Corporate Services & Finance

Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

CONTENT

1.0   OVERALL PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE DEPARTMENT

1.1.   Purpose and Scope of the Directorate

The Corporate Services and Finance Directorate is responsible for the following Corporate Services: finance, procurement, IT, internal audit, legal services, governance and transformation within the Council and across all corporate functions.

Finance

The Finance department includes the following service areas:-

- Budget setting and facilitating/supporting the striking of the district Rate
- Financial reporting
- Management reporting
- Cash and bank management
- Supplier processing
- Payroll processing
- Income collection
- Treasury management
- Procurement
- Insurance

Legal

The Legal Services department is responsible for the management and the provision of a comprehensive legal advice and support service to the Council across the Council's wide range of functions and responsibilities.

The service seeks to provide high quality, proactive and timely advice, together with support in the development of where practicable innovative initiatives/solutions for the Council to assist it operate effectively and legally within the wider legal landscape.

IT

The IT service is responsible for the development and management of secure, robust, resilient, effective high-performance and where applicable, legally compliant, Council systems, applications and network infrastructure for data and voice (including provision for remote and wireless access).

It seeks to provide a set of affordable core appropriately licenced (where applicable) ICT services which are secure, up-to-date, easy to use and meet the needs of service users.

1.2   Responsibilities

The directorate is specifically responsible for the following services:

Finance

Budget setting and facilitating/supporting the Striking of the district Rate
* Budget setting and ensuring that the Council has access to sufficient funds to deliver its services and achieve its objectives.

Financial reporting
* This includes preparation and submission of annual financial statements and all other legislative reporting requirements.

Management reporting
* Facilitating effective budgetary control by delivering meaningful, accurate and timely reporting of financial performance against budget.

Cash and bank management
* Operation of an efficient and effective banking service and associated treasury management.

Supplier processing
* Operation of an efficient, effective and timely supplier processing service, which is compliant with the Council's policies, procedures and other relevant standards, whether set by the Council or other legitimate authority.

Payroll processing
* Operation of an efficient, effective and timely payroll service, which is compliant with all statutory requirements and relevant Council policies.

Income collection
* Securing all major sources of income, e.g. rate income, rate support grant, de-rating grant. Assisting other departments, where applicable, to promptly collect amounts due to the Council.

Procurement
* Facilitating efficient, effective and compliant procurement of goods and services. The service provides strategic and operational advice in relation to quotation and tendering exercises. It leads on tender exercises which are estimated/anticipated to have estimated contract values in excess of £30,000

Insurance
* Ensuring that Council is adequately insured against all reasonable and foreseeable risks in accordance with statutory requirements and the Council's risk appetite. The service is responsible for insurance renewals and administration.

Treasury management
- Managing the Council's cash balances to ensure that funds are available to settle liabilities when due and otherwise distributed between appropriate financial institutions to mitigate the risk of loss while retaining sufficient access to funds and where practicable earn a reasonable rate of return.

Internal Audit

Although Internal Audit is necessarily independent of direct organisational control, it forms part of the Corporate Services and Finance directorate. The service supports the Audit Committee and forms an important part of the Council's internal control system. It provides an independent assurance function and leads on risk management throughout the Council.

IT

- Authentication and authorisation (user account provisioning)
- Email And Office productivity suite
- Management information and administrative of systems
- Provision of infrastructure to support web and applications
- General purpose application software for line of business
- Data storage and backup
- Network Services & general Multi-function device support & printing
- Cyber and security service ,Anti-spam and virus protection
- Technical support
- Data Protection Support & Advice
- Mobile, Wireless and Telephony Support

Legal Services

- The provision of proactive, high quality, timely professional legal advice on matters relating to the functions and the exercise of the powers and duties of the Council;
- The drafting and settling of legal documentation;
- The provision of training and information on legal and quasi legal matters to officers and Elected Members, as required;
- The instigation and defence of claims, actions, applications and other legal proceedings, including representation, as required on behalf of the Council;
- Where relevant, support in the development of practicable innovative initiatives/solutions for the Council;
- Liaison with other legal professionals, the courts, government departments, statutory bodies and other organisations in relation to legal matters pertaining to the Council.

Governance

This is an evolving area which seeks to ensure that the Council has proportionate, robust and effective governance arrangements across the Council and in its

relationships with stakeholders and third parties. It works closely with internal audit and legal services, and derives cross departmental knowledge from the finance department and procurement service in particular. As an emerging area, it will seek to ensure that Council directorates and departments have adequately considered, documented, and implemented appropriate governance arrangements and sufficient evidence is retained on an ongoing basis to demonstrate that the relevant governance arrangements are operating effectively as intended. It will also seek to ensure that governance arrangements throughout the Council are consistent and reflect insofar as practicable with best practice in the relevant areas.

Transformation

This is an evolving area which seeks, in collaboration with relevant officers throughout the Council to lead and support the Council and its directorates, departments and services in their efforts to continuously improve and transform service delivery mechanisms and models to better meet the needs of the Council's stakeholders. It is also leading on the implementation of the Digital Transformation Strategy.

Customers & Stakeholders
Employees, Councillors, Senior Management Team, Assistant Directors, Heads of Service, officers etc.
Central government departments and agencies including LG Audit, DfC, HMRC, NILGOSC, LPS, funding bodies, public sector agencies (DfI, NI Water, other statutory Planning consultees)
Suppliers
Recipients of financial support from Council
Other district councils
Members of the legal profession, including solicitors and barristers
The judiciary and court officials
Individuals residing in and businesses and organisations operating within the district

1.4 Performance Overview in 2022/23 (Retrospective Review)

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IT	
2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities)	**End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other**
Wan connection Migration	75% Complete
Planning Online applications	Live & complete
Server Migration and upgrade	75% Complete
Disaster Recovery Testing	50% Complete
Office 365 Backup Solution	Completed in Cloud AWS
Upgrade wi-fi provision	Complete :20APs installed
Policy revision (Internet, Security &CCTV)	3 Policies revised, Internet access security and review not started
Fleet System	Partially Complete: Third party Delay
GIS: Provide Land Asset register	Complete
GIS: Provide planning and Property Certificate layers	Complete
Telephony Upgrade	80 Complete
End Point hardening & management	75% Complete intune and vulnerability Complete
Digital Strategy : Infrastructure workstream Year 1	Implementation Partner Procured

FINANCE	
2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities) **(Finance & Procurement)**	**End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other**
• Financial statements for year end 31 March 2022, financial audit and statutory returns	Completed
• 2023/24 District Rates struck and budgets agreed by prescribed date	Completed
• Financial reports to Council via P&R committee	Completed
• Creditor and payroll payments runs – prompt payment target for 30 and 10 days exceeded	Completed
• Receipting, invoicing and reconciliations	Completed
• Procurement exercises – relevant tender exercises advertised and conducted in accordance with legislative requirements	Ongoing
• Contract and DAC register maintained and reported to Council via P&R Committee	Completed
• 2023/24 Insurance renewal	Completed

LEGAL	
2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview **(What we achieved- Measured Activities)** **(Legal & Governance)**	**End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other**
• Amalgamation of Legal Services and Governance transferred from Chief Executive's Office to newly established Directorate of Corporate Services and Finance	Ongoing
• Continuance, where appropriate, of commissioning third party legal support to secure prompt high quality advice in areas out with the resource constraints of the in-house legal team	Ongoing In-house legal resource benefitting from increased and increasing more conveyancing/property experience. Further review and evaluation of existing third party legal support arrangements required to maximise benefits to be derived therefrom
• Participation in and assistance with the development of an Estates Strategy and Asset Management Plan to provide strategic direction on the management, maintenance, acquisition and disposal of Council property and assets.	Ongoing
• Provision of timely high quality legal advice and support •	Ongoing
• Identification of areas where an increase in staff and Member awareness and knowledge of relevant legal issues would be of benefit. Provision/commissioning of appropriately tailored guidance, training, workshops in response to areas/issues identified.	Ongoing
• Review of the Council's Scheme of Delegation	Ongoing

Transformation	
2022/2023 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities) **(Transformation)**	**End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other**
• Digital Transformation Strategy approved by Council	Completed
• Procurement exercise to engage a co-delivery partner for the implementation of the Council's Digital Transformation Strategy	Ongoing as of March 2023. Completed May 2023.
• Establishment of Transformation Working Group; Terms of Reference agreed; 3 workshops progressed	Working Group established Ongoing

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 2022-23 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

2.1 Budget 2023/24

Finance, Procurement, Legal, Governance and Transformation

Budget Headings	£
Staffing costs	2,174,874
Insurance	1,063,572
Other	2,818,755
Interest payable	206,833
Minimum Revenue Provision and Capital Financing	1,813,326
Legal Fees & Subscriptions	274,947
Gross Budget	8,352,307
Income	(3,000)
Net Budget for 2023/24	8,349,307

IT Service

Budget Headings	
Computer - Equipment	23,000
Computer - Maintenance / Support/Software	756,231
Computer - Supplies	15,800
Internet & Data Connections	166,821
Mobile Communications	32,679
Photocopying Expenditure	50,000
Printing - Cartridges	12,000
Software Licences	189,089
Telephone	109,690
Consultancy Fees	60,000
Fees	40,500
Subscriptions	250
Stationery Supplies	73
Hospitality	100
Other Income	(3,000)
Bus Train Transport	100
Mileage Allowance	2,435
Mileage Lump Sum	2,500
Salaries	419,332
Subsistence	200
	1,877,800

Chief Executive
Adrian McCreesh

Deputy CE
Anne-Marie Campbell

Head of Democratic Services
Vacant

Head of Marketing & Communications
Urusla Mezza

Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes
Fiona McKeown

Strategic Director of Corporate Service/Finance
JJ Tohill

Strategic Director of Organisation Development, Strategy & Performance
Marissa Canavan

Strategic Director of Communities & Place
Ryan Black

Strategic Director of Environment
Anne-Marie Campbell

Service Director - Planning
Chris Boomer

Assistant Director of Finance, Legal, Governance and Transformation
Claire McNally
Financial Management, Legal Services, Procurement & Insurance, Governance and Transformation

Head of ICT
Barry O'Hagan

Assistant Director of OD, Strategy & Performance
Philip Moffett
Organisational Development, Community Planning, Corporate Strategy & Performance, Registration, Customer Service / Business Support

Head of HR
Geraldine Dyson

Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Kieran Gordon
Environmental Health Leisure Services, Parks, Events

Assistant Director of Development
Claire Linney
Strategic Community Development, Community Support, Arts & Culture

Assistant Director of Environmental Services
Mark McAdoo
Waste, Re-cycling Grounds Maintenance

Assistant Director of Property Services
Terry Scullion
Capital Planning, Building Control, Health & Safety, Emergency Planning, Asset Management

Head of Technical Services
Raymond Lowry
Capital project delivery

Head of Development Plan & Enforcement
Vacant

Head of Development Management
Melvin Bowman

2.2   Departmental Services - Council Structure - 2023/24

Staffing	No. of Staff (FTEs)
Strategic Director	1
Assistant Director	1
Head of Service	1
Managers	10
Officers	24
Total	**37**

2.3   Service Work Plan - 2023/24

This plan confirms the core activities and actions, which forms the Corporate Services and Finance Directorate's (by Services or Department) Service Work Plan for 2023/24.

This is a high-level capture of the Departmental and Service activities/measures as well as some improvement undertakings which the services will focus on throughout 2022/23.

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 though 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

SERVICES WORK PLAN 2023/24

Service Name: Finance					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
CMP 4.2 Health & Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.			*Leadership: 1.3 We will work collectively to meet the identified needs and priorities of our citizens & connect the people of Mid Ulster*		
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.**
	FINANCIAL STATEMENTS • Draft Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 filed with the Department for Communities (DfC)	30/06/2022	Assistant Director	All statutory deadlines have been adhered to	Signed accounts with the DfC by agreed timeline
	FINANCIAL AUDIT • Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 approved by Council and published • Audited Financial Statements for year ended 31 March 2021 certified	30/09/2022 NIAO determine	Assistant Director Assistant Director	All statutory deadlines have been adhered to All statutory deadlines have been adhered to	Approved accounts published by timeline All statutory deadlines have been adhered to
	STATUTORY RETURNS • Whole of government accounts, Treasury return, VAT, CIS and all other statutory returns completed and submitted	Various	Finance Managers	All statutory deadlines have been adhered to	Completed and submitted by timelines

Service Name: Finance					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
	RATE SETTING • Process and timetable agreed for 2023/24 • Accurate and prompt adjustment of draft budget to incorporate additional information and potential alternative delivery methods and timely reporting to same to SMT and members • Budget struck by 15/02/24	30/11/2022 Ongoing 15/02/2024	Strategic Director & Assistant Director	Early presentation of accurate budgetary information Improved engagement with stakeholders Statutory deadline has been adhered to	District Rates struck and budgets agreed by prescribed date
	MANAGEMENT REPORTING • Monthly Financial Report to SMT and budget holders • Monthly Financial Report to P&R Committee • Monthly Over-time and payroll reports to SMT	Monthly	Assistant Director	Timely presentation and evaluation of financial information will support service delivery and adherence to the Council's budget	SMT and P&R consideration

Service Name: Finance					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
	PAYROLL PROCESSING		Assistant Director supported by:		Rotas and timetables agreed
	Work rotas and timetables agreed for weekly and monthly payrolls	Ongoing	Team leader / Principal Finance Officer	Work properly planned	
	Weekly, monthly and councillors payrolls processed	Per agreed timetable	Team leader / Team member / Principal Finance Officer	Employees, councillors and deductions paid when due	Agreed timetables adhered to and contractual commitments met.
	Payroll and pension returns	Various	Team leader / Team member / Principal Finance Officer	All statutory deadlines have been adhered to	Completed and submitted by timelines

Service Name: Finance					

Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
Choose an item.		Choose an item.			

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)
	CREDITOR PROCESSING • Work rotas and timetables agreed • Weekly creditor payment runs processed • Creditor control account reconciled	Ongoing Per agreed timetable Monthly	Assistant Director supported by: Team leader Team leader / Team member / Accountant Team leader / Team member / Accountant	Work properly planned Creditors paid when due Governance measure	Rotas and timetables agreed Agreed timetables adhered to and prompt payment statistics Reconciliation completed and approved
	INCOME PROCESSING • Work rota and timetables agreed • Receipting of income and monthly invoice runs • Debtor account reconciled	Ongoing Per monthly cut off schedule Monthly	Assistant Director supported by: Team leader Team members Team Leader / Accountant Team Leader / Accountant /	Work properly planned Essential for delivery of finance services Governance measure	Cut off schedule adhered to Completed and approved by team leaders

	• Bank accounts reconciled	10 working days	Principal Finance Officer	Governance measure	All bank accounts reconciled and approved by finance managers

Service Name: Procurement					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
	PROCUREMENT EXERCISES • Tender opportunity returns from department to be collated for Strategic Director to report to SMT	Periodically	Assistant Director	Procurement exercises carried out within agreed timescales	Agreed schedule of tenders with SMT prioritisation
	• To progress compliant procurement exercises in accordance with SMT prioritisation	Ongoing	Assistant Director/Principal procurement and insurance officer	Provision of an effective and efficient procurement function for all Councils stakeholders	Procurement exercises carried out in accordance with SMT prioritisation
	CONTRACT AND DAC REGISTER • Contract register updated to Director / Head of Service shared folder monthly	Monthly	Principal procurement and insurance officer	The contact and DAC register are part of the governance arrangements in relation to the Council's Procurement policies	Monthly update provided
	• Contracts register reported monthly to P & R committee	Per committee meeting schedule	Assistant Director Corporate Service/Finance	The contact and DAC register are part of the governance arrangements in relation to the Council's Procurement policies	Agreed timetable adhered to
	• DAC register reported monthly to P & R committee	Per committee meeting schedule	Assistant Director Corporate Service/Finance	The contact and DAC register are part of the governance arrangements in relation to the Council's Procurement policies	Agreed timetable adhered to

Service Name: Legal					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
	• Ongoing and regular engagement with stakeholders; further refinement and utilisation of legal instruction format/template; and further development and utilisation of case management system. Reminders/follow-ups to be issued to relevant staff regarding process of instruction and ongoing case management	Ongoing	Assistant Director supported by Council Solicitor	More efficient and effective briefing of Legal Services team and relevant stakeholders. Better understanding of key issues to ensure timely and tailored advice.	Baseline figure for usage of request for legal support (instructions) form – together with measure of increased usage during 2023/24. Reminder information/brief (regarding usage of legal instruction format/template) forwarded to staff by end of Q2
	• The continued provision of strategic legal advice and operational legal support across all Council functions and priorities (including: Local Development Plan, identification and development of key strategic sites, MSW Region Growth Deal, effective delivery of Capital programme, etc.)	Ongoing	Assistant Director supported by: Council Solicitor	Identification and consideration of issues and options and development of relevant effective solutions will be accelerated and implemented/discounted at an earlier stage thereby enhancing strategic perspective and service delivery within an effective and efficient governance framework.	Increased stakeholder satisfaction with Legal Services contributions notably in relation to timelines associated with operational legal transactions. Increased corporate assurance in relation to the elimination and/or mitigation of potential challenges against the Council's strategic and

					operational aspirations/plans/actions

Service Name: Legal					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
	• To continue to assist in the development and implementation of an effective Estates Strategy and Asset Management Plan to provide strategic direction and operational support in relation to on the management, maintenance, acquisition and disposal of Council property and assets.	Ongoing	Assistant Director supported by: Council Solicitor	Reliable central and easily accessible (to authorised individuals) database of Council's property and assets. Documented procedure for dealing with Council's property and assets (to include consideration of potential acquisitions and disposals) to ensure consistency.	Formalisation of Estates Strategy and Asset Management Plan.
	• Increase staff and member awareness and knowledge in areas prone to legal challenge as follows: - Planning (Councillors); - Prosecutions (Officers)	Ongoing	Assistant Director supported by: Council Solicitor	Reduce risk and financial or other impact of (successful) challenges against the Council. Improve and increase staff and member knowledge. Increased transparency and accountability in decision making. Increased public confidence in the Council's decisions and enforcement actions.	Number and cost of successful challenges will remain low, or potentially reduce. Increased efficacy in securing successful prosecutions, stemming from improved enforcement action, and leading to more robust statistics in this regard.

					Provision of internal and external advice as identified

Service Name: IT					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
Provide and Maintain Resilient and available Systems	Conduct Disaster recovery Test Maintain resilient and tested sys recovery procedures ,	31/03/2024	Head of IT supported by: STO:CMcK STO:FG Team	Complete monthly DR recovery on systems Carry out and update recovery procedures	12 Completed DR tests 12 Vulnerability Scans Monthly Security Updates Compliance monitoring Tier 1 Recovery procedures reviewed Tier 2 Recovery Procedures Reviewed
	Implement DMarc Email compliance	31/03/2024	Head of IT supported by: FG	Greater assurance to Email security and origin for Councils email	Protects brans and greater assurance of Councils email, Helps prevents spoofing and phishing

Service Name: IT					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
Upgrade and maintain current services to reflect the current demands and latest secure and stable version software for Tier 1 & 2 Applications	Revise Internet across the organisation (Digital Strategy and IT strategies)	30/11/2023	Head of IT supported by: STO :FG	Reduction in Helpdesk support ticket ref Internet access. Safe unhindered User Internet Access from Work & Home	Firewall rules reviewed and amended after reflection of AMENDED deployment Firewall policies distributed to hybrid working Staff
	Migrate Citrix access stakeholders to new version	30/11/2023	Head of IT supported by: STO :FG	Remote users Internet access is secure and monitored inline with policy	Up to Date Citrix with MFA deployed.
	End user device Security Hardening & Management Implement local Account administrator Solution	31/12/2023	Head of IT supported by: Technical Support Officers STO - Dgn	More secure Administrative accounts, increase endpoint security control in configuration	LAPS deployed Review of GPO's and security configuration deployed to End point
	Planning : Maintain and Support Online property certificate deployment.	01/09/2023	Head of IT supported by: GIS Officer	Modern mapping information Online self service application for Customer Deduplication of Effort	Operational Online Property certificate system.
	Planning: Standalone Staff Fee calculator	31/12/2023	Head of IT supported by: Planning Project Officer	Improve accuracy of Fee calculation and validation process	Operational fee calculator for Planning fee validation

	Planning: iPad deployment & App deployment	31/12/2023	Head of IT supported by: Planning Project Officer	Allow officer to Planning documentation and drawings during site visits	Certificate service with functioning layers

Service Name: IT					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?): 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)**
Provide corporate wide services to integrate Communication and collaboration across our sites	Telephony Review , Upgrade and integration with voice & video platforms	01/11/2023	Head of IT	Reduction of voice and video platforms and consolidate voice and Video	Digital Strategy :Migrate Site to Upgraded IPT with SIP Provide Telephony with Teams integration
	Scope and Migrate copper to digital lines	31/03/2025	Head of IT supported by: GIS Project Officer and IT Team	Replacing unsupported copper based technology (* Industry mandated) with Sip based technology	Copper based lines migrated into Council IPT telephony and managed service
	Maintain Wireless Infrastructure and replace as required	31/03/2024	Head of IT supported by: JK	Latest and fast next generation wi-fi provision	20:Wireless Access points deployed across estate

Service Name: IT					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
Maintain Modern computing infrastructure and Communications systems	Replace personal Computing arrangement	31/03/2024	Head of IT supported by: IT Team	Fast responsive and modern hardware services the needs of users	Replaced 60 laptops & 60 smart docks. Deploy 60 Double on premise screen arrangements
	Provide/ maintain a Council wide Geographical Information Service • (NIMA and Council Datasets)	30/10/2023	Head of IT supported by: GIS Officer,	Single point of reference for Council Property GIS layers	Update web app internally accessible to all staff to access property information centrally
	Exchange management console : Migration/Update	31/10/2023	Head of IT supported by: STO :FG	Maintain update exchange management interface	Decommission Hyper V Migrate Exchange console
	Maintain up to date Active Directory	31/03/2024	Head of IT supported by: IT Team	Upgrade AD to Latest version	Accurate Active Directory reflects new structure

Service Name: ICT					
Link to Community Plan Theme:			**Align to Corporate Plan Theme**		
Choose an item.			Choose an item.		
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)**
Provide secure network services	Manage and monitor Network SD wan services implemented	31/10/2023	Head of IT supported by: IT Team GIS Officer	All site on SD wan will operate on fibre to the premises: using FFNI and FFIB funded fibres 10G Replication Link Operational	All premises running on new faster speeds Synchronous 10 Gb replication Link operational
	Network Segmentation:: VRF for Chip & Pin and @dirty 'VRF for CCTV and completion of WAN deployment with New subnets Failover design implemented	31/12/2023	Head of IT supported by: IT Team	Faster network with resilience across availability proprietary fibres and FFNI connections Separation of Network sites into resilient sites with failover availability	New Subnets for Killymeal Road, Magheraglass Dungannon Leisure centre Dungannon Offices Magherafelt Offices Magherafelt yard Resilience implemented
	Network Infrastructure and configuration review	31/01/2024	Head of IT supported by: IT Team	Clear picture of the physical network internal	Report outlining the Network Switch estate and recommendation

2.4 Service Improvements for 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)
Implementation of Phase 2 of Financial Management Information System, Tech1.	Phased implementation of various modules from October 2023, with full implementation of agreed modules etc. in accordance with schedule to be agreed with SMT	Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Finance	Phase 2 will introduce functionality and benefits not previously available to the Council. It will greatly improve, e.g.,:- • financial controls at remote facilities, such as leisure centres; • timeliness, integration and accuracy of reporting of financial information from remote facilities; • governance associated with financial matters, including procurement of quotations; • efficiencies in processes; • improved visibility for revenue management; • improved budgeting and forecasting functionality; • Contract management	Phase 2 modules agreed, implemented and functional as planned.
We will research Environmental, Social and Governance ("ESG") principles in the context of the review of the Council's Procurement Policy. Consider whether and how same could be incorporated as to how the Council thinks ESG and buys/procures ESG	Research and awareness building by December 2023.	Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Finance	ESG Values align with the Council's corporate priorities and values within the Corporate Plan, Community Plan and Performance Improvement Objectives. Therefore, this work will improve:- (1) Awareness and Training for relevant staff on ESG Values;	Research and awareness will have been carried out and we will have a Council decision on the inclusion or otherwise of ESG values when procuring.

			(2) Understanding within the organisation how ESG could impact on the lifecycle of projects/goods/services - from design, planning, procuring, contract management and exit; (3) Better inform the Council in its decision making on whether and when to include ESG values and scoring within our Procurement Policy.	
We will review the Council's governance arrangements and structures in relation to decision making by Council, Committees and Senior Officers and provide training.	By December 2023	Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Finance	Increased clarity, flexibility (where appropriate) and governance around decision making throughout the Council to align with the organisational restructure.	Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers, Terms of Reference for Committees and ancillary documents and supporting processes will have been reviewed and revised with Council approval.
We will offer a series of training/workshops/masterclasses to the relevant internal staff covering a range of topics such as; Conveyancing Process; Planning Law update.	Ongoing over 23/24 and to be rolled out by March 2024	Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Finance (with delivery by team members)	Improvements to staff's understanding and learning of various topical issues within the Council, so that we see improvements to how we better collaborate to achieve improved outcomes for our customers. Could become an area for Communities of Practice under the Digital Transformation Strategy.	Programme of tailored learning on the various relevant issues rolled out by March 2023 or in accordance with schedule agreed by SMT. Feedback that sessions are informative, practical and learning being put in to practice. Improved collaboration between corporate services and our customers.

We will work towards the implementation of the Digital Transformation Programme		Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Finance (to support relevant Lead Officers)	We will re-think what we do and how we do it by using modern technology and new ways of working which keeps our people and their needs at the heart of our commitment to improve services. In doing so, we will invest in delivering better experiences, better connections and better outcomes.	Strategy will be agree and we will be working on the Actions in order to implement the Outcomes from the various workstreams, in particular People, Culture and Capability.

IT

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)
Implementation of immutable backup solution (business as usual)	30/12/2023	Head of IT supported by: IT Team	Develop Immutable backups in line with NCSC recommendations (on premise or cloud)	Operational Immutable backups for all systems migrated to infrastructure
Integrate SOC & SIEM services into the fabric of IT monitoring and service provision.	30/03/2024	Head of IT	Faster automated responses to incident and alerts	Develop standard playbooks for predetermined incident in conjunction with SOC/SIEM partner
Formulate playbooks responses in conjunction with Security partner in the event of security incident detection and response	31/03/2024	Head of IT	Greater understanding and plan and response to security and cyber incidents	Cyber Incident response plan and playbooks
Develop IT Strategy	31/12/2023	Head of IT	Compliance with Internal audit recommendation	IT Strategy approved at Council
Support the deployment of new Fleet Management system and iPad inspection	30/10/2023	Head of IT supported by: GIS Officer and JK	Hosted system	New fleet system operation with iPads deployed and WIFI provided
Install a digital chamber delegate system in Cookstown	07/09/2023	Head of IT supported by GIS Officer	Cookstown capable of facilitating hybrid Committee meetings	New Installation and streaming for Cookstown
File server review	31/03/2024	Head of IT	Better informed of the File structure and information storage practices & issues, Determine future action to improve	Review of file contents structure and information retention

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.

GUIDANCE FOR DEPARTMENTS/SERVICES

As you will be aware the below tables show the tolerance level of the "risk appetite" of the organisation. Any risks that have a rating of 10 or above (red) are outside of the range of acceptable exposure and mitigations must be put in place to reduce the exposure or be referred to a higher managerial level for discussion and decision when they arise. Risks falling in the amber zone (7 - 9) are also likely to require some measure of mitigation in order to be acceptable whilst all those in the green zone are considered tolerable and unlikely to require further action or mitigation unless circumstances alter.

This table illustrates the risks identified to deliver the Department's/Services business as outlined in service plan for 2023/24. *(These should be extracted from the Service's Risk Register DO NOT COPY AND PASTE YOUR COMPLETE RISK REGISTER HERE - THIS AREA IS FOR A SUMMARY NARRATIVE ONLY AND RELATES TO THE OBJECTIVES /ACTIVITY OUTLINED ABOVE)*

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	*Inability to recruit and retain appropriate staff*	*8*	*Liaison with HR*
2.	*Third party support delivery failures or arrangements breaks down*	*8*	*Contingencies and Supplier assurance checks in place*
3.	*Malicious attacks or security systems in IT systems prevents normal service prioritisation*	*10*	*Ongoing controls in place, Soc and SIEM to be implemented*

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.