



***Chief Executive's Directorate  
Service Plan 2024/2025***

**DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE  
PLAN - 2024 / 2025**

Date

Consulted within staff team

22/4/24

Discussed & signed off by Director

8/5/24

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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 development, 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 Tourism team is responsible for the successful management of Council's Tourism and Heritage Service. Its key functional responsibilities are district wide strategic tourism and heritage 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.

The 25.71 staff complement within the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes team are located across three main sites in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt

#### **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.

There are 5.5 staff members within the service structure, all based at the Council's Magherafelt offices.

## **1.2 Responsibilities**

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

This Department is specifically responsible for the development, implementation and management of a wide range of key strategic local and regional initiatives to develop the district. The main thematic areas are highlighted below.

#### **Economic Development**

- Develop and deliver a range of economic support programmes, (including the new 11-Council collaborative Go Succeed service) 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.
- Manage / service a range of Working Groups and Partnerships such as Council's Broadband Working Group, the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee, Town Centre Forums, Labour Market Partnership etc.
- Progress opportunities to further develop strategic local, regional and cross border alliances by partnering with others, eg, Irish Central Border Area Network, A5/N2 Cross Border Committee, Sliabh Beagh Committee, Lough Neagh Partnership, Sperrins Partnership, Lough Neagh Rescue, etc.
- Maximise opportunities for development and inward investment to the district from a range of sources, collaborating with appropriate local, regional, national, and European partners etc.

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

- Manage, develop, and deliver a comprehensive range of initiatives relating to Urban and Rural Regeneration to support the growth and development of a competitive retail sector across Mid Ulster, and the reinvigoration of rural areas; eg, Town Business Spruce Up Schemes, Mid Ulster Gift Card, Maghera Public Realm, 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 urban and rural areas.
- Identify regeneration priorities from Masterplans, Village Plans as agreed by Council and progress revitalise/regeneration schemes across the Mid Ulster.
- 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 South West Industrial Investment Challenge Fund
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)
- Development of Strategic Opportunity Sites (Ann Street, Dungannon and the former Maghera High School site)
- Community Planning – Economic Growth Initiatives
- Levelling Up Fund - Maghera.
- Digital Transformation Flexible Fund

## **Tourism/Heritage**

- Develop and progress initiatives identified in Council's Tourism Action Plan and complete the new Heritage Strategy for the District.
- 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 and heritage to ensure Mid Ulster is an attractive and competitive location.
- Identify sources of external funding opportunities for tourism and heritage, formulating fund bids and liaising with funding bodies to maximise the tourism/heritage profile of Mid Ulster.
- Provide guidance and professional advice to Stakeholders and elected members, ensuring clear communication, and delivery of Tourism and Heritage services.

**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 (but is not limited to)

- 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 proactive management of media relations
- Delivery of in-house graphic design services
- 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Internal:</b> Other Council Departments, Elected Members, Senior Management Team, and Staff</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>External:</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government Departments and Agencies (DfE, DfI, DfC, Invest NI, DAERA, Dept for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSW Growth Deal Councils and associated Project Partners</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local businesses, social enterprises and farmers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further and Higher Education Providers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ENI &amp; Local Enterprise Agencies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPs and MLAs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional sectoral representative bodies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local and Regional Media</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP), Chambers of Commerce, Town Centre Forums.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inward Investors</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community / voluntary sectors</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Enterprise NI (SENI)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Northern Ireland</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Ireland</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Trust</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport NI</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sperrin's Partnership</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lough Neagh Partnership and Lough Neagh Rescue</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Trade</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Organisers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outscape</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ulster Scots Agency</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICBAN</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOLACE Economic Development Group</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MEGA</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Ulster Construction Cluster/Forum</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Ulster Residents</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Service Users</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funders</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected Members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Staff</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Government Departments e.g., DfC, DfI, DAERA, DfE</li> </ul>

## 1.4 Performance Overview in 2023/24 (Retrospective Review)

### 1.4.1 Economic Development and Strategic Programmes

<b>2023/2024 Performance Response/ Overview</b> <b>(What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status:</b> <b>Activity was - Completed</b> <b>/Commenced/ Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid Ulster Town Business Spruce Up Scheme. Capital Funding secured from the Department for Communities. Funding to the value of £200,000 currently committed to schemes in town centre boundary areas within the towns of Dungannon, Coalisland, Cookstown and Magherafelt.</li> </ul>	On-Going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NI Business Start Up Programme (Go For It) - due to deliver at least 128 Plans (promoting 77 jobs by 30 Sept 2023) Outcome - 80 jobs promoted supporting 134 clients with Plans</li> <li>Start Up support to be delivered via new 'Go Succeed' Service from Nov 2023 – March 2025 (Yr 1 target 194 – achieved 299 clients engaged)</li> </ul>	Completed (30 September 2023)  Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Growth and Scaling support to be delivered via new 'Go Succeed' Service from Nov 2023 – March 2025 (Yr. 1 target – support to 200 businesses achieved)</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four Business Support Programmes completed Feb 2023) (Funded: 60% EU/ERDF, 20% Invest NI, 20% Council) outcomes to be independently evaluated            Gearing for Growth Programme, Tender Ready Programme, Digital First Programme and Transform Programme</li> </ul> <p>Independent Evaluation (completed Sept 2023) confirmed following key outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 714 business places taken up (of target 690)</li> <li>- 344 new jobs created (against target of 900) – valued at £7.33M</li> <li>- 32 businesses won new work of £28.45M (against target of £5m)</li> <li>- 57 businesses accepted as Invest NI Quality Referrals (against target of 90)</li> <li>- 31 Mid Ulster businesses offered £1.015M from Invest NI's Ambition to Grow Fund</li> </ul>	Completed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership</b></li> <li>- Developed and submitted a Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24 to the Department for Communities (DfC) for funding.</li> <li>- Delivered the Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New programmes on-going with 132 residents furthest from the labour market supported into employment.</li> <li>○ Range of employer support events delivered – both face to face and via online seminar, providing support to local organisations in employability related subjects</li> <li>○ 6 Job Fairs held – 5 local fairs in partnership with our 3 Jobs and Benefits Offices (Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt) and one large Jobs and Apprenticeship Fair. Minimum 15 residents gained employment because of attending the fairs.</li> <li>○ Developed a Three-Year Strategy for Mid Ulster LMP 2024-2027</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Letter of offer for £386,510.71 received from DfC to deliver Action Plan (including additional funding allocated February 2024).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MSW Growth Deal</b></li> <li>- Developed Strategic Outline Cases for Desertcreat Industrial lands Project and Sperrins Slieve Gallion Project. The Desertcreat project has since evolved into the Desertcreat Green Innovation Business Park and a Programme Business Case has commenced.</li> <li>- Progress A29 Cookstown Bypass to Draft Orders stage and Public Information Event.</li> <li>- A successful funding application was submitted to the Innovate UK Fast Followers Programme on behalf of the MSW Region. The funding will help to further develop each Council's net zero delivery plans, improve delivery pathways, and enable adoption at scale of innovative products and services throughout the local economy.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Draft Orders issued</p> <p>Letter of offer for £300k received from Innovate UK for the period 2023-25.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Shared Island Funding (SIF)</b></li> <li>- In 2022, Council partnered in three cross-border projects which bid into the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund.</li> <li>- The projects involved 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> </ul>	<p>Three Cross-Border Studies completed.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The outputs included; 1) a feasibility study for ringforts at Tullaghoge and Killahurk, 2) the development of Report to investigate the feasibility of enhancing cross border economic growth, innovation, clustering and networking in key growth sectors through the development of strategic green industrial serviced land and enterprise space for SMEs (Desertcreat), and 3) a feasibility study for the development of an Eco Tourism Destination in Sliabh Beagh.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (Monday 13 November – Friday 17 November 2023)</b></li> <li>- Theme of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2023 was challenge, adopt and succeed. Throughout the week 11 free events had been held both on-line and in person.</li> <li>- Wide range of topics relevant to the needs of businesses had been provided.</li> <li>- 700 business people attended the programme of events during Enterprise Week.</li> </ul>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Urban Regeneration Initiatives – Maghera Regeneration Project</b></li> <li>- Council successfully secured £9.1m from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities’ Levelling Up Fund to support the regeneration of Maghera to include a town centre public realm scheme, the redevelopment of the former High School site as a Business Park and the creation of a Wetland Park. Economic Development and Strategic Programmes are the client team on the delivery of the public realm scheme and the business park with the technical support being received from under the Environment Directorate to oversee the management of Maghera Regeneration Project.</li> <li>- Council appointed a contractor at the end of March 2024 to deliver Maghera Public Realm Scheme.</li> </ul>	On-going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Ulster Gift Card</b></li> <li>- This initiative supports the ethos of shopping local.</li> <li>- To date 226 businesses have registered/pending across the district.</li> <li>- Over £75K has been uploaded onto gift cards and spent in participating businesses within Mid Ulster.</li> </ul>	On-Going

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reduced Christmas Car Parking Charges and Christmas Campaign</b></li> <li>- As in previous years Dungannon &amp; Magherafelt benefitted from reduced Christmas Car Parking charges over the Christmas period.</li> <li>- A district wide Christmas Marketing Campaign had been delivered to promote the retail/hospitality offering in 2023, including a TV Advertisement.</li> </ul>	Complete
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#### 1.4.2 Tourism Performance Overview in 2023/24 (Retrospective Review)

<b>2023/2024 Performance Response/ Overview – Tourism (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b>	<b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b>
<p><b>Broadened the appeal of visitor attractions through experience development and therefore increasing footfall at our tourism attractions.</b></p> <p>Funding was secured to mentor 6 new visitor experiences within the district. Two experiences are currently going through the 'Embrace A Giant Spirit' brand alignment process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 1798 rebellion with a focus on Watty Graham (Currently going through brand alignment process)</li> <li>• Killymoon Castle WW2 story (Currently going through brand alignment process)</li> <li>• Ulster Fry</li> <li>• Broughderg History tour</li> <li>• Ben's Hollow Forge</li> <li>• The Three Sisters Experience</li> </ul>	Completed
<p><b>Delivery of Mid Ulster's Tourism Action Plan</b></p> <p>As a result of the success of the Trade and Consumer shows with the robust seasonal marketing campaigns, the MUDC Tourism team maintained its focus on the ROI, GB and International markets.</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 and touchscreens 'Visit Mid Ulster Unwinding Time.' Content for the touchscreen is a live feed from the <a href="http://www.visitmidulster.com">www.visitmidulster.com</a> website.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Increased attendance at trade and consumer shows.</b></p> <p>Tourism staff attended eight national and international trade and consumer shows across Ireland, UK and Europe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday World Dublin</li> <li>• Nordics Workshop Stockholm</li> <li>• World Travel Market</li> <li>• Meet the Buyer Belfast</li> <li>• Clogher Valley show</li> <li>• Irish Tour Operators Association</li> <li>• Flavours London</li> <li>• Great Days Out</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Delivered a series of events, Hidden Heritage, Great Days Out, Food Heritage Event, 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 2023 across the district which attracted the staycation market. In September 2023 the Sperrins Hillwalking Programme took place, following the success of this a further hill walking programme is scheduled to take place again in 2024/25. The Great Days Out initiative showcased over 26 tourism businesses to 80 group organisers and members of the public at an event in 2023. A successful Food Heritage Event (branded as Taste Mid Ulster) took place in Moy on 8-9 March 2024.</p> <p>Draft Heritage Plan for Mid Ulster is nearing completion.</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 186 businesses.</li> <li>• Delivered six in-house business mentoring in addition to Tourism NI's TED programme to 120 tourism businesses.</li> <li>• Four active clusters as highlighted below with up to 50 businesses collaboratively working with Invest NI. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loughinsholin Cluster</li> <li>2. Archaeology Heritage and History Cluster</li> <li>3. Clogher Valley Cluster</li> <li>4. Outdoor Cluster</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hosted six meetings with Tourism Development Group</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Service Level Agreements and Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Level Agreement in place with Lough Neagh Partnership</li> <li>• Service Level Agreement in place with Lough Neagh Rescue</li> <li>• Partnership Agreement in place with Sperrins Partnership</li> </ul>	<p>Completed for 2023/24  Completed for 2023/24  Completed for 2023/24</p>

**1.4.3 Marketing and Communications Performance Overview in 2023/24 -Retrospective Review**

<p align="center"><b>2023/2024 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities)</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop and deliver an integrated marketing and communications plan to address dog fouling and littering hotspots.</b></li> </ul> <p>The service developed and delivered an integrated marketing and communications plan to address dog fouling and littering throughout 2023-24. Actions focused on several key areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big Spring Clean Campaign launched in April 2023 encouraging residents to organise Big Spring Clean events in their areas. Reminding residents that we loan the litter pickers, provide the bin bags and collect the rubbish after the event. The efforts help to keep Mid Ulster clean, tidy and free from rubbish.</li> <li>• Dog fouling campaign launched in June 2023 encouraging responsible dog ownership by cleaning up dog mess and carrying poo bags at all times for disposing of dog waste to help keep our district clean and tidy and to help protect the environment.</li> <li>• Rubbish Visitor campaign shared in June 2023 encouraging residents not to be a ‘rubbish visitor’ by leaving no trace behind of their visit to our parks and forests by disposing of any waste properly in bins to help keep Mid Ulster clean and tidy.</li> <li>• Publicity of the chewing gum task force carried out in July 2023. The Council secured a grant of £25K from the chewing gum task force to remove chewing gum from our footpaths which helped restore unsightly paths in our towns and kept paths presentable and clean.</li> <li>• Further dog fouling campaign publicity issued in July and August encouraging residents to continue to exercise responsible dog ownership by cleaning up after their dog while out and about at our parks, forests and footpaths to help keep Mid Ulster clean and tidy.</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p>

- Publicity issued in July 2023 about Mid Ulster securing 5 green flags for Dungannon Park, Davagh Forest Park, Ballyronan Marina, Maghera Walled Garden & Hill of the O'Neill emphasising the standards upheld at our parks and outdoor spaces, encouraging residents to help keep them that way out of civic pride.
- Paint reuse scheme was launched in July 2023. This scheme prevented the illegal dumping of paint in the district by introducing a handy and environmentally friendly way for disposing of any unwanted paint.
- Uniform reuse scheme launched in August 2023 encouraging residents to donate any used uniform items in good condition so they can be reused to avoid unnecessary dumping which will affect the environment, while at the same time helping families who may not be able to afford brand new school uniforms to purchase the items more easily at a reduced cost.
- Vape recycling campaign carried out in September 2023 encouraging residents to dispose of vapes correctly to avoid littering and to reduce contamination in our household refuse bins.
- Recycle Week 2023 publicity issued in October 2023 - Join the Big Recycling Hunt - calling on children aged 5 to 11 in Mid Ulster to take the lead in protecting our environment and looking after our planet.
- International E-Waste Day publicity was carried out in October 2023- highlighting the importance of recycling ALL vapes separately from household waste & recycling to protect the environment and prevent disposal of vapes on our roads and paths.
- A Halloween recycling campaign ran from 26 – 31 October 2023 to promote the importance of recycling properly and reducing food waste over the Halloween period.
- European Week for Waste Reduction publicity was issued in November 2023– this year's theme was packaging, so we encouraged residents not to use unnecessary packaging to help protect the environment and reduce dumping on our roads.
- A Christmas Recycling Campaign ran from 5 December 2023 to 3 January 2024 to encourage residents to recycle properly and reduce food waste over the Christmas period.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further dog fouling campaign publicity issued in January 2024 to remind residents to exercise responsible dog ownership by ensuring to clean up after their dog to help keep the district clean and tidy.</li> <li>• A Food waste recycling campaign ran from 19 – 29 February 2024 encouraging residents to reduce food waste through reuse and recycling to help them save up to £1,000 a year while also protecting and benefiting our environment and planet.</li> <li>• Big Spring Clean promotion for 2024 commenced in February 2024 encouraging residents to keep our district tidy by taking part in Big Spring Clean events for the new season and organising them in their areas. Reminding them that we support all efforts by loaning litter pickers, providing the bin bags and collecting the rubbish afterwards.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Implement Digital Transformation Communications actions to contribute to a more connected Mid Ulster</b></li> <li>• The service has continued to manage the review and updating of content on the Council’s website, removing content that is underused and updating change items, for example, new services, initiatives, price changes across leisure, planning, environmental services and cemeteries.</li> <li>• Web accessibility, content and user experience has remained a priority for the service.</li> <li>• The website has received 424,401 visitors over the course of 2023.</li> <li>• An email marketing tool has been secured and an initial template has been designed to support delivery of corporate email messaging in the next financial year.</li> <li>• The service has provided significant support to assist with customer service, registration, missed bins and dog licencing digital transformation strategy work throughout 2023-24.</li> <li>• The service has completed a pilot exercise to research social media management tools which involved creating a long list of martech social media management tools that would streamline our</li> </ul>	Completed

<p>publishing and response to enquiries. A resulting short list of three were trialed by the service and the results of the trial used to identify the best tool in relation to effectiveness, efficiency and value for money to be implemented in 2024-25.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop and deliver a Sustainable Communications Plan to support the Council’s sustainability and climate change programme</b></li> <li>• Initial research for a sustainable communications plan has been completed and the service has engaged with the Waste and Sustainability Officer as well as participated in the Climate Change Action Plan workshops.</li> <li>• Further progress is dependent on the publication of the Council’s Climate Change Action Plan (still to be confirmed at the time of writing) which will inform the final Sustainable Communications Plan.</li> </ul>	Commenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop and deliver an internal communications strategy and action plan that connects, engages and brings together all Council staff.</b></li> <li>• Due to resource pressures within the service structure, this objective was paused and will be carried forward to the next service improvement plan.</li> <li>• The service continues to contribute to the delivery of member and staff briefings and manages the intranet as the Council’s key internal communications channel. It developed a Staff Matters newsletter template and works with the HR team to publish to all staff within the organisation.</li> </ul>	Carried Forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To continue to create and deliver an integrated communications plan for the Council’s capital investment programme.</b></li> <li>• The service has contributed significantly to the communication of the outputs of the Council’s capital investment programme, through inputting into the Capital Projects Board and delivering communications activities across several key investment programmes, including those listed below.</li> </ul>	Completed



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant assistance has been given to support the Maghera Regeneration Programme, which has included creation and delivery of communications activity across all three strands of the programme, managing significant media and online social media interest in the programme.</li><li>• Support has been given through the marketing and communications service for community engagement events for the Coalisland Canal Active Travel and the Altmore and Cappagh projects.</li><li>• An online and print publicity campaign was delivered to mark the official opening of the Derrynoyd and Drumcairne Forests capital projects in March 2024.</li></ul> |  |
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## 2.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICES AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE - 2024/25

The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Department has access to throughout 2024-25 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

### 2.1 Budget 2024/2025

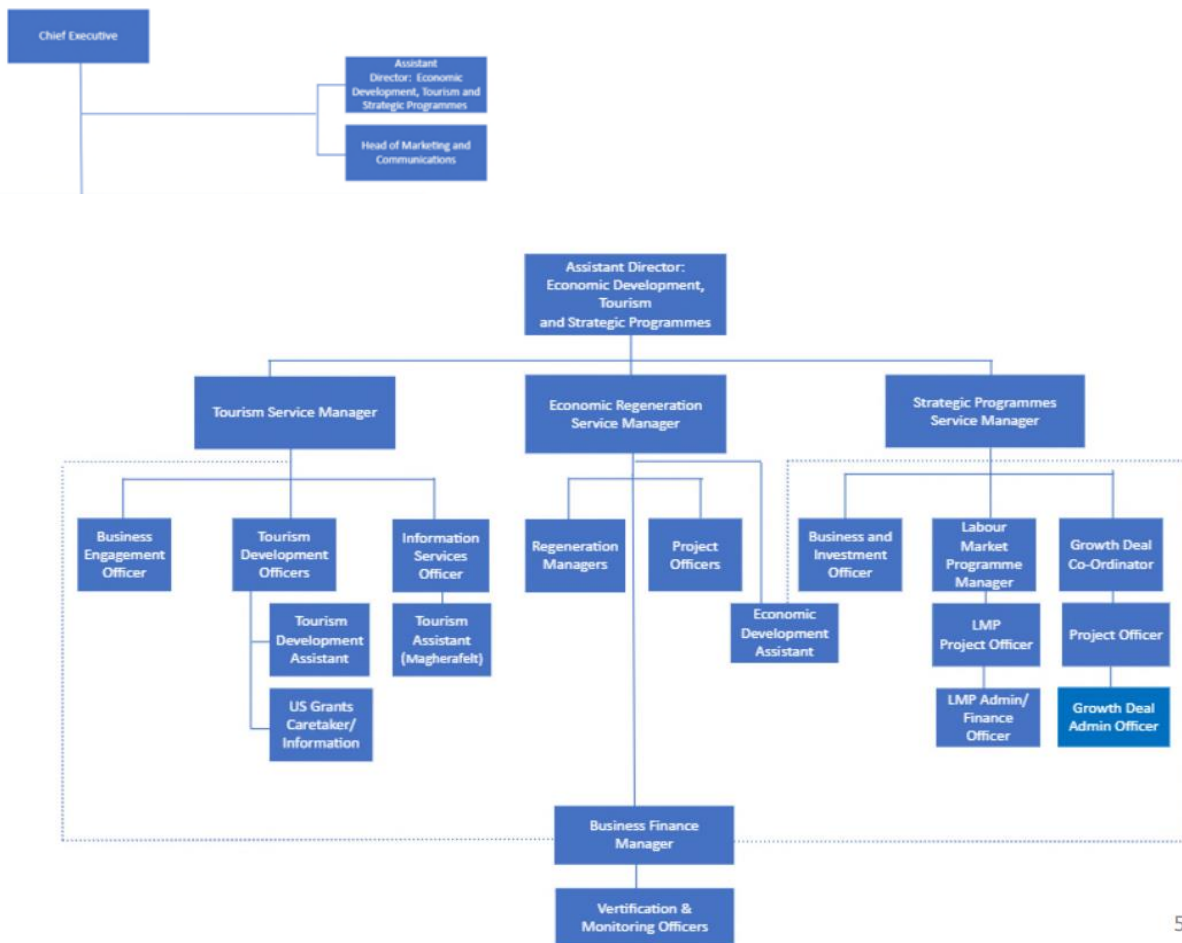
<b>Economic Development and Strategic Programmes</b>	<b>£</b>
General Economic Development	1,349,014
Town Strategy	480,375
Gross Budget	1,829,389
Income	188,428
Net Budget for 2024-25	1,640,961

<b>Tourism</b>	<b>£</b>
Bridewell	99,630
Tourism General	428,370
US Grants	10,159
Gross Budget	538,159
Income	58,018
Net Budget for 2024-25	480,141

<b>Marketing and Communications</b>	<b>£</b>
Central ICT Costs	5,200
Fees	3,000
Office Expenses	92
Marketing Costs	63,000
Staff Costs	311,630
Gross Budget	382,922

## 2.2 Departmental Services - Council Structure - 2024/2025

### Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes Department



5

<b>Assistant Director</b>	1
<b>Service Managers</b>	3
<b>Economic Regeneration</b>	
Managers	3.8
Officers	5.8
Remaining Team	1
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>10.6</b>
<b>Tourism</b>	
Officers	3.24
Remaining Team	1.87
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>5.11</b>
<b>Strategic Programmes Section</b>	
Managers	2
Officers	6
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total Staff Within EDT&amp;SP</b>	<b>25.71</b>

## Marketing and Communications



Staffing	No. of Staff
Assistant Director	
Head of Service	
Managers	2
Officers	3.5
Remaining Team	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.5</b>

### **2.3 Service Work Plan- 2024/25**

This plan outlines the core activities and actions, which will form the Chief Executive's Directorate Service Work Plan for 2024-2025.

This is a high-level capture of the Department and the Service outcomes /activities/measures as well as some improvement undertakings which the services will focus on throughout 2024-2025.

The Plan links to hierarchy of other plans and measures such as:

1. Community Plan
2. Strategic plans e.g. Local Development Plan
3. 2024-2028 Corporate Plan priorities,
4. Annual Corporate Performance Improvement (PIP plan)
5. Corporate Improvement Project Plans (CIP's)
6. Statutory Indicators,
7. Corporate Health Indicators

Mid Ulster District Council's Improvement Objectives for 2024 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

# SERVICE WORK PLAN 2024/2025

Service Name: Economic Development & Strategic Programmes						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy			Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
CORP-001	Support delivery of a strong business economy by fostering start-ups; creating growth/scalability opportunities; and job promotion.	Deliver the requisite number of approved business plans for start-ups to achieve current Statutory Jobs Target * <i>*Due to ongoing considerations this measure is currently under review by DfC and DfE. DfE have advised the new agreed amended lower Stat target of 153 (jobs promoted) has been agreed (July2023) but DfE yet to formally confirm with Councils.</i> Nov 2023 - delivery is via the new 11-Council Go Succeed Enterprise Support Service (led by Belfast City Council)	31/03/25	Business & Investment Officer	Support service to budding entrepreneurs to develop a client-led business plan and start a business.	No. of jobs promoted through business start-up activity. (Target: 153 jobs promoted - 256 approved client business plans completed per annum)  <i>* Changed to target of 153 jobs created (see column 2) via 256 Plans</i>
	Support delivery of a strong business economy by fostering start-ups; creating growth/scalability opportunities; and job promotion.	Deliver and manage growth support to 200 businesses and social enterprises. From Nov 2023 - delivery is via new 11-Council Go Succeed	31/03/25	Business & Investment Officer	Building the sustainability, growth, and job creation potential of Mid Ulster businesses/social enterprises	No. of businesses supported through growth orientated scaling programmes and

		<p>Enterprise Support Service (led by Belfast City Council)</p> <p>Participate in and promote the 3-year NI 11 Council Digital Transformation Flexible Fund ('DTFF') led by Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council. 40 Mid Ulster businesses to avail of funding in year 2</p>	31/03/25		<p>The DTFF will provide funding to businesses to implement digital transformation measures.</p>	<p>events (will include Tourism)</p> <p>(Target: 200 businesses / social enterprises supported per annum)</p> <p>(Target: 90 jobs created and 40 businesses to avail of funding opportunity to deliver digital transformation measures).</p>
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# SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

Service Name: Economic Development & Strategic Programmes						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy			Theme 2: Leadership and Partnership for Local Growth			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
<b>No.001</b>	Profiling Mid Ulster Business: Marketing, Communication Campaigns	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working within internal communications across the district to deliver a number of key messaging campaigns that will capture and promote businesses within and beyond the district.</li> <li>Undertake a number of Marketing and Promotion campaigns across 5 town centres during key retail periods to promote offering and town centre brands.</li> <li>Profile and publicise Business Related Good News Stories (e.g. new business openings, job creation, increased revenue,</li> </ol>	31/03/25	Regeneration Managers,  Project Officers  Marketing and Communications Team.	<i>Raising the profile of local businesses in the district by boosting visibility, driving economic growth, enhancing community engagement, facilitating networking and improving the district's reputation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number. of key messaging local campaigns delivered promoting local businesses throughout the district in the year.</li> <li>Number of marketing and promotion town centre campaigns undertaken during key retail periods.</li> <li>Number of participating businesses "Good News" stories profiled and publicised in year.</li> </ol>



		<p>successful expansions etc)</p> <p>4. Promote and build on the success of the Mid Ulster Gift Card in year.</p> <p>5. Provide reduced Carparking Charges during the Christmas period.</p> <p>6. Develop a Mid Ulster Business Welcome Pack.</p>				<p>4. Value in £ of Mid Ulster Gift Cards purchased and redeemed.</p> <p>5. Number of weeks that parking fees were reduced in Council car parks over the Christmas period in Dungannon and Magherafelt</p> <p>6. Number of Mid Ulster Welcome Packs distributed in year.</p>
<b>No.002</b>	Delivery of Strategic Events	<p>Calendar of corporate events in five town centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cookstown Continental Market</li> <li>• Summer Bash, Coalisland</li> <li>• Walled Garden Maghera</li> <li>• Halloween in Dungannon</li> <li>• Halloween in Coalisland</li> <li>• Christmas Lights Switch On in Cookstown</li> </ul>	31/03/25	<p>Regeneration Managers</p> <p>Project Officers</p> <p>Corporate Events Team.</p>	Increase Civic Pride, and footfall across the five town centres	Delivery of ten town centre events in the five town centres during 2024/25

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lights Switch On in Dungannon</li> <li>• Lights Switch On in Magherafelt</li> <li>• Christmas Lights Switch On in Coalisland</li> <li>• Christmas Lights Switch On in Maghera</li> </ul>				
<b>No.003</b>	Events	Develop several events in towns and villages to benefit businesses and local communities (includes Taste Mid Ulster event in Pomeroy)	31/03/2025	Regeneration Managers  Project Officers	Increase Civic Pride, dwell time, spend and footfall across the five town centres.	Number of events held  Number of evaluations completed
<b>No.004</b>	Physical Regeneration /Improving Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delivery of Maghera Public Realm.</li> <li>2. Development of a work plan to support the need to address dereliction and vacancy. (subject to both human and financial commitment from government departments – DFC &amp; DAERA)</li> </ol>	31/03/2025	Regeneration Service Manager  Regeneration Managers	<p>Improved town centre aesthetics and enhanced civic pride in Maghera once the public realm works are completed.</p> <p>A working document that will facilitate and create forward looking interventions that can be used to source external funding that will enhance the streetscapes within Mid Ulster</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion of Maghera Public Realm Scheme as client lead in partnership with Environment Directorate.</li> <li>2. Working document plan to lobby and submit applications to relevant departments such as DFC and other potential funders.</li> </ol>

		<p>3. Progress early actions recommended within Cookstown Saturday Market Scoping Study.</p> <p>4. Assessment to appoint professional services to conduct a costed intervention/health check for rural and urban areas. (subject to support from Govt Depts – (DFC/DAERA)</p> <p>5. Town Business Spruce Up Scheme  - Make a £200K funding bid to DFC to acquire monies to deliver Phase 2 'Reserve List' Projects on the Town Business Spruce Up Scheme   - Progress Phase 1 Town Business Spruce Up Scheme</p> <p>6. Continue to progress development of key opportunity sites – Maghera High School</p>		<p>Strategic Programmes Service Manager</p>	<p>Phased reinvigoration of Cookstown Saturday Market by undertaking initial actions.</p> <p>Increased private sector investment in Mid Ulster</p> <p>Increased private sector investment through redevelopment of a long-term vacant site.</p>	<p>3. Measure actions within Cookstown Saturday Market Scoping Study.</p> <p>4. Working document to explore intervention/health checks to support regeneration in rural and urban areas across the district.</p> <p>5. Secure £ in additional funding from DFC to deliver applications on the Phase 2 Reserve List for the Town Business Spruce Up Scheme.</p> <p>Complete Phase 1 Town Business Spruce Up Scheme</p>
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		7. Continue to progress Ann Street Development site, Dungannon		Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Increased private sector investment through redevelopment of a long-term vacant site.	6. Planning permission secured for 6. Maghera High School site by Q2/3  7. Agreement for lease completion and Planning application submitted by Q2. Commitment and Consultation to progress on to Business Case stage.
<b>No.005</b>	Place Shaping Plans	1. To collaboratively develop a robust strategic place shaping plan for Cookstown with proactive engagement, consultation with key stakeholders to develop a plan that reflects the aspirations and needs of Cookstown communities by Summer 2025.  2. Establish an Officer Led Cross Departmental Task & Finish Group to share knowledge, address cross cutting issues and explore opportunities to enhance regeneration across the district.	30/09/2025	Economic Regeneration Service Manager  Economic Regeneration Managers	A meaningful place plan document, that will shape the future of Cookstown.  Co-ordinated approach for joint advocate on rural and urban issues/opportunities.	1. Delivery of Cookstown Place Plan by Sept 2025.  2. Number of Key Stakeholder Engagement and Consultations.

<b>No. 006</b>	Broadband and Telecommunications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work to deliver the objectives of the Broadband and Telecommunications Working Group.</li> <li>2. Work closely with DfE to enhance access to quality, reliable broadband and Telecommunications throughout the district.</li> </ol>	31/03/2025	Economic Regeneration Service Manager  Economic Regeneration Manager	Enhanced broadband and Telecommunications within the district.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of Broadband working group meetings to support lobbying and engagement with DfE and broadband/telecommunication providers.</li> </ol>
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## SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

Service Name: Economic Development & Strategic Programmes						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy			Theme 2: Leadership and Partnership for Local Growth			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.	
CORP-001	Visibly progress the Mid-South West Growth Deal initiatives.	1. Work in partnership with DfE to develop and secure approval for an Innovation Programme Business Case (Phase 1) to include Desertcreat Green Innovation Industrial Park project by Q2 (Sept 24)	30/09/24	Assistant Director, Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes	Potential availability of significant funding to implement a key MSW intervention in Mid Ulster	Number of Growth Deal projects progressed by 2028
		2. Work with DfI and other stakeholders to progress delivery of the A29 Cookstown Bypass to Outline Business Case stage (Phase 2)	30/09/25	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Improved transport connectivity in Mid Ulster	Number of Growth Deal Business Cases progressed by 2028.  Scheme Draft Orders Stage and statutory consultation completed.

		3. Continue to lobby DFI for the inclusion of a bypass for Dungannon in the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP)	31/03/25			Commence Phase 2 Outline Business Case  Scheme included in RSTNTP
<b>No.001</b>	MSW Fast Followers Programme	Support the delivery of the Fast Followers Programme within Mid Ulster during 2024/25	31/03/25	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Improved Net Zero skills and capability among local businesses in Mid Ulster.	100% progress on actions contained in the agreed Project Plan 2024/25
<b>No.002</b>	Supporting Employability and Skills	Deliver a Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2024-25* <i>*Subject to funding from the Department for Communities.</i>	31/03/25	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 Action Plan 2024-25 delivered (Subject to funding)
		Effectively deliver events which connect local people to local jobs and continues to support employers with skilled labour shortages.	31/03/25	LMP Manager	Addressing industry needs for skilled labour.	Up to 10 relevant events (face to face and online successfully delivered.
		Support MEGA in the delivery of a three-year Strategic Action Plan 2022-25.	31/03/25	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

		<p>Support the Mid Ulster Construction Cluster with an application to Invest NI to secure funding to deliver a Three-Year Action Plan (Subject to funding opportunity from Invest NI)</p>	31/03/25	Strategic Programmes Service Manager	Contribute to addressing skills and labour challenges facing the construction sector.	<p>Study and Action Plan developed</p> <p>Application submitted to Invest NI when funding opportunity becomes available.</p>
		<p>Develop and deliver a Multiply programme through the planning, implementation, and evaluation of a range of numeracy-based projects and initiatives throughout the district.</p>	31/03/25	Multiply Project Officer	Raising the numeracy levels of adults through the delivery of skills courses and qualifications.	<p>100% progress of no. of assigned actions for 2024-25 delivered.</p>
<b>No.003</b>	Business Support, Networking and Capacity Building	<p>Deliver Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (Nov 2024)</p> <p>Delivery of International Women's Events in March 2025</p> <p>Mid Ulster Business Awards 2024 (subject to Council agreeing to fund the awards)</p>	31/03/25	Economic Development & Strategic Programme	Improved capacity building, empowerment and opportunities for businesses trading within the district.	<p>Number of events</p> <p>Number of participants attending events.</p>



<b>No.004</b>	Industrial Land and Serviced Sites	Identify pilot project and explore potential funding opportunities in partnership with Invest NI.  Develop a Masterplan for the Desertcreat site (funded by Shared Island Fund).	31/03/25	Strategic Programmes Service Manager  Business & Investment Officer	Ensure an appropriate supply of employment land and premises.	Identify Pilot Project and secure funding for intervention.  Complete Masterplan
<b>No.005</b>	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 within EDTSP.	31/03/25	Strategic Programmes Service Manager  Business & Investment Officer	Potential to leverage financial investment into Mid Ulster	Two funding bids submitted for strategic projects
<b>No.006</b>	Promote Mid Ulster as an Investment location	Develop a high-profile video to showcase and promote Mid Ulster as an attractive investment location.	31/03/25	Strategic Programmes Service Manager  Business & Investment Officer	Increased opportunity to attract investment into Mid Ulster	Number of video impressions

# SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

Service Name: Tourism						
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>Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
<b>CORP-001</b>	Support delivery of a strong business economy by fostering start-ups; creating growth/scalability opportunities; and job promotion.	<p>Develop a portfolio of systems and communications channels to keep the tourism and heritage sectors informed and connected with each other 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>Continue to develop and grow our Taste Mid Ulster food and drink offering, upskilling the hospitality industry and hosting a Taste Mid Ulster Market.</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>	31/03/25	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>Sustainable growth and job creation in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry.</p>	<p>No. of businesses supported through growth orientated scaling programmes and events (will include Tourism)</p> <p>No. of businesses supported through mentoring programmes and events.</p> <p>(Target: 60 supported businesses per annum)</p> <p>Deliver 1 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Market.</p>

						Develop and deliver 2 new 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' brand aligned experiences.
<b>CORP-002</b>	Develop Mid Ulster as an enriched vibrant tourist destination.	<p>Deliver the actions within the tourism/heritage action plan for 2024/25.</p> <p>Delivery of a calendar of events such as Hidden Heritage, Great Days Out, Hillwalking, Taste Mid Ulster Food Market, Christmas Grotto.</p> <p>Increase destination digital presence via the Unwinding Time website and social media platforms.</p> <p>Robust seasonal marketing campaign centred around events and the tourism attractions.</p> <p>Collate NISRA tourism visitor stats and Visitor monitoring statistics.</p> <p>Analyse figures from Mid Ulster Council Tourism website and social media platforms.</p>	31/03/25	Tourism Service Manager and Tourism team.	<p>Direct economic benefit to the tourism and hospitality businesses helping them expand and increase their workforce.</p> <p>Reinforce the national and local tourism brand.</p> <p>Increased staycation and out of state visitors to Mid Ulster.</p>	No. of visitors (footfall) to Council visitor attractions.

<b>No. 001</b>	Explore funding opportunities for Tourism and Heritage projects.	<p>Bid for funding (DAERA, Shared Island, HLF, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland, PEACEPLUS).</p> <p>Design programmes of work established and agreed.</p> <p>Identify funding sources and complete bids for projects such as Sperrins/Slieve Gallion, Tullaghoge Fort and Sliabh Beagh.</p>	31/03/25	Tourism Service Manager and Tourism team	Investigate funding opportunities which could help produce high quality, innovative and immersive experiences/attractions that will preserve our tourism and heritage, increase visitor numbers and investment.	Number of funding bids made.
<b>No.002</b>	Lough Neagh Rescue	To benefit the Lough Shore area within Mid Ulster by providing faster response times for rescues and other operations carried out in and around the Western Shores of Lough Neagh, and provide an emergency flood response service for Mid Ulster.	31/03/25	Tourism Service Manager and Tourism team	Rescue service in situ across the Mid Ulster Lough Neagh shoreline.	Number of call outs on Lough Neagh
<b>No.003</b>	Sperrins Partnership	<p>Commencing work on the delivery of the short and long-term actions contained within the Brand and Tourism Action Plan.</p> <p>Identifying funding opportunities and creating the respective business cases (HLF, RDP, Peace Plus etc).</p>	31/03/25	Tourism Service Manager and Tourism team	Work with partner Councils in Sperrins Partnership to develop the Sperrins Region as a unique tourism and heritage destination.	<p>No. of visitors (footfall)</p> <p>No. Of events</p> <p>No. Of participants attending events.</p>

		<p>Forming strong cross boundary partnerships.</p> <p>Researching and identifying the best practice delivery structure for Sperrin region.</p> <p>The formation and development of the remaining Thematic Groups.</p> <p>The development of an AONB action and management plan for Sperrins.</p>				<p>Completion of Sperrins Management Plan</p>
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Service Name: Tourism						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy			Theme 2: Leadership and Partnership for Local Growth			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
<b>CORP-001</b>	Actively participate with other partners to substantially progress the co-ordinated management of Lough Neagh.	Develop an SLA for Lough Neagh Partnership.  Monitor 6 monthly and annually.  Provide funding.	31/03/25	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes  Tourism Manager	Contribute to the preservation economic growth and sustainability of Lough Neagh.	Number of engagements with other statutory bodies responsible for the co-ordinated management of Lough Neagh

# SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

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			Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
<b>No.001</b>	A connected, engaged and cohesive staff complement that feels informed and involved.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead on the research, development and delivery of a new intranet that is fit for purpose and suitable for integration within other online tools currently in place.</li> <li>Work with key content leads from each of the directorates to establish the functionality and content needed for a new intranet.</li> </ol>	Complete by 31/03/25	Marketing and Communications Development Manager / Design & Digital Officer	Improved internal communications that will contribute to a connected and engaged employee group that feels informed and involved.	SMT decision made. New intranet to be implemented (budget implications to be confirmed).
<b>No.002</b>	Ensure that the Council understands the needs of its staff in order to target communication effectively.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a staff survey to establish employee feedback and provide a benchmark for the development of internal communications</li> </ol>	December 2024	Marketing and Communications Development Manager	Results of the survey will inform effective internal communications strategy.	% of employees participating in survey Survey results

# SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

Service Name: Marketing and Communications						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 3.1 Education &amp; Skills - Our People are better qualified &amp; more skilled</i>			<i>Theme 3: Being the Best Council Possible</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
<b>No.003</b>	Improve cross-directorate/service communications and increase external PR opportunities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a pilot cross-service communications working group, chaired by the M&amp;C Development Manager that will improve communications.</li> <li>2. Hold four meetings of the group per year.</li> <li>3. Design and carry out campaigns plan in line with priorities raised by Working Group.</li> </ol>	<p>Group established by June 2024</p> <p>Programme of work agreed by July 2024</p>	Marketing and Communications Development Manager	<p>Communications will be improved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a key contact within each service area to develop positive communications initiatives.</li> <li>• Developing and embedding corporate communications</li> <li>• Sharing and disseminating good practice</li> <li>• Using knowledge, skills, and capabilities in a more effective and co-ordinated way</li> </ul>	<p>No . Of meetings held</p> <p>Media coverage</p> <p>Social media data</p>
<b>No.004</b>	Develop more engaging social media content such as video to explain Council priorities and activities and	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create corporate social media content plan to address key themes throughout the year.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content plan drafted by June 2024</li> </ul>	Marketing and Communications Development Manager	Stakeholders aware of Council's vision, priorities, and remit through effective campaigns.	Social media and digital analytics to measure reach and engagement



	to increase awareness of services Council provides.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Procure external video production company to assist in provision of content.</li> <li>3. Publish content on corporate social media channels.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company procured by August 2024</li> <li>• Completed by March 2025</li> </ul>		The awareness and understanding of the Council and the services it delivers is improved.	
<b>No.005</b>	Continue to develop and deliver an integrated marketing and communications plan to address dog fouling and littering hotspots	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and deliver quarterly action plans in partnership with the Environmental Health service to include positive stories about what we're doing well.</li> </ol>	Completed by March 2025	Marketing and Communications Officer (Corporate Lead)	Residents are supported to reduce dog fouling in their neighbourhoods. Reduction in incidents. Recognition is given to the efforts of community groups.	EH monitoring figures of incidents and hot spots Media coverage Social media data
<b>No.006</b>	Ensure our communications allows us to prepare, respond and recover in a crisis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft a crisis communications improvement plan including the development of a toolkit to include playbook.</li> </ol>	Completed by May 2024	Marketing and Communications Development Manager	The plan will assist in clarifying roles and responsibilities during a crisis, define how the M&C service will support the delivery of the BCP, build our crisis comms expertise, and create a living structure, that can be flexed to learnings as we deal with more crisis situations.	Improvement plan in place. Crisis comms toolkit in place.

# SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/2025

Service Name: Marketing and Communications						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 3.3 Education &amp; Skills - We are more entrepreneurial, innovative &amp; creative</i>			<i>Theme 2: Leadership and Partnership for Local Growth</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
<b>No.007</b>	Ensure the reputation of the Council is protected and raise the profile of the District in a positive way.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to provide a proactive approach to Council news and supply local, regional, and national media with ready-made stories.</li> <li>2. Continue to monitor the media for reputational issues and act if necessary.</li> <li>3. Improve social media monitoring through implementation of social media management tools.</li> <li>4. Secure 2-4 positive pieces of TV coverage a year from proactive media work and selling in of stories.</li> </ol>	Completed by March 2025	Marketing and Communications Development Manager	Our residents, businesses and visitors are aware of our activities and trust us because we communicate effectively.	90% of all press releases used by at least one media outlet 80% positive or neutral tone of coverage 2-4 TV pieces achieved

<b>No.008</b>	Ensure the Council's brand is applied consistently and within identity guidelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Review existing brand guidelines.</li><li>2. Extend brand guidelines to include tone of voice, style guide and all instances of brand application internally and externally.</li></ol>	Completed by September 2024	Marketing and Communications Development Manager	Our corporate body communications will be clear, consistent, unified, credible, and effective.	Revised brand guidelines are produced, communicated internally, and are in operation consistently.
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## **2.4 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 2024-25.

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	Failure to manage and deliver all Departmental funding (internal/external) in line with Governance procedures to effectively manage projects	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget, projections &amp; monitoring &amp; reporting progress in place. Policies &amp; Procedures in place for funding. Letter of offers/service level agreements/partnership agreements issued to third party organisations setting out terms &amp; conditions / targets / deadlines etc. Monthly monitoring returns made to funding bodies and capital planning team (where relevant). Funding approval reports submitted to the relevant Council Committee. Legal Services review all Legal Agreements between Council and funding partners/organisations (as applicable for each funding stream).</li> <li>- Ongoing engagement &amp; communication with Funders, Stakeholders, Staff &amp; Members. Structured team meetings with Agenda. Regular review of key existing and new risks in line with the changing risk landscape. PC&amp;SP 1-1 staff meetings with training / development plans in place.</li> <li>- Raising staff knowledge, awareness and ongoing training opportunities in line with Council's Information Governance procedures.</li> <li>- Ongoing staff development &amp; training provided to ensure compliance with statutory / mandatory requirements.</li> <li>- Economic Development, Tourism &amp; Strategic Programmes Service Improvement Plan and Action Plan</li> </ul>

			<p>in place annually and agreed by Council. Quarterly reporting to SMT on corporate improvement objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Networking / Collaboration with other Councils and Stakeholders to maximise resources and share information. Attended numerous internal / external meetings / working groups. Guidance provided to stakeholders. Ongoing review.</li><li>- Advance liaison with Councils Procurement Dept. for larger projects to ensure appropriate scheduling of procurement expertise etc.</li><li>- Initial governance procedures in place for Mid South West Growth Deal up to Head of Terms</li><li>- EDTSP officers to explore and maximise new funding opportunities for delivery of projects.</li><li>- Assurance that EDTSP financial priorities and commitments are aligned with Councils financial plan.</li><li>- Establishment of baselines to measure progress and outputs in programme delivery.</li><li>- Liaise with legal services to determine a working agreement/schedule to support EDTSP</li><li>- Ensure appropriate partnership agreements are in place.</li><li>- Governance for MSW Growth Deal post Head of Terms</li></ul>
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2.	Failure to maximise the tourism/heritage potential in the District.	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing seasonal campaigns with online engagement through click, comment &amp; share tools via Visit Mid Ulster website and social platforms to reinforce the brand and align with Tourism NI Embrace a Giant Spirit and Tourism Ireland campaigns.</li> <li>- Liaising with Council's Capital department in the management and statutory compliance of tourism assets, Bridewell and US Grants Ancestral Homestead with annual meetings with tenants.</li> <li>- Ongoing engagement and communication with funders, stakeholders, staff and members.</li> <li>- Raising staff knowledge, awareness and ongoing training opportunities in line with Councils Information Governance procedures.</li> <li>- Networking / Collaboration with other government departments and Stakeholders to maximise resources and share information to assist with the delivery of the Heritage Strategy. Ongoing review.</li> <li>- To increase the number of visitor footfall to Council visitor attractions with 3 seasonal campaigns</li> <li>- Manage tourism assets</li> <li>- Mid Ulster District Council's 5 year Heritage Strategy to be completed and launched</li> </ul>
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3.	Failure to prevent Fraud, bribery, theft	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Control/processes developed and reviewed to minimise the risk of fraud e.g. SoD management checks.</li> <li>- Data checking takes place through internal audit</li> <li>- Employees Code of Conduct in place with good ethical standards in place.</li> <li>- Encryption, staff awareness, passwords, access controls, restricted access, 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 facilities.</li> <li>- New policies are communicated to staff regularly.</li> <li>- Raising concerns/complaints handling process in place.</li> <li>- Random spot checks by trained staff and documentation of same takes place.</li> <li>- Tenders are carried out by experienced/trained staff. Adhere to Council procedures.</li> <li>- Trained staff carryout monitoring checks. Ongoing review of staff training needs with mandatory training required.</li> <li>- Implement existing controls.</li> <li>- Raise staff awareness.</li> <li>- Undertake random checks.</li> </ul>
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4.	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.
5.	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.
6.	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.
7.	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.
8.	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.