09 January 2019

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to be held in
The Chamber, Magherafelt at Mid Ulster District Council, Ballyronan Road, MAGHERAFELT, BT45 6EN on Wednesday, 09 January 2019 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Tohill
Chief Executive

AGENDA

OPEN BUSINESS

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Chair's Business

<u>Matters for Decision</u>

4.	Elected Member Development Working Group	3 - 16
5.	Draft Accessible Communications Policy	17 - 48
6.	Marketing & Communications Strategy 2018-2020	49 - 62

<u>Matters for Information</u>

7	Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 6 December 2018	63 - 66

Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.

<u>Matters for Decision</u>

8. Seamus Heaney HomePlace Trails Project and Davagh Forest Outdoor Experience (Phase II) DAERA funding applications
9. Proposal from Dungannon Enterprise Centre to exchange lands with the Council at Drumcoo, Carland Road, Dungannon
10. Village Renewal Scheme: Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 – Lands situated at Upperlands and Pathway at St

Lurach's, Maghera

11. Tender for the provision of external Legal Services
12. Staffing Matters for Decision
13. Redundancy on grounds of business efficiency
14. Purchase of lands at Market Square, Feeney's Lane, Dungannon
15. Capital Projects Report 2017-2020

Matters for Information
16. Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 6 December 2018
17. Managing Attendance
18. Staffing Matters for Information
19. Financial report for 8 months ended 30 November 2018
20. Contracts and DAC
21. Rates Estimates 2019-2020

Report on	Elected Member Development Working Group
Date of Meeting	9 January 2018
Reporting Officer	Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	Eileen Forde, Member Support Officer

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

1.0	**Purpose of Report**
1.1	To receive and consider the report of a meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group held on Wednesday 28 November 2018.
2.0	**Background**
2.1	The Council previously resolved to establish an Elected Member Development Steering Group to provide direction on member development needs and work towards the attainment of the Elected Member Development Charter.
2.2	The steering group Terms of Reference confirms that the business of the Working Group be reported through Policy & Resources Committee.
3.0	**Main Report**
3.1	The Report of the most recent meeting of the Elected Member Development Steering Group is attached as Appendix A for consideration and approval. The following issues have resulted from discussion at meeting November meeting: • Provision of personalised stationery for example a ream of headed paper per term of office for the new incoming Council (May 2019); • Refugee awareness session and Universal Credit awareness session be offered to Members in the incoming training schedule
3.2	**Charter Status Assessment**: The assessment took place on Wednesday 2nd October 2018. The Council received official notification that it had been successful in receiving Level 1 Charter Status for Elected Member Development. The letter and final assessment report from the Awarding Body, North West Employers is attached as Appendix B. Continuous improvement is an important part of the Charter Review process and at the assessment, members and officers, put forward ideas for future improvement. The Elected Member Development Working Group continue to discuss these and consider the areas that the council would like to work towards over the next three years.

	It is customary that the Award is presented prior to a Committee or Council meeting by NILGA and as such, we are working to schedule this in advance of the February meeting of Policy and Resources Committee.	
4.0	**Other Considerations**	
4.1	**Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications**	
	Financial: not applicable at this point	
	Human: Not applicable	
	Risk Management: Not applicable	
4.2	**Screening & Impact Assessments**	
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Not applicable	
	Rural Needs Implications: Not applicable	
5.0	**Recommendation(s)**	
5.1	The committee: (i) Consider and approves the report of the Elected Member Development Steering Group meeting held on Wednesday 28th November; (ii) Notes that Council has now received Level 1 Charter Status in relation to Elected Member Development from North West Employers; (iii) Consider further the recommendation from the Elected Member Development Steering Group to furnish Members with personalised headed paper in the incoming Council term.	
6.0	**Documents Attached & References**	
6.1	Appendix A: Report of Elected Member Development Steering Group Appendix B: Letter received from Norther West Employers	

	Report of Elected Member Development Steering Group Thursday 28 November 2018

Report of Elected Member Development Steering Group of Mid Ulster District Council held on *28 November 2018* at 6.30pm in Council Offices, Dungannon

Attendees   **Members:** Councillors Ashton, Doris, McKinney and M Quinn
                  Officers: E Forde, Member Support Officer

Apologies   Cllr Gildernew, S McAleer, Corporate L&D Manager
                  P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services

AGENDA	MATTERS AGREED	ACTIONS & RESPONSIBILITY
1.0	**Meeting Report 12 September 2018**	
	• Noted	
2.0	**Charter Status Update**	
	• Member Support Officer advised that Council would be made aware of the outcome of Charter Assessment following North West Employers Meeting on 6 December 2018, following which Working Group Members would be emailed details of the outcome.	Member Support Officer
3.0	**Progress Report**	
	Members Noted • Update on training, Personal Training Budget allocation and uses, In-house Links to Corporate Plan, Working group additional membership. **Members Agreed:** • Members approved conference report form now to be distributed to those attending outside training, conferences.	Member Support Officer Member Support Officer

4.0	**Learning and Development Training Programme – Proposed Training**	
	Members Agreed: • To progress planning Learning & Development Schedule 2018/19 • To actively encourage party colleagues to avail of the training • To offer Refugee Awareness Training prior to a committee; • To avail of offer of Universal Credit Training.	S McAleer, C L&D Manager Working Group Members E Forde, Member Support Officer
	Future Training for New Members • To update the 'Go To' Contacts booklet for new Members; • Short synopsis of Terms of Reference for Committees to be delivered to new Members prior to committees in new Council May/June 2019;	E Forde, Member Support Officer Head of Democratic Services
	Councillors Allowances • As proposed by Councillor Doris, seconded by Councillor McKinney and agreed by the group that a recommendation be made to Council through Policy & Resources that a ream of personalised paper be provided for Members in the new Council term. • Updated information to be sought from the National Association of Councillors with regard to Councillors allowances i.e. availability of iPads, stationery etc.	E Forde, Member Support Officer Head of Democratic Services
5.0	**Meeting Schedule & Additional Members**	
	Members Noted: • Additional Members to join the working group; • Meeting schedule for remainder of Council term (30 January and 27 March 2019)	
	Meeting concluded at 7.15pm	

Eileen Forde
Mid Ulster District Council
Council Offices
Circular Rd
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

6 December 2018

NORTH WEST CHARTER FOR MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Dear Eileen,

We are writing to let you know that North West Employers Executive Board met on 5 December 2018 to discuss your assessment undertaken on 2 October 2018. We are delighted to say that the Board had no hesitation in endorsing the recommendation to award the Level 1 Charter for Elected Member Development to Mid Ulster District Council.

We know that a lot of effort was put into preparing for the assessment visit, including the online submission of the portfolio of evidence. All the information gathered was considered and an electronic copy of the report is also attached. The report includes particular examples of good practice and continuous improvement.

Continuous improvement is an important part of the Charter Review process and on the assessment day both members and officers put forward their ideas for future improvement. It would be useful for the Elected Member Development Working Group to discuss these and consider the areas that the council would like to work towards over the next three years.

We know that investing in developing councillors has been a significant part of Mid Ulster District Council's improvement journey and we applaud and celebrate the commitment shown to continue to improve the support to all councillors.

We would particularly like to thank you Eileen for your efforts in organising the evidence and verification visit.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Bishop
NWE Chief Executive

Alan Dean
Chair of North West Employers

Derek McCallan
NILGA Chief Executive

Mid Ulster District Council

NORTH WEST CHARTER
FOR COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT

LEVEL ONE VERIFICATION

VISIT

2 October 2018

Mid Ulster District Council
North West Charter for Councillor Development

Verification Visit

Verification visits to authorities are undertaken by representatives from the North West Employers' Executive Board and an officer. On this occasion Councillor Alan Dean, Liverpool City Council and Sharon Senior, North West Employers, conducted the verification visit with Councillor Joan Baird, Causeway Coast and Glens Council.

The purpose of the visit was to verify the information submitted by the council in their portfolio presented for assessment for the Charter on councillor development. The visit consisted of interviews with councillors and officers from the council. Whilst the content of the interviews is confidential, the information gathered has been used to support the submission made by the council.

The following people were seen during the visit:

Councillor Sean McPeake	Chair
Adrian McCreesh	Deputy Chief Executive
Philip Moffett	Head of Democratic Services
Sinead McAleer	Corp Learning & Development Manager
Eileen Forde	Member Support Officer
Councillor Derek McKinney	Working Group Chair
Councillor Niamh Doris	Regional Representative
Councillors Ashton, M Quinn & Gildernew	Working Group Members
Councillor Mark Glasgow	Randomly Selected Member
Councillor Frances Burton	Randomly Selected Member
Councillor Sean McGuigan	Randomly Selected Member
Alderman Martin Kearney	Randomly Selected Member

Thanks to all those above who gave their time so generously on the day.

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	ASSESSORS' COMMENTS
1. Having a clear commitment to councillor development	There is a real commitment to councillor development at all levels in the organisation. From a strategic and political level, there is strong recognition of the councillor leadership role and learning and development being integral to change. Both the Chair and Deputy Chief Executive are enabling and supporting a culture of learning and recognising the value of investing in development. Councillors played an active role in developing the corporate plan, with a cross-party group involved in shaping the priorities and budget for the first four years of the newly formed council. There is an Elected Member Development Working Group which meets on a quarterly basis. A report is presented following each meeting to the Policy & Resources Committee of Council for approval of actions. These papers are received by all Members and decisions from the Policy and Resources Committee are then brought to the Council meeting for approval. In addition to the budget of £7,500, each Elected Member is allocated a £750 personal conference budget. Those interviewed were very complementary about the support provided by the Democratic Services Team and shared their positive experiences of development including induction, 121 briefings and shared site visits which helped to build cross-party respect and communication.
2. Promoting learning and development opportunities	In preparation for the establishment of the new council in 2015, there was a transition programme for councillors and this included a comprehensive range of development including standards, handling the media and scrutiny. With the three Councils amalgamating, 'Getting to Know You' days were organised for staff and members to come together and become familiar with the new council area. There was also a development offer to support the new responsibilities including planning and community planning. One–to-one induction training for the newly co-opted Elected Members has been provided by the Head of Democratic Services. Those interviewed demonstrated a genuine openness to accessing development, found the offer to be excellent and appreciated the flexibility in terms of delivery timings. Councillors acknowledged the social side of attending training and felt that scheduling the sessions before committee meetings has increased levels of engagement. Learning and Development schedules are produced on a quarterly basis in response to the Training Needs Analysis. Regular emails are issued to remind members of forthcoming training events (both internal and external i.e. NILGA) and this seems to be working well in terms of encouraging attendance and maximising resources. Training schedules are also available on the CMIS Member Resource Library.

	Attendance is monitored and training records show that 77.5% of members have engaged in at least one offer of training. Take up of learning opportunities is reported to the Elected Member Development Working Group with party members on the group committed to promoting training opportunities with colleagues. There is a proactive approach to engagement through contacting members who have requested training to highlight what is available. This is supported by one to one encouragement from officers and encouragement within party groupings and there is a real commitment to understanding the barriers to accessing learning. Session times and formats have been adapted in response to feedback from members to actively promote take-up and reduce travel time.
3. Having a councillor-led approach to developing learning and development	The Elected Member Development Working Group was established in 2017. The group agreed an approach to officers carrying out a training needs analysis to develop a draft development programme. The survey was provided to all members to complete individually or with the assistance of officers. Working Group members also encourage party colleagues to flag up training needs either through the group or at relevant committee. The Elected Member Development Working Group is proactive in analysing and prioritising the summary of training needs to inform the quarterly Learning and Development schedules. The group also review the training offered and the levels of attendance. In addition to the schedule of training, there is a responsive approach to emerging requirements with examples such as Rural Needs Training and Refugee Awareness being offered to enable members to fulfil their roles in the community. Those councillors interviewed explained how the development had increased their self-awareness and helped them consider how they might further develop in the role, for example, identifying future committee roles that might be of interest. The development has impacted positively on their levels of confidence; knowing what to do in certain situations and their ability to respond to questions out in the community. There was recognition at a strategic level of the impact that development has had - citing an increased ability to probe, a transferable skill set in governance and effective decision-making. Reference was also made to the work driven by councillors in community development and the development of a multi-agency model. The importance of relationships and how these have developed was also acknowledged.

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4. Having a strategy that includes impact measures within a continuous improvement framework	There is a strong culture of continuous improvement at Mid Ulster District Council and this came through in the interviews and was referenced by the visible and transparent performance management processes in place. A draft Elected Member Learning and Development Policy was developed and taken to the Elected Member Development Working Group in 2017. The policy sets out the Council's approach and commitment to the development and learning of its Elected Members. With clear links to the corporate plan, the policy includes clear accountabilities for the EMDWG, members, party leaders, officers and the Chief Executive. During the interviews, ideas were shared on how the future strategy might evolve, ensuring it remains current and builds on the great work that has been done to date. Councillors were able to provide examples of how they have fed back on development events and there is a clear feedback mechanism in place with information being fed back into the EMDWG on a regular basis. Councillors demonstrated a responsible attitude to attending the right development for them and ensuring it provides value for money.

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Continuous Improvement

Although the purpose of the visit was to assess the submission for the Charter, it was also an ideal opportunity to discuss what improvements the council would hope to make within the next three years.

All those interviewed were asked at the end of the interview what improvements they could suggest. They are recorded below to act as a reference point when the Charter is re-assessed in three years.

All the points noted below were agreed with by the assessor team.

- Build on the TNA approach with a move to individual PDP's for councillors to create longer term development plans and increased ownership

- Embrace technology and consider e-learning/webinars as an option to provide flexibility and improve attendance at training

- Refresh the induction offer and consider how existing councillors can get involved in future induction programmes to help shape, lead and nurture the new wave of councillors from the outset

- Reflect any new powers (fiscal, Power of Competence) in the development offer

- Consider how to create and support a culture of entrepreneurialism and the skills needed

Special Mention

The intention of the Charter is to encourage councils to adopt the four key practice points within the standard framework but we hope to encourage and celebrate innovation and excellent practice.

Where we have found "little gems" through the interviews, we will take the opportunity to share these examples and give positive feedback to the council:

- Good evidence of strong political and strategic leadership providing clarity around the strategic vision and direction of the organisation and commitment to the role that councillor development has in supporting councillors in their changing roles

- Member and officer relationships are strong and there is great support from the Democratic Services Team

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- Clear examples of the positive impact that development has had on councillors and the organisation i.e. improved confidence to challenge and influence and decision making

- Allocation of £750 personal development budget to members and the willingness to reallocate/share this

- A positive approach to succession planning

- Mentoring/buddying offer

- Recognition of the culture shift in learning and development and the continued ability to look ahead

Assessors' Comments

Mid Ulster District Council has demonstrated a positive approach to learning and development and made great progress in creating the appetite for learning. Councillors are confident in shaping the development offer and can clearly see the benefits for them, the organisation and the community.

Recommendation from the Verification Team

Having reviewed all the evidence, it is our view that Mid Ulster District Council meets the standards set out in the North West Charter on Councillor Development for Level 1.

Signed:

Sharon Senior
North West Employers

Signed:

Councillor Alan Dean,
Liverpool City Council

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Awarded to

Mid Ulster District Council

For Level 1:

North West Elected Member Development Charter

Councillor Alan Dean
Chair
North West Employers

Derek McCallan
Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Gillian Bishop
Chief Executive
North West Employers

Report on	Draft Accessible Communications Policy
Date of Meeting	Wednesday 9th January 2019
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	A McAleer, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform and seek approval from the Committee for the draft Accessible Communications Policy.
2.0	**Background**
2.1	The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 prohibits the discrimination of disabled people and places a duty on local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure services are as accessible as possible to all service users/customers. This includes how Council communicates with people who have additional communication and/or learning needs.
2.2	The development of this policy also forms part of the previously agreed council Disability Action Plan
3.0	**Main Report**
3.1	This policy has been developed as an outworking an Audit of Inequalities carried out in Mid Ulster District Council area in 2014. The audit identified that within Council, '*there are opportunities within corporate practices to mainstream improve and equalities'.* The audit also identified that '*older people feel they cannot access Council facilities'* and that, *'residents from ethnic minority backgrounds feel a perceived inaccessibility to local democracy'.*
3.2	The Audit of Inequalities informed the Equality Action Plan, which includes Action *2c- the development of a policy in relation to communicating with disabled people, older people, younger people and different racial groups*. This draft policy, as presented at appendix A is the subsequent implementation of this action.

4.0	**Other Considerations**
4.1	**Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications**
	Financial: • No direct immediate costs associated with policy implementation. However, should requests for alternative formats be requested costs are sought on a quotation basis (language interpreters typically charge £40 per hour, whilst translation into braille/audio format depends on word count averaging £45 per letter/correspondence. Council is already subject to such costs regardless of a formal policy being in place. Many format requirements are free or negligible, by for example, altering font size, colour contrast and text alignment.
	Human: • no additional resource required and identified
	Risk Management: • Risk to the reputation of the council in not having services accessible to all users, where practicable
4.2	**Screening & Impact Assessments**
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: • Screened out for an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). Progress on implementation of this policy will be included in the annual report to the Equality Commission for NI.
	Rural Needs Implications: • None identified in the operational outworking of the policy
5.0	**Recommendation(s)**
5.1	It is recommended that Members consider and approve the draft Accessible Communications Policy.
6.0	**Documents Attached & References**
	Appendix A: Draft Accessible Communications Policy Appendix B: Equality Screening Document

Accessible Communications Policy (DRAFT)

Document Control			
Policy Owner	Ann McAleer		
Policy Author	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer		
Version	Draft (19-12-18)		
Consultation	Senior Management Team Mid Ulster Disability Forum		
Equality Screened by	Yes	**Date**	11/12/18
Equality Impact Assessment	N/A	**Date**	N/A
Good Relations	N/A	**Date**	N/A
Approved By		**Date**	
Adopted By		**Date**	
Review Date		**By Whom**	
Circulation	Councillors Staff		
Document Linkages	Customer Service Policy		

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CONTENTS PAGE

1.0   Introduction

1.1   This policy has been developed to help to ensure that the Council has a clear and consistent approach to the provision of accessible information and communication support.

2.0   Policy Aims & Objectives

2.1   **Policy Aim**: To ensure that Council information is presented in an accessible way, and where appropriate in a range of formats and languages which are tailored to the needs of the intended audience (ties in the new interpretation and translation policy).

2.2   **Policy Objectives:**

- To promote inclusive communication to enable people with communication support needs to access information more effectively

- To increase awareness among Council staff or service users who have increased communication needs
- To mainstream the accessibility of information to help ensure that all service users have their communication needs met

- To establish good practice in order to benefit Council services in the future as well as now

3.0   Underpinning Legislation

3.1   The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 prohibits discrimination and requires local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that services are accessible. This includes Council communications.

3.2   Section 6.1 of this policy contains examples of alternatives formats which are considered as examples of reasonable adjustments.

3.3   Since 2006, public authorities must also pay due regard to the need:
• To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and
• To encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

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3.4   Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires public authorities to have due regard to promote equality of opportunity across a number of grounds, including disability.

3.5   The Human Rights Act (1998) also makes human rights a part of local legislation and means that public authorities must respect, protect and uphold the rights of all service users.

3.6   The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) provides specific human rights protections for persons with disabilities, including accessibility of information and communication. The Convention states that Persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability.

4.0   Policy Scope

4.1   It is important that documents and information published by Mid Ulster District Council are accessible and inclusive. This includes documents and information authored and produced in-house and commissioned from external agencies. This ensures that information can be read or received and understood by as many people as possible. It reduces – but does not remove – the need for alternative formats to be produced. Therefore, this policy relates to all of the Council's communications specifically:

- Written/printed communications
- Face-to-face communications
- Digital communications

4.2   Each of these areas are examined in turn to consider the varying communication needs of our service users:

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Written/Printed Communications

4.3   If a document is initially designed using the core accessibility principles (see Appendix A for guidance), the information will already be accessible to a greater number of people and may reduce demand for alternative formats. Structured planning will also make best use of resources available and will reduce duplication of work across Council departments

4.4   Structured planning can be carried out by:

- Carrying out research and identifying the target audience at the commissioning stage
- Considering how to reach audience members by using a mix of channels and appropriate formats, considering any costs.

4.5   This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print, and in alternative languages on request. Please contact the Council's Corporate Policy & Equality Officer with your request. The Council's Accessible Communication Statement is included as Appendix D.

Face-to-Face Communications

4.6   This policy is compatible with processes in place across Mid Ulster District Council, such as the 'Just A Minute' Initiative. The Council's Equality Scheme also requires preparation work to take place in relation to all projects/plans and strategies. Within that context, the scope of this policy extends to considering the communication requirements of the audience at the planning stage of projects/plans and strategies. This is necessary in order to ensure that everyone's communication needs are considered proactively and within the timeframe that is required by the Council's Equality Scheme. Appendix A sets out specific guidance for face to face communication.

Digital Communications

4.7   All electronic documents, including all documents published on Mid Ulster District Council's website or intranet should adhere to the accessibility guidance set out in Council's protocols for accessible communication (Appendix A).

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4.8   The Council's websites must, by default, achieve a high level of accessibility and any specifications which commission web-based services, including those provided by 3rd party suppliers, must incorporate accessibility requirements at the planning stage.

4.9   Appendix C sets out specific guidance for accessible digital communications.

4.10   It is anticipated that the following groups are most likely to be directly impacted upon by the policy:
- People who are blind or have visual loss
- People who are deaf or have hearing loss
- People who are deafblind
- People who have a learning disability
- People who have limited or no English

4.11   The following groups may also be affected by the policy:
- People with aphasia
- People with a mental health condition which affects their ability to communicate
- People with dyslexia
- People with autism

4.12   Please note that these categories may not represent all of the groups who may be affected.

5.0   Linkage to Our Corporate Plan

5.1   Referring to Mid Ulster District Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, this policy contributes toward the delivery of Corporate Theme 1, *(Delivering for Our People).*

6.0   Submitting Requests for Alternative Formats

6.1   The Council shall consider all requests to provide communications in a range of alternative formats. Alternative formats can include documents being made available in large-print, on disk, on audiocassette and in Braille and in other languages upon request. Requests should be made to the Corporate Policy & Equality Officer.

6.2   Council Officers who receive the request should make the person submitting the request aware that there are waiting times in place for request for some types of translation services.

6.3   All Council staff must take responsibility for their own actions and how their communication methods may affect others. Staff should be flexible in the way they communicate and deliver services. Staff should always be mindful that different people will require different types of support to access Council services effectively.

7.0   Roles and Responsibilities

7.1   **Chief Executive:** has ultimate authority with regard to the implementation of the Equality Scheme. This policy is an outworking of the Equality Scheme to ensure equality of opportunity in relation to how the Council provides accessible communication.

7.2   **Departments:** are responsible for; the day to day implementation of this policy and ensuring a high quality service is provided to all customers including people with additional communication requirements.

7.3   **Staff:** All Council staff must take responsibility for ensuring that how they are communicating with customers takes into account that different people will have different communication needs. Staff should also ensure that accessibility is considered at the beginning of the process.

8.0   Impact Assessment

8.1   **Equality Screening & Impact**
The policy shall be subjected to equality screening in accordance with the council's screening process.

8.2   **Staff & Financial Resources**

No issues have been identified which would significantly impact on the council's resources and delivery of its business as a result of this policy being implemented. Many adjustments to make communications accessible can be completed with little or no cost attached.

8.3   Rural Needs Implications

 The policy shall be subjected to a Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

9.0   Support and Advice

9.1   Advice and guidance on the implementation of this should be sought from the Corporate Policy & Equality Officer.

10.0   Communication

10.1   Democratic Services is responsible for the communication of this policy.

11.0   Monitoring and Review

11.1   Implementation of this policy will be monitored and a formal review undertaken 24 months from its effective date.

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Appendix A- Protocols for Accessible Written/Printed Communications

Fonts

- Document text size should be a minimum of 12 point, preferably 14 point.
- Use Arial font. This is Council's agreed font for internally produced documents.
- Avoid italics, underlining, simulated handwriting, blocks of capitalised letters or anything styled.

Design and Layout

- Use a simple, clear and uncluttered design and layout.
- All body text should be left aligned. Avoid aligning text or to the right or justifying text.
- All text should be the same orientation on the page.
- Use bold sparingly, only highlight a few words rather than a paragraph.
- Leading (space between lines) should not be too cramped, preferably 1.5-line spacing.
- Text should never be placed over an image or fitted around an image.
- The contrast between the text and background should be as high as possible.
- Space between columns of text should be large enough to be distinct.
- Colour text/fonts should not be used.
- Do not use abbreviation or acronyms.
- Keep your words, sentences and paragraphs short and simple.
- Use page numbers and headings consistently.

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Images:

- Images can help communicate messages and support understanding.

- Make sure images are as big and as clear as possible.

- Text should never be placed over an image or fitted around an image.

- Images in colour are preferable.

- Authentic photographs of real people or places are preferable.

- Put a clear picture next to accompanying text.

DRAFT

Appendix B- Guidance for Face to Face Communication

- Make sure you have the person's attention before trying to communicate with them.
- Identify yourself clearly. Say who you are and what you do – it may be more relevant to explain your reason for seeing the person rather than your job title.
- Check that you are in the best position to communicate, usually this will be facing the person, but consider whether seated or standing is more appropriate. Communication at eye level is usually easiest so if you are speaking to a wheelchair user consider sitting down if possible.
- Find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting and away from noise and distractions.
- Speak clearly but do not shout.
- Keep your face and lips visible – do not cover your mouth with clothing, a hand or your hair. If a member of staff is concerned about religious expression they should discuss this with their manager in advance.
- Use gestures and facial expressions to support what you are saying.
- If necessary, repeat phrases, re-phrase the sentence or use simpler words or phrases.
- Use plain, direct language and avoid using figures of speech.
- Check if the person has understood what you are saying. Look for visual clues as well as asking if they have understood.
- Encourage people to ask questions or request further information. Ask if they would like anything in writing as a reminder or reference.
- Try different ways of getting your point across. For example, writing things down, drawing or using symbols or objects to support your point.
- Keep messages short, clear and to the point.
- Provide a pen and paper to enable the person to write or draw key points themselves.
- Try to keep communication and documents consistent, as repetition will support effective communication.
- Recap the key points at the end of the conversation.

Appendix C- Guidance for Digital Communication

- Writing for digital channels should, where applicable, meet the same standards as writing for print.
- Photographs and video content should, where possible, be captioned.
- Appropriate measures should be taken to assist accessibility and screen reading technology, including the use of alt text tags for images, meaningful hyperlinks (avoid hyperlinking phrases such as 'click here') and camel case (capitalisation) in hashtags where more than 1 word is used.

Appendix D- Accessible Communication Statement

All Mid Ulster District Council publications should include the 'accessible communication statement' in a prominent position, as follows:

'This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as audio, braille, easy read or large print and may be provided in alternative languages, upon request. Please contact Mid Ulster District Council's Corporate Policy & Equality Officer on 03000 132 132 Ex 24612 or via ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org'

The statement should be in no less than 12 point, in an obvious place, such as on the front cover page. For longer documents, it would be appropriate to duplicate the statement on the back cover as well as at the beginning.

Introduction

Mid Ulster District Council has a statutory duty to screen its policies, procedures, practices/decisions. This Policy Screening Form and Report assists Council Departments to consider the likely equality and good relations impacts of the aforementioned, if any, placed upon our ratepayers, citizens, service users, staff and visitors to the district.

Section 1 – Policy scoping

This asks the Policy Author to provide details on the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations. Reference to policy within this document refers to either of the aforementioned (policy, procedure, practice, and/ or decision).

Section 2 – Screening questions

This asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and issues.

Section 3 –Screening decision

This guides the Council to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

Section 4 – Monitoring

This provides guidance to the Council on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Section 5 – Approval and authorisation

This verifies the Council's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

Appendix A   Screening Process

Section 1   Policy Scoping & Information

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration which sets the context and confirms the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. Scoping the policy helps to identify constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy author to work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

1. Policy Name
Draft Accessible Communication Policy

2. Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?
This is a new policy.

3. What is it trying to achieve? (aims/outcomes)
This policy aims to ensure that Council information is presented in an accessible way, and where appropriate in a range of formats and languages which are tailored to the needs of the intended audience.

4. Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?	Yes	x
	No	

If so, please explain

People in the following S75 categories are expected to benefit from this policy:

- Men & Women generally
- People with a disability
- People of various age groups
- Racial groupings

6. Who initiated or wrote the policy?
This policy was initiated as a result of Mid Ulster District Council's Equality Action Plan.

7. Who owns and who implements the policy?
Mid Ulster District Council

Implementation factors

	Yes	No
Are there any factors which could contribute to/ detract from intended aim/ outcome of the policy?		No
• If yes, are they financial?	✓	
• If yes, are they legislative?	✓	
• If yes, Please specify	*Financial:* Councils have to deliver their services within their annual budget allocation. *Legislative:* The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 prohibits the discrimination of disabled people and requires local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that services are accessible to everyone. This includes how Council communicates.	
• Other, Please specify		

Stakeholders

The internal and external (actual or potential) that the policy will be impacted upon

	Yes	No
Staff	✓	
Service Users	✓	
Other public sector organisations	✓	
Voluntary/community/ trade unions	✓	
Other, please specify		

Others policies with a bearing on this policy

Policies	Owners
Procurement Policy	Finance Team

Available evidence

Information and available evidence (qualitative and quantitative) gathered to inform the policy under each of the Section 75 groups as identified within the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	63.77% of the population were brought up in the Catholic religion and 33.46% belong or were brought up in a Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion. Other religions comprised 690 (0.5%) and None 3,153 (2.28%) of the population (Source: 2011 Census). See table below.
Political opinion	Political party representation can be used as an approximate barometer of political opinion of people within Mid Ulster council area. The most recent local government/ council election in 2014 the percentage 1st preference vote share for each of the political party/ independents is detailed bellowed along with representation (seats) on Council (Source: NISRA): See table below.
Racial group	According to the 2011 Census the overwhelming majority of the population 136,485 (98.48%) were classified as 'white'. Within this total will be migrant communities, such as Polish, Lithuanian and so forth. Statistics indicate that the number of people in Mid Ulster Local Government District (LGD) born outside Northern Ireland is: See table below.

Religious belief table:

Religion or Religion brought up in	No.	%
Catholic	88,375	63.77
Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	46,372	33.46
Other religions	690	0.5
None	3,153	2.28
Total	**138,590**	**100**

Political opinion table:

Party	Votes	Percentage	Council Seats
SF	22,587	41.0%	18
DUP	9,723	17.6%	8
UUP	9,573	17.4%	7
SDLP	7,600	13.8%	6
Independent	2,689	4.9%	1
TUV	2,380	4.3%	0
Alliance	250	0.6%	0
UKIP	195	0.4%	0

Racial group table:

Place of Birth	No.
Great Britain	4,053
Republic of Ireland	2,250
EU Countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)	6,795

Other	2,280

The minority ethnic language profile within the area can serve as a possible indicator of the Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) community profile within the district. The composition of language groups in Mid Ulster LGD area is also noted from the 2011 census by NISRA as:

Main Languages of residents in Mid Ulster Council area	No.
English	125,715
Polish	2,008
Lithuanian	2,039
Portuguese	903
Irish (Gaelic)	404
Slovak	477
Russian	297
Latvia	261
Hungarian	117
Chinese	64
Tagalog/Filipino	38
Malaysian	33
Other	922

Age

The age profile of Mid Ulster Local Government District area as at 2015 (Source, NISRA)

	Mid Ulster	Northern Ireland
Total Population	144,002	1,851,621
0-15 years	33,123	385,200
16-39 years	47,646	583,116
40-64 years	43,621	591,481
65+ years	19,612	291,824
Population Change % (2005-2015)	15.3%	7.2%

| | Marital status | The below table sets out the martial status profile for Mid Ulster District Council area as extracted from results of the 2011 Census |

		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland	
		No.	%	No	%
Single (never married or never registered a same sex civil partnership) (Aged 16+)	38,353	35.97	517,393	36.14
Married (Aged 16+)	54,192	50.82	680,831	47.56
In a registered same sex civil partnership (Aged 16+)	62	0.06	1,243	0.09
Separated (but is still legally married or still legally in a same sex civil partnership) (Aged 16+)	3,369	3.16	56,911	3.98
Divorced or formerly in a same sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved (Aged 16+)	4,139	3.88	78,074	5.45
Widowed or surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership (Aged 16+)	6,523	6.12	97,088	6.78

Sexual orientation

No specific statistics are available from the 2011 government census for this Category and there are therefore no official statistics available in relation to persons of different sexual orientation. However, the Integrated Household Survey would include between 3% and 4% would be either gay, lesbian and/or bisexual. However, due to the nature of 'disclosure' in this area, umbrella organisations often state that the figure may be closer to 10%.

Region	Heterosexual / Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual	Other	Don't know /refuse	No response
England	92.54%	1.10%	0.51%	1.61%	0.33%	4.07%	1.45%
Wales	93.93%	1.04%	0.48%	1.52%	0.45%	2.99%	1.11%
Scotland	94.65%	0.82%	0.33%	1.14%	0.26%	2.59%	1.37%
N Ireland	**93.00%**	**0.64%**	**0.96%**	**1.60%**	**0.26%**	**3.98%**	**1.17%**
Total	92.80%	1.06%	0.51%	1.57%	0.32%	3.89%	1.42%

Research also conducted by the HM Treasury shows that between 5%-7% of the UK population identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or 'trans' (transsexual, transgendered and transvestite) (LGBT).

| Men & women generally | The gender profile of Mid Ulster LGD is detailed as; |

	Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland	
	No.	%	No.	%
Male	69,362	50.05	887,323	49.00
Female	69,228	49.95	923,540	51.00

Disability

According to the 2011 NISRA census statistics 19.39% of people had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities whilst 80.43% of people within the district stated their general health was either good or very good

	Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland	
	No.	%	No.	%
Disability / long term health	26,870	19.39	374,646	20.69
No disability / long term health problem	111,720	80.61	1,436,217	79.31

In Northern Ireland the profile of persons with a disability has been reported by Disability Action as;

- More than 1 in 5 or 21% of the population have a disability
- 1 in 7 people have some form of hearing loss
- 5,000 persons use sign language - British Sign Language and/or Irish Sign Language
- There are 57,000 blind persons or persons with significant impairment
- 52,000 persons with learning difficulties

Dependants

Persons with dependents may be people who have personal responsibility for the care of a child (or children), a person with a disability, and/ or a dependent older person. The below table provides a summary with respect Mid Ulster LGD.

	Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland	
	No.	%	No.	%
Households with dependent children	18,626	38.99	238,094	33.86
Lone parent households with dependents	3,485	7.30	63,921	9.09
People providing unpaid care	12,821	10.69	231,980	11.82

Of the households in Mid Ulster Local Government District with dependent children, they can be summarised as;

- 7,407 families in households have 1 dependent child
- 6,394 families in households with two dependent children
- 5,014 families in households with three dependent children

There are 37,306 dependent children within families.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	N/A
Political opinion	N/A
Racial group	There is a varied minority ethnic community resident in Mid Ulster Council area.
Age	Mid Ulster District Council has an aging population.
Marital status	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A
Men and women generally	N/A
Disability	5% of the population in the Mid Ulster District have a disability.
Dependants	N/A

Section 2 – Screening Questions

In making a decision as to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), the Council should consider its answers to the questions 1- 3 detailed below.

If the Council's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity categories, then the Council may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity, the Council should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the Council's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the Council's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

In favour of a 'major' impact

a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;

b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;

c) Potential equality impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;

d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;

f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;

b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;

c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;

d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity.

In favour of none

a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity.

b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity for people within the equality categories.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories (minor/ major/ none)		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief		**None**
Political opinion		**None**
Racial group	Removes and minimises disadvantages faced by people whose first language is not English, or people with other communications needs, who need to access our information. Takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs. Encourages people to participate and make informed choices	**Minor (positive)**
Age	Removes and minimises disadvantages faced by people whose first language is not English, or people with other communications needs, who need to access our information. Takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	**Minor (positive)**

	Encourages people to participate and make informed choices	
Marital status		**None**
Sexual orientation		**None**
Men and women generally		**None**
Disability	Removes and minimises disadvantages faced by people whose first language is not English, or people with other communications needs, who need to access our information. Takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs. Encourages people to participate and make informed choices	**Minor (positive)**
Dependants		**None**

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories? (Yes/ No)		
Section 75 category	If **Yes,** provide details	If **No,** provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of religious belief.

Political opinion		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of political opinion.
Racial group	This policy takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	
Age	This policy takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	
Marital status		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of marital status.
Sexual orientation		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of sexual orientation.
Men and women generally		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of gender.
Disability	This policy takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	
Dependants		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of responsibility for dependents.

3. Are there opportunities without prejudice, to the equality of opportunity duty, to better promote good relations between Section 75 equality categories, through tackling prejudice and/ or promoting understanding? (Yes/ No)		
	No	x
	Yes	
If yes, please detail the opportunities below:		

If yes is concluded to Question 3, then the policy will be referred to the Council's Good Relations Working Group for consideration. The Group will consider the potential opportunities and assess if and how the overall impact of a decision/policy can better promote good relations.

Additional Considerations - Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities? (*For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).*
N/A
Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

Section 3 – Screening Decision

In light of answers provided to the questions within Section 3 select one of the following with regards the policy:

		Select One
1	Shall not be subject to an EQIA - *with no mitigating measures required*	x
2	Shall not be subject to an EQIA - *mitigating measures/ alternative policies introduced*	
3	Shall be subject to an EQIA	

If 1 or 2 above (i.e. not to be subject to an EQIA) please provide details of reasons why.
Overall this policy provides a minor positive and therefore does not require an EQIA.

If 2 above (i.e. not to subject to an EQIA) in what ways can adverse impacts attaching to the policy be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

If 3 above (i.e. shall be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons.

Mitigation

When it is concluded that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity?
If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy: Overall this policy provides a minor positive and therefore does not require an EQIA.

Timetabling and prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the below to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

- **On a scale of 1-3 (1 being lowest priority and 3 being highest), assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment**.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a Council's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the Council in timetabling. Details of the Council's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the Screening Reports.

- **Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?**

Yes	
No	

Section 5 – Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the Council to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development. Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

This policy will be monitored in relation to the types of alternative communication that are requested by service users and to ensure there are no gaps in information provision.

Section 6 – Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/ Job Title	Date
Ann McAleer	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	11/12/18
Approved by:	**Position/ Job Title**	**Date**
Philip Moffett	Head of Democratic Services	19/12/18

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy; made easily accessible on the council website as soon as possible following completion and be available on request.

Report on	Marketing & Communications Strategy 2018-2020
Date of Meeting	9 January 2019
Reporting Officer	Ursula Mezza
Contact Officer	Ursula Mezza

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

1.0	**Purpose of Report**
1.1	The report outlines the aims, objectives and key actions of a proposed new strategic approach to marketing and communications.
2.0	**Background**
2.1	The centralised marketing and communications service came into being with the new Council and has a defined but diverse remit, with responsibility for the development and delivery of effective external and internal marketing and communications activity which supports the Council's vision, values and strategic direction.
2.2	In the first term of the new Council, the service has established its core services and has sought to embed a planned and integrated approach to marketing and communications. It has also sought to adopt new ways of working both as a service itself and with its internal clients.
2.3	Planned activity, which considers positioning and messaging, products and offering, pricing, target markets, channels, tactics and evaluation, has helped to ensure that marketing and communications are better aligned and more consistent.
2.4	This has allowed the service to more easily demonstrate how it supports the Council's strategic priorities and contributes to their achievement at departmental and service level, particularly through campaign work.
2.5	This new strategy takes the service's work to a new level, developing and extending its approach to positioning the Council via a new aim and 2 new objectives.
3.0	**Main Report**
3.1	While marketing and communications work to date has always had a strategic imperative, the 'golden thread' which links individual elements of activity to paint the 'big picture' or tell the 'big story' has not always been present or clear. The sense, ethos and ambition of the corporate body which is Mid Ulster District Council is therefore less visible and coherent.

3.2	In terms of building trust with our citizens and stakeholders and thereby building and maintaining the Council's reputation, the marketing and communications service now needs to introduce a new dimension to its work which positions the Council itself as a corporate body with an agreed narrative - its 'big story' - at its core.
3.3	In summary, the service's new aims is: *'to contribute to building trust in Mid Ulster District Council, in its vision and values, among our residents and customers, partners and stakeholders, councillors and staff, through effective marketing and communications'.*
3.4	The strategy sets out two key objectives: 1. To present and support the delivery of the Council's vision, values and strategic priorities externally and internally. 2. To promote the adoption of, and to utilise, an evidence-based, customer-focussed approach to marketing and communications which demonstrates excellence and value for money.
3.4	In terms of Objective 1, the strategy proposes an over-arching corporate narrative and 4 narrative statements flowing from it, with their origins in both the existing Corporate Plan and the Mid Ulster Community Plan. These seek to encapsulate the Council's goals and ambitions in a meaningful way for all our stakeholders.
3.5	The strategy posits that every outcome in the Community Plan is predicated on an investment of time, effort and money in Mid Ulster and if we believe we are *investing in Mid Ulster, the place and its people*, then we are doing so by: • Investing to create a thriving economy • Investing to grow healthy communities • Investing to enhance our environment • Investing in our people (internal focus).
3.6	These 4 statements have the potential to act as the framework in which marketing and communications activity takes place and the strategy sets out how each can be interpreted and applied, and then details associated high level actions.
3.7	Objective 2 recognises that strategic marketing and communication puts a very clear understanding of the audience at the heart of its work, whether that work relates to policy, service design and delivery, or the creation and implementation of awareness-raising and behaviour-changing campaigns.
3.8	The significance of customer insight and, at the other end of the cycle, evaluation is detailed, together with the importance of inclusive communications which sees our digital agenda prioritised while we continue to embrace traditional marketing and communications channels which have a valid and valuable role in meeting our audiences' needs and preferences. This objective also incorporates the contemporary 'omni-channel' concept, where every channel we use is seamlessly connected visually, verbally and virtually, and again, a series of corresponding actions are outlined.

4.0	**Other Considerations**
4.1	**Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications**
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: The strategy contributes to the mitigation of risk associated with planning and management of media relations issues.
4.2	**Screening & Impact Assessments**
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: The strategy has been equality screened and screened out.
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	**Recommendation(s)**
5.1	That the Committee accepts the Marketing & Communications Strategy.
6.0	**Documents Attached & References**
	Marketing & Communications Strategy 2018-2020.

Marketing and Communications Strategy 2018-2020

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Introduction
Modern marketing and communications methods and practices have evolved rapidly in recent years, reflecting a radically different media landscape, embracing digital technologies together with their associated levels of personal, direct and fast-paced engagement, and prioritising customer insight.

Context
If methods and practices have evolved beyond the traditional single or primary specialisms which characterised marketing and communications services in the recent past, so too has the context in which those services are planned and delivered in a local government setting.

The establishment of new councils in 2015, with larger populations, increased powers, including the advent of community planning, and growing financial pressures have impacted the shape of marketing and communications activities. They have also influenced the corresponding skills-base required to deliver in a new environment and in newly structured organisations.

The new Mid Ulster District Council invested in the creation of a centralised marketing and communications service, with responsibility for the development and delivery of effective external and internal marketing and communications activity which support the Council's vision, values and strategic direction.

In the first term of the new Council, marketing and communications has established its core services and has sought to embed a planned and integrated approach to marketing and communications activity. It has also sought to adopt new ways of working both as a service itself and with its internal clients.

The service's core remit is defined, but diverse, including:
- brand management, including of the corporate visual identity and corporate messaging
- facility marketing
- campaign development and delivery
- public relations work which extends across every department and service
- media management
- digital channel development and management
- graphic design and
- extensive elected member (primarily Chair and Deputy Chair) support.

Planned activity, which considers positioning and messaging, products and offering, pricing, target markets, channels, tactics and evaluation, has helped to ensure that marketing and communications are better aligned and more consistent.

This has allowed the service to more easily demonstrate how it supports the Council's strategic priorities and contributes to their achievement at departmental and service level, particularly through campaign work.

However, while marketing and communications work to date has always had a strategic imperative, the 'golden thread' which links individual elements of activity to

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paint the 'big picture' or tell the 'big story' has not always been present or clear. The sense, ethos and ambition of the corporate body which is Mid Ulster District Council is therefore less visible and coherent.

In terms of building trust with our citizens and stakeholders and thereby building and maintaining the Council's reputation, the marketing and communications service now needs to introduce a new dimension to its work which positions the Council itself as a corporate body with an agreed narrative - its 'big story' - at its core.

This new Marketing and Communications Strategy, therefore, sets out a potential, over-arching corporate narrative which seeks to encapsulate the Council's goals and ambitions in a meaningful way for all our stakeholders: in other words, to tell the story of where we are as an organisation and, crucially, where we are going, in a way which resonates with our citizens, our staff and our stakeholders.

It sets out the service's overall aim in this context, specifies its objectives, and also outlines how the marketing and communications service proposes to use a series of core narrative statements to tell our story through the development and delivery of cohesive and integrated marketing and communications plans.

Supporting Strategic Goals

'Strategic communications supports the delivery of organisational priorities, policies and services through planned communications activity and is strategic when it is completely consistent with mission, vision and values' ('Modern Public Sector Communications', Northern Ireland Public Sector Communications Forum).

Aim

The service aims:

'to contribute to building trust in Mid Ulster District Council, in its vision and values, among our residents and customers, partners and stakeholders, councillors and staff, through effective marketing and communications'.

Objectives

The service has two key objectives:

1. To present and support the delivery of the Council's vision, values and strategic priorities externally and internally.

2. To promote the adoption of, and to utilise, an evidence-based, customer-focussed approach to marketing and communications which demonstrates excellence and value for money.

Objective 1

To present and support the delivery of the Council's vision, values and strategic priorities externally and internally.

Positioning The Council: Towards A Corporate Narrative

Our vision is 'to be at the heart of our community'.

While the Council demonstrates that it is, in fact, at the heart of its community through every individual service, programme or initiative it delivers, there is no overarching consistent, corporate narrative which is used as a mechanism to capture its plans, achievements and ambitions.

Developing a corporate narrative requires us to consider the thread that connects our vision, values and strategic priorities, as expressed through our Corporate Plan (and via associated departmental strategies and plans), and through our Community Plan.

Themes in both these central strategic documents align, spanning the economy, infrastructure, the environment and health and well-being.

They are perhaps expressed most succinctly through the Community Plan's commitment to partnership working to create:

'a welcoming place where our people are content, healthy and safe; educated and skilled; where our economy is thriving; our environment and heritage are sustained; and where our public services excel'.

Every outcome in the Community Plan is predicated on an investment of time, effort and money in Mid Ulster.

If we believe we are *investing in Mid Ulster, the place and its people*, then we are doing so by:

- Investing to create a thriving economy
- Investing to grow healthy communities
- Investing to enhance our environment
- Investing in our people (internal focus).

These 4 statements have the potential to act as the framework in which marketing and communications activity takes place. However, any corporate narrative has to be realistic and believable. If it lacks authenticity, it will not resonate positively with either external or internal audiences and the trust which is so essential to building relationships – and building reputations – will be missing.

Corporate Narrative 1
Investing to create a thriving economy:

We are investing to create a strong, sustainable, diverse and more competitive economy.

Marketing and Communications will develop plans to demonstrate how the Council is investing in the local economy by focussing on the Council's commitment to:

- fund, whether directly or via leveraged funding, to stimulate business development and growth
- support the industry-led Mid Ulster Skills Forum, its action plan and outcomes
- position Mid Ulster as the centre of manufacturing excellence here
- be an active force driving the planning and delivery of major connectivity and infrastructure projects.

Corporate Narrative 2
Investing to grow healthy communities

We are helping to grow vibrant, active and healthy communities in Mid Ulster by investing in their well-being.

Marketing and Communications will support the Council and its partners' ambitions to enable our residents to live well and to age well by focussing on:

- the use of customer insight and industry trends to aid the development of customer-centric product portfolios across leisure and outdoor recreation
- the development of supporting leisure and outdoor recreation marketing strategies which help to meet the leisure, health and well-being needs of Mid Ulster
- harnessing the opportunities for partnership marketing, communication and engagement with our key health and well-being partners
- developing and delivering a capital projects campaign plan which showcases the Council's investment in new facilities and infrastructure in towns and villages for individual and community well-being.

Corporate Narrative 3
Investing to enhance our environment

We value our environment and will optimise the management of our waste, preserving, protecting and enhancing our natural and built heritage.

We aim to demonstrate how the Council values the environment by focussing on:

- the design, development and delivery of recycling and waste-related campaigns which effect positive behaviour change
- how the Council's new Local Development Plan balances social, economic and environmental interests.

Corporate Narrative 4
Investing in our people (internal focus)

We value our employees, recognise their professionalism and their contributions to achieving corporate goals, and encourage innovation and excellence.

We aim to demonstrate how the Council invests in its employees by focussing on:

- the design, development and delivery of an internal communications plan which prioritises staff engagement, encourages staff to 'live' the Council's values, demonstrates that the Council is now a unified organisation and promotes the benefits of working with Mid Ulster.

Objective 1
To present and support the delivery of the Council's vision, values and strategic priorities externally and internally.
How
Through the development, strategic application and positioning of clear and coherent corporate narratives, associated messaging and bespoke campaigns. Through the use of clear and consistent branding. By actively profiling Mid Ulster regionally to enhance the Council and District's reputation.
Actions
1. Test and agree new corporate narrative statements internally and with stakeholders. 2. Create a narrative implementation plan. 3. Continue to develop and deliver bespoke marketing and communications plans and campaigns in support of strategic corporate objectives, including a new internal communications plan. 4. Identify projects or initiatives with regional significance on an annual basis for focussed profiling work. 5. Continue to embed branding best practice and monitor brand use.

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Objective 2

To promote the adoption of, and to utilise, an evidence-based, customer-focussed approach to marketing and communications which demonstrates excellence and value for money.

In line with the Council's vision to be 'at the heart of our community' and its 'customer focus' value, knowing and understanding the needs of our audiences will be at the heart of marketing and communications work.

Our customers are wide and varied, ranging from our citizens as a whole, geographic groupings, special interest groupings and specific service and facility users to partner organisations and our internal audiences, including elected members and staff.

Strategic marketing and communication puts a very clear understanding of the audience at the heart of its work, whether that work relates to policy, service design and delivery, or the creation and implementation of awareness-raising and behaviour-changing campaigns.

In addition, the advent of Community Planning with the attendant requirement for statutory partners to work together to achieve a distinct set of outcomes on a region by region basis, creates a very specific stakeholder engagement requirement for local government. It also creates the opportunity for marketing and communication teams to work in partnership.

Partnership marketing and communication can be resource-efficient but perhaps more importantly, an approach which sees organisations share expertise, knowledge, creativity and best practice, can also be more effective in terms of reach and engagement to meet joint or aligned objectives.

Customer Insight
To truly understand an audience requires insight into who our audiences are, what they think, how they behave, what they need, and how we can best meet those needs.

This goes beyond merely gathering and presenting data, statistics and qualitative information. Information needs to be interpreted and transformed to generate insight.

Insight may not always appear at first glance to be customer-based, particularly when considering a strategic policy issue. However, given we are a public service organisation, whatever we do fundamentally affects people and so there will always be a human element to our insight work.

Creating an understanding of our customers is a continuous and multi-stranded process, encompassing the outcomes of research, consultation, engagement, evaluations and feedback.

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Ultimately this understanding of our audiences and the generation of customer insight should help to inform decision-making across the organisation, and, by extension our marketing and communications activity.

Evaluation
If understanding our customers is indeed a continuous process, then review and evaluation are essential and key to the delivery of strategic marketing and communications work.

Evaluation should not, however, be confined to the end of a process, but be undertaken in 'real-time' to allow actions to be re-focussed or adapted on an on-going basis to improve short-term and longer-term outcomes.

Inclusive Communication
Allied closely to our customer focus is the principle of inclusive communication, recognising that while we are digitally-led and will prioritise, where appropriate, the use of digital channels, we will continue to embrace traditional marketing and communications channels which have a valid and valuable role in meeting our audiences' needs and preferences.

However, in doing so, we will embrace the 'omni-channel' concept, where every channel we use is seamlessly connected visually, verbally and virtually. This will ensure that whether we are working across our web site and social media sites, print, out of home or in direct marketing, our positioning and messaging is clear and consistent.

We will use our insight to:
- Identity audiences more clearly
- Be clear about our objectives for each audience segment: what are we trying to do? Change behaviour? Improve operational effectiveness? Explain a policy or programme?
- Better understand our customers' needs.
- Influence the design and delivery of services based on evidence
- Develop the right content for delivery via the most appropriate channels
- Identify potential marketing and communications partners and work collaboratively to achieve common aims.

We will use evaluation to:
- Inform the planning stage of our marketing and communications work and to link clearly to our objectives: what are we trying to do? What do we want the audience to think or do differently as a result of our activity and how can we measure it to best show the impact.
- Set the metrics at the beginning of a process to track our success, ensuring we use the right metrics for the right marketing and communication discipline
- Evaluate our work as it progresses in 'real time' to adapt our approach as required, effect continual improvement and identify areas for on-going improvement
- Demonstrate how we deliver against our marketing and communication objectives and, by extension, our organisational goals.

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Objective 2
To promote the adoption of, and to utilise, an evidence-based, customer-focussed approach to marketing and communications which demonstrates excellence and value for money.
How
By accessing existing and commissioned sources of insight and evaluation to inform our understanding and influence our future activity. Through planned delivery of activity, which is evaluated and monitored for impact. By using social media strategically, ensuring our social media activity is well-researched, well-planned, monitored and evaluated. By adopting industry best practice in evaluative techniques, selecting the appropriate metrics to manage, plan and deliver robust evaluation. Through the service's contribution to the corporate innovation and revenue-raising agenda. By ensuring our marketing and communications staff are trained and upskilled to meet the demands of a changing digital landscape. By building alliances with our stakeholders to identify common areas of work, common objectives, similar audiences and messages.
Actions
1. Compile baseline of existing internal customer insight data sources and of relevant external research and evaluation sources. 2. Use baseline results to identify data insight gaps. 3. Develop proposals to invest in building our customer insight. 4. Create a meaningful evaluations framework, drawing on industry best practice. 5. Develop a medium-term 'digital by design' strategy for Mid Ulster. 6. Establish a Community Planning Communications' Group with responsibility for managing the implementation of the Community Planning Engagement and Communications Strategy.

Resources and Budget

The strategy will be delivered using existing resources and with the existing budget of the Marketing and Communications service.

Monitoring and Review

In line with best practice and the commitment to evidence-based principle operated by the service, the strategy will be subject to on-going monitoring to assess progress and impact.

Given the election of a new Council in May 2019, the development of a new coterminous Corporate Plan, and the fast-changing landscape in which the service operates, the strategy will be reviewed, amended and extended in 2020.

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 6 December 2018 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

Members Present	Councillor McKinney, Chair
	Councillors Ashton, Buchanan, Cuddy, Doris, Elattar, Forde, Gildernew, Kearney, S McGuigan, McLean (7.03 pm), S McPeake, Molloy, M Quinn, Totten
Officers in Attendance	Mrs Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
	Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property
	Mrs Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
	Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure
	Mrs Kerr, Head of Finance
	Ms Mezza, Head of Marketing and Communications
	Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
	Mr Scullion, Head of Property Services
	Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance
	Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

The meeting commenced at 7.02 pm.

PR243/18   Apologies

None.

PR244/18   Declaration of Interest

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest.

Councillor Ashton declared an interest in Aughnacloy College.

Councillor Gildernew declared an interest in Brantry Forest.

PR245/18   Chair's Business

None.

Councillor McLean entered the meeting at 7.03 pm.

Matters for Decision

PR246/18   Magherafelt Office Heating System Upgrade

The Head of Property Services presented previously circulated report which sought approval to upgrade and fund the replacement of the heating boilers, fuel tank and

introduce a building management system for the efficient operation of the heating system in the Magherafelt Office.

In response to Councillor McLean's question the Head of Property Services advised that the costs itemised in appendix to report were estimated and that best value would have to be obtained through a tendering process for the works.

Councillor McLean felt that the costs listed seemed high but agreed that the works were necessary. Councillor McLean stated that on the basis of Council getting best value, he would propose the report recommendation.

Councillor S McGuigan seconded Councillor McLean's proposal.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney asked what the yearly running costs will be for the new system compared to current costs and what savings can be achieved. Councillor McKinney also asked how the new system will be controlled.

The Head of Property Services advised that he could come back with costs/savings but highlighted that, on average, a plumber has had to be called with regard to heating at Magherafelt offices every six weeks since 2016 and a new system would automatically negate the need for that type of expense. The officer advised that the new system would be more energy efficient which would bring savings and that the new system could be controlled by zoning or on a room by room basis in order that room(s) which did not require heating on a particular day did not have to be heated, thereby savings can also be acheived.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney asked that Members be provided with comparison of running costs and savings to be made from installation of new heating system.

Resolved   That it be recommended to Council to approve the release of £110,700 plus a 10% contingency (£122,400) from the Council Capital Program to undertake the heating system replacement and upgrade works as outlined in report at the Council's Magherafelt office.

PR247/18   Aughnacloy Changing Room Relocation

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation presented previously circulated report which outlined proposal to uplift the existing changing block at Aughnacloy grass pitch to Aughnacloy College's 3G soccer pitch.

　　　Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
　　　Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

Resolved   That it be recommended to Council to progress the uplift of the existing changing block at Aughnacloy Grass Pitch to Aughnacloy College's 3G soccer pitch at a cost to Council of approximately £45,000.

PR248/18   Castledawson Play Park

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation presented previously circulated report which sought approval to accept the valuation of £1,000 and progress transfer of land and equipment from Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney asked if the entrance to the play park had been amended in that current access was via Riverside House.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation stated she would have to check this but was of the belief that if Council is to acquire the play park a new entrance would be required.

Councillor Forde asked when the play park would be handed over and open.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that if the valuation is accepted tonight officers can then move ahead with finalising the legal agreement with NIHE. The Director advised the play park would be open in the New Year when the legal agreements were complete.

> Proposed by Councillor McKinney
> Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

Resolved   That it be recommended to Council to accept the valuation of £1,000 and agree to the transfer of land and play equipment from Northern Ireland Housing Executive to Council ownership subject to agreement.

Matters for Information

PR249/18   Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 November 2018

Members noted Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 November 2018.

PR250/18   Marketing & Communications Activity Update

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on key areas of recent marketing and communications activity.

PR251/18   Performance Improvement Six Month Progress Update (Objectives, Improvement projects and Indicators)

Members noted previously circulated report which provided monitoring information on the review of Council performance against its seven statutory and three corporate performance improvement indicators and standards. The report also provided a performance progress summary against the Council's four corporate improvement objectives and their associated project plans, along with an overview of the Corporate Health Indicators for the first six months of 2018/19.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved: In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items PR252/18 to PR264/18.

Matters for Decision
PR252/18   Staffing Matters for Decision
PR253/18   Award of Integrated HR/Payroll Software Contract
PR254/18   Off Street Car Park Pay on Foot Pilot Scheme
PR255/18   Dungannon Market Square
PR256/18   Brantry Award Contract
PR257/18   2019/20 Insurances Update
PR258/18   Council's Financial Management Information System

Matters for Information
PR259/18   Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 November 2018
PR260/18   Staffing Matters for Information
PR261/18   Update on Recalculation of holiday pay for staff
PR262/18   Contracts and DAC
PR263/18   Financial Report for 7 months ended 31 October 2018
PR264/18   2019/20 Rates Estimates Update

PR265/18   Christmas Greetings

The Chair, Councillor McKinney wished Members and Officers a Happy Christmas.

PR266/18   Duration of Meeting

The commenced at 7pm and concluded at 8.50 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____