Report on	Planning Department Service Improvement Plan 2019-2020
Date of Meeting	2 nd April 2019
Reporting Officer	Sinead McEvoy/Melvin Bowman
Contact Officer	Chris Boomer

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide members with a copy of the Planning Departments Service Improvement Plan (SIP) for the period 2019-2020.
2.0	Background
2.1	The attached SIP shows how the service provided by the Planning Department will contribute to the Council's corporate objectives.
2.2	A SIP was in place for the period 2018-2019 and a section of the attached SIP sets out the performance overview and end of year progress status for that period. Also included in the SIP is a Service Work Plan for the same period, outlining the various actions to be taken by us over the reporting period.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	There are a number of actions and outcomes within the SIP which the Planning Department will report on over the course of the period 2019-2020.
3.2	Also included are a number of risks for the Planning Department and details of mitigation in place to control these in the most effective way. A key risk continues to relate to staff retention and the ability to maintain a full complement of staff needed to deliver an effective service.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial:
	None identified

Human:
None identified
Risk Management:
None identified
Screening & Impact Assessments
Equality & Good Relations Implications:
None identified
Rural Needs Implications:
None identified
Recommendation(s)
Members are requested to note the contents of this report and agree the attached Planning Department Service Improvement Plan 2019-2020.
Documents Attached & References
- Planning Department Service Improvement Plan 2019-2020.



Planning Department

SERVICE PLAN - 2019 / 20

Date

Consulted within staff team / / 2019

Discussed & signed off by Director

/ / 2019

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1.0 OVERALL PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SERVICE

1.1. Purpose and Scope of the Service

The Planning Department is led by the Planning Manager and it is responsible for the delivery of a number of functions including the following:

- receiving and making decisions on planning applications:
- enforcing breaches of planning control;
- making tree preservation orders and providing advice on conservation area development; and
- producing a local development plan which will outline how land in Mid Ulster should be used and developed in the future.

1.2 Responsibilities

In order to deliver these services the Planning Department is divided into 2 separate functions:

1. Development Management

This function is made up of the following area teams all of which are based at the Councils offices on the Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt.

- 1. Cookstown, Magherafelt, Carntogher and Mayola
- 2. Dungannon, Clogher and Torrent
- 3. Major applications team

2. Development Plan, Environment and Enforcement

The section is specifically responsible for the following functions:

The Development Management function has a number of responsibilities including:

- Determining Major, Local planning applications
- Providing Pre-application advice and facilitating pre-application discussions
- Dealing with non-material changes to planning approvals
- Determining certificates of lawfulness

The Enforcement team are responsible for investigating and responding to enforcement complaints regarding breaches of planning control.

The Development Plan team are responsible for the production of the new Local Development Plan for Mid Ulster District.

The Environment team are responsible for consideration of environmental issues including the carrying out the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment of the

new Local Development Plan as well as providing advice on Conservation matters and Tree Preservation Orders.

The 3 area teams are supported by an Administrative Support Team which also offers support for the wider Planning Department.

1.3 Customers & Stakeholders

Cu	stomers & Stakeholders
•	applicants
•	agent / architects
•	objectors
•	complainants in relation to breaches of planning control
•	Planning Committee
•	Council officers and elected representatives
•	Statutory Consultees
٠	Local Development Plan Consultation Bodies
•	Mid Ulster residents, businesses and interested parties

1.4 Performance Overview in 2019/20

The following table provides a progress summary and the impact made by last years' Service Plan (2019-2020). It also details key successes, a summary of the end of year progress, remaining challenges for the Service and how it made a difference.

2018/19 Performance Overview	End of Year Progress Status:
	Completed/Commenced/Other
 To determine 50% of all local applications within 15 weeks Comment & Analysis: finalised Q2 figures shows some improvement from 18.1 weeks in Q1 to 165.8weeks. What does this mean: that whilst not meeting the 15 weeks target that hopefully a trend is emerging to get performance back on track. Recent staff changes / temporary promotions will have the potential to impact on Q3 the impact of this not being available as yet as Q3 performance has not been provided. Comparison with last year same reporting period: again a fall by 19.4% which reflects a period of staffing shortage in the interim which has hopefully been addressed in Q1/ Q2 of this year. 	Ongoing: performance has dropped below the 15 week target and measures are being put in place to bring processing times back to within Target including making this a Corporate Improvement Objective for the Council moving forward.

 To determine 50% of all Major applications within 30 weeks Comment & Analysis: Finalised Q2 figures show am improvement over Q1. Q3 figures not yet available. What does this mean: This shows the start of the benefits of the Major applications team which, once older legacy cases are resolved, will be able to aim to continue this improvement. Comparison with last year same reporting period: a slight dip in performance here by 10.7%. This is indicative of the Major applications and how issuing even a single application within target can potentially reflect on quarterly performance. 	Ongoing: the benefits of the Major applications team headed by the Planning Manager has shown improvements in processing times. Target is still not being met.		
 To process 70% of all enforcement cases to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint The statutory target of 70% has been met and exceeded during the period until the end of February 2018 (based on unvalidated figures). The percentage of cases concluded within 39 weeks at the end of February 2019 sits at 88.9 % which is an improvement on the figure for the 2017/18 period which was 82.1%. This is another marked improvement on the performance for the previous year. 	Ongoing - The statutory target of 70% has been met and exceeded during the period until the end of February 2018 (based on unvalidated figures).		
 To provide submissions on Appeals, Judicial Reviews, Consultations and Calls for evidence – 100% within response timeframe Over this period there have been numerous appeals and consultations as well as some JR submissions and all have been within the timeframe set by the external bodies. 	Ongoing – Over this period all such targets have been within the timeframe set by the external bodies.		
 To complete the second phase in the preparation of a new local development plan for Mid Ulster – publication of draft Plan Strategy, and associated documents including Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment, by end of quarter 3. The publication of the Local Development Plan 2030 - Draft Plan Strategy (and related supporting documents) did not take place before the end of Quarter 3 as all of the work 	Completed: The publication of the Local Development Plan 2030 - Draft Plan Strategy (and related supporting documents) did not take place before the end of Quarter 3 and therefore the target was not met. It was however published in Q4 on 22 nd February 2019.		

on the draft plan strategy and related	
documents had not been completed within	
that timeframe. The Local Development Plan	
2030 – Draft Plan Strategy and associated	
documents (including SA/SEA Report, Equality	
Screening Report, Draft Habitats Assessment	
and Rural Impact Assessment) was published	
on 22 nd February 2019, before the end of	
Quarter 4. Work has been ongoing to broker	
agreement with neighbouring councils on	
cross boundary issues and we are close to	
agreement Statements of Common Ground in	
0	
respect of the Sperrins Forum and Cross	
Border Forum.	
	Onening Darferman had been
	Ongoing – Performance has dropped on
	general correspondence and
68% of general correspondence cases were	complaints but increased on EIR cases
answered within the 15 day working target.	during this period.
63% of complaints were responded to within	
the 15 working day target. 100% of EIR cases	
were responded to within the 20 day target.	
Therefore, only the responses to the EIR cases	
were within target. This is down on our target	
for the previous year (2017-2018) which saw	
a response rate of 82% for general	
correspondence and 82% for complaints. We	
have increased our response time on EIR's	
from 97% in the previous period of 2017-	
2018.	
	Ongoing: Performance has dropped
•	during this period and target has not
	been met.
Over this period a response rate of 50% has	
been achieved and therefore the target has	
not been met. This is explained in large part	
by the intense work that has occurred on the	
Local Development Plan over the same period	
with a reduction in resources within the	
development plan team.	
· · ·	Ongoing: Work on this is ongoing and
	discussions are continuing.
••	
Work on this is ongoing and discussions have	C
taken place with both Environmental Health	
and DFI Roads on how best to address this.	
and DFI Roads on how best to address this.	Ongoing: Work on this is ongoing.

	easier	access	on-line	submission	of
	applica				
V	Vork on th	is with al	ll other co	uncils is ongoi	ng.

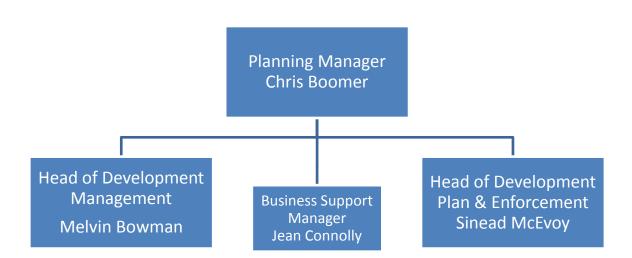
2.0 SERVICE WORKPLAN 2019/20

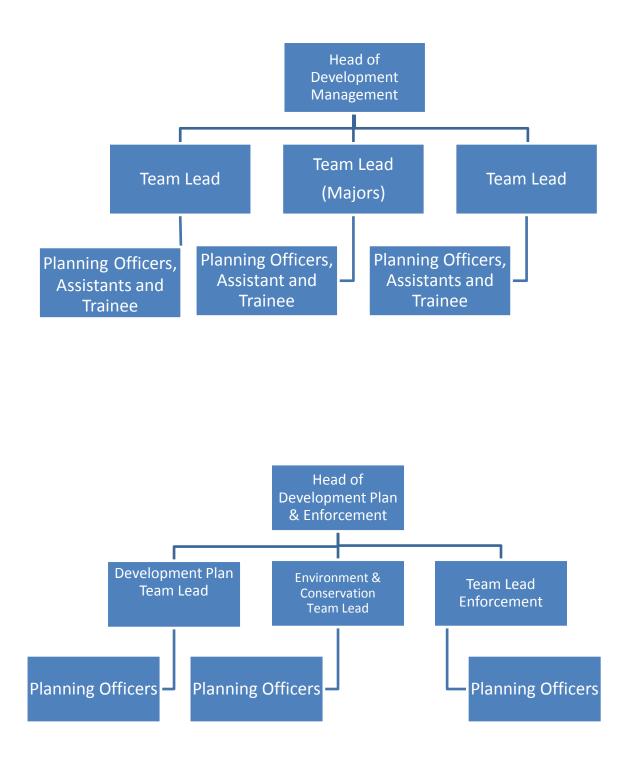
The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Service has access to throughout 2019-20 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

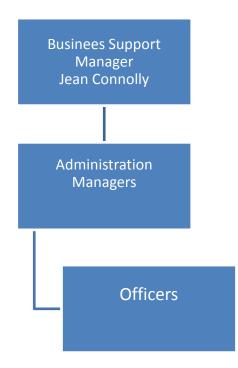
2.1 Budget 2019/20 - ****TO BE CONFIRMED****

Service Budget Headings	£
Gross Budget	
Income	
Net Budget for 2019-20	

2.2 Staffing Complement - 2019/20







Current Staffing	No. of Staff (FTE)
Planning Manager	1
Head of Service	2
Team Leads/ Managers	6.6
P & T Officers	19.6
Admin Officers	8.4
Total	37.6

2.3 Service Work Plan - 2019/20

This plan confirms the core activities and actions, which will form your Service Work Plan for 2019-20. This should be a high-level capture of the Service activities and work which it will focus on throughout 2019-20. The Plan links to the Council's 2015-2020 Corporate Plan priorities (the Corporate Plan 2015/19 priorities were extended for another year to include 2019 to 2020), Annual Corporate Improvement Plan Objectives, Corporate Indicators and Mid Ulster Sustainable Community Plan themes & outcomes:

SERVICE WORK PLAN

Link to Community	Corporate Plan	n Theme							
Plan Theme:									
CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment & enhance it	CRP 1.5 Delivering for Our People - Delivery of quality and timely planning decisions implement and organisational strategy for a modern workplace								
Service Objective	How Will we	Where are we now?	What do we want to achieve? (Targets)	How Will we get there?					
	measure the (Baseline data) impact of our work (PI's)	(baseline data)		Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome		
To determine 50% of local planning applications within 15 weeks	Monitoring of quarterly figures provided in regional statistics	In the 2018/19 year based on available figures we missed the target at 17.2 weeks.	To get performance back within 15 week target	 Continued to implement revised monthly group meeting arrangements Ensure consultation process is meaningful and relevant to the application and agree best practise with EHO and the Dept on the consultation process. Monitor issuing times for decisions on weekly delegated list Monitor staff numbers and ensure full compliment Ensure smooth transfer of Dev Management staff to Dungannon office 	Ongoing	Chris Boomer Melvin Bowman	We contribute to the delivery of quality and timely planning decisions.		

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Plan Theme							
CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment & enhance it	CRP 1.5 Delivering f	P 1.5 Delivering for Our People - Delivery of quality and timely planning decisions implement and organisational strategy for a modern workplace						
Service Objective		Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve?	How Will we get there?				
			(Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome	
To determine 50% of Major applications within 30 weeks	Monitoring of quarterly figures provided in regional statistics	In the 2018/19 year based on available figures we missed the target at 64.7 weeks.	To improve Major application processing times towards target	 Planning Manager continues to have direct oversight of Major applications team Monthly monitoring of performance Greater use of PAD discussions 	Ongoing	Chris Boomer	We contribute to the delivery of quality and timely planning decisions.	

Link to Community	Corporate Plan	Corporate Plan Theme							
Plan Theme:									
CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment & enhance it	CRP 1.5 Delivering f	P 1.5 Delivering for Our People - Delivery of quality and timely planning decisions implement and organisational strategy for a modern workplace							
Service Objective		Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve?	How Will we get there?					
			(Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome		
To speed up consultation responses on applications	Monitoring of quarterly figures provided in regional statistics	In the 2018/19 year based on available figures we missed the target at 17.2 weeks for local applications	To improve application processing times towards target	• To agree a best practise guide with Consultees, in particular Environmental Health / DFI Roads.	End June 2019.	Melvin Bowman	We contribute to the delivery of quality and timely planning decisions.		

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Plan	Theme					
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy	CRP 2.1 Creating Gro	owth - Preparation of a	local development pl	an			
Service Objective	How Will we measure the	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve?	How Will we get there?			
	measure the impact of our work (PI's)		(Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome
To complete the next phase in the preparation of a new local development plan for Mid Ulster – undertake public consultation on the Draft Plan Strategy (DPS), consider representations and seek agreement to submit the DPS to the Department for Independent Examination in Winter 2019/2020	Progress against key actions/milestones	Phase 1 – preparatory work and public consultation completed. Phased 2 - Draft plan strategy and associated documents are published and at public consultation. Phase 3 – Undertake public consultation on Draft Plan Strategy and associated documents and submit the Draft Plan Strategy to Dfl for Independent Examination in Winter 2019/2020	100% against key actions	 Continue to broker agreement with neighbouring councils on cross boundary issues and work towards agreeing Statements of Common Ground. Undertake public consultation on Draft Plan Strategy Consider representations to DPS and seek agreement from members to submit Draft Plan Strategy to Department to request an Independent Examination (IE) to be held in Winter 2019/2020, in line with published Timetable. 	Ongoing Ongoing Q3 – to allow IE to be held in line with published Timetable.	Chris Boomer Sinead McEvoy	Provide public certainty on the development of Mid Ulster District for the period up to 2030.

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Pla	Corporate Plan Theme							
CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment & enhance it for our children	CRP 3.5 Sustaining	RP 3.5 Sustaining our Environment - Efficiencies in processing Planning Enforcement Cases							
Service Objective	How Will we measure the	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve?	How Will we get there?					
	impact of our work (Pl's)	(baseline data)	(Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome		
To process 70% of all enforcement cases to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.	By monitoring monthly and quarterly figures provided by Dfl.	At the end of February 2019 the percentage of cases concluded within 39 weeks sits at 88.9%.	To continue to meet the target of processing 70% of all enforcement cases to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint	 Continue to hold monthly group meetings Monitor staff resources 	Monthly Ongoing	Chris Boomer Melvin Bowman Sinead McEvoy	Continued efficiencies in processing of enforcement cases.		

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Plan Theme							
CMP 2.2 Infrastructure - We increasingly value our environment & enhance it	CRP 1.5 Delivering f	RP 1.5 Delivering for Our People - Delivery of quality and timely planning decisions implement and organisational strategy for a modern workplace						
Service Objective		Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve?	How Will we get there?				
			(Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome	
To provide internal consultation advice on conservation matters on 90% of cases within 10 working days.	By monitoring and our quarterly internal figures.	In the 2018/19 year we achieved a figure of 50%.	Achieve target of 90% responses within 10 working days.	 Weekly discussion on internal consultations. Monthly monitoring of progress on internal consultations. Monitor staff resources 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Chris Boomer Sinead McEvoy	We contribute to the delivery of quality and timely planning decisions.	

Link to Community Plan Theme:	Corporate Pla	Corporate Plan Theme										
Service Objective	How Will we measure the	Where are we now? (Baseline data)	What do we want to achieve?	How Will we get there?								
	impact of our work (PI's)		(Targets)	ке	y Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome				
To continue working with other councils on a new Planning portal to promote easier access on-line submission of applications.	By Progress against project timescales	Dfl and Local Government are in the process of agreeing the Outline Business Case for a new regional Planning IT System. The indicicative timeframe for this new system is June 2022 although the end of the current contract is Dec 2020	An improved planning system	•	To continue to be represented on the Planning Portal Governance Board and to provide key staff to the project as required. Although all other councils agreed to sign in £1 million., a paper is going to P&R suggesting we look at providing our own system, independent to everyone else	March 2020	Chris Boomer	New PP that meets needs of MUDC				

3.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICE AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE

3.1 Annual Improvement Objectives and Associated Programs

Senior management team is currently in process of giving initial consideration to improvement objectives for 2019-20 and are to be agreed for 2019/20.

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

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

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

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

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

4.0 Equality

The council is committed to fulfilling its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This commitment is demonstrated by allocating the appropriate time, people and resources to fulfil our equality duties. The Equality Scheme commits us to implementing our duties effectively and in a timely way alongside implementing this Service Plan. Without impacting upon our obligations, when carrying out our equality duties we will also take into account the desirability of promoting good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. We are also required to take into account the need to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and encourage the participation of

people with a disability in public life. Mid Ulster District Council are committed to fulfilling our disability duties and we set out how we intend to do this in our disability action plan.

3.2 Service Contribution to the Corporate Improvement Objectives/Projects

Senior management team is currently in process of giving initial consideration to improvement objectives for 2019-20

Link to Commu	nity Plan Theme:	Corporate	Plan Theme									
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy		CRP 1.5	CRP 1.5 Delivering for Our People - Delivery of quality and timely planning decisions implement and organisational strategy for a modern workplace									
Improvement Plan	Service Objective	How Will	Where are we	What do we	How Will we get there?							
Objective		we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	now? (Baseline data)	want to achieve? (Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome				
2.0 To improve the average processing time of local planning applications	To determine 50% of local planning applications within 15 weeks	Monitoring of quarterly figures provided in	In the 2018/19 year based on available figuros wo	To improve application processing times towards	 Continue to implement the revised group meeting arrangements, particularly Team Lead role in delegated applications 	Ongoing	Team Leads Head of Dev Management	To ensure efficient and timely decisions on delegated cases.				
applications	cations regional figures we target statistics missed the target at 17.2 weeks.	larget	• Ensure full staff complement where possible.	Ongoing	Planning Manager	To allow manageable case loads across the teams						
					 Deliver a smooth transition of staff to Dungannon Office 	End of April 2019 Ongoing	Planning Manager Planning Manager	To eventually enable more efficient working within Dungannon Dev Man Team				
					 Monitor performance on a monthly basis. 	End Aug 2019	Head of Dev Management	To identify inefficiencies and monthly trends on				

			 Consider revising the Planning Committee scheme of delegation Agree best practise on consultations with Environmental Health and DFI Roads. 	End June 2019	Planning Manager Head of Development Management	local applications processing times To permit a wider scope of delegated cases to assist with processing times. To improve the time taken to determine local applications and make best use of Consultation process.
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Link to Commu	nity Plan Theme:	Corporate Plan Theme								
CMP 1.1 Economic Growth - We prosper in a stronger & more competitive economy		CRP 1.2 Delivering for Our People - Increase Access to services and customer experiences across the district								
Improvement Plan	Service Objective	How Will	Where are we	What do we	How Will we get there?					
Objective		we measure the impact of our work (PI's)	now? (Baseline data)	want to achieve? (Targets)	Key Actions	Dates	Owners	Outcome		
3.0 To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online	To continue working with other Councils on a new Planning Portal to provide an ability to submit online applications.	By agreeing and progressing work in accordance with a joint business plan	Dfl and Local Government are in the process of agreeing the Outline Business Case for a new regional Planning IT System. The indicicative	To be ready to implement new system by end of 2020. However all other councils agreed to sign in st 1 million. Paper going to P&R suggesting we look at providing our	 To continue working with other Authorities Although all other councils agreed to sign in £1 million., a paper is going to P&R suggesting we look at providing our own system, independent to everyone else 	End 2020	Dr Chris Boomer	Progress made on new portal.		

	timeframe for	own system,		
	this new	independent to		
	system is June	everyone else		
	2022 although			
	the end of the			
	current			
	contract is			
	Dec 2020			

3.3 RISK MANAGEMENT OF SERVICE

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

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

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

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	Failure to meet major application target	7	Planning Manager continues to have direct oversight of Major applications team. Monthly monitoring of performance. Greater use of PAD discussions.
2.	Failure to meet local applications target	7	Continue to implement revised monthly group meeting arrangements. Ensure consultation process is meaningful and relevant to the application and agree best practise with EHO and the Dept on the consultation process. Monitor issuing times for decisions on weekly delegated list. Monitor staff numbers and ensure full compliment. Ensure smooth transfer of Development Management staff to Dungannon office
3.	Failure to progress Local Development Plan 2030 – Draft Plan Strategy to submission to Department for Independent Examination in Winter 2019/2020	7	Continue to broker agreement with neighbouring councils on cross boundary issues and work towards agreeing Statements of Common Ground. Undertake public consultation on Draft Plan Strategy. Consider representations made to DPS and seek agreement from members to submit DPS to Department to request an Independent Examination (IE) to be held in Winter 2019/2020, in line with published Timetable.

4.	Failure to progress 70% of all enforcement cases to target	6	Continued use of monthly group meetings and
	conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint in year		monitoring of staff resources and monitoring of
	2018/2019.		caseloads using MIS Reports. Risk could be greater if
			staff were to be transferred to other sections of
			Planning Department.

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)