2023 (targets currently undergoing collation and will be subject to external Evaluation 2023/24)</p>	Completed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 189 new jobs created</li> <li>- 34 referrals to Invest NI</li>   <li>• Mid Ulster Social Enterprise Programme currently supporting 14 new and existing social enterprises (target of 40 to be supported by September 2023)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ESF Match Funded Projects</b></li>   <li>- SUSE Project (South West College)</li> <li>- Women Towards Education and Employment (First Steps Women's Centre)</li> <li>- Project 'VERVE' (NOW Group)</li> <li>- Exploring Enterprise Programme (Enterprise NI with the 3 Mid Ulster Enterprise Agencies)</li> <li>- (Programme participant figures and targets not available until April 2023)</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Village Renewal Scheme</b></li>   <li>- £3.75m in grant aid from DAERA, additional match funding from Council,</li> <li>- Total investment of £5.9m across the 50 village renewal projects in Mid Ulster</li> <li>- Final Group 6 (Finalising leases) was completed in January 2023 to value of £120,665.25</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Closure of Rural Local Action Group</b></li>   <li>- Post project evaluations have been completed.</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (14-18 November 2022)</b></li>   <li>- The theme of this year's Mid Ulster Enterprise Week was Adapt, Evolve, Overcome. Throughout the week 13 free events took place with over 370 persons participating both online and in person.</li> </ul>	Completed



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Town &amp; Village Business Spruce Up Scheme</b></li> <li>- In the financial year 2022-2023, under Phase 4, 29 applicants accepted Letters of Offer and completed works to the value of grant aid of £104,425.15.</li> <li>- Phases 1 to 4 has resulted in £699,454.52 of Grant aid awarded to 200 properties across the Council area. The private sector leverage amounts to £427,097.85 for the entire Scheme.</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Urban Regeneration Initiatives – Coalisland</b></li> <li>- Coalisland Public Realm Scheme was completed at a total cost of £4.27m. Funding supplied by the Department for Communities (DfC) and Mid Ulster District Council.</li> <li>- DfC approved a revitalisation scheme for Coalisland Town Centre to the value of £250,000, which followed after the completion of Coalisland Public Realm Scheme. This project was 100% funded by DfC and contains the following initiatives: -</li> <li>- Festive Lighting Campaign (Approx. £80,000)</li> <li>- Marketing &amp; Branding (Approx. £25,000)</li> <li>- Lineside Environmental Improvement Scheme (Approx. £145,000)</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Gift Card</b></li> <li>- To date 200 businesses have registered/pending across the district.</li> <li>- Number of cards loaded 2,436</li> <li>- Value on cards purchased £57,325</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Rural Business Development Scheme (RBDS)</b></li> <li>- The Rural Business Development Scheme funded under the DAERA Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI)</li> <li>- 136 Letters of Offer issued to the value of £478,099</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reduced Christmas Car Parking Charges</b></li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As in previous years Dungannon &amp; Magherafelt benefitted from reduced Christmas Car Parking charges over the Christmas period.</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Levelling Up Fund (LUF)</b></li> </ul> <p>Council submitted four applications to the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 to support economic growth and drive regeneration in Maghera. Maghera Regeneration Project was successful and was awarded £9 million.</p>	Project to commence 2023-24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Granville Industrial Estate, Dungannon</b></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As a result of Council lobbying, DfI Roads invested approximately £600,000 into improving and enhancing the road infrastructure within Granville Industrial Estate as well as a major carriageway and footway resurfacing scheme between Granville and Dungannon.</li> <li>- Consideration of strategic and connectivity road improvements in Granville.</li> </ul>	<p>Two Schemes completed in December 2022.</p> <p>Options Study /Masterplan completed by DfI.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Shared Island Funding (SIF)</b></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council partnered in three cross-border projects which bid into the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund.</li> <li>- The projects will see collaborative cross-border investment with border Councils including Cavan, Monaghan and Leitrim, as well as northern partner Councils in Fermanagh and Omagh and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.</li> <li>- The projects include a feasibility study for ringforts at Tullyhogue and Killahurk, the development of sectoral SME innovation clusters and cross-border collaborative networks and a development study for sustainable tourism and outdoor recreation at Sliabh Beagh.</li> </ul>	<p>€505k funding through the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund.</p> <p>Three Cross-Border Projects to be completed in September 2023.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership</b></li> <li>- Develop and submit a Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2022-23 to the Department for Communities (DfC) for funding.</li> </ul>	<p>Letter of offer for £368,009.25 received from DfC to deliver Action Plan. Additional £50k secured from Department for Economy.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MSW Growth Deal</b></li> <li>- Complete Mid South West Pilot Business Innovation Programme.</li> </ul>	<p>Programme delivered and evaluation completed supporting 180 businesses across the region.</p>

#### 1.4.2 Tourism Performance Overview in 2022/23 (Retrospective Review)

2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Tourism (What we achieved- Measured Activities)	End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other
<p><b>Broadened the visitor appeal of the Council’s visitor attractions by increasing the visitor footfall through experience development at OM Dark Sky Park &amp; Observatory, Hill of the O’Neill and Seamus Heaney HomePlace.</b></p> <p>Funding secured through Tourism NI’s Market Led Product Development Programme to enhance experiences and these were trialled by 31 March 2023. This included the Banquet on the Hill, Moss Wall at Seamus Heaney HomePlace and a new OM Odyssey Light Projection Show.</p>	Completed
<p><b>Delivery of Mid Ulster’s Five Year Tourism Strategy.</b></p> <p>As a result of the success of seasonal Staycation campaigns, the MUDC Tourism Strategy maintained its focus to the staycation market with seasonal campaigns which attracted the ROI and domestic market. The campaigns were expanded to include the GB, American and European markets as Covid restrictions were eased.</p>	Completed
<p><b>Increased awareness of the new Visit Mid Ulster brand and exposure through various digital platforms, including Tourism NI’s ‘Embrace a Giant Spirit’ website and the destination website <a href="http://www.visitmidulster.com">www.visitmidulster.com</a></b></p> <p>Continuous development and maintenance of the tourism website, ‘Visit Mid Ulster Unwinding Time’. A new touchscreen has been installed in Coalisland town centre. Content is live fed from the visitmidulster.com website.</p>	Completed

<p><b>Increased attendance at trade and consumer shows.</b> Tourism staff attended nine national and international trade and consumer shows across Ireland, UK and Europe.</p>	Completed
<p><b>Delivered a series of events, Hidden Heritage, Great Days Out and a Hill Walking Programme to increase economic spend and overnight stays.</b></p> <p>Another successful Hidden Heritage programme ran from June to September 2022 across the district which attracted the staycation market. In September 2022 the Sperrins Hillwalking Programme took place, following the success of this a further hill walking programme is scheduled to take place again in 2023/24. The Great Days Out initiative showcased over 40 tourism businesses to 80 group organisers at an event in 2022.</p> <p>Draft new Heritage Plan prepared.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Nearing Completion</p>
<p><b>Provided industry knowledge and training to local businesses through social media, mentoring and collaborative working.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortnightly Ezine was distributed to 380 businesses.</li> <li>• Live WhatsApp engagement 180 businesses.</li> <li>• Delivered eight in-house business mentoring in addition to Tourism NI's TED programme to 160 tourism businesses.</li> <li>• Three active clusters with up to 50 businesses collaboratively working with Invest NI.</li> <li>• Hosted six meetings with Tourism Development Group</li> </ul>	Completed
<p><b>Upgrading of CCTV and new storage area at Bridewell Visitor Information Centre in Magherafelt</b></p>	Work completed March 2023.
<p><b>Service Level Agreements and Partnerships</b> Service Level Agreements in place with Lough Neagh Partnership and Lough Neagh Rescue Partnership Agreement in place with Sperrins Partnership</p>	<p>Completed (ongoing)</p> <p>Completed (ongoing)</p>

### 1.4.3 Marketing and Communications Performance Overview in 2022/23 (Retrospective Review)

2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Marketing and Communications (What we achieved- Measured Activities)	End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The service committed to build on the foundation of our marketing and communications planning by reviewing and refining our evaluation activity, agreeing measures at the planning stage and actions at the end delivery stage with our internal clients, who to date this year have included Economic Development, Tourism, the Mid Ulster LMP and Corporate Events.</b></li> <li>• The service led on a field market research project focusing on summer and Halloween events, and evidence from the resulting reports and our own service evaluations were used to feed into a wider events evaluation to help improve our approach to our delivery and to assist internal clients to make informed decisions about the future design and delivery of their events to ensure a cycle of continuous improvement.</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The service committed to develop and deliver the 2022-2023 annual marketing plan for OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory.</b></li> <li>• A review of previous activity was completed, and the service met with the facility manager to agree approach and tactics.</li> <li>• The further development of a formal marketing and communications plan for 2022-2023 was paused early in the year, as the service faced significant challenges as a result of reductions to its staffing levels due to recruitment difficulties and resignations impacting on available capacity from the start of Q2 onwards. In addition, significant periods of industrial action in Q1</li> </ul>	Commenced

<b>2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Marketing and Communications (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<p>and Q2 meant that internal and external communications to address the resulting requirements were prioritised during this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service has, however, continued to support the facility in its tactical marketing activity as the year progressed, providing support and advice on social media strategy and content, online presence, and promotion/advertising. The service has also contributed significantly to the ongoing marketing of the facility through supporting the tourism service with the creation of seasonal marketing campaigns on the new destination website <a href="http://www.visitmidulster.com">www.visitmidulster.com</a> which have featured Davagh and its entire visitor experience package.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The service committed to continue to create and deliver integrated communication plans for the Council’s capital investment programme.</b></li> </ul> <p>In the course of the year, the service delivered communications plans for a leisure and outdoor recreation focused investment programme, including the transformation of Iniscarn Forest, as well as other projects including the Shared Space Works in Coalisland, the significant redevelopment and upgrading of Maghera Recycling Centre, the Connecting Pomeroy Project, and a myriad of other smaller, but significant local investments in play parks and community facilities.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The service committed to the introduction of a social media management tool to streamline our publishing and response to enquiries and to introduce an email marketing tool and standardised approach to email marketing across our services and in our planned communications to increase engagement and trust in our online services.</b></li> </ul>	

<b>2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Marketing and Communications (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on any new social media and email marketing tools paused this year to allow the development of the Council’s new Digital Transformation Strategy to progress, given this will impact on the tools which the service uses to manage social media, as well as other aspects of digital marketing. The improvement will now roll into 2023-2024 for action through the new strategy’s implementation.</li> <li>• Meanwhile, the service has supported the Economic Development service to implement a new email marketing tool to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council’s direct business to business engagement, marketing and communications. It has also provided support to OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory to set up and implement a new email marketing tool to assist in communicating with its audience and generating additional earned income through event and workshop promotion.</li> </ul>	<p>Paused</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The service committed to contributing to the outcomes identified in our new Digital Transformation Strategy</b></li> <li>• Work has been completed by the service to assist with the implementation of a new birth registration online booking system. This is a brand-new customer focused, digital booking system, readily accessible 24/7, which improves and simplifies current birth registration processes and provides a better service to the customer, as well as streamline internal processes.</li> <li>• Work has also been carried out with the Planning Environment and Conservation team to complete the publication of new Tree Preservation Order / Written Consent for Tree Works online request forms, improving customer service and improving internal processes.</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p>



<b>2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Marketing and Communications (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service supported leisure by leading on the development of and rolling out of online booking approaches to submitting children’s swimming lesson expressions of interest and piloting an online booking form for birthday party bookings in Cookstown Leisure Centre.</li> <li>• The service team continue to use Silktide, a web governance platform to help manage and improve web accessibility, to meet legislative requirements set out by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Following a review of the Council’s website by the Cabinet Office in March 2022, and extensive work by the team, the site has achieved the top score for web accessibility in Northern Ireland and is currently positioned 31st place in the UK.</li> <li>• The service continues to support the Tourism Service by providing website support and advice on their online presence, through their destination management system and content management systems, social media strategies and promotion/advertising campaigns.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The service committee to continue to contribute to the Council’s strategic priority to reduce our dependency on landfill through waste reduction and increased recycling and recovery.</b></li> <li>• Work has been completed by the service to support a number of recycling and waste campaigns throughout the year, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recycle Week which took place from 17 – 23 October. Through this campaign we encouraged residents to ‘get real’ about recycling by ensuring they were recycling the correct waste items in the correct bins. The campaign was profiled and promoted in the local press, Council website news and recycling section and on our social media channels.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p>

<b>2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Marketing and Communications (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A Halloween recycling social media campaign encouraging residents to make sensible recycling choices at Halloween including choosing to make hand-made decorations and recycling the pumpkin waste created after carving your pumpkin. The campaign ran on the Council’s social media channels at the end of October and right through Halloween.</li> <li>○ European Week for Waste Reduction which took place from 19 – 27 November. Through this campaign we encouraged residents to be more sustainable with their textiles and footwear. The campaign was profiled and promoted in the local press, Council website news and recycling section and on our social media channels.</li> <li>○ A Christmas recycling social media campaign which ran from 5 December 2022 – 3 January 2023. Through this campaign we encouraged and reminded residents to make sensible recycling choices at Christmas including recycling all glass bottles and jars in the blue bin and bringing real Christmas trees to one of our recycling centres when you took it down to be recycled into compost.</li> <li>○ Recycle – Refresh – Renewed campaign which ran over December and January. Through this campaign we made residents aware that the Council now provided this service which saw old, large electrical appliances such as cookers, hobs, ovens, washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers, repaired, refurbished and then resold. The campaign was profiled and promoted in the local press, Council website news and recycling section and on our social media channels.</li> <li>● The reopening of Magherafelt Recycling Centre in December following its £1.7M refurbishment. We updated residents through every stage of the refurbishment including temporary closures to allow for works and the establishment of a temporary facility on site to allow residents to continue to use the centre throughout the refurbishment works. Through</li> </ul>	

<b>2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview – Marketing and Communications (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<p>this communication, residents were kept informed and reminded of the state-of-the-art facility they would benefit from when works completed and the centre reopened. Work on this significant project was communicated in the local press, Council website- news and recycling centre sections, and on all our social media channels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We continue to support the Big Spring Clean initiative. Through this campaign we make residents aware that the Council provides support to those organising a Big Spring Clean by loaning the litter pickers, litter bags and by collecting and disposing of all the litter collected afterwards. We also profile all Big Spring Clean efforts in the district by sharing them to our social channels and acknowledging the group/s taking part. We support the campaign by issuing our own news release and pic to the local press, publishing on the Council website news and recycling sections and profiling on our social media channels.</li> </ul>	

## 2.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICES AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE - 2023/24

The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Department has access to throughout 2023-24 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

### 2.1 BUDGET 2023/24

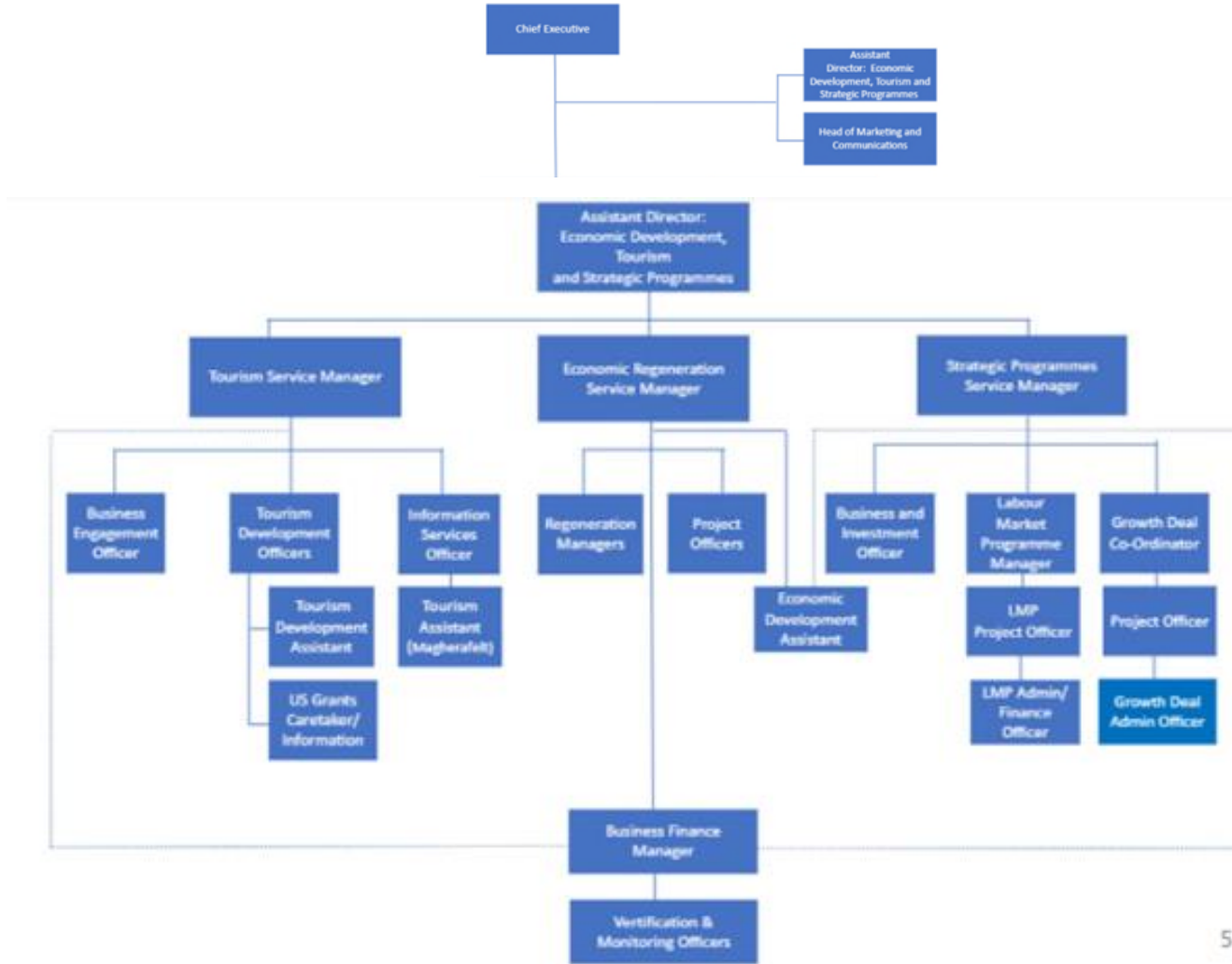
<b>Economic Development and Strategic Programmes</b>	<b>£</b>
General Economic Development	1,021,334
Town Strategy	474,044
Gross Budget	1,495,378
Income	0
Net Budget for 2023-24	1,495,378

<b>Tourism</b>	<b>£</b>
Bridewell	99,004
Tourism General	416,728
US Grants	9,825
Gross Budget	525,557
Income	58,018
Net Budget for 2023-24	467,539

<b>Marketing and Communications</b>	<b>£</b>
Salaries / Staff Costs	297,908
Printing / Publications	20,000
Stationery Supplies	92
Advertising	21,000
Promotional materials	22,000
Licences	5,200
Fees	3,000
Subsistence	200
Gross Budget	369,400
Income	0
Net Budget for 2023-24	369,400

## 2.2 CHIEF STAFFING COMPLEMENT/DEPARTMENT 2023/24

### Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes



5

<b>Assistant Director</b>	1
<b>Service Managers</b>	3
<b>Economic Regeneration</b>	
Managers	4
Officers	7
Remaining Team	1
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>10.52</b>
<b>Tourism</b>	
Officers	3.3
Remaining Team	1.9
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7.2</b>
<b>Strategic Programmes Section</b>	
Managers	2
Officers	3
Remaining Team	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total Staff Within EDT&amp;SP</b>	<b>28.6</b>

## Marketing and Communications



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

### **2.3 SERVICE WORK PLAN - 2023/24**

**This plan confirms the core activities and actions, which will form your Department (by Services) or Departmental Service Work Plan for 2023-24.**

This is a high-level capture of the Department and the Service activities/measures as well as some improvement undertakings which the services will focus on throughout 2023-2024.

The Plan links to the Council's:

1. 2020-2024 Corporate Plan priorities,
2. Annual Corporate Performance Improvement (PIP plan)
3. Corporate Improvement Project Plans (CIP's)
4. Statutory Indicators,
5. Corporate Health Indicators and
6. Mid Ulster Sustainable Community Plan themes & outcomes (aligned to the Programme for Government):

Mid Ulster District Council's Improvement Objectives for 2023 to 2025 are:

1. Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action.
2. We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them.
3. To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and environment.
4. We will contribute to the on-going regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people.

### 2.3.1 Services Work Plan 2023/24 – Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes

Service Name: Economic Development and Strategic Programmes					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme		
<i>CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger &amp; more competitive economy</i>			<i>Economy: 3.2 We will continue to build on our work to generate business diversification, innovation &amp; expansion &amp; increase in employment opportunities</i>		
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Deliver the 2023 Rural Development Grants Scheme (TPRSI)	Full commitment of funding allocated circa £140,000	31/03/24	Economic Regeneration Service Manager	Positive impact on business recovery through sustaining employment and increasing turnover	Evaluation report prepared

Service Name: <u>Economic Development and Strategic Programmes</u>					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme		
<i>CMP 1.3 Economic Growth - Our Towns &amp; Villages are vibrant &amp; competitive</i>			<i>Leadership: 1.3 We will work collectively to meet the identified needs and priorities of our citizens &amp; connect the people of Mid Ulster</i>		
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Marketing & Promotion of Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt Coalisland and Maghera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Centre Marketing Campaigns across the five towns to promote:</li> <li>Seasonal Promotional Campaigns</li> </ul>	31/03/24	Regeneration Managers	Raise profile of the five town centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of seasonal promotional campaigns delivered.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shop Local Campaigns</li> <li>• Mid Ulster Gift Card</li> <li>• Promotion of Town Brands</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of shop local campaigns delivered.</li> <li>• No. of participating businesses</li> <li>• Value of Mid Ulster Gift Cards purchased and redeemed.</li> <li>• A range of branded merchandise will be purchased for town centre promotion</li> </ul>
Delivery of Strategic Events	<p>Calendar of events in five town centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walled Garden Maghera Halloween in Dungannon</li> <li>• Halloween in Coalisland</li> <li>• Christmas Lights Switch On in Cookstown</li> <li>• Christmas Kingdom and Switch On in Dungannon</li> <li>• Christmas Market and Switch On in Magherafelt</li> <li>• Christmas Lights Switch On in Coalisland</li> </ul>	31/03/24	Regeneration Managers	Increase civic pride and footfall across five towns.	Delivery of eight town centre events in the five towns during 2023/24

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christmas Lights Switch On in Maghera</li> </ul>				
Business Support / Attracting Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing Dereliction and Vacancy Levels across Mid Ulster <i>(Subject to attaining funding)</i></li> <li>Mid Ulster Gift Card</li> </ul>	31/03/25	Regeneration Managers		<p>Application to DfC to secure funding to conduct a pilot Empty to Occupied Scheme</p> <p>No. participating businesses Value of Mid Ulster Gift Cards purchased and redeemed.</p>
Physical Regeneration / Improving Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of LUF Maghera Regeneration Scheme (Inc. Maghera Public Realm Scheme, Maghera High School Site &amp; Maghera Wetlands Park)</li> <li>Place Shaping Plans <i>(Subject to attaining funding)</i></li> </ul>	31/03/25  31/03/25	Regeneration Manager	<p>Increase the overall viability and vitality of the town centre.</p> <p>Provide a fresh strategic framework for place based economic growth and regeneration in the three main towns.</p>	<p>Delivery of scheme.</p> <p>Place Shaping Plans for Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt completed by end of Q4 2025/26.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cookstown Market</li> </ul>	31/03/25	Regeneration Manager	Enhance the operations, delivery and aesthetics of the Cookstown Market	<p>No of Market Stalls</p> <p>Footfall within the Market</p>

<b>Service Name: <u>Economic Development and Strategic Programmes</u></b>					
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>		<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>			
<i>CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger &amp; more competitive economy</i>		<i>Economy: 3.4 We will continue to identify opportunity sites for development proposals &amp; to deliver against existing plans for other key strategic sites (Ann Street- Dungannon &amp; former Maghera High School site.)</i>			
<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Develop Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential Development of Town Centre Sites</li> </ul>	31/03/24	Regeneration Managers	Improved perception of Council area as an investment location.	By end of Q4 2023/24 Economic appraisals prepared for one potential town centre development sites.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to progress development of key opportunity sites – Maghera High School</li> </ul>	31/03/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Increased private sector investment in Mid Ulster.	Planning permission secured for Maghera High School site by Q2/3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to progress the Ann Street Development site, Dungannon</li> </ul>	31/03/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Increased private sector investment through redevelopment of a long-term vacant site.	Agreement for lease completed, anchor tenant secured and Planning application submitted by Q2

Service Name: <u>Economic Development and Strategic Programmes</u> :					
Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger &amp; more competitive economy</i>		<i>Economy: 3.2 We will continue to build on our work to generate business diversification, innovation &amp; expansion &amp; increase in employment opportunities</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Business Start & Entrepreneurship	<p>Deliver the requisite number of approved business plans for start-ups to achieve current Statutory Jobs Target (210*) &amp; new Statutory Target</p> <p>*The new agreed amended lower Stat target of 153 (job creation) was not adopted before the Assembly dissolved; DfE advised the NIAO currently require Councils to report on <i>both</i> targets/standards (ref DfE letter 12/5/22) in the interim.</p> <p>April-Sept 2023: delivery via current NIBSUP</p> <p>Sept 23- Mar 24: delivered via new Enterprise Support Service</p>	31/03/24	Business & Investment Officer	Support service to budding entrepreneurs to develop a client-led business plan	<p>210 jobs promoted - 350 approved client business plans completed (pa)</p> <p>*To change to target of 153 jobs created (see column 2) via 256</p>
Business Growth & Sustainability	Deliver and manage growth support to 100 businesses /social enterprises	31/03/24	Business & Investment Officer	Building the sustainability, growth, and job creation potential of Mid Ulster businesses/social enterprises	100 businesses / social enterprises supported (pa)

	Participate in the 3-year NI Regional Digital Transformation Flexible Fund ('DTFF') led by Newry, Mourne & Down District Council. 40 Mid Ulster businesses to avail of funding in year 1		Business & Investment Officer	The DTFF will provide funding to businesses to implement digital transformation measures	50 jobs created (pa)  40 businesses to avail of funding opportunity to deliver digital transformation measures
Industrial land and serviced sites	Develop short and medium-term options for addressing lack of industrial land and serviced sites in Mid Ulster. Identify pilot project and explore potential funding opportunities in partnership with Invest NI.	31/03/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager  Business & Investment Officer	Ensure an appropriate supply of employment land and premises.	Identify Pilot Project and secure funding for an intervention.
Identify funding opportunities to support investment in strategic Council projects	Work closely with central government and key stakeholders and develop funding bids for prioritised projects.	31/03/24	Business & Investment Officer	Potential to leverage financial investment into Mid Ulster	Two funding bids submitted for strategic projects
Promote Mid Ulster as an investment location	Develop online and hard copy materials/collateral to promote Mid Ulster as an attractive investment location.	31/03/24	Business & Investment Officer	Increased opportunity to attract external investment into Mid Ulster	No of expressions of interest from external investors

<b>Service Name: <u>Economic Development and Strategic Programmes</u></b>					
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>			<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>		
<i>CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger &amp; more competitive economy</i>			<i>Economy: 3.3 We will continue to support the work of our partners including the Mid Ulster Skills Forum, to address employability/skills to ensure existing &amp; future needs of our region's business base are met.</i>		
<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Supporting Employability and Skills	Deliver a Mid Ulster LMP Contingency Plan 2023-24 (due to funding cuts announced by Dept for Communities in May 2023).	31/03/24	LMP Manager	Employability outcomes and labour market conditions improved by a stronger co-ordinated, multi-agency approach.	100% progress of no. of assigned actions from the Contingency Plan 2023-24 delivered.
	Effectively deliver Job Fairs which connect local people to local jobs.	31/03/24	LMP Manager	Addressing industry needs for skilled labour.	Three local job fairs successfully delivered.
	Support MEGA in the delivery of a three-year Strategic Action Plan 2022-25.	31/03/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Contribute to the economic growth and sustainability of the manufacturing and engineering sector.	100% progress on funded actions detailed in SLA Employability & Skills Scoping Study and Action Plan developed
	Support the Mid Ulster Construction Cluster with an application to Invest NI to secure funding to deliver a Three-Year Action Plan.	31/03/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Contribute to skills and labour challenges facing the construction sector.	Application submitted to Invest NI by Q2.

**Service Name: Economic Development, and Strategic Programmes**

<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>	<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>
<i>CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger &amp; more competitive economy</i>	<i>Economy: 3.1 We will develop and deliver, Mid/South/West Regional Economic Strategy in collaboration with Council Partners- ABC &amp; Fermangah Omagh</i>

<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Complete Business Cases for Council led interventions as part of MSW Growth Deal.	Complete Five Case Model Business Cases for potential Growth Deal interventions:-	30/06/23	Assistant Director, Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes	Potential availability of significant funding to implement key MSW interventions within Mid Ulster.	Two Business Cases (SOC's) completed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desertcreat</li> <li>Sperrins /Slieve Gallion</li> </ul>				
	Work with Dfl and other stakeholders to progress delivery of the A29 Cookstown Bypass.	31/3/24	Assistant Director, Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes	Improved transport connectivity in Mid Ulster	Scheme at Draft Orders Stage and statutory consultation.
	Continue to lobby for the inclusion of a bypass for Dungannon in the RSTNTP.	31/3/24	Assistant Director, Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes		Scheme included in RSTNTP

MSW Fast Followers Collaborative Programme	Support the delivery of Year One of the Programme within the Mid Ulster area	31/3/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Improved Net Zero skills and capability among local businesses in Mid Ulster.	MSW Net Zero Innovation & Delivery Officer appointed  100% progress on actions contained in the agreed Project Plan (Year 1)
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Service Name: Tourism					
			Align to Corporate Plan Theme		
<i>CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger &amp; more competitive economy</i>			<i>Economy: 3.2 We will continue to build on our work to generate business diversification, innovation &amp; expansion &amp; increase in employment opportunities</i>		
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Increased occupancy figures and visitor numbers to the district	<p>Deliver upon the objectives within the Mid Ulster Council Tourism Strategy (Reviewed 2019).</p> <p>To rview and update the Mid Ulster Council Tourism Strategy in line with the draft Tourism NI – Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism Strategy.</p> <p>To review and update the Mid Ulster Council Tourism Strategy to reflect the new Visit Mid Ulster Unwinding Time brand and align with Tourism NI's brand experiences 'Embrace a Giant Spirit.</p> <p>Increase destination digital presence via website and social media platforms.</p>	31/03/2024	Tourism Service Manager and Tourism Team	<p>To deliver the objectives outlined in the MUDC tourism Strategy (Reviewed 2019).</p> <p>Strategic alignment with the council and national brand.</p> <p>Reinforce the national and local tourism brands.</p> <p>Increased staycation and out of state offering.</p>	<p>Analyse figures from Mid Ulster Council Tourism web site and social media platforms.</p> <p>Carry out ongoing perception research.</p> <p>NISRA tourism visitor statistics.</p> <p>Visitor monitoring results</p>

<b>Service Name: Tourism</b>					
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>			<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>		
<i>CMP 1.2 Economic Growth - We have more people working in a diverse economy</i>			<i>Economy: 3.6 We will work to deliver tourism investment and employment concentrating on Mid Ulster's three identified tourism strands</i>		
<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Improved engagement and support with the Tourism and Hospitality sector	<p>Develop a portfolio of systems and communications channels to keep the tourism sector informed and to ensure that they receive the latest and most current business information.</p> <p>Develop a series of webinars to support and inform the sector.</p> <p>Develop our new Taste Mid Ulster food and drink offering, upskilling the hospitality industry.</p> <p>Deliver programmes that will support and create opportunities for the sector under one or more of the 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' experiences.</p>	31/03/24	Tourism Service Manager and Tourism Team	<p>Greater and more focused support for the tourism &amp; hospitality business sector.</p> <p>Supporting and developing new local experiences under the 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' branding.</p>	<p>20% increase business participation on Council digital and social media tourism channels</p> <p>Develop and deliver 2 new 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' brand aligned experience.</p> <p>Measure increased tourism traffic to website and social channels.</p>

<p>Attain funding for Tourism Projects and experiences</p>	<p>Progress and implementation of schemes : -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bid for funding (MSW, DAERA, Shared Island, Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland).</li> <li>• Design programmes of work established and agreed.</li> </ul>	<p>01/04/23 - 31/03/24</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Tourism Service Manager, Strategic Projects Manager,</p>	<p>Produce high quality, innovative and immersive experiences/attraction that will increase visitor numbers and investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify Funding sources</li> <li>• SOC (Strategic Outline Case) completed for the MSW Tourism project</li> </ul>
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**Service Name: Marketing and Communications**

Service Name: Marketing and Communications					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme		
CMP 3.3 Education & Skills - We are more entrepreneurial, innovative & creative			Service Delivery: 2.1 We will improve services for our citizens through the development and delivery of an innovation agenda		
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
Implement Digital Transformation Strategy communications actions	In partnership with all Council services, review the content on our website as we improve each of our services, removing content that is underused or not focused on residents' needs.	Ongoing until 31 March 2024	M&C Manager Design & Digital Officer	Users can understand our website so that they do not need to contact us if we put the information online.	% increase in visitor numbers to the website by end of Q4
	Introduce an email marketing tool and standardised approach to email marketing across our services and in our planned communications to increase engagement and trust in our online services.	By 30 June 2023	M&C Manager Design & Digital Officer	Our residents, businesses and visitors are aware of our activities and trust us because we communicate effectively via email and social media.	4 Corporate email newsletters delivered by 31 March 2024 (June, Sept, Dec, March)

Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment &amp; enhance it for our children</i>		<i>Environment: 4.2 We will continue to promote and protect our environment through our environmental and anti-littering programmes of education, awareness-raising and enforcement.</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Develop and deliver a Sustainable Communications Plan to support Council's sustainability and climate change programme.	Develop and produce Sustainability and Climate Change Communications Strategy for 2023 – 2025, including action plan, monitoring and evaluation.	31/05/2023	M&C Manager	Sustainability and Climate Change Communications Strategy approved by	30/06/2023
Successful engagement of both sustainability peers and experts through actioned evidence and profiling, as well as the wider public through coherent sustainability narratives.	Deliver action plan to profile Council wide efforts towards achieving sustainability and climate change goals to include quarterly and annual evaluation.	31/03/2024	M&C Manager / Communications Officer	Quarterly and annual evaluations quantifying work completed by	31/03/2024
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
Develop and deliver an integrated marketing and communications plan to address dog fouling and littering hotspots.	Develop and produce a communications plan for approval by EH service and Committee by	30/6/2023	M&C Manager / Communications Officer (Corporate Lead)	Residents are supported to reduce dog fouling in their neighbourhoods. Dog owners are aware of the	Evaluation completed by 31/03/24 Campaign to contribute to a

				need to be responsible for addressing the issue.	50% reduction in dog fouling at key Council owned hotspots.
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>			<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>		
<i>CMP 2.1 Infrastructure - We are better connected through appropriate infrastructure</i>			<i>Service Delivery: 2.2 We will invest in our people to create a customer-focused, purposeful, skilled, high performing, engaged, healthy and safe work space.</i>		
<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
Develop and deliver an internal communications strategy and action plan that connects, engages and brings together all Council staff.	Develop and produce internal communications strategy including action plan, monitoring and evaluation.  Complete staff survey to provide benchmark evaluation metrics  Deliver action plan by	30/06/23  15/09/23  31/03/24	M&C Manager / Communications Officer	Effective internal communications have a role to play in helping the Council achieve all its objectives, creating not just a flow of information about key corporate issues, projects and events, but also an environment where employees know their views are sought, listened to, considered and valued – where our staff feel engaged.	Evaluation metrics will focus on an annual increase in: 1. communication effectiveness scores 2. employee engagement scores 3. channel performance 4. employee feedback
<b>Link to Community Plan Theme:</b>			<b>Align to Corporate Plan Theme</b>		
<i>CMP 2.1 Infrastructure - We are better connected through appropriate infrastructure</i>			<i>Economy: 3.5 We will have a prioritised, sustainably resourced programme of capital investment supporting the enhancement of facilities for local people &amp; contributing to the regeneration of the district.</i>		

<b>Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):</b>	<b>What are the key 'Business as Usual' activities we will deliver (actions):</b>	<b>By When (Date?)</b>	<b>Service Name /Lead Officers(s)</b>	<b>What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)</b>	<b>How Will we Know? (Measures)</b>
<p>To continue to create and deliver an integrated communications plan for the Council's capital investment programme.</p>	<p>We will work with internal clients to identify capital programme and deliverables by</p> <p>We will develop the 2023-2024 capital programme communications plan.</p> <p>We will deliver the capital programme communications plan.</p>	<p>30/06/23</p> <p>31/07/23</p> <p>Ongoing until 31 March 2024</p>	<p>M&amp;C Team</p>	<p>The Council's ambitious and significant capital development programme will be strategically positioned and profiled to build awareness of the level of awareness of the investment with both internal and external audiences.</p>	<p>Plan and associated KPI's will be delivered.</p>

## 2.4 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS 2023/24

What Service Development/Improvement will we undertake in 2023/2024? (Actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name/ Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
<p>Council has agreed to be part of the new 11 Council collaborative 'Entrepreneurship Support Service' ('ESS') which seeks to deliver a regionally connected business support service to drive entrepreneurship, and support start up through to growth. This will involve the development of more regionally aligned services to manage this, including the development of a new Management Information System, to oversee the whole programme and a new Grants Software System to manage this process.</p>	31/03/24	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	More consistent approach across economic development sections to the process of managing business supports and delivery of business funding.	Adoption of good practice from ESS to be subject to Independent Evaluation to assess impact of these measures.
<p>Work on the development on new Place Shaping Plans for each of the 3 main towns to provide a fresh strategic framework for economic growth and regeneration in the 3 main towns (Subject to funding)</p>	31/03/26	Economic Regeneration Service Manager	Place Shaping will help make our communities stronger and more resilient in the future.	By getting agreement and consensus on the aspirations, direction and proposals for the 3 main towns



What Service Development/Improvement will we undertake in 2023/2024? (Actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name/ Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
<p>To review and prepare an annual Tourism Action Plan in line with the draft Tourism NI – Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism Strategy.</p> <p>Deliver upon the objectives within the new Mid Ulster Council Tourism Strategy.</p>	31/03/2024	Tourism Service Manager & Tourism Team	<p>To deliver a range of key actions as detailed in the new MUDC Annual Tourism Action Plan</p> <p>Strategic alignment with the national brand.</p> <p>Reinforce the national and local tourism brands.</p>	<p>Implementation of the reviewed new annual Mid Ulster District Council Tourism Action Plan.</p> <p>Achieve reviewed outputs for 2023-24</p>
<p>Develop a portfolio of systems and communications channels to keep the tourism sector informed and to ensure that they receive the latest and most current business information.</p> <p>Develop a series of webinars to support and inform the sector.</p> <p>Deliver programmes that will support and create opportunities for the sector under one or more of the ‘Embrace a Giant Spirit’ experiences.</p>	31/03/2024	Tourism Service Manager & Tourism Team	<p>Greater and more focused support for the tourism &amp; hospitality business sector.</p> <p>Supporting and developing new local experiences under the ‘Embrace a Giant Spirit’ branding.</p>	<p>Measure increased tourism traffic to website and social channels.</p> <p>Development of 2 new Mid Ulster experiences under the ‘Embrace a Giant Spirit’ brand by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.</p>

Develop and deliver a number of actions within Mid Ulster District Council's Heritage Strategy	31/3/2024	Tourism Service Manager & Tourism Team	To explore and deliver a number of key actions in year 1's action plan (subject to being able to attract funding)	Achieve reviewed outputs.
<p>Progress a number of key tourism projects:to the next stage -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Growth Deal Project - Strategic Outline Business Case</li> <li>• Shared Island Sliabh Beagh Feasibility Study</li> <li>• Shared Island Tullaghoge Feasibility Study</li> </ul>	1/4/2023 - 31/03/2024	Assistant Director, Tourism Service Manager, Strategic Programmes Service Manager,	Produce high quality, innovative and immersive experiences/attractions that will increase visitors and investment.	Development of new high-quality attractions in the longer term

What Service Development/Improvement will we undertake in 2023/2024? (Actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name/ Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes/outputs)	How Will we Know? (Measures)
<p>Marketing and Communications service will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment though local action by taking a digital first approach to communications wherever possible.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 2023 / 24</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Anticipated budgetary savings will be achieved.</p> <p>Reduction in print materials. Contributes to the Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan targets.</p>	<p>Every marketing &amp; communications plan reflects a digital first approach.</p> <p>Sustainable Marketing KPIs established and monitoring arrangements in place.</p>
<p>We will introduce a social media management tool to streamline our publishing and response to enquiries and introduce an email marketing tool and standardised approach to email marketing across our services and in our planned communications to increase engagement and trust in our online services.</p>	<p>By 30/06/23</p>	<p>Marketing and Communications Manager</p>	<p>Contributes to a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them.</p>	<p>Introduction of SMM and email marketing tools</p> <p>Engagement % increase throughout the year.</p>

## **2.5 RISK MANAGEMENT OF DEPARTMENT/SERVICES**

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 Department 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 Department's/Services business as outlined in service plan for 2023-24.

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	Loss of External Funding	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continual review by staff of new and emerging funding opportunities.</li> <li>- Maintain regular communication with funding sources/potential partners.</li> <li>- Management control procedures are in place and staff training provided on the implementation of funder operating guidance.</li> <li>- Regular communication with funder(s) to update on progress and agree solutions.</li> <li>- Senior staff are informed of key funding sources.</li> <li>- The estimated impact of Brexit is the loss of EU Funding £28.5 million between 2021 and 2027 – staff across Council looking at other funding avenues.</li> <li>- Lobby DAERA to progress their Rural Affairs Policy Framework in order to advance the new successor Rural Development Programme to assist businesses across Mid Ulster. Gaps between one programme ending and another programme commencing also present issues for Council in terms of retaining staff.</li> </ul>

2	Failure to maintain effective Corporate Governance arrangements within Council and with Partner organisations	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constitution / Code of Governance</li> <li>- Member / Officer L&amp;D Program</li> <li>- Solicitor / Policy / Equality Officer</li> <li>- Annual Governance Statement (AGS)</li> <li>- Governance &amp; Assurance Framework</li> <li>- Joint working arrangements (LOO/MOU) - KPI's...</li> <li>- Action plans</li> <li>- Regular meetings / communications</li> <li>- Stakeholder Engagement</li> <li>- Internal &amp; External</li> <li>- MSW Region Governance Steering Group contains representation of 12 Councillors (4 Councillors from each of the 3 Councils), together with the 3 CEOs &amp; 3 Directors from each Council and senior MSW Staff.</li> <li>- 3 MSW Officer Working Groups (across the 3 Councils)</li> <li>- Progress reports to Dev. Comm (bi-annually) with finance matters reported to P&amp;R.</li> <li>- Project Board, Senior Responsible Officers, Project Managers meet regularly with agenda, minutes &amp; action plan</li> <li>- Regular engagement with Strategic Partners &amp; procedures in place to monitor all claims to ensure compliance with LoO issued.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of relationships within individual partner organisations undertaken - consideration of risks. Training on Business Cases &amp; Risk Management in Q1 23/24.</li> </ul>
3	Failure to achieve and build upon appropriate Corporate & Community Plan objectives.	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 yr Corporate / 10 yr Comm Plan</li> <li>- Stakeholder engagements / Community Engagement / Surveys</li> <li>- Governance process with Partners - defined roles / responsibilities / resilience / communications</li> <li>- Monitor/ Review / Lessons learnt</li> <li>- Communication Strategy</li> <li>- Customer Service / Complaints</li> <li>- Equality assessments on plans</li> <li>- Performance Management - KPI's</li> <li>- Engaged with Statutory agencies</li> <li>- Alignment of plans</li> <li>- Multi-disciplinary programmes e.g. Agewell</li> <li>- Aligned actions from the Community Plan to the Growth Deal (inform the Outline Business Cases).</li> <li>- CP Strategic Board meetings &amp; day to day delivery of the CP has returned to normal. Partners acknowledged the role of CP in making multi-agency co-operation &amp; co-ordination easier during the Pandemic &amp; are</li> </ul>

		<p>been to build upon the key alliances &amp; shared delivery practices forged during the period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Growth Deal formally launched in Sep 20. Content is fully aligned &amp; supportive of Councils recently agreed Corporate Plan 20-24. Two staff members now employed on the GD.</li><li>- Implementing a strategic &amp; operational response to the wider economic &amp; social impacts of the pandemic - rolled out a range of grant aid programmes to assist businesses and communities in addressing the impact of the pandemic.</li><li>- Inter thematic workshops held and amendments to the plan are shared to all Partners.</li><li>- Review of CP Panel membership completed Feb 21. Community Plan progress is published every 2 years through the Statement of Progress (as per Statutory Guidance), 1st Nov 19. A 4 year review of the Community Plan (as per Statutory Guidance) has commenced (Nov 20)</li><li>- A newsletter is in place.</li><li>- Monitor emerging health trends within District to ensure plans are appropriate e.g. growth in mental health, demographic changes.</li></ul>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MU Poverty Plan in place (regular updates to all partners, updates to Committee)</li> <li>- Performance Improvement objectives and subsequent annual Improvement Plans in place</li> </ul>
4	Failure to effectively scan the External Env. regularly to identify potential threats & opport. e.g. Brexit, Global pressures, War, Climate Change	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEO &amp; Directors participate in NI wide working groups.</li> <li>- Engagement with key Businesses / Partners / Community Groups / key Suppliers</li> <li>- Horizon Scanning - identification of key funding streams &amp; ongoing engagement / lobbying with Funders</li> <li>- Legislation updates.</li> <li>- MU continues to act as a channel of communication, informing &amp; briefing our private sector upon the current/pending issues pertinent to Brexit. Council is also very active in collating experiences &amp; challenges endured by our</li> <li>- private sector colleagues &amp; ensuring these are relayed to the necessary authorities for potential mitigation. - Ongoing participation in cross border working groups.</li> <li>- NI Executive's Brexit Briefing Newsletter in place</li> <li>- Educate the wider community about climate change through free Carbon Literacy</li> </ul>

		<p>Programmes training, to empower &amp; inspire civic action that can help NI tackle the climate emergency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Monitor / review the soaring fuel, utility, supplier costs and inflationary pressures and the impact on budgets / service provision.</li><li>- External policies / legislation relevant to local authorities NI will be monitored regularly by the Equality &amp; Policy Officer.</li><li>- Ongoing Engagement / Lobbying with OFM / DFM &amp; directly with Ministerial Government Departments</li><li>- Governance &amp; management of Growth Deal is undertaken on monthly basis with structured CEO/Dir meeting &amp; oversight meeting with Members from the 3 Councils. Funding resourced on annual basis via estimates.</li><li>- Growth Manager in place</li><li>- Continued monitoring of industrial relations disputes across the economy and public sector employers for early mitigation of industrial action affecting services</li><li>- Monitor movement in the Employment market &amp; implications for any changes to employment legislation.</li></ul>
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5	Failure to implement an Economic / Tourism programme to regenerate the District to attract investment and visitors.	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commenced work developing 3 outline business cases within MSW Growth Deal.</li> <li>- Delivering TRPSI Prog. 2022 (with DAERA funding) - small capital grants for local businesses.</li> <li>- Devised a no. of bids to the Levelling up Fund.</li> <li>- Economic &amp; Tourism Forum &amp; Local Tourism Industry Ass.</li> <li>- Rural Development Programme</li> <li>- Regional Consortium / Meetings with Tourism agencies including Tourism Ireland, Hospitality Ulster, Tourism Alliance...</li> <li>- Growth Deal</li> <li>- Engagement with other Councils, Executive, NILGA &amp; Traders.</li> <li>- Draft Asset Management / Draft Estate &amp; Events Strategy</li> <li>- Explored accounting and taxation issues regarding Joint Ventures and special purpose vehicles.</li> <li>- Increased collaboration with private / public sector across NI &amp; ROI. Working with 12 new experiences which will be aligned with TNI 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' brand. (Secured DAERA funding)</li> </ul>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing seasonal campaigns with online engagement through click, comment &amp; share tools.</li> <li>- Support mediums provided through webinars &amp; Wats App to the Hospitality Sector (as a result of Covid). Funding acquired via Tourism NI.</li> <li>- The new Visit Mid Ulster website was funded by Tourism NI, launched Oct 21, the Spring Campaign in March 22 will reinforce the Brand and align with Tourism NI Embrace a Giant Spirit campaign.</li> <li>- Working Groups &amp; Project Teams established to secure / manage external funding with a Bid Writing Framework in place (managed by Procurement Team) to assist in preparing economic appraisals etc.</li> </ul>
6	Fraud, theft or bribery occurring within Economic Development	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benchmarking follow tendering procedures</li> <li>- Data checking takes place through Internal Audit</li> <li>- Encryption, staff awareness, passwords, Access controls, Restricted Access and Security policy</li> <li>- Internal and External Audit checks takes place</li> <li>- Internet use policy, Surf control, Access controls, Management reports on internet usage, software audit facility.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Random spot checks by trained staff and documentation of same takes place</li> <li>- Tenders are carried out by experienced/trained staff</li> <li>- Trained staff carry out monitoring checks</li> </ul>
7	Failing to deliver a programme & drawdown maximum funding possible	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular internal officer meetings held.</li> <li>- Assessment of progress against Work Plan.</li> <li>- Identification of potential issues at an early stage.</li> <li>- Regular communication with funder(s) to update on progress and agree solutions.</li> <li>- Management control procedures are in place and staff training provided on the implementation of funder operating guidance.</li> </ul>
8	EU Exit	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EU Exit is on the agenda on a regular basis at internal meetings.</li> <li>- Implications being considered regionally.</li> <li>- Mid Ulster Brexit Working Group formed November 2018.</li> <li>- MUDC Officers (from Economic Development) are following Brexit events and circulating relevant information to Businesses.</li> <li>- There is a minimum two-year lead in period providing time to adapt to new policies and procedures</li> </ul>
9	Covid-19	9	Impacts on:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff working locations</li> <li>- The full delivery of LED business programmes.</li> <li>- The full delivery of Council events</li> <li>- Delivering Enterprise week events for Businesses</li> <li>- Delivery of RDP Village Renewal Programme</li> </ul>
10	<p>New 'Entrepreneurship Support Service' (ESS) Due to scale and volume this impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic development staff resources (vs new structure)</li> <li>- Department Budget</li> <li>- Risk management</li> <li>- Legal services</li> <li>- Procurement</li> <li>- Communications</li> </ul>	9	The new 'ESS' is in early stages of development. This is an entirely new business support service and delivery model, seeking to achieve a regional approach with sub-regional flexibility. Mitigating actions are currently being identified by the Lead Council (Belfast City Council) with Lead Officers in each Council being requested to liaise within their own Councils for support. BCC will also provide a 'Risk Management' workshop for all Councils in April 2023 to identify further mitigating actions required.
11	Failure to miss deadlines for the development of marketing to inform visitors of what is on offer to the visitor.	6	To ensure that there is a robust marketing strategy with resources.
12	Failure to deliver the tourism strategy action plan	6	Regular engagement with the sector currently being undertaken. Ongoing engagement with customer base being delivered via online platforms to ensure customer relationships are maintained. Regular team meetings discussing programming.
13	Funding and other opportunities missed for MUDC area.	6	Ongoing scanning being undertaken by all officers. Team meeting agenda item, Officers

			have been assigned to investigate funding opportunities.
14	Misuse or inconsistent use of the Council's branding internally and externally.	6	Brand guidelines in place, reviewed and updated. Service oversees and has oversight of brand application and manages internal graphic design service to ensure correct application.
15	Ineffective use of the Council's social media channels.	6	Documented protocol issued to all staff, only designated staff with access to content management of social media channels, ongoing monitoring of social media channels and regular contact meetings with service/facility-based social media editors.
16	Failure to adhere to Public Sector Bodies (website and mobile apps) Accessibility regulations.	2	Accessibility standards monitored on a weekly basis using the third party tool, Silktide, issues addressed either directly via the service or, where required, by engaging with the Council's web development company to address technical accessibility issues.
17	Failure to communicate effectively in response to emergencies or crisis situations.	8	Emergency / Business Continuity Plan in place with sections relating to Communication Plan. Ongoing review of lessons learned in response to managing communications in emergency or crisis situations & continued attendance at the EP Public Information/Media Working Group

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



### **3.0 OUR STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

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

#### **3.1 EQUALITY DUTY**

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

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

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

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