June 14th, 2023

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 15th June 2023 at 6:00 pm in Microsoft Teams & Downshire Civic Centre.

Committee Membership 2023 - 2024

Councillor L McEvoy **Chairperson**

Councillor C Enright **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor J Brennan

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor R Howell

Councillor T Kelly

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor D McAteer

Councillor A Mathers

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Agenda

1.0 Apologies

Mrs Marie Ward

Mr Conor Mallon

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from SPR Committee Meeting held on 16 March 2023

Draft SPR-Action Sheet arising from 16 March 2023 _ (002) (002).pdf ***Page 1***

4.0 SPR Committee Terms of Reference.

SPR Report - SPR Committee Terms of Reference 2023 - 2027.pdf ***Page 10***

ToR SPR Committee (Final approved SPR June 2023).pdf ***Page 13***

5.0 To agree start times for SPR Committee Meetings 2023-2024.

To agree start times for SPR Committee Meetings 2023-2024..pdf ***Page 16***

Notices of Motion

6.0 Notice of Motion: Mournes Gateway Project

The following Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr McMurray was referred to SPR committee at the Council Meeting on 3rd April 2023

“This Council notes with concern the continued lack of clarity, as well as increasing public opposition, regarding the Visitor Centre located at Thomas’ Mountain and ‘Gondola’ elements of the Mournes Gateway Project. Stakeholder events and information sessions fall short of a full public consultation for a project of this financial, environmental and economic magnitude. Council will; pause the progression of this project until explicit consent from the landowner is acquired, commission a full public consultation on the project open to all residents within the district including open and transparent stakeholder engagement, actively investigate and develop alternatives to the Gondola and Thomas’ Mountain Visitor Centre elements – alternatives which will both meet the funding criteria while enhancing this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.”

SPR June 2023 - NoM - MMGP - vf.pdf ***Page 17***

For Consideration and/or Decision

7.0 Revised Access to Information Policy and Procedure

SPRC ATIPP Report.pdf *Page 21*

DRAFT Access to Info Policy.pdf *Page 24*

DRAFT Access to Info Procedure.pdf *Page 26*

8.0 Revised Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure

SPRC COI Report.pdf *Page 57*

DRAFT Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures V0.7.pdf *Page 60*

9.0 Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24

SPR Cover Report PIP 2023-24.pdf *Page 87*

Appendix 1 - Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.pdf *Page 90*

Appendix 2 - Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24_.pdf *Page 126*

Appendix 3 - Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24.pdf *Page 152*

10.0 Directorate Business Plans

SPR Cover Report Directorate Business Plans.pdf *Page 166*

Appendix 1 - Chief Executive's Annual Assessment Business Plan 2022-23.pdf *Page 169*

Appendix 2 - Corporate Services Directorate Annual Assessment Business Plan 2022-23.pdf *Page 178*

Appendix 3 - Chief Executive's Business Plan 2023-24.pdf *Page 191*

Appendix 4 - Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2023-24.pdf *Page 204*

Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

11.0 Renewal of Lease of Office at Down Arts Centre

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person

and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 23 -Lease at Down Arts Centre.pdf ***Not included***

Map for Lease at Down Arts Centre (DDC048-B-1-10).pdf ***Not included***

12.0 Extension to area leased at Dungormley Estate, Newtownhamilton

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 23 -Lands at Dungormley Estate Newtownhamilton.pdf ***Not included***

Footpath at Dungormley Estate Newtownhamilton.pdf ***Not included***

13.0 Request to lease lands at Bunkers Hill, Castlewellan

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 2023 - Lands at Bunkers Hill.pdf ***Not included***

Map Of Lands at Bunker's Hill (DDC031-G-1-00).pdf ***Not included***

14.0 Surrender of Lease of pitch at Carrigenagh Road Playing Fields, Kilkeel

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Report SPR 15 June 23 - Surrender of Lease at Carrigenagh Road Playing Fields Kilkeel.pdf ***Not included***

Map SPR Valley Rangers FC.pdf ***Not included***

15.0 Proposed Lease of Saintfield Community Centre

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Report SPR - Saintfield Community Association - 15 June 23.pdf ***Not included***

16.0 Request to dispose of strip of land at Saintfield Community Centre

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph one of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to any individual and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - Proposed sale of lands at Saintfield CC 15 June 23.pdf ***Not included***

Map of Lands at Saintfield Community Centre.pdf ***Not included***

17.0 Request to lease lands at Killough Playing Fields, Killough

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 2023 - Killough Playing Fields.pdf ***Not included***

Map for Report SPR -15 June 2023- Killough Playing Fields.pdf ***Not included***

18.0 Request for Wayleave at Slieve Gullion Forest Park

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 23 - Wayleave at Slieve Gullion.pdf ***Not included***

Wayleave and Maps Slieve Gullion - SPR 15June 2023.pdf ***Not included***

19.0 Lease of The Old Gasworks Site, Newry

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Report SPR 15 June 23 - Unit known as former Gasworks Site Newry.pdf ***Not included***

Map of Old Gasworks Site Newry (NM419-G-1-00).pdf ***Not included***

20.0 Renewal of Licence for portacabin at Shandon Park, Newry

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 23 -Licence for Portacabin at Shandon Park.pdf ***Not included***

Licence Map Shandon Park Portacabin.pdf ***Not included***

21.0 Lease of Ballynahinch Market House

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SPR Report - 15 June 23 -Ballynahinch Market House.pdf ***Not included***

22.0 Renewal of Licences at Crossmaglen Community Centre

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Report SPR - 15 June 2023 - Crossmaglen Community Centre.pdf ***Not included***

Map 1.pdf ***Not included***

Map 2.pdf ***Not included***

23.0 Civil Engineering Minor Works Framework Procurement

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Civil Engineering Minor Works Framework Procurement.pdf ***Not included***

24.0 NCCR – BRCD Approval of Public Realm Design Fees

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

NCCR - BRCD Approval of Public Realm Design Fees.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 1 - Newry Theatre Landscape Layout P04.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 2 - Newry Civic Centre Landscape Layout.pdf ***Not included***

25.0 Provision of Internal Audit Services 2023-2027

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this

item of business.

Provsion of Internal Audit Services 2023-2027 new.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 1 - Approved Business Case - IA Provsion 2023-2027.pdf ***Not included***

FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

26.0 DfC Budget 2023/24 – Consultation Responses

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business

DfC Consultation new.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 1 - 2023 Draft Budget - Letter from Perm Sec to SOLACE Chair - Rates Support Grant - 9 May 2023.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 2 - LMP - Proposed pause of funding.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 3 - NMDDC EQIA Response - RSG.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 4 - NMDDC EQIA Response - LMP.pdf ***Not included***

27.0 Year End Management Accounts – 2022/23

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Management Accounts 202223 final.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 1 - Mgt Accs by Directorate for period ending 31 March 2023.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 2 - Mgt Acs by Assistant Directorate for period ending 31 March 2023.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 3 - Management Accounts By Expense Code for Period Ending 31 March 2023.pdf ***Not included***

Appendix 4 - Payroll Report at 31 March 2023.pdf ***Not included***

For Noting

28.0 2022/23 FOI/EIR/DP/RM monitoring statistics

Compliance Team 2022-23 Year End Report.pdf — *Not included*

FOI-EIR- DP 2022-23 Stats.pdf — *Not included*

RM 2022-23.pdf — *Not included*

29.0 Annual report for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 on requests related to naming Council facilities, planting trees and to locate artworks/sculptures on Council property.

Annual report for the period 1 April 2022 31 March 2023 on requests related to naming Council facilities planting trees and to locate artworks sculptures on C.pdf — *Not included*

30.0 Statutory reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Statutory reporting - Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022-31 March 2023.pdf — *Not included*

Appendix I - NMDDC Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.pdf — *Not included*

31.0 Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2023

Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report Quarterly Report for period January March 2023.pdf — *Not included*

Appendix I - Section 75 Policy Screening Report Quarterly Report for period January March 2023.pdf — *Not included*

32.0 Digital Communications and Marketing Activity Report – Local Council Elections Count, 19 & 20 May 2023

31 15.06.23 Digital Communications and Marketing Activity Report LC Elections 2023 agenda item.pdf — *Not included*

31 15.06.23 Appendix I LC Elections 2023 Facebook Analytics Report.pdf — *Not included*

31 15.06.23 Appendix II LCElections 2023 Twitter Analytics Report.pdf — *Not included*

33.0 The Department of Health and Department of Justice draft

Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2030 and associated Equality and Human Rights Screening

SPRC Report Consultation Draft Domestic Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-30.pdf *Not included*

Appendix 1 Consultation Response Draft Domestic Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-30.pdf *Not included*

Appendix 2 Draft Domestic Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-30.pdf *Not included*

34.0 The Department of Justice consultation on Forms of Evidence of Domestic Abuse that should Trigger an Automatic Prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings and associated Equality and Human Rights Screening.

SPRC Report Consultation Reponse -Evidence of Domestic Abuse in Family Courts.pdf *Not included*

Appendix 1 Draft Consultation Response- Evidence of Domestic Abuse for Family Courts.pdf *Not included*

Appendix 2 Consultation on Evidence of Domestic Abuse for Family Courts.pdf *Not included*

Appendix 3 Specified Evidence Equality Screening Form (2).pdf *Not included*

Appendix 4 Rural Needs Impact Assessment Screening Form.pdf *Not included*

35.0 Minutes of Mournes Gateway Project - Project Board Meeting held on Friday 3rd March 2023,

Minutes of Mournes Gateway Project - Project Board Mtg 03.03.2023 (Final).pdf *Not included*

36.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on Thursday 23rd March 2023

Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Mtg 23.03.2023.pdf *Not included*

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 19 JANUARY 2023					
SPR/004/2023	Notice of Motion – Kings Coronation	It was agreed that Elected Members give consideration to establishing a King Charles III Coronation financial assistance programme within the existing budget and be brought back to the next Strategic Finance Working Group for consideration and ratification at full Council.	R Mackin	Further to the SFWG meeting Council initiated a financial assistance call. This will close on 3 April 2023. Assessment outcome will be tabled at AHC meeting April 2023.	Y
ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 16 February 2023					
ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014					

SPR/027/2023	NCCR-Monaghan Row Office Site	It was agreed Elected Members approve the following recommendations: • Members agree to the sale of the Monaghan Row site to the Southern Health and Social Care Trust at the LPS valuation subject to agreement of terms between both Council and the Southern Trust. • Members agree to the lease back of a portion of Monaghan Row site from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust at LPS valuation subject to agreement of terms.	J Kelly	Completed – Contract signed and update will be provided at April Council meeting.	Y

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 16 MARCH 2023					
SPR/036/2023	Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 16 February 2023.	It was agreed to approve the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 February 2023.	J Kelly/ A Cassells	Approved	Y
SPR/037/2023	Presentation from Land & Property.	It was agreed to note the presentation.	J Kelly/ A Cassells	Approved	Y
SPR/038/2023	Notice of Motion – Newry Mourne and Down District Council appropriately mark the 25th anniversary of the good Friday/Belfast agreement	It was agreed that Elected Members approve the events taking place in Newry and Mourne Museum and Down County Museum to mark the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday / Belfast Agreement. It was also agreed that officers write to Mr D Nesbitt, Lady Trimble and Mrs A Carr to invite them to give their views inorder to have a wider balanced view as to what had passed in 25 years.	C Moffett	Referred to Museum Curators / Education Officers who are issuing invitations.	Y
SPR/039/2023	Notice of Motion – Memorial garden to acknowledge 180th anniversary of Newcastle fishing disaster and all those who have lost their lives through fishing	It was agreed that Elected Members approve to support the motion that Council give consideration to establishing a memorial garden to acknowledge the 180th Anniversary of the Newcastle Fishing Disaster.	C Moffett	To be progressed once recommendation is adopted at Monthly Council meeting 3 April 2023 (subject to 5-day call-in).	Y

SPR/040/2023	Notice of Motion – Rebellion Anniversaries	It was agreed that Elected Members agree to give consideration to an appropriate series of events and initiatives to suitably mark the Rebellion Anniversaries.	C Moffett	Forwarded for information to Museum Curators/ Officers - to be progressed once recommendation is adopted at Monthly Council meeting 3 April 2023 (subject to 5-day call-in).	Y
SPR/041/2023	Governance Arrangements	It was agreed that Elected Members approve the following recommendations: 1. Council approve that the Annual Meeting of Council will take place at 6pm on Monday 1st June 2023, in Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick, in accordance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 which states that in an election year, the Annual Meeting of Council must take place within 21 days of the election. 2. Delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive to make essential, urgent decisions, as required during period from 3 April 2023 to the first Full Council Meeting (6 June 2023) after the Annual Meeting. 3. Under Standing Order 29.2: "any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Standing Order will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary Meeting of the Council. The mandatory standing orders may not be added to, varied or revoked by the Council." It is recommended that Council adopt the amendment to the Standing Orders as detailed at 2.3 of this report at the next Council Meeting on 3rd April 2023.	M Ward	Actioned	Y

SPR/042/2023	Draft Performance Improvement Objectives	It was agreed that Elected Members approve the following recommendations: • The five draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24, as outlined in Appendix 1 • The proposed approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24, as outlined in Appendix 2, including approval to commence the consultation and engagement process on 20 March 2023	G Byrne	Actioned Actioned	Y
ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014					
SPR/043/2023	Lease of lands at Station Road, Castlewellan under Council's Sports and Community Leasing Policy.	On the proposal of Councillor Gallagher, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed to enter into a Lease with the group noted in the report in respect of lands at Station Road, Castlewellan as outlined in red on the map attached hereto for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent subject to Departmental Consent.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/044/2023	Lease of lands at Lisdrumgullion, Armagh Road, under Council's Sports and Community Leasing Policy	It was agreed to enter into a Lease with the group noted in the officer's report in respect of that portion of the lands known as Lisdrumgullion Open Space, Armagh Road, Newry as outlined in blue on the map for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent subject to Departmental Consent.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/045/2023	Lease of lands at Annsborough, Castlewellan under Council's Sports and Community Leasing Policy	It was agreed to enter into a Lease with the club noted in the report in respect of the lands known as Annsborough Playing Fields, Annsborough, Castlewellan as outlined in orange on the map for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent subject to Departmental Consent.	P Rooney	Approved	Y

SPR/046/2023	Licensing of fishing Rights at Donaghaguy Lake, Warrenpoint	It was agreed to grant a Licence to Warrenpoint, Rostrevor and District Angling Club for the fishing rights for Donaghaguy Lake, Warrenpoint for a period of up to three years at a Peppercorn Licence Fee subject to Departmental Consent.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/047/2023	Proposed lease of lands at Dundrum to NI Water for new Wastewater Pumping Station	The following was agreed to facilitate the Installation and Maintenance of the New Waste Water Pumping Station: 1. That Elected Members agree to the granting of the Lease with easement to NI Water Limited for a term of 99 years, subject to a one-off premium of £1500 and nominal rent. 2. That Elected Members agree to the granting of a Licence Agreement for works to NI Water Limited. 3. Subject to completion of legal formalities and NI Water Limited being responsible for Council's legal and valuation costs.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/048/2023	Amendment to Easement at Glen Hill/Watsons Road, Newry	It was agreed to amend the easement in favour of the Company noted in the report to include a right to lay a surface water pipe along the route marked by a blue dashed line in addition to a foul sewer and that the position of the foul sewer is changed from the area shown by a green line to the blue hatched line on the attached map subject to the company paying the additional market value fee if any.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/049/2023	Lands at Charlotte Street, Warrenpoint	It was agreed to approve to enter into a Deed of Rectification in respect of lands at 42 Charlotte Street, Warrenpoint subject to agreement of terms and subject also to Departmental Consent.	P Rooney	Approved	Y

SPR/050/2023	Lands at Latt Villas, Mullaghglass, Newry	It was agreed to approve the following recommendations: • The purchase of the freehold of the lands at Latt Villas as outlined in red on the map from the freeholder noted in the report for the sum noted in the report. • The sale of the lands at Latt Villas as outlined in red on the map to the two neighbouring landowners for the sum noted in the report.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/051/2023	Request to Release a Strip of Land Over Which Council Holds a Charge – Thomas Davis Newry GAC	It was agreed to release the Charge over the portion of the lands outlined in red on Map 1 and Map 2 as per officer's report.	P Rooney	Approved	Y
SPR/052/2023	Newry Leisure Centre (NLC) – Swimming Pool	It was agreed to approve the following recommendations: • To order pool tiles for Newry Leisure Centre as per section 2.1.5 of the report. • A future report will be tabled at SPR Committee in June 2023 outlining a programme of works and timescales for pool tile repairs.	P Tamati	Actioned Report to SPRC June	Y
SPR/053/2023	Lease of Monaghan Row from Southern Health and Social Care Trust	It was agreed that Council enter into a Lease with the Southern Health & Social Care Trust for a term of two years (with an option to extend for a further 6 months if required) subject to the rent noted in the officer's report which has been determined by Land and Property Services and subject also to the payment of Service Charges.	C Mallon	Actioned	Y
SPR/054/2023	Renewal of Advertising Solutions Framework Contract Agreement	It was agreed to grant approval as at paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of the officer's report.	J Kelly	Approved	Y

SPR/055/2023	Business Case for the Provision Media Monitoring Services for Council's	It was agreed to approve the Business Case at Appendix I and give approval as at paragraph 1.6 of the officer's report.	J Kelly	Approved	Y
FOR NOTING – This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014					
SPR/056/2023	Management Accounts – 2022/23, Quarter 3.	It was agreed to note the 2022-23 Quarter 3 (period ending 31 December 2022) Management Accounts update.	G Byrne	Noted	Y
SPR/057/2023	Update – Local Government Pay 2023.	It was agreed to note the Local Government Pay 2023 update.	J Kelly	Noted	Y
SPR/058/2023	Chief Executive Appraisal	It was agreed to note the 2022 - 2023 Performance Appraisal of the Chief Executive had been completed and that members of the Chief Executive Appraisal Group were unanimous in their assessment of performance.	C Miskelly	Noted	Y
FOR NOTING					
SPR/059/2023	Update Covid 19 Inquiry	It was agreed to note the update provided by the Chief Executive.	M Ward	Noted	Y

END

FOR NOTING – This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee (SP&R)
Date of Meeting:	Thursday 15th June 2023
Subject:	SP&R Committee Terms of Reference 2023 – 2027
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly Director – Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly Director – Corporate Services

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	x	**For noting only**	

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	Purpose To agree and adopt the recommendations as detailed in Section 3.0
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	Terms of reference for each of the Committees, have been revised and some adjustments have been proposed. Revised terms of reference with changes highlighted in red, has been attached as follows for this Committee.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	To adopt the proposed changes as detailed in Appx 1 – Strategic Policy & Resources Terms of Reference
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	n/a
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	**General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes**

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations	☒
5.2	**Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision** Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened	☐
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	☐
5.3	**Proposal initiating consultation** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves	☐
	Consultation period will be 12 weeks	☐
	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	☐
	Rationale:	
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	☐
7.0	**Appendices**	
	Appendix 1 – Strategic Policy & Resource Committee Terms of Reference	

8.0	**Background Documents**
	N/A

STRATEGY POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

-TERMS OF REFERENCE-

Scope

The **Strategy Policy & Resources Committee** ("the Committee") will be responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the Council, as well as setting its future strategic direction.

- Responsibilities for the development, and monitoring implementation, of the key strategic plans of the Council, including the Community Plan, Equality Scheme, Disability Action Plan, Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan.

- Responsible for the effective planning and stewardship of the Council's entire resources and assets (financial, employees, information technology and land/property assets).

- Responsible for the management of the Council's policy development framework, including the statutory duties of equality and disability, and development of policy on matters including the Irish Language, disability and safe guarding strategies.

- Responsible for the development of an equality action measures plan to address corporate key inequalities identified under the audit of inequalities.

- Responsible for the Council's corporate performance management framework, including the setting and monitoring of performance targets and the oversight of performance across the organisation.

- Responsible for leading on the development and implementation of future organisational change in support of the Council's strategic objectives

- Responsible for the development and delivery of key corporate projects.

- Responsible for the Council's corporate communications and policy, including public consultation; public relations and media; marketing and publications.

- Leading on the development and implementation of suitable strategies, policies and programmes to assist with the effective and efficient operation of the Council, to include matters relating to finance_and systems; human resources; estates and capital projects; legal, procurement administration and registration.

Terms of Reference shall be kept under review to ensure they remain appropriate annually. A full review of Council's Committee structures, and the corresponding Terms of Reference will be undertaken within the first 3 months of a new Council. Review of Terms of Reference shall be undertaken by the Council.

Membership

The Committee is comprised of the fifteen (15) Elected Members appointed to the Committee at the Council's Annual Meeting.

Quorum

No business shall be transacted unless at least 4 Members are present.

Chairperson

The Committee Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall be appointed at the Council's Annual Meeting in accordance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

Meetings

All meetings of the Committee shall be governed by the Council's Standing Orders and the NI Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors.

A timetable of meetings shall be agreed annually by the Council.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

The Committee has the power to establish and appoint any number of Sub-Committees, Task and Finish Working Groups, Project Boards and Forums, as are necessary, to consider in more detail the work of the Committee, (see appendix 1).

Communication & Reporting

The Minutes of the Committee shall be tabled at each meeting of the Council in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Declarations of Interest

A Declaration of Interests Register will be kept for all Committee Members. Each Member shall take responsibility to declare proactively any potential conflict of interest arising out of business undertaken by the Council.

Terms of Reference shall be kept under review to ensure they remain appropriate annually. A full review of Council's Committee structures, and the corresponding Terms of Reference will be undertaken within the first 3 months of a new Council. Review of Terms of Reference shall be undertaken by the Council.

APPENDIX 1

Council Task and Finish Working Groups/Project Boards/Forums
Reporting Arrangements

	Committees			
	AHC	ERT	S&E	SPR
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Sub-Group/PCSP	√			
Bonfire Sub-Group/PCSP	√			
Camlough Lake Task and Finish Working Group		√		
Castlewellan Forest Park Project Board		√		
Chief Executive Appraisal Group				√
Church Street Downpatrick Revitalization Steering Group		√		
Downpatrick Regeneration Project		√		
Economic Forum		√		
Elected Member Development Working Group				√
Equality and Good Relations Reference Group				√
Health Forum	√			
Forkhill former Barricks Task and Finish Project Steering Group		√		
Irish Language Strategy Working Group				√
Local Development Plan Steering Group		√		
Mourne Gullion Strangford Geopark Management Group		√		
New Ireland Working Group				√
Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board		√		
Newry and Mourne Travellers Forum	√			
Peace Plus Partnership	√			
Planning Call-in Panel/Planning Committee		√		
Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnerhship		√		
Strangford Lough & Lecale Partnership	√			
Strategic Finance Working Group				√
Sustainability and Environment Working Group			√	
Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Working Group		√		
Womens Working Group				√

Terms of Reference shall be kept under review to ensure they remain appropriate annually. A full review of Council's Committee structures, and the corresponding Terms of Reference will be undertaken within the first 3 months of a new Council. Review of Terms of Reference shall be undertaken by the Council.

STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date	Time	Location
15 June 2023	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
17 August 2023	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
14 September 2023	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
12 October 2023	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
16 November 2023	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
14 December 2023	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
18 January 2024	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
15 February 2024	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
14 March 2024	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
11 April 2024	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
16 May 2024	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday 15th June 2023
Subject:	Notice of Motion: Mournes Gateway Project
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Andy Patterson Assistant Director of Tourism Culture and Events
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Andy Patterson Assistant Director of Tourism Culture and Events

For decision	**x**	**For noting only**		

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	Purpose To approve the recommendations as set out in section 3.1 of this report on the Notice of Motion on the Mourne Mountains Gateway Project. Background At the Council meeting in April 2023 the following motion was received from Councillor McMurray: "This Council notes with concern the continued lack of clarity, as well as increasing public opposition, regarding the Visitor Centre located at Thomas' Mountain and 'Gondola' elements of the Mournes Gateway Project. Stakeholder events and information sessions fall short of a full public consultation for a project of this financial, environmental and economic magnitude. Council will; pause the progression of this project until explicit consent from the landowner is acquired, commission a full public consultation on the project open to all residents within the district including open and transparent stakeholder engagement, actively investigate and develop alternatives to the Gondola and Thomas' Mountain Visitor Centre elements – alternatives which will both meet the funding criteria while enhancing this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty." The motion was seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, and it was agreed the Motion was referred to the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Orders.

2.0	Key issues
2.1	**Council Approval on the Project** The following approvals are in place from Council to progress the Mournes Gateway Project: • Council granted approval to develop the Outline Business Case for the Mournes Gateway Project in November 2018. • Council approved the Outline Business Case for inclusion in the Belfast region City Deal programme in September 2020 and again in October 2021. • This included projected capital costs of up to £44m based on the preferred option of a visitor centre at Thomas Quarry and gondola/uplift from Donard Park to the site of the visitor centre. • The preferred option for the project was agreed in consultation with the OBC Project Board, which included representatives of the Mournes Heritage Trust, Tourism NI, National Trust and Department for Communities. • Comprehensive stakeholder engagement has been undertaken with local tourism and hospitality businesses on the proposed project. **Environmental & Ecological Considerations** Following Council approval of the OBC in October 2021, a report was commissioned to undertake an Environmental and Ecological Review of the project proposals, with input from key stakeholders, including the Mournes Heritage Trust, Tourism NI and National Trust. A Scope of Services was developed to inform the next stage of project development in terms of the comprehensive list of ecological and environmental surveys that will take place in the next 12-18 months. Council acknowledge that this project is at a very early stage of development and have listened and understood the environmental and other concerns raised by stakeholders, local residents and user groups, and are committed to working with partners to identify the scale, scope and complexity of the issues raised. The environmental reports and studies proposed will consider the concerns raised by stakeholders, user groups and project partners in order to develop a full understanding of the issues to be addressed. **Next Steps** A report seeking approval of the Funding Agreement for the project will be presented to SP&R. If approval is granted officers will progress the Full Business Case for the project over the next 2-3 years. Through the development of the FBC, the Council will appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team to: 1. undertake detailed environmental and ecological surveys of the site;

	2. to further develop the design and projected capital costs for the project; and 3. to assist Council to undertake a comprehensive stakeholder engagement programme on the development of the project proposals over the next two-years as the Full Business Case is being developed, and as part of the planning process as the project design is progressed. Following this phase of the project development, the Full Business Case will be subsequently presented back to all Councillors for consideration and approval.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	• To note the contents of this report on the Council approvals that have been passed to date on the Mournes Gateway Project. • Council will continue to work with all project partners, landowners, and local communities to develop the project. • Council will deliver a full suite of environmental reports and studies to develop a full understanding of the environmental concerns raised by stakeholders, user groups and project partners. • A comprehensive stakeholder engagement programme will be developed through the Project Board and project delivery team • A Full Business Case will be presented back to Council for approval following the next stage of project development.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	The budget required to progress the project to Full Business Case has been approved by Council. A total budget for project delivery will be tabled with committee and Council following the development of the Full Business Case in 2026/27.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following:

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened	☒
	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation***	**N/a**
	Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves	☐
	Consultation period will be 12 weeks	☐
	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	☐
	Rationale:	
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	☒
7.0	**Appendices**	
8.0	**Background Documents**	

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Revised Access to Information Policy and Procedure
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Edel Cosgrove Head of Compliance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Alison Robb Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	**X**	**For noting only**	

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The purpose of the report is to seek Members approval on the revised Access to Information Policy and Procedure (ATIPP).
1.2	The revised ATIPP details how Council will meet its statutory obligations in relation to a series of legislation; the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004, Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
1.3	The draft will replace the existing ATIPP which is due for review.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	For ease of reference, main amendments are included in red text.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	It is recommended that Members approve the ATIPP.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	None identified.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒

5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	☒ ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves Consultation period will be 12 weeks Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	☐ ☐ ☐
	Rationale:	
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	☒
7.0	**Appendices**	
	Revised ATIPP	

8.0	**Background Documents**
	Current ATIPP presented to the Committee on 13 June 2019, pages 220 – 252

Access to Information Policy

Title
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's (NMDDC) Access to Information (ATI) Policy.

Reference CS28

Statement
NMDDC endorses the ATI Policy as a framework for the Council's compliance with and implementation of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004, Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Aim
The aim of the ATI Policy is to ensure NMDDC's compliance with and consistent application of the FOI, EIR, DPA and UK GDPR. NMDDC is committed to providing sufficient resources and appropriate training to ensure the Council achieves this objective. Council will work with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to achieve the highest possible information governance standards.

Scope
NMDDC recognises the right of individuals to access Council information in accordance with the terms of the FOIA, EIR, DPA and UK GDPR.

The ATI Policy applies to:

- All recorded information which NMDDC holds including (but not limited to) any information which is created, received and maintained by Council Officers and Elected Members on behalf of the Council. The FOI, EIR, DPA and UK GDPR are fully retrospective so any past records held by the Council are covered by the legislation;
- The FOIA and EIR will apply to any recorded information which any other entity holds on behalf of the Council; and
- Personal data which Council holds in its capacity as a 'Controller' and/or 'Processor'. Where an entity processes information on behalf of Council as the 'Controller', Council will ensure that the matter of who responds to subject access requests is addressed.

All Council Officers and Elected Members are responsible for complying with the terms of the FOI, EIR, DPA and UK GDPR. All Officers and Members are also expected to comply with the Council's ATI Policy and Procedures in relation to FOI, EIR, DPA and UK GDPR.

Non-compliance with the legislation and the Council's ATI Policy & Procedures may result in the Council breaching its' legal obligations under the legislation. This, in turn, may result in NMDDC being the subject of formal or informal action by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Related Policies / Legislation
NMDDC's Records Management Policy and Procedure
NMDDC's IT Policies & Procedures

NMDDC's Publication Scheme
NMDDC's Retention & Disposal Schedule
NMDDC's Privacy Notice
NMDDC's Customer Service Charter

Definitions
The "Information Commissioner's Office" means the independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest.

Policy Owner
Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)

Contact Details
Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Head of Compliance

CMT Authorised on **1 June 2023 (via email)**

SMT Authorised on **6 June 2023**

Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Authorised on _____

Council Authorised on _____

Policy Effective Date _____

Policy Review Date _____
(4 years as per equality scheme commitment 4.31)

Procedures
The ATI Procedures attached hereto must be adhered to in the delivery of this Policy.

Equality Impact Assessment
This Policy has been assessed on ~~16 May 2019~~26 May 2023 under NMDDC's Equality Impact Assessment process and has been screened out as having no impact on any of the groups designated in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Rural Impact Assessment
This Policy has been assessed on ~~16 May 2019~~26 May 2023 under NMDDC's Rural Impact Assessment process and has been screened out as having no impact on the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Access to Information Procedure

Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's (NMDDC) framework for:

1. Compliance (Section 1) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004, Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) 2018; and

2. Implementation (Section 2) for the above pieces of legislation.

Aim

The aim of the procedure is to ensure NMDDC's compliance with and consistent application of the FOI, EIR, DPA and UK GDPR. NMDDC is committed to providing sufficient resources and appropriate training to ensure the Council achieves this objective. Council will work with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to achieve the highest possible information governance standards.

Scope

The procedure brings together a series of legislation (FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR) providing individuals with the right to access information held by Council. It applies to everyone processing recorded data held by Council (including but not limited to, staff, elected Members, other public representatives, contractors, agents and all third party data processors).

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Section 1: Compliance	
• FOIA	2
• EIR	5
• DPA/UK GDPR	7
Introduction	
What is covered by the legislation	
Time limits	
Charging	
Exemptions / Exceptions	
Section 2: Implementation	
• Access to Information Procedure	210
• Roles & Responsibilities	287
• Training	310
• Monitoring & Review	310

Freedom of Information Act (2000)

Introduction

The FOIA gives the public the legal right to access information held by public authorities (subject to a number of legal exemptions).

The aim of the FOIA is to promote a culture of openness and accountability in local Government and to facilitate a better understanding of how we, as a Council, conduct our duties, make decisions and spend public money.

What is covered by the legislation

The FOIA applies to all recorded information which the Council holds including (but not limited to) any information which is created, received and maintained by Council Officers and Elected Members on behalf of the Council. The FOIA is fully retrospective, so any past records held by the Council are covered by the legislation.

Time limits

Any person who makes a request to the Council for information will be informed within 20 working days from the date of receipt of their request whether the Council holds the information requested. If the Council holds the information requested the requester will be provided with the information within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the request (subject to legal exemptions). Please note that 20 working days is the statutory maximum period within which public bodies must respond to a request. The Council will, however, endeavour to provide information to requesters in as short a timeframe as possible. Please also note that the statutory period of 20 working days may be extended for a further 20 working days in limited circumstances and the requester will be advised if this is the case.

Council may request clarification in relation to a request for information. Clarification may be sought in order to assist the Council in identifying and locating information relevant to a request. Where the Council requires clarification to be provided by a requester the Council will inform the requester of this as soon as reasonably possible following receipt of the request. Once clarification is received, Council will respond within 20 working days.

Where the Council does not hold the information being requested but the Council is aware that another organisation may hold the information the Council will advise the requester to contact that organisation and, where possible, will provide contact details for that organisation.

Charging

The Council may refuse a request where the cost to the Council of locating, retrieving and extracting the requested information would exceed the appropriate time and cost limits set by the FOIA. These limits are currently set at £450 or 18 hours of a Council Officer's time at £25 per person per hour. Where this amount will be exceeded the Council will inform the

requester of this and may refuse the request or issue a Fees Notice to the requester specifying the fee payable. Where a Fees Notice is issued the statutory period of 20 working days for dealing with the request will be suspended until payment of the Fee has been received by the Council. The requester will be given a period of 3 months within which to make payment of the Fee. If the Fee is not received within this period, the Council will no longer proceed with the request.

Exemptions
Council may refuse to provide information where it believes the information is subject to one or more of the legal exemptions prescribed under the FOIA.

Some exemptions are absolute and if invoked there is no obligation on the Council to consider the request for information further. However, most of the exemptions under the Act are qualified exemptions and are subject to the Public Interest Test. The Public Interest Test is the test applied to information to determine if the public interest in disclosing the information is greater than the public interest in applying an exemption and not disclosing the information. The Council will apply the Public Interest Test in all cases where qualified exemptions apply.

Where a request for information is refused the Council will, in most cases, confirm the fact that the Council holds the information and will provide the requester with details of the legal exemption under which the Council is refusing to provide the information. The Council will also provide details of the reason that the exemption has been applied to the information in question. However, in some cases, the FOIA recognises that it would not be appropriate to even confirm or deny whether the Council holds certain information. Where this is the case the Council will, in accordance with Section 17 of the legislation, issue a Refusal Notice stating the fact of refusal, the exemption being used and the reason why the exemption applies. The list of exemptions are as follows:

Absolute exemptions	Qualified exemptions subject to PIT
Information Accessible By Other Means (Section 21) Information Supplied by, or Relating to, Bodies Dealing with Security Matters (Section 23) Court Records (Section 32) Parliamentary Privilege (Section 34) Personal Information (Section 40) Information provided in Confidence (Section 41) Prohibitions on Disclosure (Section 44)	Information Intended For Future Publication (Section 22) National Security (Section 24) Certificates under ss. 23 and 24: Supplemental Provisions (Section 25) Defence (Section 26) International Relations (Section 27) Relations within the United Kingdom (Section 28) The Economy (Section 29) Investigations & Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities (Section 30) Law Enforcement (Section 31) Audit Functions (Section 33) Formulation of Government Policy (Section 35) Communications with Her Majesty etc & Honours (Section 37) Health & Safety (Section 38) Environmental Information (Section 39) Legal Professional Privilege (Section 42) Commercial Interests (Section 43)

Environmental Information Regulations (2004)

Introduction

The EIR gives certain rights of access to Environmental Information to the general public.

The aim behind the law is that giving the public access to environmental information will encourage greater awareness of issues that affect the environment. Greater awareness helps increase public participation in decision-making; it makes public bodies more accountable and transparent and it builds public confidence and trust in them.

What is covered by the legislation

Any information in written, visual, aural, electronic or any other material form on:

> (a) the state of the elements of the environment, such as air and atmosphere, water, soil, land, landscape and natural sites including wetlands, coastal and marine areas, biological diversity and its components, including genetically modified organisms, and the interaction among these elements;
>
> (b) factors, such as substances, energy, noise, radiation or waste, including radioactive waste, emissions, discharges and other releases into the environment, affecting or likely to affect the elements of the environment referred to in (a);
>
> (c) measures (including administrative measures), such as policies, legislation, plans, programmes, environmental agreements, and activities affecting or likely to affect the elements and factors referred to in (a) and (b) as well as measures or activities designed to protect those elements;
>
> (d) reports on the implementation of environmental legislation;
>
> (e) cost-benefit and other economic analyses and assumptions used within the framework of the measures and activities referred to in (c); and
>
> (f) the state of human health and safety, including the contamination of the food chain, where relevant, conditions of human life, cultural sites and built structures in as much as they are or may be affected by the state of the elements of the environment referred to in (a) or, through those elements, by any of the matters referred to in (b) and (c)

Time limits

Requests for information must be responded to within 20 working days. The 20 day time limit can be extended to 40 working days if the complexity and volume of the information requested means that the 20 working days deadline cannot be complied with. Unlike FOIA, there is no provision to further extend the time limit for cases where the public interest has to be balanced.

Council is required to comply with all requests for information as soon as possible and we must not delay responding until the end of the 20 working day period under Regulation 5(2)(b) if the information could reasonably have been provided earlier. Council must aim to make all decisions as soon as possible and in any case within 20 working days, including in cases where a public authority needs to consider where the public interest lies. However, it is recognised there will be some instances where, because of the complexity and volume of the information requested it will not be possible to deal with an application within 20 working days. In such cases Council will inform the requester of this as soon as possible and within 20 working days, and will advise the requester when they will receive the information and the reasons for the delay.

Charging

The EIR does not require charges to be made but Council has discretion to make a reasonable charge for environmental information. However, if Council is providing access to a public register, or if the requester examines the information at Council offices, access to the information shall be free of charge. When making a charge, whether for information that is proactively disseminated or provided on request, the charge will not exceed the cost of producing the information.

A schedule of charges will be made available (including, e.g. a price list for publications, or the charge per unit of work which will be incurred to meet a request) when Council proposes to make a charge. When an advance payment is required, the requester will be notified and Council will invite the requester to say whether they wish to proceed with the request, or part of it, or whether the request may be met in some other way (for example, by visiting the offices to inspect the information or by making use of more easily identifiable data). Where advance payment is required the case will remain active for 3 months until payment is received. When a fee payment is received Council will release the information promptly and within 20 working days.

Exceptions

Under the EIR, there is a presumption in favour of disclosure. Council will conduct a public interest test if there are compelling and substantive reasons to withhold it. Below is a list of exceptions most relevant to the Council. For a complete list of exceptions consult the EIR exceptions[1]:

Regulation:
12(3) – Personal Data
12(4) – Type and/or amount of information
12(5)(b) – Adversely affect justice or disciplinary procedures
12(5)(c) – Intellectual Property Rights
12(5)(d) – Confidentiality of proceedings
12(5)(e) – Commercial Interest
12(5)(f) – Voluntary Information
12(5)(g) – Protection of the Environment
13 – Third party personal data
**Note: 12(5)(d-g) may not be used for information concerning emissions*

[1] EIR exceptions: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/3391/part/3/made

DATA PROTECTION ACT (2018) /
GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (2018)

Introduction

The DPA and UK GDPR are two pieces of legislation which establish a framework of rights and duties designed to safeguard personal data. The UK GDPR applies to all EU Member States. The DPA sets out specific provisions applicable to the UK. The UK GDPR and the DPA must therefore be read together.

Data protection is the fair and proper use of information about people. It is part of the fundamental right to privacy – but on a more practical level, it is about building trust between people and organisations. It is about treating people fairly and openly, recognising their right to have control over their own identity and their interactions with others, and striking a balance with the wider interests of society.

In order to carry out Council business Council collects and uses information about individuals. This may include information on members of the public, customers, suppliers, employees (past and current) and all others with whom the Council communicates.

What is covered by the legislation

- Personal data and special category data

Article 4(1) of the UK GDPR advises that 'personal data' means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person;

Special category data is personal data which the UK GDPR says is more sensitive, and so needs more protection. This is particularly so as the loss, theft or mishandling of this category of information is likely to be of a greater detriment to the individual than the loss, theft etc of other categories of personal data. In order to lawfully process special category data, Council must identify both a lawful basis under Article 6 and a separate condition for processing special category data under Article 9.

The table below sets out personal data and special category data:

Personal Data (Article 4 UK GDPR)	**Special Category Data** (Article 9 UK GDPR)
• Name • Identification number • Location data • An online identifier • Physical • Physiological • Genetic • Mental • Economic • Cultural • Social factors	• Race • Ethnic Origin • Politics • Religion • Trade Union Membership • Genetics • Biometrics • Health • Sex Life or Sexual Orientation

Article 4 of the UK GDPR sets out the main definitions:

- Processing

(2) 'processing' means any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction;

- Controller

(7) 'controller' means the natural or legal person, public authority, agency or other body which, alone or jointly with others, determines the purposes and means of the processing of personal data; where the purposes and means of such processing are determined by Union or Member State law, the controller or the specific criteria for its nomination may be provided for by Union or Member State law;

- Processor

(8) 'processor' means a natural or legal person, public authority, agency or other body which processes personal data on behalf of the controller;

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
The ICO means the independent authority set up to regulate and oversee the implementation of DPA/UK GDPR (and FOIA/EIR).

Data Protection Principles

Article 5 of the UK GDPR establishes seven key principles. The principles are in **bold** text below. ICO clarification[2] for each principle has been adopted to support Council compliance.

Article 5 (1) requires that personal data shall be:

> **(a) processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject ('lawfulness, fairness and transparency');**

Council must have a valid lawful basis in order to process personal data. There are six available lawful bases for processing. No single basis is 'better' or more important than the others – which basis is most appropriate to use will depend on Council's purpose and relationship with the individual[3].

Most lawful bases require that processing is 'necessary' for a specific purpose. If Council can reasonably achieve the same purpose without the processing, Council will not have a lawful basis.

Council must determine the lawful basis before beginning processing, and should document it.

The lawful bases for processing are set out in Article 6 of the UK GDPR. At least one of these must apply whenever processing personal data:

(a) Consent: the individual has given clear consent for Council to process their personal data for a specific purpose. However, if relying on consent, the consent can be withdrawn at any time. Where an individual is 'required' to provide information, you should not use consent as a lawful basis. Consent must be freely given and cannot be so given where the data subject is under an obligation to provide their personal information.
(b) Contract: the processing is necessary for a contract Council has with the individual, or because they have asked Council to take specific steps before entering into a contract.
(c) Legal obligation: the processing is necessary for Council to comply with the law (not including contractual obligations).
(d) Vital interests: the processing is necessary to protect someone's life.
(e) Public task: the processing is necessary for Council to perform a task in the public interest or for Council's official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law.
(f) Legitimate interests: the processing is necessary for Council's legitimate interests or the legitimate interests of a third party, unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests. (This cannot apply if you are a public authority processing data to perform your official tasks.)

Processing of personal data must always be fair as well as lawful. If any aspect of Council's processing is unfair Council will be in breach of this principle. Fairness means that Council should only handle personal data in ways that people would reasonably expect and not use

---

[2] Principles - https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-UK GDPR/principles/

[3] Lawful bases for processing - https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-UK GDPR/lawful-basis-for-processing/

it in ways that have unjustified adverse effects on them. Personal data may sometimes be used in a way that negatively affects an individual without this necessarily being unfair, e.g. processing personal data to impose a fine. What matters is whether or not such detriment is justified.

Transparent processing is about being clear, open and honest with people from the start about who Council is, and how and why it uses their personal data. Council must ensure that it tells individuals about its processing in a way that is easily accessible and easy to understand. Council must use clear and plain language.

(b) collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes; further processing for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes shall, in accordance with Article 89(1), not be considered to be incompatible with the initial purposes ('purpose limitation');

Council will be clear about what it's purposes for processing personal data are. It will record its purposes as part of its documentation obligations and specify them in its privacy information for individuals.

(c) adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed ('data minimisation');

Council will ensure the personal data it is processing is: adequate – sufficient to properly fulfil it's stated purpose; relevant – has a rational link to that purpose; and limited to what is necessary – Council will not hold more than it needs for that purpose.

(d) accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay ('accuracy');

Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure the personal data it holds is not incorrect or misleading as to any matter of fact. Personal data will be kept updated and if it discovers it is incorrect or misleading. Council will take reasonable steps to correct or erase it as soon as possible. Council will also carefully consider any challenges to the accuracy of personal data.

(e) kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) subject to implementation of the appropriate technical and organisational measures required by this Regulation in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals ('storage limitation');

Council will not keep personal data for longer than is needed. It will create, maintain and regularly review its Retention and Disposal Schedule. Council will also carefully consider any challenges to the retention of personal data.

(f) processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures ('integrity and confidentiality').

Council will ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to protect the personal data it holds. In addition to the technical security measures set out under Article 32 of the UK GDPR and Council's internal IT Policy and Procedure, the below bullet points are specific requirements that should be adhered to. This is not an exhaustive list and anyone handling personal data on behalf of Council must take all steps necessary to protect personal data and keep it secure at all times.

- **Physical Security of Personal Data:**

Physical security measures should be in place to protect personal data. This includes locking doors, securing filing cabinets containing personal information, protecting premises with alarms, security lighting and CCTV cameras (subject to DPIA, p16) and using confidential waste bins~~, when posting personal data place sensitive data in envelope, then place all contents inside another envelope with return address on both. It also includes ensuring that access to Council Premises is controlled and monitored.~~

~~**Manually held Personal Data:**~~

Each Department must make sure that it knows and holds a record of what personal data it holds and how and where it is stored. When confidential and sensitive personal data is being sent via post the information should be checked by another member of staff before being sent to ensure it is being posted to the correct recipient. In addition, Officers should 'double bag' information being sent where the information contains sensitive personal data or personal data of a confidential nature. Double bagging works by putting the personal data in an inner envelope which marks the material as confidential and has a postal return address. The inner envelope acts as a second barrier to the information being opened by the wrong recipient accidentally or otherwise.

When printing personal data all personal data sent to printers should be collected immediately and either stored securely or disposed of appropriately. Personal data should not be left on printers, photocopiers, fax machines etc.

- **Clear Desk Policy:**

As a general rule personal data should never be left unattended on desks or in meeting rooms etc. The Council will operate a Clear Desk Policy. This will reduce the risk of unauthorised access to, loss of or damage to personal data. It will also ensure that all personal data and confidential information held by the Council is held securely and adequately protected.

The Clear Desk Policy means that at the end of each day it is the responsibility of individual Officer's to clear their desk of all documents that contain any personal data or confidential information. This information must be stored safely and securely (for example, in a locked office, locked filing room or filing cabinet etc).

- **Electronically held Personal Data:**

Please refer to Council's IT policies and procedures saved on the R drive under the 'policies and procedures' folder.

- **Access to Records containing Personal Data:**

Access to paper and electronic records containing personal data must be restricted. Line Managers must ensure that Officers with responsibility for and access to personal data are properly supervised. It is essential that all staff members and Councillors only access records which they have authority to access and which it is necessary for them to access in the course of their work as Council employees / representatives. Any employee / Councillors finding that they have access to data which they are not authorised to use must report this to their Line Manager so that the access can be removed. In the case of Councillors they should report this to the Head of Compliance. Any employee / Councillor with access to data which is no longer relevant to or necessary for their work must ask for the access to be removed. Any employee / Councillor who is aware that unauthorised access is taking place must report this to their Line Manager as soon as they become aware of it. In the case of Councillors they should report this to the Head of Compliance.

Employees should ensure:

- ✓ The 'Leavers' procedure under Council's IT procedure is completed for 'movers' or 'leavers' which includes employees on long term leave; and
- ✓ Refer to Council's IT procedure when seeking additional access to user accounts.

- **Sharing personal data**

Personal data should only be shared internally and disclosed to external third parties (other than the individual who is the subject of the data) where the sharing is compatible with the DPA/UK GDPR.

When sharing personal data internally within the Council, all staff members and Councillors should ensure that the sharing complies with the DPA and the UK GDPR. Sharing personal data across departments without having a lawful basis potentially risks breaching the UK GDPR.

Given Council's obligation to only use personal data for the purpose for which it was collected, all staff members and Councillors should consider dealing with any internal request for information as you would an external request by:

- Complying with the principles set out under Article 5(1) of the UK GDPR (p9 above),
- Ensure you have a lawful basis for sharing under Article 6(1) (p9 above);
- Where the personal data falls within the remit of Article 9(1) (special category data, p8 above), that you have a further reason for the processing under Article 9(2)[4]; and
- Documenting your reasons to share personal data.

Where there is no lawful basis for sharing the information, then it should not be shared.

[4] UK GDPR Article 9: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/article/9

Council's Corporate Privacy Notice, available on the website, sets out some instances which may require Council to share personal data, for example, for police investigations.

When personal information is shared Officers should advise the recipient of the purpose for which the information is being provided. Officers should also state that the information should only be used for that purpose and, depending on the nature of the information, Officers may want to restrict the onward sharing of the information by advising that the information should not be disclosed to third parties. Officers should seek assurances from the recipient on how long the personal data will be held for and an assurance that the data will be securely disposed of.

Article 5(2) of the UK GDPR adds that:

> **The controller shall be responsible for, and be able to demonstrate compliance with, paragraph 1 ('accountability').**[5]

The accountability principle requires Council to take responsibility for what we do with personal data and how we comply with the other principles. Council will have appropriate measures and records in place to be able to demonstrate compliance. The Compliance Team is responsible for implementing this area of work however all employees are required to support the Compliance Team when contacted. Some measures are set out below:

Privacy Notices
When collecting personal data the Council will inform individuals why their personal data is being collected and will be open and honest as to how they intend to use it. The Council will not deceive or mislead any individual when obtaining their personal data. The Council will use people's personal data in ways that they would reasonably expect and will make sure not to do anything unlawful with the data.

All individuals collecting personal data (in any capacity) on behalf of Council must ensure that individuals are fully informed. A "Privacy Notice" must be provided to all individuals from whom the Council collects personal data.

What is a Privacy Notice?
A Privacy Notice is a Notice to let individuals know how Council will use their personal information. This will be different for each case in which personal data is collected. This Notice should be clearly communicated to individuals and should be visible on all Application Forms etc so that the Data Subject is fully aware of the intended uses of their personal information.

"Privacy Notices" should tell people:-

- ✓ The name and contact details of Council.
- ✓ The contact details of its Data Protection Officer - Head of Compliance.
- ✓ The purposes of the processing.
- ✓ The lawful basis for the processing.
    - The legitimate interests for the processing (if applicable).

[5] What are the principles - https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-UK GDPR/principles/

- ✓ The categories of personal data obtained (if the personal data is not obtained from the individual it relates to).
- ✓ The recipients or categories of recipients of the personal data.
  - The details of transfers of the personal data to any third countries or international organisations (if applicable).
- ✓ The retention periods for the personal data.
- ✓ The rights available to individuals in respect of the processing.
  - The right to withdraw consent (if applicable).
- ✓ The right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority.
- ✓ The source of the personal data (if the personal data is not obtained from the individual it relates to).
  - The details of whether individuals are under a statutory or contractual obligation to provide the personal data (if applicable, and if the personal data is collected from the individual it relates to).
  - The details of the existence of automated decision-making, including profiling (if applicable).

It is the responsibility of all Officers collecting personal data on behalf of Council to ensure that the appropriate Privacy Notices are provided. Sample Privacy Notices are available from the Council's Compliance Team. Council's Corporate Privacy Notice is available on the Council website.

When collecting personal data via the telephone or face to face the above information should be made clear to the data subject before any processing of their personal data takes place.

Council can use the information collected for a purpose other than the purpose for which it was originally collected, only if the new purpose is compatible with the original purpose[6]. Officers should not collect information unless Council need's to; if information is 'optional' Officers need to reassess whether it is needed at all.

Audit of Information
Council will conduct and regularly review Information Audits to support awareness of Council's data processing activities. The information gathered will be used to support compliance with UK GDPR Principle 7 as well as Business Planning.

Data Protection Impact Assessments
A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is a process to help identify and minimise the data protection risks of a project, similar to equality and rural proofing screening. Council will conduct DPIA's for processing that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals and any other major project which requires the processing of personal data.

Data Sharing Agreements
When Council engages another organisation to process personal information on its behalf Council must make sure that the Data Processor enters into a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) confirming their commitment to process personal data on behalf of Council in accordance with Data Protection legislation. It is the responsibility of all Officers engaging

[6] Purpose limitation:- https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-UK GDPR/principles/purpose-limitation/

Data Processors to ensure that this Agreement is signed and enforced. Sample Agreements can be obtained by contacting the Compliance Team.

CCTV (which includes any audio and/or video surveillance/recording device*)
*Recording device means a device capable of electronically or mechanically storing, accessing, or transmitting sounds or images. The term encompasses, among other things, a computer of any size, including a tablet, a notebook, and a laptop; a smart phone, a cell phone or other wireless phone; a camera and other audio or video recording devices; a personal digital assistant (PDA); and any similar devices[7].

Council operates a number of CCTV Cameras at various Council premises throughout the district. The purpose of the cameras is as follows:-

- Protecting areas and premises used by Council staff and the public;
- Deterring and detecting crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Assisting in the identification of offenders leading to their arrest and successful prosecution or other appropriate action;
- Reducing violent or aggressive behaviour towards staff;
- Reducing fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and aggression;
- Protecting Council property and assets;
- Maintaining and enhancing the commercial viability of the District and encouraging continued investment
- Assisting in staff disciplinary, grievance, formal complaints and Health and Safety Investigations.

The systems will not be used for any other purpose than those set out in this document without Council approval, and, where appropriate, notification to staff and following consultation with the Trade Unions. Any novel or non-standard use of the CCTV cameras will require the approval of the Council.

~~Cameras~~ Recording devices will not be used to monitor the progress of staff or individuals in the ordinary course of lawful business in the area under surveillance. Nor are ~~managers~~ employees permitted to use the camerasrecording devices to observe staff working practices or time keeping or to assist them in the day-to-day management of ~~their~~ staff.

Individuals will only be monitored if there is reasonable cause to suspect a criminal offence or serious breach of discipline, potentially amounting to misconduct has been, or may be, about to be committed and this will only be permitted when authorized and may require authorisation. Officers should consult the Compliance Team before any such action is taken.

Each service operating CCTV cameras must establish who is responsible for the Camera and the images recorded by the Camera. That Officer will be responsible for the implementation of the good practice guidelines set out below:

A CCTV system should not be in use unless Council can demonstrate compliance with all of the below:

Guidelines for the Operation of CCTV Cameras:

[7] https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/recording-device

- A Data Protection Impact Assessment must be undertaken for each location to take into account the effect on an individual's privacy and data protection rights, and to consider if the need identified can be addressed in a less privacy intrusive manner delivering the same objectives. DPIA to be subject to regular review;
- Transparency in its operation of CCTV – Council must let people know they are in an area where CCTV cameras are operational and that CCTV Cameras are recording their personal data. Council should also provide an explanation of why CCTV cameras are in operation, the purpose of the camera and what they are used for. Appropriate signage must be erected to include a published contact point for access to information and complaints;
- CCTV Cameras should not view areas which are not of interest and are not intended to be the subject of surveillance
- In areas where people have a heightened expectation of privacy (for example, toilets, changing rooms etc) cameras should only be used in the most exceptional of circumstances and where they are necessary to deal with serious concerns. In these cases an extra effort should be made to ensure that those under surveillance are aware of the cameras. This may be by way of signs highlighting the fact that there are cameras in operation
- CCTV should not (usually) be used to record audio (for example, conversations between members of the public) as this is highly intrusive
- Regular review and audit of CCTV systems;
- CCTV footage is of sufficient evidential quality (with forensic integrity maintained) and fit-for-purpose.

Use, security and Retention of Recorded Images:

- There should be restricted access to recorded material and recorded images should be viewed in a restricted area or designated office. Access to CCTV recordings should be restricted to authorised personnel only;
- The public should not be allowed access to the area where staff can view CCTV;
- The Council must ensure that images obtained using CCTV are not used for any purpose other than the reason they were originally captured;
- No more footage should be stored than that which is strictly required for the purpose of a CCTV system, and should be deleted once the purpose has been met;
- Access to CCTV footage must be clearly defined, with restrictions on who can gain access and for what purpose;
- Appropriate organisational and technical measures should be in place to protect against unauthorised access and use;
- There should be clear responsibility and accountability within Council for all CCTV in operation;
- Due consideration must be given of approved operational, technical and competency standards and continual work in maintaining such standards;
- Clear rules, policies and procedures (with site-specific operational requirements and protocols) must be in place before a CCTV system is used;
- Regular training must be provided for CCTV operators.

Disclosure of CCTV Images:

- Disclosure of images from CCTV must be controlled and consistent. Requests for images should be treated with care as a wide disclosure may be unfair to the individuals concerned (effectively breaching the DPA/UK GDPR).

- Individuals may request images recorded of them. Such requests should be dealt with formally as Subject Access Requests (SAR) under the DPA/UK GDPR. All such requests should be passed to the Compliance Team as soon as they are received.
- CCTV Images should not generally be released to third parties (although there will be times when this is permissible under the DPA/UK GDPR). Requests for images of third parties should be dealt with formally as requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. All such requests should be passed to the Compliance Team as soon as they are received.
- Council recognises that individuals have a right to prevent processing of their images where this would cause substantial and unwarranted damage / distress.

RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS UNDER THE UK GDPR:

The UK GDPR provides the following rights for individuals:

1. The right to be informed
2. The right of access
3. The right to rectification
4. The right to erasure
5. The right to restrict processing
6. The right to data portability
7. The right to object
8. Rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling.

An individual is entitled to make a request to Council verbally or in writing. For further information visit the ICO's website[8].

BREACHES:

A breach of the DPA/UK GDPR may occur in a variety of ways. For example, this may arise from a theft or accidental loss of personal data (for example, mobile devices, laptops, documents containing personal data). It may also occur due to a deliberate attack on the Council's systems; the unauthorised use of personal data by a staff member or accidental loss or equipment failure. A suspected breach must be reported to the Compliance Team immediately.

Breaches considered 'high risk' need to be reported to the ICO within 72 hours. Failure to notify a breach when required to do so could result in a significant fine, up to 10 million Euros or 2 per cent of turnover.

ICO Penalties:

The ICO has the power to take regulatory action against public bodies for breaches of the DPA/UK GDPR as follows:-

1. The ICO has the power to impose monetary penalties up to the value of 20 million Euros (or equivalent in sterling) or 4% of the total annual turnover in the preceding financial year, whichever is higher;
2. The ICO may issue an Undertaking or Enforcement Notice requiring an organisation to take action or;
3. The ICO has the power to criminally prosecute organisations. Individuals may also be prosecuted under the Act. Upon summary conviction (in a Magistrate's Court) fines

[8] Individual Rights:- https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-UK GDPR/individual-rights/

could result if employees / members process information about other people without their consent or proper authorisation from the Council. Upon conviction or indictment in the Crown Court the fine can be unlimited.

The Council's Breach Management Plan:
Should a breach of the DPA/UK GDPR occur there are four main elements the Council will focus on:

- Containment & Recovery of the breach;
- Assessment of the ongoing risk caused by the breach;
- Notification of the breach and;
- Evaluation of the Council's response to the breach

Council's Breach Management Plan is as follows:

1. All breaches should be notified immediately to the Council's Data Protection Officer/Head of Compliance (or the Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration) in their absence) in order that the breach can be addressed. Council hold a Breach Register so that staff can report breaches or potential breaches of DPA/UK GDPR.

2. Upon becoming aware of the breach Council will take all steps necessary to recover the information and limit the damage caused by the breach.

3. Council will assess the risks associated with the breach. In particular it will consider what type of data is involved; how sensitive it is; if data has been lost or stolen; whether there were any protections in place; what has happened to the data; the level of risk posed; how many individuals are affected; who the individuals affected are; what harm can come to those individuals and any perceived wider consequences of the breach.

4. Council will inform the appropriate people and organisations that a breach has occurred. Where appropriate the Information Commissioner's Office and the Police will be informed. The decision to inform the ICO and / or the Police will rest with Council.

5. Council will review its response and take steps to avoid the breach reoccurring.

NOTIFICATION TO THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE:
The DPA/UK GDPR requires every Data Controller who is responsible for processing personal data to notify the Information Commissioner's Office that they are processing personal data and to renew their Notification on an annual basis. Failure to do so is a criminal offence.

The Council's Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration) is responsible for Council's Notification to the Information Commissioner's Office on an annual basis.

All Officers are required to make the Assistant Director of Corporate (Administration) aware of any changes to the processing of personal data or any proposals to create a new system (paper or automated) which contains personal data. Any changes to Council's Notification should be brought to the attention of the ICO within 28 days.

Time limits

Any person who makes a request to Council for their personal data (subject access request) will be informed without undue delay and at the latest within one month from the date of receipt of their request whether Council holds the information requested. If Council holds the information requested the requester will be provided with the information within one month of the date of receipt the request (subject to legal exemptions). One month is the statutory maximum period within which public bodies must respond to a request. Council will, however, endeavour to provide information to requesters in as short a timeframe as possible. The statutory period of one month may be extended for a further two months in limited circumstances and the requester will be advised if this is the case.

Council may request proof of identity and/or clarification in relation to a request for information. Proof/clarification may be sought in order to assist Council in identifying and locating information relevant to a request. Where Council requires proof/clarification to be provided by a requester Council will inform the requester of this as soon as reasonably possible following receipt of the request. Council will respond to the request when it receives the additional information and within the statutory time limit.

Where Council does not hold the information being requested but Council is aware that another organisation may hold the information Council will advise the requester to contact that organisation and, where possible, will provide contact details for that organisation.

Charging

Under the UK GDPR Council will not charge a fee for most subject access requests. However, Article 12(5) advises where the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive Council may charge a reasonable fee for the administrative costs of complying with the request. This can cover e.g. repeated requests for the same information. In those circumstances, Council will either refuse to respond and explain why, or charge for the administrative costs of providing the information, e.g. photocopying or postage costs; Council cannot, for example, charge for staff time. Council will advise the requester which basis (either manifestly unfounded or excessive) it is relying on.

The ICO's view is that standard requests for personal data will not meet the manifestly unfounded or excessive request threshold, however voluminous the records are.

When an advance payment is required, the requester will be notified and Council will invite the requester to say whether they wish to proceed with the request, or part of it, or whether the request may be met in some other way (for example, by visiting the offices to inspect the information). Where advance payment is required the case will remain active for 60 working days until payment is received. If no payment is received during this time the request closes but the requester may make a new application at any time. When a fee payment is received Council will release the information promptly and within the appropriate time limit.

Exemptions

Schedule 2-4 of the DPA sets out the exemptions to individuals right of access for Council. Officers should consult the Compliance Team for guidance. Some reasons for right of access to be denied is:

- The request is manifestly unfounded or excessive
- Information constitutes the personal data of third parties
- The information is subject to investigation being considered
- Disclosure would prohibit the prevention and detection of crime
- Information is protected under Legal Professional Privilege (LPP)
- Confidential references

Access to information procedure

Introduction
All requests for information (RFI) to Council need to be handled in accordance with the FOIA, EIR and DPA/UK GDPR.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) advises:
"This doesn't mean you have to treat every enquiry formally as a request under the Act. It will often be most sensible and provide better customer service to deal with it as a normal customer enquiry under your usual customer service procedures. The provisions of the Act need to come into force only if:

- *you cannot provide the requested information straight away; or*
- *the requester makes it clear they expect a response under the Act".*[9]

All staff should be familiar with information readily available via Council's publication scheme[10]. The response to such requests should be issued as soon as possible, in adherence with Councils Customer Care procedures and certainly within the statutory time limits.

"*If you need to deal with a request more formally, it is important to identify the relevant legislation:*

- *If the person is asking for their own personal data, you should deal with it as a subject access request under the DPA/UK GDPR.*
- *If the person is asking for 'environmental information', the request is covered by the EIR.*
- *Any other non-routine request for information you hold should be dealt with under the FOIA".*[11]

The Compliance Team (CT) is responsible for processing RFI which fall outside the scope of a "normal day to day business or media enquiry". The CT will acknowledge the RFI, collating the information requested and responding to all requests received by Council. The Head of Compliance/Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration) is responsible for responding to internal reviews.

These procedures set out the processes that the CT follow when dealing with a RFI and Head of Compliance/Assistance Director of Corporate Services (Administration) will follow when dealing with a request for Internal Review.

[9] In brief - https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/receiving-a-request/
[10] Council publication scheme - http://www.newrymournedown.org/publication-scheme
[11] When should we deal with a request as a freedom of information request – https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/receiving-a-request/

Types of RFI submitted to Council

There are four different types of request that Council might receive, aside from those which should be dealt with as enquiries in the normal course of business. It is important that the legislation under which a request is made is identified from the outset, as each will be dealt with slightly differently. The CT will identify which piece of legislation the request will be treated under. The requests may be any of the following:

- Requests for information made under FOIA.
- Requests for personal data made under the DPA/UK GDPR.
- Requests for environmental information made under the EIR.
- Request from complainants for information held on their case files which are primarily dealt with under DPA/UK GDPR, with other information on the case file falling outside the DPA/UK GDPR being considered under FOIA or EIR depending on the nature of the complaint (hybrid requests).

All requests under FOIA should be made in writing. Verbal requests are valid under EIR and DPA/UK GDPR. Verbal requests can be captured using the ICO's verbal request template form[12].

Council has a duty to comply with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006. The CT will support individuals requiring assistance in submitting requests in accordance with Chapter 6 of Councils Equality Scheme[13].

Receiving and acknowledging a RFI

The CT receives requests:

- Directly from individuals via telephone, letter or email addressed to the CT; and/or
- Communications which are transferred by teams to CT, including through social media.

All RFI to be dealt with by the CT will be logged on the monitoring spreadsheet as cases and given a reference number. New requests should be given a new case reference number from the central filing database. Existing case reference numbers can be applied to routine follow up requests that can be processed quickly.

The request case will be set up and an acknowledgement sent to the requester within two working days. The acknowledgement will clearly state the date by which the requester can expect a response. *If a response can be issued within two working days, an acknowledgement will be included therein.

Establishing whether the request is valid

[12] Saved on the R Drive, under 'Policies and Procedures' folder

[13] Council's Equality Scheme - http://www.newrymournedown.org/equality

The first stage once a request has been received is establishing whether it is a valid request:

- is it in writing (required for FOIs) or verbal (accepted under DPA/UK GDPR & EIR)
- does it contain the name and an address for correspondence?
- Is a form of ID required (DPA/UK GDPR)?
- does it describe the information being requested?

Seeking clarification
At the stage of acknowledgement, the CT will assist and advise requesters on what information is required to process their request.

Examples of the most common instances where the CT seeks clarification include; asking for proof of ID or authorisation (when dealing with a SAR on behalf of another individual. Where the request is not clear, can be read in more than one way or the CT has not received enough information needed to locate and retrieve the information being requested, clarification will be sought from the requester rather than attempt to interpret the scope of the request.

The case is closed in the acknowledging team member's name pending the receipt of the requested clarification. Once the clarification is received, the case is then reopened, acknowledged and referred back for processing.

Requests which can be responded to immediately
The request may be for information which, although not included in the Publication Scheme, can be provided immediately, or is for information which is not held by Council.

In either of these circumstances the response will be sent immediately, and the case closed. Where the information is not held Council will explain why and, if the request is misguided, provide the contact details for the correct organisation if known.

Advice may be sought by members of staff outside the CT regarding requests that can be responded to as normal course of business. Such requests should be responded to promptly, in adherence with Councils Customer Service Standards and certainly within the statutory timeframe.

Gathering and collating the information
Having interpreted the request, the CT will conduct searches of electronic and manual records, accessible to the CT, to establish what information is held. The monitoring spreadsheet and previous responses will also be considered when gathering information, noting any lapsed time.

The CT will then identify the possible Department(s) which may hold any additional information. The Department is added on the monitoring spreadsheet and an e-mail sent to the Head of Service (or equivalent) and responsible officer as soon as possible to allow them a reasonable time to respond.

When consulting with teams, the CT will:

- Clearly specify the information requested

- Enquire whether information which falls within the scope of the request is held by the department
- Specify a date by which a response should be provided to the CT (usually at least one week before the request is due)
- Ask for any views that the Department may have on disclosing the information
- Ask for any additional information which might put the information being requested into context and provide additional assistance to the requester.

In some cases, it may be necessary to send an 'all staff' email to ask staff to check their computers and manual files for information covered by the scope of the request. The requesters personal information will not be disclosed to third parties, unless a lawful basis applies.

Classification of Information
Information that contains protective marking e.g. 'Personal', 'Confidential' and/or 'Sensitive' will be considered in line with any applicable exemptions and or guidance from the ICO.

Cost
Council will adopt a 'in favour of disclosure approach'. In exceptional circumstances Council may consider refusing to comply with a request on the basis of the costs involved. If the information is held, the CT will estimate whether the cost of complying is "reasonable".

- Under FOI the cost limit is £25 per hour, £450 or 18 hours.
- Under EIR there is no cost limit. Manifestly unreasonable requests will be subject to a public interest test and, if applicable, a reasonable fee.
- Under DPA/UK GDPR there is no cost limit. Manifestly unfounded or excessive requests will be subject to a reasonable fee.

Where the CT receives multiple requests, but each individual request is for information falling under only one access regime (FOIA, EIR, or DPA/UK GDPR) then there will be no aggregation of costs across the different access regimes. In this situation the CT will only take the aggregated costs of responding to FOI requests into account under FOIA. Similarly, the CT will only take the costs of responding to requests for environmental information into account when deciding if multiple similar requests are manifestly unreasonable/unfounded under the EIR and DPA/UK GDPR[14].
If a request exceeds the reasonable/appropriate cost limit the table below identifies the description of costs which can be applied under the relevant regime:

[14] ICO - Calculating a cost where a request spans different access regimes: https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1192/calculating_costs_foia_eir_guidance.pdf

Cost description	FOI[15]	EIR[16]	DPA/UK GDPR[17]
Time	Only chargeable if the info cannot be viewed by the requester at a Council site		X
Printing / copying The Council will not charge for photocopying which amounts to less than £5.00	✓	✓	No cost for one copy. Cost applied for additional copies.
Postage	✓	✓	✓
Format (*media device, Folder/ring binder*)	✓	✓	✓

The requester will be advised of the fees notice and advice to enable them to reformulate their request to try bring it within the cost limit which will be treated as a new request. They will also be advised of the date to pay the fees notice (60 working days) or respond with a reformulated request.

The CT will also advise requesters they can seek an Internal Review of fees notices.

Consultation
If the information requested includes correspondence or information provided by a third party it may be necessary for the CT to contact that individual or organisation to seek their views on the disclosure.

The communication with the consultee will specify the document(s) considered for disclosure, and where necessary the CT may also need to provide a copy of the information considered for disclosure. A time frame for the reply will be given to the third party consulted.

The requesters personal information will not be disclosed to third parties, unless a lawful basis applies.

Responding to a request
The CT will adhere to the following checklist:

- Log all SAR/FOI/EIR requests on the monitoring spreadsheet.
- Review the monitoring spreadsheet to ascertain repeat requests and responses.

[15] ICO – Fees that may be charged when the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit: https://ico.org.uk/media/1635/fees_cost_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.pdf
[16] ICO – Charging for Environmental Information: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi-eir-and-access-to-information/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/charging-for-information-under-the-eir/#:~:text=Regulation%208%20of%20the%20EIR,ability%20to%20exercise%20that%20right
[17] ICO – Can we charge a fee: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-UK GDPR/individual-rights/right-of-access/

- Consider ICO guidance and decision notices.
- New requests should be given a new case reference number from the central filing database. Existing case reference numbers can be applied to routine follow up requests that can be processed quickly.
- Is the request from an individual for information about their case/complaint? If so, generally in the first instance treat it as a DPA/UK GDPR subject access request but bear in mind that some information in the file may need to be considered for disclosure under FOIA or EIR.
- If treating as a subject access request and records held are historical (e.g. an application prior to 25 May 2018) then the request should be considered under the DPA/UK GDPR 2018. The DPA 1998 is only relevant if reviewing a decision and the matter is still ongoing.
- Is the information already available through Council's Publication Scheme or are they able to book an appointment to view files?
- Where necessary offer advice and assistance as soon as possible.
- Issue acknowledgement* within two working days (see * on page 21).
- Advice and assistance should be offered if the request is vague or framed as a question:
    - Give as much information as possible in normal course of business
    - Check whether they still require further information
    - Explain the right to request recorded information
    - Explain what sort of information we might hold
- In every case where advice and assistance is provided:
    - Check we have understood what information they require
    - Explain what happens next in considering their request
    - Confirm date of receipt and latest date for response
- Search for the information. If the search would exceed the cost limit contact the requester as soon as possible, issue fees notice, date for payment and offer to assist reformulating the request.
- If Council does not hold any information, contact the requester to explain this. Offer advice on who else may hold the relevant information.
- If Council holds the information, is there a good reason not to disclose it? For example, does an exemption/exception apply
- Are there any protective markings e.g. draft, sensitive, private, confidential?

- Are there any FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR disclosure notices contained within documents?
- Has the requester specified a preferred means of communication?
- Does Council need to consult with a third party (e.g. employee, contractor, stakeholder) before deciding on whether to disclose or withhold the information under an exemption?
- If Council wants to withhold the information, can it provide redacted documents?
- Is the request voluminous or sensitive and require peer checking?
- If Council withholds or redacts any information, issue a Refusal Notice. Include:
    - A confirmation that Council holds the information (unless an exemption applies to the confirmation itself)
    - The section and subsection of the exemption
    - Why the information falls within the exemption (unless explanation would disclose exempt information)
    - If prejudice-based, an explanation of likely prejudice
    - If qualified, set out the public interest arguments for and against disclosure
    - If absolute, explain there is no public interest test requirement
    - How to request an internal review and how to appeal
- Has the requesters address been checked against the original request?

Responses to requests will be sent as soon as the information is available. In some cases it may be possible to respond immediately, upon receipt, in which case it is not necessary to send an acknowledgment.

The information contained within the response will vary according to the nature of the request. Generally, a response to an FOI/EIR request should initially confirm whether or not the information requested is held, although there is some variation to this.

In cases where information is withheld, a Refusal Notice will be issued. The CT will set out the exemption(s) applied, the public interest (if applicable) and the reason why the exemption is engaged.

The CT will keep a copy of all documentation on file in response to the request. The CT will label the copy of un-redacted information in case it is subject for future request, Internal Review or review by the ICO.

The CT will:

- ensure to have complied with any reasonable request for a particular format, electronic or hardcopy
- ensure that the correct review or right of appeal paragraphs are included
- check any attachments or enclosures which are being provided in response to the request before sending out the response

- ensure attachments to email are sent via pdf and encrypted/password protected where appropriate
- check the postal or email address of the requester against the original request before sending out the response. Place sensitive/confidential information within a second envelope for extra protection.
- Update the monitoring spreadsheet

Internal Reviews
The CT will acknowledge receipt of the request for review as soon as it is received and give the latest date by which the requester can expect a response.

The Head of Compliance/Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration) will conduct Internal Reviews and request the relevant file from the CT, to include:

- The original request
- The response
- Copies of information (guidance, verbal discussions etc)
- Copies of consultation request & responses
- Copies of unredacted information where applicable
- Request for review
- Acknowledgement

The Head of Compliance/Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration) will review the original decision, taking account of any time lapse and ICO decision notices. The response will include the details of the review, the outcome and requesters right to complain to the Commissioner. The respective file will be updated to include records of the Internal Review and the monitoring spreadsheet.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Council Officers
All Council Officers who hold or process recorded information held by Council are responsible for complying with the FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR legislation and this procedure.

RFI can be made to any Council Officer. All Officers who receive RFI that cannot be dealt with within the normal everyday requirements of their role and function should forward the request to the CT immediately. If an Officer is in doubt as to whether a RFI requires to be dealt with under the terms of the FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR the Officer should immediately contact the CT. All transfers of requests to the CT should be made immediately upon receipt of the request to allow the CT sufficient time to deal with the request within the statutory timeframe. Where an Officer deals with a RFI within the normal everyday requirements of their role they should be aware of the statutory timeframes.

When requested by the CT to provide information requested under the FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR all Council Officers must provide all information held by them in relation to the request. Officers can highlight any sensitives over the disclosure of information, but it is the CT who decides whether an exemption/exception is engaged. If an Officer is unsure whether information they hold is relevant to a request they should check this with the CT.

Information held in non-work personal email accounts may be subject to the legislation if it relates to the official business of Council. When a request for information is received Officers should consider all locations where relevant information is held, including private email accounts.

Council acknowledges that personal data held on private email accounts relating to the official work of the Council, falls within the scope of a request for information. However, since private email accounts may not be subject to the level of security deemed appropriate by the Council, storing personal data and using private email accounts risks breaching Article 5 and Article 32 of the UK GDPR.

Private email accounts should only be used in **exceptional** circumstance, for example, if Councils official IT platform is down and the matter requires urgent action. When communicating to a data subject regarding Council official business using a private email account, you must cc your official Council email address to ensure completeness of Council records[18]. Officers communicating via their private email account or are otherwise transmitting and/ or storing data therein, engage the data protection principles. **Officers therefore should use their Council email address and secure Council devices when communicating to data subjects regarding Council business.**

Whilst the Council has a statutory maximum statutory timeframe within which to respond to a request Officers will be required to provide the CT with the requested information within the timeframe as specified by the CT. This to ensure that the CT has sufficient time within which to consider the information, contact relevant third parties and redact exempt information where necessary.

It is a criminal offence to wilfully conceal, damage or destroy information in order to avoid responding to a request. It is therefore important that no records that are the subject of a request are amended or destroyed. The ICO advises: "*where information that is covered by a request is knowingly treated as not held because it is held in a private email account, this may count as concealment intended to prevent the disclosure of information, with the person concealing the information being liable to prosecution*".[19]

All Council Officers are also responsible for good information handling practice and implementing records management policies and procedures as appropriate. Council departments are responsible for the content of the Publication Scheme and must review it regularly. Departmental website content updates should be forwarded to the Marketing and Communications Team and Compliance Team for inclusion on the website.

When a request is made for information and that information includes the names of employees in connection with their work on behalf of Council, as a general rule Heads of Service and above name, job title and/or role will be disclosed.

The question of disclosure of employee's name, job title and/or role below Head of Service will be looked at on a case by case basis. The main consideration in deciding whether to

[18] Official information held in private email accounts, p5:- https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1147/official_information_held_in_private_email_accounts.pdf
[19] Page 4, link as above.

release the information in connection with their work on behalf of Council will be whether it is fair in all the circumstances to identify an individual employee e.g. whether they have been involved in the decision making process and whether their information is already in the public domain. Special consideration will be given where the disclosure of an employee's name would cause unwarranted damage or distress to that individual.

Responsibilities of Councillors

Information received, created or held by a Councillor on behalf of the Council will be covered by the legislation. This includes information received, created or held by a Councillor outside of the Council Chamber / Council Offices where the information forms part of their work as a Councillor on behalf of Council. Correspondence between Councillors or information held by a Councillor for their own private, political or representative purposes will not usually be covered.

As Councillors are not public authorities in their own right they have no obligation to respond to a request for information addressed to them individually. However, as a matter of good practice, a Councillor should explain this to the requester and, with the permission of the requester, pass the request to the CT. All transfers of requests to the CT should be made immediately upon receipt of the request to allow the Officer sufficient time to deal with the request within the statutory timeframe.

When requested by the CT to provide information requested under the FOI/EIR/DAP/UK GDPR all Councillors must provide all relevant information held by them in their role as an agent or representative on behalf of Council. Councillors can highlight any sensitives over the disclosure of information, but it is the CT who decides whether an exemption/exception is engaged. If a Councillor is unsure whether information they hold is relevant to a request they should check this with the CT.

Information held in non-work personal email accounts may be subject to the legislation if it relates to the official business of Council. When a request for information is received Councillors should consider all locations where relevant information is held, including private email accounts.

Council acknowledges that personal data held on private email accounts relating to the official work of the Council, falls within the scope of a request for information. However, since private email accounts may not be subject to the level of security deemed appropriate by the Council, storing personal data and using private email accounts risks breaching Article 5 and Article 32 of the UK GDPR.

Private email accounts should only be used in **exceptional** circumstance, for example, if Councils official IT platform is down and the matter requires urgent action. When communicating to a data subject regarding Council official business using a private email account, you must cc your official Council email address to ensure completeness of Council records[20]. Councillors communicating via their private email account or are otherwise transmitting and/ or storing data therein, engage the data protection principles. **Councillors therefore should use their Council email address and secure Council devices when communicating to data subjects regarding Council business.**

[20] Page 5, link as above.

Whilst the Council has a statutory maximum statutory timeframe within which to respond to a request Officers will be required to provide the CT with the requested information within the timeframe as specified by the CT. This to ensure that the CT has sufficient time within which to consider the information, contact relevant third parties and redact exempt information where necessary.

It is a criminal offence to wilfully conceal, damage or destroy information in order to avoid responding to a request. It is therefore important that no records that are the subject of a request are amended or destroyed. The ICO advises: "*where information that is covered by a request is knowingly treated as not held because it is held in a private email account, this may count as concealment intended to prevent the disclosure of information, with the person concealing the information being liable to prosecution*".[21]

Councillors should be aware that where their names appear on any recorded information or documentation held by them or by the Council in connection with their work on behalf of the Council their names and position within the Council will ordinarily be disclosed as a matter of course.

Training

All staff and Councillor's will be provided with mandatory FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR training which will be required to be undertaken every three years, subject to legislative amendments. Refresher guidance will be provided annually.

FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR training will form part of the Council's induction for new employees. A copy of this policy and procedure will be provided to all employees and Councillors.

Monitoring and Review

To ensure this Procedure complies with the terms of the FOI/EIR/DPA/UK GDPR and meets the needs of Council it will be reviewed every ~~three~~ four years. If there is a change in legislation and/or internal processes review may complete sooner.

[21] Page 4, link as above.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Revised Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Edel Cosgrove Head of Compliance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Alison Robb Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Administration)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	**X**	**For noting only**	

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The purpose of the report is to seek Members approval on the revised Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure (COIPP).
1.2	The draft will replace the existing COIPP.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	The following is a summary of the main amendments:-
2.2	The COIPP includes a new electronic process to gather employees Declarations of Interest (DOI) and Register of Interests (ROI) using Microsoft Forms software. Councillors return will continue to be collected via Democratic Services.
2.3	A description and an indicative list of "high-risk posts" are included to support monitoring and evaluation by accurately determining the annual completion of DOI returns. Subject to Committee approval and Council ratification, a version control table is included to track any future amends.
2.4	An annual CEO update will be issued providing instruction to staff on how to complete.
2.5	A new ROI process is created to capture any direct or perceived conflict outside of the annual return DOI process.
2.6	New employee (which includes movers) induction checklist and IT Leavers procedure will be updated to reflect the requirements.
2.7	The responsibility has passed from the Head of Legal to the Head of Compliance to administer the electronic process.
2.8	For ease of reference, revisions are included in red text within the COIPP.

3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	It is recommended that Members approve the COIPP.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	None identified.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☒ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale:

6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☒
7.0	**Appendices**
	Draft Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure
8.0	**Background Documents**
	See current Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure

Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures

Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Policy Control

Policy reference:	CS27
Title of Policy:	Conflicts of Interest
Version:	0.7
Directorate / Departmental ownership:	Corporate Services / Administration
Officer responsible:	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Date of ratification:	
Review date:	(4 years as per equality scheme commitment)
Equality screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed by:	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Equality screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment date:	27 February 2022
Location where document is held and referenced:	Responsible Department ☒ Corporate Policy repository ☒

Contents

Content	Page Number
Statement	3
Aim of this policy	3
Scope of the policy	3
Related policies and legislation	3
Definitions	4
Department & Officer responsible	4
Policy approval process	5
Review date	5
Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the implementation and impact of the policy	5
Equality Screening	5
Rural Needs Impact Assessment	5
PROCEDURES	
Introduction	6
Who are these procedures for?	6
What is a Conflict of Interest and what issues does it raise?	6

How do I identify a Conflict of Interest?	8
Private Occupations	8
Payment for Private Work	9
Shareholdings	9
Relationships with Suppliers and Consultants	10
How can conflicts of Interest be managed effectively? • *Daily and Annual guidance for employees* • *Guidance for Councillors*	10 11 12
What happens if there is a breach of the policy?	12
Policy Review Date	12
Training	12
Templates	12
Recognising a Conflict of Interest - Checklist for Employees	21
Options for managing Conflicts of Interest	22
List of high-risk posts per Directorate	23

Version Control

Version No	Amendments	Authorisation	Date	New Version No

1. Title of policy

Conflicts of Interest.

2. Statement

Council approves the policy to ensure staff and Elected Members are aware that it is not appropriate to use public position or resources to deal with private matters or to pursue private interests. All staff and members have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way which protects the public interest.

In the course of their work it is essential that staff avoid any suggestion of nepotism or favouritism in their dealings with colleagues, clients or other contacts. This applies to the whole range of work activities but the key areas are recruitment, promotion, training, procurement, grant funding, planning and staff appraisal. In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, staff and members should make choices on merit.

3. Aim

The aim of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to ensure the Council's compliance with and consistent application of best practice in relation to Conflicts of Interest. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to providing sufficient resources and appropriate training to ensure the Council achieves this objective.

4. Scope

This Policy applies to all staff and Elected Members of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The Policy applies to all those who work for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (including but not limited to employees, agency staff, elected members, other public representatives, contractors, agents, consultants, servants of the Council and all third party data processors). All parties referred to above are responsible for complying with the terms of the Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures.

Consequences of non-compliance will be considered under Councils Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy and Procedure.

5. Related policies and legislation

Conflicts of Interest: A Good Practice – Published by NIAO
The Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors
The Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Staff
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Gifts and Hospitality Policy
Access to Information Policy and Procedure
Records Management Policy and Procedure
IT Policy and Procedure
Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy and Procedure

Publication Scheme
Induction checklist

6. Definitions

The Northern Ireland Audit Office[1] provides the following definition of a Conflict of Interest:-

At its most basic, a conflict of interest arises when an individual has two different interests that overlap. This Guide uses a broad definition[2] that is applicable across the public sector and is relevant to public officials and Board members alike:

"A conflict of interest involves a conflict between the public duty and the private interest of a public official in which the official's private-capacity interest could improperly influence the performance of his/her official duties and responsibilities."

A conflict of interest can also be perceived.

A perceived conflict of interest exists where it could be perceived, or appears, that private capacity interests could improperly influence the performance of a public official or Board member's official duties and responsibilities. It may pose no actual risk to the conduct of public business, but it requires proper management in order to minimise the risk of reputational damage both to the organisation and the individual(s) concerned.

A perception of a conflict of interest can be just as significant as an actual conflict of interest. The key issue is whether there is a risk that a fair-minded outside observer, acting reasonably, would conclude that there is a real possibility of bias.

7. Department and Officer responsible

Directorate / Department	Corporate Services / Administration
Officer(s) responsible for developing the policy	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration) Head of Compliance

[1] Page 6:- https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/files/niauditoffice/media-files/conflicts_of_interest_good_practice_guide.pdf
[2] Managing Conflict of Interest in the Public Sector – A toolkit, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, September 2005

8. Policy approval process

Meeting	Date
CMT	1 June 2023 (via email)
SMT	6 June 2023
Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee	
Monthly Council Meeting	

9. Review Date

The policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every 4 years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31), or sooner to ensure it remains reflective of legislative developments.

10. Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the implementation and impact of the policy

The Conflict of Interest Policy is supplemented by implementation procedures required for delivery of the policy and relevant monitoring arrangements to assess the impact.

11. Equality Screening

This policy and procedures have been assessed under Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Impact Assessment process and the decision of the Council is that the policy is not to be subject to an EQIA and no mitigating measures are required. A copy of the equality screening is available from the Head of Corporate Policy.

12. Rural Needs Impact Assessment

This policy and procedures have been assessed under Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Rural Needs Impact Assessment process, and no rural specific indicators have been set. A copy of the Rural Needs Assessment is available from the Head of Corporate Policy.

Conflict of Interest Procedures

Introduction

For those employed in the public sector and Elected Members it is likely that from time-to-time private matters will impinge on public duties. In such circumstances staff and Members should be aware that it is not appropriate to use public position or resources to deal with private matters or to pursue private interests. All staff have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way which protects the public interest.

In the course of their work it is essential that staff and Members avoid any suggestion of nepotism or favouritism in their dealings with colleagues, clients or other contacts. This applies to the whole range of work activities but the key areas are recruitment, promotion, training, procurement, grant funding, planning and staff appraisal. In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, staff should make choices on merit.

Conflicts or potential conflicts of interest can and do arise in our work.

Who are these procedures for?

These procedures are for Councillors and staff who will wish to ascertain whether they have an interest which should be declared under the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors or the Employee Code of Conduct.

Under the Members' Code of Conduct Councillors are obliged to declare pecuniary interests and non-pecuniary interests (e.g. membership of outside bodies). However, these formal definitions do not cover every possible conflict which could be encountered by Councillors and this document provides additional guidance so that Members can meet their obligations.

Similarly, whilst the Local Government Employee Code of Conduct specifies numerous matters which must be reported to their Chief Officer, not every eventuality can be covered and there is a catch all category of "any other connection to the Council's work which may be relevant".

These Procedures provide extra explanation of what conflicts ought to be recorded by you in your work for the Council. The intention of these procedures is not to look in depth at any particular situations, but to provide an overview of conflicts of interest, and how to deal with them, and to signpost sources of further information.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office provides a useful in-depth Good Practice Guide on Conflicts of Interest which is available at www.niauditoffice.gov.uk

What is a conflict of interest and what issues does it raise?

A conflict of interest is any situation in which your personal interests, or interests that you owe to another body or person, may (or may appear to) influence or affect your decision making.

A conflict of interest can also be perceived.

A perceived conflict of interest exists where it could be perceived, or appears, that private interests could improperly influence the performance of your official duties and responsibilities. It may pose no actual risk to the conduct of public business, but it requires proper management in order to minimise the risk of reputational damage both to the Council and the individual(s) concerned.

A perception of a conflict of interest can be just as significant as an actual conflict of interest. The key issue is whether there is a risk that a fair-minded outside observer, acting reasonably, would conclude that there is a real possibility of bias.

It is inevitable that conflicts of interest occur. It is therefore important to manage any situation where there is potential for criticism that your position or your decision has been influenced by conflicting loyalties. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can damage your reputation and the Council's reputation, so conflicts need to be managed carefully.

It is the potential, rather than the actual benefit from which the conflict of interest arises and which requires attention. In order to ensure selflessness and transparency, a declaration is required where there is a possibility of people outside the Council assuming that you (or a friend or relative) may have some benefit from the Council's business or decision making. This will avoid accusations of impropriety, which could in turn have a damaging effect on the Council's reputation.

Some advantages of working for the Council are enjoyed by more than one person. Where this arises then it is not usually the case that a declaration has to be made. An example of this would be the allowances and expenses which Councillors are entitled to claim. These decisions are always made in the open at public meetings and although it is correct that Councillors will receive a personal benefit there is no real risk to accountability or transparent decision making if an interest is not declared in that situation. This is because the subject matter of the decision makes it clear that Councillors will benefit. Similarly pay rises for staff will be recommended by staff and decisions made by Councillors – there is clear transparency and no declarations are required.

You should be more careful where decisions arise and it is not clear that a connection exists. For example, a planning application is made by someone you know. If you are a Planning Officer then you should declare to your manager that this is the case. Then the manager can make an informed decision if you should continue to work on the case. If you are a Councillor on the Planning Committee and the application is referred to the Committee then the public will know that the relationship exists only if you declare it. In these cases, a timely declaration of an interest will assure members of the public that there is nothing untoward to be worried about and that you are acting beyond reproach.

Similarly if you take advantage of benefits that are available to all, or that are of inconsequential or little measurable value, they will not normally need to be declared. E.g. you hire a tennis court. This would not need to be declared, as the facilities are available to all members of the local community, which includes Councillors and staff alike.

Issues may also arise where you have a conflict of interest or loyalties on a particular issue, but there is no potential for profit or advantage by any person. This may still be useful to declare so that it is clear that a decision has been made correctly. For instance you are a member of an outside body and the affairs of that body are raised at a meeting. It is helpful

for all concerned to know about the link to that other body even if nothing in the debate or the decision particularly turns on the declaration.

How do I identify a conflict of interest?

Conflicts of interest may come in a number of different forms:

- direct financial gain or benefit
- the award of a contract to another organisation in which you (or a friend or relative) has an interest and from which you (or they) will receive a financial benefit
- indirect financial gain, such as employment by the Council of your spouse or partner
- non-financial gain, such as when the Council's decisions or policies affect another organisation of which you are a member.

The Council expects you to be able to identify possible conflicts of interest when they arise and to ensure, that you take advice and to make the appropriate declarations. If you are a member of staff then you can speak to your line manager, Human Resources or the Head of Compliance. If you are a Councillor you can speak to the Democratic Services Manager, the Chief Executive or the Head of Compliance. To support you Council has identified a list of high risk posts which are included from page 23 onwards. High Risk posts are those where an employee could or be perceived to use their bias to favour or detrimentally impact an outcome. Any other member of staff who on review of this policy believes they have a conflict of interest is required to consult with the Head of Compliance (see advice on p11).

The main areas are likely to be:

(a) Private occupations

(b) Payment for private work

(c) Shareholdings

(d) Relationships with suppliers and consultants

(e) Acceptance of gifts and benefits

Private occupations

Staff must not engage in any activity which might conflict with the interests of the Council or be inconsistent with their position as members of the Council.

No restriction is placed on paid part-time employment or other paid activities outside official hours provided official work does not suffer and there is no risk of it bringing discredit upon the Council. However, staff proposing to undertake outside employment or activity should consult Human Resources if:

- it is employment or activity in a service also provided by the Council e.g. Environmental Health Officer, Fitness Instructor, Building Control Surveyor etc;

- it involves the use of official information or experience acquired in the course of official duties (but excluding information already in the public domain). Examples of such information range from general themes developed as a result of our work, to specific information obtained from members of the public. In the latter case it is most unlikely that approval would be given;

- it is employment or activity for anybody to which the Council may award business or contracts;

- the working hours of the proposed employment, when aggregated with the working hours of Council employment are likely to exceed 48 hours a week in line with EU Working Time Directive.

- any such employment will, in the view of the Council, conflict with or react detrimentally to the Council's interests, or in any way weaken public confidence in the conduct of the Council's business.

Payment for private work

Staff should consult the Head of Compliance if they are offered payment for work which relates to their official duties or is carried out in official time, or if they receive extra money from public funds for work outside the scope of their official duties, other than fees for acting as presiding officer or poll clerk at a parliamentary or local election.

Any fee or payment for private work must be surrendered to the Council if the preparation or execution of the work is undertaken in official time, as should fees for speeches or lectures given in an official capacity. Any travel, accommodation or meals provided in connection with such events must be normal and reasonable in the circumstances, please refer to the Council's Gifts and Hospitality Policy for further guidance. The Council *may* allow staff to keep all or part of the payment if the work or preparation is undertaken in private time, or the official time is wholly or partly made up and the Council on review of the individual facts of the matter is content that acceptance of payment by the member of staff would not be improper. In the latter instance, staff must obtain prior approval from the Chief Executive so that arrangements can be made with the appropriate Line Manager.

Staff may be permitted to write or contribute to books or articles provided these are not related to the work of the Council and their content could not call into question the integrity, objectivity or impartiality of the Council. Such activities should be conducted entirely in the individual's own time and staff should make no reference to their employment by the Council. Any fee or payment for such work can be retained by the individual, but must be notified to the Council.

Shareholdings

Staff may hold private investments. They should not, however, hold or deal in shares when they are in a position to gain information through their work which might affect the value of such shares. If a shareholding might raise a question of possible conflict with the interests or independence of the Council staff or Member then they should not obtain shares or, if already holding them, should declare the holding immediately. Examples where conflict might arise are when an individual:

- knows of a large government contract to be placed with a public company;
- has privileged information about a future privatisation; and
- knows of planned actions which might affect a company's prospects;

The Chief Executive will decide whether the individual's financial interest in a company might exert undue influence on his/her judgement, and, in conjunction with the Head of Compliance and the Officer's Line Manager, will determine the appropriate course of action. Staff should also ensure that privileged information obtained in the course of their work is under no circumstances imparted to colleagues, friends or relatives.

Under the Criminal Justice Act 1993 it is an offence if an individual *'who has information as an insider...deals in securities that are price-affected securities in relation to the information'.* An individual is also guilty of the offence of insider dealing if they encourage *'another person to deal in securities that are (whether or not that other knows it) price-affected securities in relation to the information....or he (the individual) discloses the information, otherwise in the proper performances of the functions of his employment, office or profession, to another person'.*

Relationships with suppliers and consultants

Contracts must be awarded on merit in fair competition against other potential suppliers, and no favouritism should be shown to businesses run by friends, partners or relatives. Staff responsible for engaging or supervising contractors who have any personal or domestic relationship with potential suppliers should declare it to their Director/Assistant Director. Staff should also declare any investment interests they hold with suppliers or consultants with whom they might deal. Where conflict might arise the individual should dispose of their investment or ensure that they play no part in awarding the contract or selecting consultants.

When involved in employing consultants, staff must ensure that appointments are made on merit in fair competition, i.e. the assignment should be awarded to the individual or company which best meets pre-determined criteria concerning the quantity, quality and cost of the service to be provided. The Council policy on Procurement is located in the internal R drive or can be obtained from Council's Head of Procurement.

How can conflicts of interest be managed effectively?

You need to be alert to possible conflicts of interest which you might have and how you can minimise their effects. A key aspect of minimising the effects of conflicts of interest is to be open and transparent about such situations when they arise.

All staff and Councillors have a responsibility to regularly review their circumstances and determine if any change has occurred which should rightly result in a change to their declaration or facilitate the need for a new declaration.

Daily and Annual guidance for employees

- DAILY

At page **21** readers will find a checklist to support recognising a Conflict of Interest. Page **22** includes a table taken from the Northern Ireland Audit Office's Good Practice Guide on Conflicts of Interest which sets out different management strategies for dealing with conflicts and when they might be used.

Where an interest is declared by staff members they can discuss actions to be taken as a consequence with their line manager and a decision will be made on how to manage any conflict or perceived conflict.

A record should be made of these arrangements in case of any future queries. The Council therefore requires that you declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest of which you are aware, as soon as they arise by completing the following Register of Interests form [insert link]

The Council will collate your entry into a Register of Interests – one for staff and one for Councillors. In recording interests openly, any actual or potential conflicts of interest can be identified more easily.

- ANNUALLY

Members of staff in High Risk posts will be expected to complete a mandatory Declaration of Interest each year. The Chief Executive will issue this requirement and instructions during quarter one of each financial year.

Examples of high risk posts are included from page 23.

Any other member of staff who on review of this policy believes they have a conflict of interest is required to consult with the Head of Compliance. If it is determined a conflict of interest exists, the Head of Compliance will email the employee the link to complete the electronic Declaration of Interest form, add the post to the list at page 23 onwards and update the version control table on page 2.

All line managers and HR should be mindful of this policy when recruiting new staff, including "movers" and ensure completion of the 'Compliance Induction' within the Induction checklist for new starts. For staff exiting Council or moving roles, staff should complete the IT Leavers procedure.

The Council publishes Declaration of Interests on its website for Councillors, the Senior and Corporate Management Teams, also known as 'Senior Officers'. Council does not publish Declaration of Interests for remaining staff. This is in compliance with Councils publication scheme and the Information Commissioners Office guidance.

When an employee submits a Declaration of Interest form, the information thereon will be treated with discretion and only be used to manage a conflict or perceived conflict of interest. Information held will be processed in accordance with the privacy notice contained within the form.

It is good practice at the beginning of a meeting to declare any interest which you have in an item to be discussed, and certainly before any discussion of the item itself. Sometimes this is not possible because an issue arises in the meeting unexpectedly so that the interest

can only be declared later. In such a case, the Council expects the interest to be raised as early as possible.

Guidance for Councillors

Councillors are required to declare their interests on an annual basis and will be contacted by the Democratic Services Manager to facilitate this.

Where an interest is declared by a Councillor at the outset of a Council or Committee Meeting then that interest will be noted by the democratic services representative attending the meeting. The Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors requires the Councillor to absent himself or herself when a "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" arises. The term, 'pecuniary interest' is defined in the 1972 Act. Pecuniary interests are your business interests (for example, your employment, trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which you are associated) and wider financial interests you may have (for example, investments, and assets such as land and property). Pecuniary interests may be both direct and indirect. Where any other conflict of interest arises i.e. non-pecuniary interests, it is for the Councillor to declare that interest if it is 'significant' and the Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors, at sections 4.3 and 6.1 provides guidance for Councillors to determine if the interest is significant and how it should be managed.

What happens if there is a breach of the Policy?

There are formal sanctions available to the Council for those who are in breach. Any action taken will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. Staff can be subject to the disciplinary procedure, and Councillors can be referred to the NI Commissioner for complaints.

Policy Review Date

The policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every 4 years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31), or sooner to ensure it remains reflective of legislative developments and good practice.

Staff wishing to receive clarification on this policy and/or suggest improvements should contact the Head of Compliance.

Training

All staff and Councillor's will be provided with mandatory Conflicts of Interest training which will be required to be undertaken every three years, subject to legislative amendments. Refresher guidance will be provided annually.

Conflicts of Interest training will form part of the Council's induction for new employees and "movers". A copy of this policy and procedure will be provided to all employees and Councillors.

Templates

The following Register of Interests and Declaration of Interests forms for employees are for illustration purposes. Forms should be completed electronically, see page 10.

Register of Interests

* Required

1. PRIVACY NOTICE

The type of personal information we collect
Council collects the information contained in the below form.

How we get your personal information
The personal information we process is provided to us directly by you for the purpose of completing your Register of Interests.

Why we collect it
The NI Audit Office advises *"a 'Register of Interests'.... enhances transparency within the organisation and is a useful tool to help individuals and managers identify conflicts at an early stage and take the necessary steps to manage them."* (NIAO, 2015, p20).

We use the information that you have given us in order to demonstrate compliance with audit obligations to compile a Register of Interests. We may share this information with requesters who have a lawful bases to process your personal data.

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the lawful bases we rely on for processing this information are 'legitimate interests'.

How we store your personal information
Your information is securely stored permanently on Council servers.

Your data protection rights

Under data protection law, you have rights including:
Your right of access - You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information.
Your right to rectification - You have the right to ask us to rectify personal information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete.
Your right to erasure - You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information in certain circumstances.
Your right to restriction of processing - You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your personal information in certain circumstances.
Your right to object to processing - You have the the right to object to the processing of your personal information in certain circumstances.
Your right to data portability - You have the right to ask that we transfer the personal information you gave us to another organisation, or to you, in certain circumstances.
You are not required to pay any charge for exercising your rights. If you make a request, we have one month to respond to you.

Please contact the Compliance Team if you wish to make a request.

How to complain
If you have any concerns about our use of your personal information, you can make a complaint to the Compliance Team.

You can also complain to the ICO via: https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/ *

- [ ] **I have read and understood the Privacy Notice**

2. **Date** *

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

3. **Employee full name** *

Enter your answer

4. **Job Title** *

Enter your answer

5. **Directorate** *

- [ ] Corporate Services
- [ ] Active and Healthy Communities
- [ ] Sustainability and the Environment
- [ ] Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism
- [ ] CEOs Office

6. **Department/Section** *

Enter your answer

7. **Date of Appointment to current position** *

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

8. **Please list the individual(s) concerned** *

Enter your answer

9. **Please outline the circumstances involved on the conflict of interest** *

Enter your answer

10. **Please outline as assessment of the situation** *

Enter your answer

11. **Please outline how the matter was resolved or how the risk was reduced/eliminated** *

Enter your answer

12. **Please outline any action taken** *

Enter your answer

13. **I confirm that the above declaration is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. The interests I have declared include both direct and indirect interests (i.e. those of a partner, spouse or close relative) and any specific financial interests are shown.** *

○ Yes

Submit

This content is created by the owner of the form. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner. Microsoft is not responsible for the privacy or security practices of its customers, including those of this form owner. Never give out your password.

Powered by Microsoft Forms | Privacy and cookies | Terms of use

Declaration of Interests

* Required

1. PRIVACY NOTICE

The type of personal information we collect
Council collects the information contained in the below form.

How we get your personal information
The personal information we process is provided to us directly by you for the purpose of completing your annual Declaration of Interests.

Why we collect it
The NI Audit Office advises "all public officials and Board members to complete a Declaration of Interests form annually" (NIAO, 2015, Pg).

We use the information that you have given us in order to demonstrate compliance with audit obligations. We may share this information with requesters who have a lawful bases to process your personal data.

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the lawful bases we rely on for processing this information are 'legitimate interests'.

How we store your personal information
Your information is securely stored permanently on Council servers.

The Council publishes Declaration of Interests on it's website for Councillors, the Senior and Corporate Management Teams aka 'Senior Officers'. Council does not publish Declaration of Interests for remaining staff. This is in compliance with Councils publication scheme and the Information Commissioners Office guidance.

In relation to Senior Officers' Declarations of Interest the ICO expects Council to publish information which should include the names, departments, sections and job titles of all officers who have made entries. In relation to the Chief Executive, information recorded in the professional element (question number 13) should also be disclosed subject to consideration of the UK GDPR.

Your data protection rights

Under data protection law, you have rights including:
Your right of access - You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information.
Your right to rectification - You have the right to ask us to rectify personal information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete.
Your right to erasure - You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information in certain circumstances.
Your right to restriction of processing - You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your personal information in certain circumstances.
Your right to object to processing - You have the the right to object to the processing of your personal information in certain circumstances.
Your right to data portability - You have the right to ask that we transfer the personal information you gave us to another organisation, or to you, in certain circumstances.
You are not required to pay any charge for exercising your rights. If you make a request, we have one month to respond to you.

Please contact the Compliance Team if you wish to make a request.

How to complain
If you have any concerns about our use of your personal information, you can make a complaint to the Compliance Team.

You can also complain to the ICO via:- https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/ *

- ◯ **I have read and understood the Privacy Notice**

2. **Date** *

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

3. **Employee full name** *

Enter your answer

4. **Job Title** *

Enter your answer

5. **Directorate** *

- ◯ Corporate Services
- ◯ Active and Healthy Communities
- ◯ Sustainability and the Environment
- ◯ Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism
- ◯ CEOs Office

6. **Department/Section** *

Enter your answer

7. **Date of Appointment to current position** *

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

8. **Date of Appointment to Council (if different)** *

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

9. **Company interests –** any relations with a company or commercial organisation; Directorships, paid employment, consultancy, close family connection. **Please include dates and role or N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

10. **Self employment. Please include dates and role or N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

11. **Land or Property Holdings –** (see Appendix 2 of Conflict of Interest Procedure). **Please include N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

12. **Charities -** trusteeships, governorships or employment with any charities or voluntary organisations. **Please include dates and role or N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

13. **Public Appointments –** remunerated or unremunerated. **Please include dates and role or N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

14. **Memberships –** including membership of professional or external bodies, trade or other associations **Please include N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

15. **Close Family Links –** Specific close family interest in any of the above. **Please include N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

16. **Other Interests –** any other interests held by you or your close family. **Please include N/A if not applicable.** *

Enter your answer

17. **I confirm that the above declaration is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. The interests I have declared include both direct and indirect interests (i.e. those of a partner, spouse or close relative) and any specific financial interests are shown.** *

○ Yes

Submit

Recognising a Conflict of Interest[3]

Checklist for Employees

Do you think you have an actual, perceived or potential conflict of Interest?

The following questions may help when assessing an issue or considering the situation in which you are involved.

- ☐ Would I, or anyone associated with me, benefit from, or be detrimentally affected by my proposed decisions or action?
- ☐ Could there be benefits for me in the future that could cast doubt on my objectivity?
- ☐ Do I have a current or previous personal, professional or financial relationship or association of any significance with an interested party?
- ☐ Would my reputation or that of a relative, friend or associate stand to be enhanced or damaged because of the proposed decision or action?
- ☐ Do I or a relative, friend or associate stand to gain or lose financially in some covert or unexpected way?
- ☐ Do I hold any personal or professional views or biases that my lead others to reasonably conclude that I am not an appropriate person to deal with the matter?
- ☐ Have I contributed in a private capacity in any way to the matter my organisation is dealing with?
- ☐ Have I made any promises or commitments in relation to the matter?
- ☐ Have I received a substantial gift, benefit or hospitality from someone who stands to gain or lose from my proposed decision or action?
- ☐ Am I a member of an association, club or professional organisation or do I have particular ties and affiliations with organisations or individuals who stand to gain or lose by my proposed decision or action?
- ☐ Could this situation have an influence on any future employment opportunities outside my current official duties?
- ☐ Could there be any other benefits or factors that could cast doubt on my objectivity?

If you have ticked yes to any of the above questions you should complete and return a Declaration of Interest Form or, alternatively, seek further advice from the Head of Compliance

[3] Page 8:- https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/files/niauditoffice/media-files/conflicts_of_interest_good_practice_guide.pdf

Options for managing Conflicts of Interest[4]

Management Strategy	When most suitable	When least suitable
Register Where details of the existence of a possible or potential conflict of interest are formally registered.	For very low-risk and potential conflict of interest. Where the act of transparency through recording the conflict of interest is sufficient.	The conflict of interest is more significant or higher risk. The potential or perceived effects of a conflict of interest on the proper performance of the Council Staff/Elected member's duties require more proactive management.
Restrict Where restrictions are placed on the Council Staff/Elected Member's involvement in the matter.	The Council Staff/Elected member can be effectively separated from parts of the activity or process. The conflict of interest is not likely to arise frequently.	The conflict is likely to arise more frequently. The Council staff/Elected member is constantly unable to perform a number of their regular duties because of conflict of interest issues.
Recruit Where a disinterested third party is used to oversee part or all of the process that deals with the matter.	It is not feasible or desirable for the Council Staff/Elected member to remove themselves from the decision-making process. In small isolated communities where the particular expertise of the Council Staff/Elected member is necessary and genuinely not easily replaced.	The conflict is serious and on-going, rendering ad hoc recruitment of others unworkable. Recruitment of a third party is not appropriate for the proper handling of the matter. A suitable third party is unable to be sourced.
Remove Where a member of Council Staff/Elected member chooses to be removed from the matter.	For on-going serious conflicts of interest where ad hoc restriction or recruitment of others is not appropriate.	The conflict of interest and its perceived or potential effects are of low risk or low significance. The Council staff/elected member is prepared to relinquish the relevant private interest rather than radically change their work responsibilities or environment.

[4] Page 23:- https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/files/niauditoffice/media-files/conflicts_of_interest_good_practice_guide.pdf

LIST OF HIGH-RISK POSTS PER DIRECTORATE

ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES		
Director		
Community Engagement	Leisure and Sport	Environmental Health and Well Being
Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director
Administrative Assistant (Programmes Unit)	Head of Indoor Leisure	Head of Environmental Health Commercial
Head of Community Services, Facilities and Events	Head of Outdoor Leisure	Head of Environmental Health Residential
Head of Engagement	Sports Development Manager	Head of Sustainability
Safer Communities Manager	Sports Development Officer (2)	Senior Environmental Health Officer (6)
Project Coordinator (Diversity & Inclusion)	Area Managers (3)	Environmental Health Officer (17)
DEA Coordinator (7)	Leisure Governance Support Officer	Technical Officer (2)
Administrative Assistance (Programmes Unit) (2)	Leisure Business Support Officer	Biodiversity Officer
Head of Programmes	Outdoor Leisure Officer (2)	Sustainability Officer
Project Support Officer (Programmes Unit)	Activity Officer	Home Safety Officer (2)
		Affordable Warmth Surveyors (4)

ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM			
Director			
Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration	Tourism, Culture and Events	Building Control and Licensing	Planning
Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Chief Planning Officer
Head of Regeneration and Business Development	Head of Tourism, Product Development and Visitor Experience	Head of Building Control & Licensing	Principal Planner (2)
Regeneration Business Support and Development Officers (3)	Head of Culture, Arts, Heritage and Events	Senior Building Control Surveyor (3)	Senior Planner (5)
Finance and Monitoring Officer	Tourism Facilities Development Manager	Senior Licensing Officer	Planning Officer (15)
Project Officer (Rural Development) (2)	Events Supervisor	Licensing Officer (4)	Planning Assistant (13)
Project Coordinator	Events Officer (2)	Building Control Surveyor (12)	
	Digital Marketing Officer	Business Support Licensing Officer (2)	
	Product Development & Trade Engagement Officer	Car Park Manager	
	Assistant Curator (2)		
	Arts Manager		
	Arts Officer (2)		
	Heritage Services Manager		
	Visitor Services Manager		
	Heritage Officer		
	Assistant Tourism Development Officer		

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT	
Director	
Waste Management	Facilities and Maintenance
Assistant Director	Assistant Director
Head of Refuse and Cleansing	Head of Facilities Management
Head of Waste Processing, Enforcement and Business Support	Head of Maintenance
Garage Manager (West)	Grounds Maintenance Manager
Garage Manager (East)	Building Maintenance Manager
Waste Facilities and Enforcements Manager	Building Maintenance Supervisor (Newry)
Assistance Waste Management and Recycling Officer	Building Maintenance Supervisor (Downpatrick)
Business Support Manager (2)	Facilities Coordinator (West)
Enforcement Officer (4)	Facilities Coordinator (East)
Performance and Operations Manager	Grounds Maintenance Supervisor (Newry/South Down)
Head of Fleet Management	Grounds Maintenance Supervisor (Downpatrick/Castlewellan)
District (Dog) Warden (4)	Grounds Maintenance Supervisor (Newry/South Armagh)

CORPORATE SERVICES					
Director					
Administration	HR & Safeguarding	Corporate Planning & Policy	IT	Finance	Capital & Estates
Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Manager	Assistant Director	Assistant Director
Head of Administration and Customer Services	HR Business Support Manager	Head of Communications and Marketing		Finance Manager	Head of Capital Projects
Head of Legal Administration	HR Operations Manager	Head of Corporate Policy		Finance Supervisor	Head of Estates and Property Assets
Head of Compliance	Learning & Development Manager	Senior Communications and Marketing Officer		Management Accountant (2)	Capital Projects Manager (4)
Land Management Officer	HR & OD Manager	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer		Payroll Manager	
Records Manager	HR Administrative Assistant (8)	Communications and Marketing Officers (2)		Accounting Technician (2)	
Legal Advisor	HR Business Partner (8)	Irish Language Unit Manager		Payroll Supervisor	
Information Officer (2)				Procurement Manager	
				Finance Assistant (4)	
				Payroll Officer (7)	
				Procurement Officer (3)	

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT
Chief Executive
Head of Evidence and Research
Democratic Services Manager

Report to:	Strategy Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director of Finance and Performance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catherine Hughes – Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	**X**	**For noting only**	

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The purpose of this report is to recommend the final version of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24. This plan is supported by the Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24 and Delivery Plans which have been developed for each Performance Improvement Objective 2023-24.
1.2	Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Each financial year, Councils are required to set performance improvement objectives for the services they provide. The guidance states that performance improvement is more than quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or in the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement should focus on activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for communities.
1.3	The Performance Improvement Plan is a key strategic document which drives all improvement activity across the organisation. It features within the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and is directly aligned to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council is required to publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2023. At the beginning of this month however, written confirmation received from the Department for Communities advised that they would move the suggested publication date as set out in paragraph 45 of the guidance to the 30 September 2023. The Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 is attached at **Appendix 1**, and includes the following information: • Performance improvement objectives 2023-24 • Statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management • Self imposed performance indicators, as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23
	Public Consultation and Engagement 2023-24

2.2	The development of the performance improvement objectives 2023-24 is based on a robust and reliable evidence base which includes: • 764 responses to the Residents Survey (September 2022) • 581 individuals engaged in the consultation on COVID-19 and the draft Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020) This was supplemented by an eight week public consultation and engagement process around the proposed performance improvement objectives 2023-24, which took place between 20 March – 15 May 2023 and consisted of the following elements: • 123 responses to the survey on the draft performance improvement objectives, published through the Speak NMD platform • Engagement with 27 stakeholders through Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice, Newry and Mourne Senior Forum and the Cedar Foundation Overall, the feedback from the consultation and engagement process revealed widespread support for the proposed performance improvement objectives, as outlined in **Appendix 2**.
	Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24
2.4	Delivery plans for each performance improvement objective have been developed, as outlined in **Appendix 3**. They seek to demonstrate how the Council will manage the effective delivery of each objective, in terms of resources, risk management and governance arrangements. These plans are a 'work in progress' and will be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis to support the delivery of each performance improvement objective.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	To consider and agree • The Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 (including the five performance improvement objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24 and Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24. • That the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 is published following full Council ratification in July 2023.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	There are no financial resource implications within this report.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒

5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☒ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☒
	Rationale: At the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meeting in March 2023, it was agreed to implement an eight week consultation and engagement process, in order to meet the statutory deadline of 30 June 2023 for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan.
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☒
7.0	**Appendices**
	• **Appendix 1 –** Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 • **Appendix 2** – Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24 • **Appendix 3 –** Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24
8.0	**Background Documents**
	Performance Improvement Plans 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23

Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24

Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Contents

	page
Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Our District, Our Organisation, Our Performance	5
Performance Improvement Objective 1 We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	6
Performance Improvement Objective 2 We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	8
Performance Improvement Objective 3 We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	11
Performance Improvement Objective 4 We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change	13
Performance Improvement Objective 5 We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	15
Strategic Alignment	17
Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards	18
Self Imposed Performance Indicators	19
Identifying the Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24	21
Achieving Continuous Improvement	28
Business Planning and Performance Management Framework	29
Governance Arrangements	32
How to propose new Performance Improvement Objectives	33



An Cathaoirleach
Chairperson
Councillor Valerie Harte



An
Príomhfheidhmeannach
Chief Executive
Marie Ward

Foreword

Welcome to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24. Given all the change and uncertainty that is taking place and having listened to our communities, we are delighted to include two new/amended objectives to this year's plan which we feel will benefit both our people and place. As we continued to focus on recovery and look towards returning to, and improving upon pre-pandemic levels, we can look back and be proud of our achievements.

The Council worked tirelessly to deliver essential services and implement the performance improvement objectives. Our residents and visitors continued to embrace their health and wellbeing with nearly 720,000 paid attendances at our leisure centres and over 225,00 recorded visits at our 10 community trails across the district. We supported 39 community clean ups and issued 110 fixed penalty notices to address environmental crime than in the district.

Through our economic development programmes, we supported 423 local businesses and social enterprises and helped to create 235 local jobs. We improved the processing times of local planning applications, and we hope to achieve further improvements with the embedding of the new electronic planning system which was launched at the end of last year.

However, whilst much has been achieved, there is still more to do to make Newry, Mourne and Down a great place to live, work, visit and invest in. Through this year's performance improvement objectives, we will continue to focus on what matters most to you - improving the quality of our leisure facilities and services, growing the local economy, improving the cleanliness of our District, improving our sustainability and reducing our impacts in relation to climate change and improving the performance of our Planning Service.

We remain confident that the Council will continue to improve the quality of life for all local communities and build a District we can all be proud of.

Introduction

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all district councils must put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. The Council is required to set annual improvement objectives for the services it provides and to have in place arrangements to achieve these objectives. The Council recognises 'improvement' to mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities.

The performance improvement objectives do not describe every improvement the Council plans to make during 2023-24. Alternatively, they provide an overview of how the Council will address the issues which matter most to local communities. The Performance Improvement Plan outlines the Council's objectives for improvement, how performance will be measured and what positive outcomes stakeholders can expect as a result of improvement activity. It represents the Council's commitment to achieving continuous improvement in the delivery of key services.

Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

1. **We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services**
2. **We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs**
3. **We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents**
4. **We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change**
5. **We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme**

These objectives have been developed within the context of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. They are:

✓	Linked to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans
✓	Based on a robust and reliable evidence base, including performance trends
✓	Aligned to the seven strategic aspects of improvement
✓	Legitimate, clear, robust, deliverable and demonstrable

Our District, Our Organisation, Our Performance



District

Population: 181,669

Households: 87,735

7 District Electoral Areas

41 Elected Members

1,000+ employees

87% of residents are satisfied with the Council



Community

Life expectancy:
Male: 79.3 years /
Female: 83.2 years

Age Profile: 0-15 years: 23% / 65+ years: 16%

72% of residents agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together

94% of residents feel safe during the day, 87% of residents feel safe after dark

117 Neighbourhood Watch Schemes

18,407 food parcels delivered to vulnerable households

£8.3m awarded through the Financial Assistance Scheme since 2013



Tourism

Between 2018 and 2019:

15% increase in visitor numbers, to 536,281

21% increase in visitor spend, to £83.7m

Three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

5 'green flag' parks and 3 'blue flag' beaches



Health and Wellbeing

74% of residents feel they are in very good or good health

78% of residents are physically active at least once a week for 30mins

73.5% of customers are satisfied with the Council's six leisure facilities

200k recorded visits at community trails

1.5mn recorded visits at Killbroney and Slieve Gullion Forest Parks



Economy

Employment rate: 74.8%

9,045 VAT Registered Businesses

11.1% of the population aged 16-64 years have no qualifications

215 new jobs promoted through business start activity

408 businesses supported and 4,589 mentoring hours delivered through economic development programmes



Environment

Recycling is important to 84% of residents

Top perceived problem for residents: Dog mess and fouling

Recycling rate: 49.1%

121 community clean ups supported since 2018

Second lowest level of waste to landfill across all NI Councils



Back to Agenda

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services

Why this matters

You told us that:

- One of the top priorities for improving your local area was 'Improving people's health and wellbeing (and reducing health inequalities)
- 17% of our residents are not active for a single day each week.
- The third most important health and wellbeing opportunity you would like to see more of was 'physical activity opportunities such as leisure centres, gyms and sports facilities'
- Between 2018 and 2022 there has been an increase in the number of residents dissatisfied with the leisure centres across the District.

We know that keeping fit and active can help improve a person's health and wellbeing both physically and mentally. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council plays a key role in helping local communities to live long and healthy lives. The Council remains committed to promoting physical, mental and emotional well-being and encouraging residents to make healthy and informed lifestyle choices and as part of this we need to always be striving to improve our leisure facilities and offerings.

Looking Back: What we did in 2022-23

☺	720,000 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities
☺	Recorded 225,795 recorded visits across a total of 10 community trails.
☺	9,534 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities
☺	Progressed a number of new build and/or upgraded capital projects
☺	9,306 people participating in targeted health programmes

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24

- Increase the number of paid attendances at indoor leisure facilities through the Covid-19 recovery plan.
- Continue to progress and implement the review of Leisure Services.
- Deliver a range of targeted health programmes to encourage participation in physical activity.
- Delivered a number of seasonal youth health and wellbeing initiatives to encourage participation in physical activity.
- Progress the leisure projects agreed within the Capital Programme
- Maintain the number of recorded visits to Community Trails.
- Implement a 'Mystery Visitor' Programme for indoor leisure.

How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Number of paid attendances recorded at:						
Newry Leisure Centre	864,190	27,253	183,224	307,153	△	750,000
Down Leisure Centre	377,842	30,199	177,496	246,978	△	
Kilkeel Leisure Centre	40,219	10,367	66,987	69,797	△	
St. Colmans Sports Complex	37,349	2,945	36,717	54,024	△	
Newcastle Centre & Tropicana Outdoor Swimming Complex	284,230	2,778	33,801	25,517	▽	
Ballymote Sports and Wellbeing Centre	38,993	1,754	10,309	15,365	△	
Number of people participating in targeted health programmes	10,793	2,270*	322*	9,309	△	9,400
Number of young people participating in targeted youth health and wellbeing initiatives	New measure			19,365	-	20,000
Number of leisure centre memberships	New Measure			9,534	-	9,750
Number of capital leisure projects progressed	New Measure				-	Not set
Number of recorded visits at community trails	57,849	96,563	211,718	225,795	△	225,000

What you will see by March 2024	• Increase in the number of paid attendances at our six leisure centres to 750,000 by end of 2023-24 • Increase in the number of people participating in targeted health programmes to 9,400 • Increase in the number of young people participating in targeted health and wellbeing initiatives to 20,000. • Increase in the number of memberships being taken out to 9,750. • 225,000 recorded visits to community trails. • A number of new build and/or upgraded capital leisure projects progressed • 'Mystery Visitor' Programme implemented and baseline established
Alignment	
Corporate Plan 2021-23	• Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities • Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities
Community Plan	• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing
Programme for Government	• We all enjoy long, healthy, active lives • People want to live, work and visit here
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness; Service quality; Service Availability; Fairness
Responsible Officer	**Director: Active and Healthy Communities**

* The 'Be Active for Life' programme, which forms part of this measure, was only getting established when Covid-19 occurred and therefore participation rates were restricted.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs

Why this matters

You told us that:

- 'Improving skills, employability and job prospects' was your top priority for improving the local area in the 2022 residents survey
- 'Supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' is in your top three priorities for improvement
- Investment to grow the economy, create jobs and attract tourists is the most important form of investment
- 95% of respondents to our 2022-23 survey agreed with this objective

As we continue to emerge and recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, Newry, Mourne and Down has recorded increases in the number of VAT/PAYE registered businesses, employee jobs and the birth rate of new businesses in the past year. When compared to 2020, the claimant count for unemployment benefit has also reduced but remains above pre-pandemic levels.

Continuing to support the economic recovery of Newry, Mourne and Down remains a key priority for the Council. During 2022-23, the Council awarded approximately £1m to assist local businesses in navigating the impact of the pandemic. Whilst much has been achieved, there is still more to do to rebuild and revitalise the local economy.

For 2023-24 all NI Councils will be supporting businesses and job creation through an Entrepreneurship Support Service. This is to ensure better collaboration across Businesses, Councils and Government Departments. It will also ensure more consistency at a regional level. A funding application has been submitted to the Shared Prosperity Fund with a launch expected in September 2023. Through this Service, the Council will continue to deliver a range of business start-up and growth programmes to help new and established businesses to innovate, grow and expand.

Looking Back: What we did in 2022-23

☺	187 new business starts created and 187 new jobs promoted through business start activity
☺ 😐	12 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 new social enterprise jobs created
☺	347 businesses supported and 467.5 mentoring days delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales Accelerator' programmes.
☺	'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24

- Roll-out the NMD 'Make it Local' campaign to support the revitalisation of our local economy
- Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme

	• Support the growth of existing businesses and creation of new jobs through the Entrepreneurship Support Programme • Support the establishment of new businesses through the Entrepreneurship Support Programme • Continue to create opportunities for employability and skills through implementation of the LMP Action Plan.

How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	10	12	12	12	▷	12
Number of social enterprise jobs created	12	14	13	12-	▷	12
Number of business plans created for start-up businesses and employer enterprises	298	266	358	311	▽	300
Number of jobs promoted via business start-up activity	194	199.5	215	187	▽	155
Number of new businesses & employer enterprises supported to start up	203	181	215	187	▽	190
Number of existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions	198	327	373	347	▽	200

What you will see by March 2024	• 300 business plans created for Start-Up businesses and employer enterprises • 190 new Business / employer enterprises supported to start-up • Support provided to 200 existing businesses to progress growth and scaling ambitions • 155 new jobs promoted via business start-up activity. • 12 social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 social enterprise jobs created • More support for new and established local businesses and more employment opportunities across the District • The economic recovery of Newry, Mourne and Down is underway, as the District becomes more economically active and prosperous
Alignment	
Corporate Plan 2021-23	• Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills
Community Plan	• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities
Programme for Government	• Everyone can reach their potential • Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral • People want to live, work and visit here

7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service availability	Innovation
Responsible Officer	**Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism**			

*Updated 'Go for It' programme target for the number of jobs promoted in Newry Mourne and Down: 173. An amendment to the standard set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 is awaiting legislative passage and approval.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents

Why this matters

You told us that:

- Dog mess and dog fouling and rubbish or litter lying around are your top two perceived problems in your local area
- 6% of the residents surveyed were dissatisfied with the cleansing service provided by the Council, which was the third highest level of dissatisfaction recorded across Council services
- 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure.
- 89% of respondents to our 2022-23 survey agreed with this objective

Since 2019-20, the LEAMS* score for the District has remained at 64, which falls below the current regional average of 66. Issues around street cleanliness continue to escalate largely as a result of the increased number of illicit dumping, littering and dog fouling incidents reported to the Council and the prioritisation of the refuse collection service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to improve the overall cleanliness of the District, the Council is currently reviewing cleansing operations to design a more effective model of service provision. The Council also remains committed to collaborating with partner organisations and local communities to promote responsible dog ownership, address issues around littering and illicit dumping and generate local pride in having a cleaner, greener District for everyone to enjoy.

Looking Back: What we did in 2022-23

☹	Issued 110 fixed penalty notices, 91 of which were paid
☹	Supported 39 community clean-ups
▽	10 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme
☺	Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out
△	Increase in the rate of recycling, to 50.3%

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24

Address issues around littering, illicit dumping and dog fouling by:

- Continuing to implement the Enforcement Action Plan
- Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns
- Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of littering and illicit dumping along the border area
- Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres
- Supporting local community clean ups
- Implementation of a Paint Re-Use Scheme at 7 Household Recycling Centres throughout the district.

Work in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to:

- Commission surveys to monitor street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots
- Promote the 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns

	• Encourage community groups to 'Adopt a Spot' • Highlight the impact of littering on the marine environment

How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index)	64	64	64	-	▷	65
Number of fixed penalty notices issued	83	52	114	110	☹ ▷	120
Number of fixed penalty notices paid	72	26	101	91	☹ ▽	96
Number of community clean ups supported	94	33	94	39	☹ ▽	100
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	34	24	18	10	▽	No target
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	53.7%	51.9%	49.1%	50.3% (Q1-Q3)	☺ △	50%by 2020 65% by 2030
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	2,131t	2,538t	2,685t	1,782 (Q1-Q3)	☺ △	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20)
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	84,610t	86,900t	87,336t	63,512t (Q1-Q3)	△	No target

What you will see by March 2024	• Increase in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and paid • Responsible dog ownership and reduced levels of dog fouling, littering and illicit dumping • Improved opportunities to report littering, dog fouling and illicit dumping • Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites. • Opportunities to engage in community clean ups and participate in the 'Live Here Love Here' campaign and 'Adopt a Spot' scheme • Landfill and recycling targets are achieved • A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride
Alignment	
Corporate Plan 2021-23	• Enhance, protect and promote our environment
Community Plan	• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment
Programme for Government	• We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness; Service availability; Innovation; Sustainability
Responsible Officer	**Director: Sustainability and Environment / Director: Active and Healthy Communities**

*Local Environmental Auditing Management System is carried out by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.
**The Q1-Q3 2022-23 data for the statutory waste management performance indicators remains provisional and will be finalised when the year-end data is validated and published by DAERA.
***The 2019-20 NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) target has been included as the Council awaits more up to date targets from DAERA.

Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change.

Why this matters

You told us that:

- Managing waste, reducing climate change, investing in renewable energy etc. was important to you.
- Green technology skills were the second most important training support needed to improve the growth of resident employability.
- 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure.

Our climate is changing, and we need to prepare. Greenhouse gas emissions cause the Earth's atmosphere to hold more radiation from the sun which increases the overall temperature of the planet. This change in temperature is altering our climate and causing one of the greatest threats of our time. In October 2019 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' and directed management to effect dramatic short – term changes in every area under its control. The Council also forms part of the Local Government Climate Action Network which is helping to deliver the NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme. This network will enable us to collaborate with other Councils and relevant statutory partners to develop a strategic approach for climate action.

Just before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic the Council hosted a Climate Change Symposium 'Our Climate – Our Challenge in March 2020. This event brought together a range of internationally renowned expert speakers as well as Councils and Community Organisations from across the UK and Ireland who have demonstrated best practice in dealing with climate change. The projects at this event are now being considered for the Council's own Local Climate Adaption Plan.

NMDDC is acutely aware of how intrinsic sustainability and care of our district is to its future. In order to protect our environment, environmental sustainability has become a key objective in the development of our capital projects, providing economic growth for the region in an inclusive and sustainable way. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council aims to embed the ethos of sustainability throughout its operations and to provide leadership for the community.

Looking Back: What we did	☺	Declared a 'Climate Emergency' in October 2019
	☺	Hosted a Climate Change Symposium 'Our Climate – Our Challenge' in March 2020
	☺	Produced and launched a 10 year active travel Masterplan for the District in 2021
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24	Address issues around climate change and sustainability by: • Developing a climate change and sustainable development strategy	

	• Completing the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan • Developing a new biodiversity strategy 2023-28 • Implementing the Council's Tree Strategy • Installing new public drinking water fountains • Supporting the implementation of new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points • Undertaking a baseline assessment of the Council's carbon footprint • Implementing the Council's fleet replacement programme

How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Carbon footprint of Council estate	To be established					
Percentage of Council fleet younger than 8 years	New measure					50%
Number of vehicles within the Council fleet that have an alternative fuel source	New measure					10
Number of trees planted on Council managed estate	New measure					Not set
Number of Council supported EV charging points	New measure					20

What you will see by March 2024	• Development of a climate change and sustainable development strategy • Development of a climate change adaptation plan • Development of the new Newry, Mourne and Down Biodiversity Strategy (2023-2028) • New trees planted • Carbon footprint of Council estate established • 20 new Council supported EV charging points installed • Increase in the percentage of younger, less polluting vehicles within the Council fleet • 10 new electric vehicles ordered for use within the Council fleet. • 5 new public drinking water fountains erected.
Alignment	
Corporate Plan 2021-23	• Enhance, protect and promote our environment
Community Plan	• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment
Programme for Government	• We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness / Efficiency / Innovation / Sustainability
Responsible Officer	**Director: Active and Healthy Communities / Director: Sustainability and Environment**

Performance Improvement Objective 5

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme

Why this matters	Delivering a more efficient and effective Planning Service for customers is a key priority for improvement, for the Council. Planning plays a significant role in promoting sustainable development, regeneration, economic prosperity, investment and job creation for present and future generations of our District. 95% of respondents to our 2022-23 survey also agreed with this objective. The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is well underway with a new planning portal launched in December 2022 allowing customers to submit applications online and track live planning applications. This new system has been accompanied by the expected teething problems however it is operating, and the normal work of the planning department is ongoing. In January 2022, the Council carried out a Customer Satisfaction survey with key stakeholders to understand current perceptions of the service. Feedback from the survey highlights areas where users of the planning service are dissatisfied including with time taken to process applications; availability of officers to discuss applications; and clarity of information and guidance received. Satisfaction was registered however, with reception service; helpfulness of officers; information and guidance received; and expertise and knowledge of planning officers. It is hoped that the implementation of this new system which makes it easier for users to engage with the planning process will assist in improving some of these areas of dissatisfaction. The 2022-23 processing times for planning applications is based on the first two quarters of the year as Q3 data was withdrawn to allow more time to fully develop the data extracts from the new planning portal. The Council has not yet achieved the statutory standards, but we remain committed to delivering further improvements and providing a high-quality service to all customers.	
Looking Back: What we did between April-December 2022	☹	Processed 51.7% of planning enforcement cases within 39 weeks, which is below the regional average of 73.4%
	☹	Average processing time of 18.2 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 15 weeks
	☹	Average processing time of 67.4 weeks for major planning applications, which is below the regional average of 50.0 weeks
	☺	Received 763 local planning applications, which is the highest across Northern Ireland
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24	• Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months • Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted • Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'	

	• Effectively implement the new electronic planning system					
How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	Q1/Q2* 2022-23	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	20.6	19	18.3	18.2	☹ △	<15 weeks
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	94	64.6	49.8	67.4	☹ ▽	<30 weeks
Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks	36.2%	40.9%	46.9%	51.7%	☹ △	70%
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more**	183	187	187	228	▽	150
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less**	685	788	825	793	△	700
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more**	620	551	486	483	△	450
What you will see by March 2024	• A more efficient and effective planning service • Improved processing times for local and major planning applications • Improved processing times for planning enforcement cases • Reduction in the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system • An empowered and motivated workforce • Increased confidence in the Planning system • Sustainable development and regeneration of the District					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	• Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement					
Community Plan	• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities					
Programme for Government	• People want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Service quality	Efficiency		
Responsible Officer	**Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism**					

*The statistics due to be published for Q3 in March were withdrawn to allow more time to fully develop the data extracts from the new planning portal. Annual planning figures will be validated by the Department for Infrastructure and published through the Annual Report 2022-23.
**The 2023-24 targets have been carried forward from 2022-23.

Strategic Alignment

Performance Improvement Objective	Corporate Objective(s)	Community Planning Outcome(s)	Duty of Improvement
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Service availability Fairness
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Service availability Innovation
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Innovation Sustainability
We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Strategic Effectivness Efficiency Innovation Sustainability
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Service quality Efficiency

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

Section 89 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the Council to publish the results of the performance indicators and standards that are set by central government around economic development, planning and waste management.

The seven statutory performance indicators and standards, as outlined in the Local Government Performance Indicators and Standards Order (2015), are set out below:

Ref	Statutory Performance Indicator	Annual Standard
Economic Development		
ED1	The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity	>155 173* (updated target)
Planning		
P1	The average processing time of major planning applications	<30 weeks
P2	The average processing time of local planning applications	<15 weeks
P3	The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks	70%
Waste Management		
W1	The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)	50% by 2020
W2	The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20 target)
W3	The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	85,500 tonnes

*Updated 'Go for It' programme target for the number of jobs promoted in Newry Mourne and Down: 173. An amendment to the standard set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 is awaiting legislative passage and approval.

The Council has put in place the following arrangements to monitor progress against the standards set for the statutory performance and indicators:

- Inclusion within the Performance Improvement Plan, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.
- Inclusion within Directorate Business Plans, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the relevant Council Committee.
- Data submissions to Government Departments, with reports being issued to monitor the performance of each Council, outlining regional trends and comparisons.

Self Imposed Performance Indicators

The Council has identified the following self imposed performance indicators to measure progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2021-23.

Corporate Objective	Measure of Success
Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	Number of jobs created and businesses supported through Council programmes
	Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity
	Amount of investment secured by Council
Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities	Number of people participating in targeted health programmes
	Attendance at free play sessions
	Number of attendances at Council indoor leisure facilities
Enhance, protect and promote our environment	Level of street cleanliness across the District (Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Street Cleanliness Index)
	65% of municipal waste recycled by 2030
	Level of compliance with Sustainable Development Duty
Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage	Increased visitor spend
	Increased overnights stays
	Increased visitor satisfaction
Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities	Percentage of residents who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
	Percentage of residents who agree that the Council consults with and listens to the views of local people
	Percentage of residents who feel they can have a say on how services are delivered in their local area
	Number and percentage of financial assistance projects funded and successfully delivered
Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities	Progress against key Belfast City Region Deal projects
	Number of public realm schemes delivered
	Increased business growth and employment
Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	Increased citizen satisfaction
	Compliance with the Duty of Improvement

Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District	Compliance with the Duty of Community Planning / monitor delivery of outcomes with partners
	Percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

The Council has put in place the following arrangements to monitor progress against the self imposed performance indicators:

- Inclusion within the Performance Improvement Plan, with progress being monitored by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee through the annual Assessment of Performance.
- Some performance indicators are included within Directorate Business Plans, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the relevant Council Committee.

These performance indicators are aligned to community planning outcomes. This will ensure the Council continues to address the needs and aspirations of local communities and deliver sustainable outcomes for all, now and in the future.

Identifying the Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

Three of the performance improvement objectives 2023-24 have been carried forward from 2022-23, as they remain relevant and meaningful. One of the objectives has been amended to reflect improvements achieved and where improvements are now required while another has seen significant progress and is deemed to have been delivered and has therefore been replaced. They have been developed, reviewed and updated in close liaison with Elected Members, Senior Management Team, Corporate Management Team and employees across the organisation. Each objective is underpinned by a suite of 'supporting actions', 'measures of success' and outcomes for stakeholders. They are clearly aligned to the Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2021-23, as well as other regional and local plans, particularly the Council's Business Plans which have been developed by each Directorate. These plans influence and guide the overall direction of travel for the organisation.

- Draft Programme for Government
- Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down 2017-2030, Priority Actions Areas and District Electoral Area (DEA) Action Plans
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-23
- Thematic plans and strategies, including the IT Strategy and Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy
- Annual Directorate Business Plans 2023-24

The Council has also taken into consideration performance information from the following sources to support the development of the performance improvement objectives:

- The Northern Ireland Audit Office Audit and Assessment Reports and 'proposals for improvement', which are currently being progressed
- The Assessment of Performance 2021-22, including progress against performance improvement objectives, measures of success within the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management.

The reasons for objectives being carried forward, changing focus or being a new addition are detailed in the table below:

PIO's -2022-23	PIO's 2023-24	Progress / Rationale	Status Proposed
PIO 1: We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces	**PIO 1:** We will improve the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	• The number of recorded visits to the Council's forest parks, municipal park and community trails has been increasing year on year, with visitor numbers to the forest parks also reported through DAERA. • In the 2022 Residents Survey the number of residents advising that they have visited Council's parks and open spaces within the last 12 months increased by 11% to 41% compared to the previous residents survey carried out in 2018. • 32% of residents said they had used the leisure centres in the past 12 months which was a decrease of 9% compared to the 2018 result, • We have achieved the highest number of green and blue flags available for the District, • The Council's play strategy is now complete. • Physical activity opportunities such as leisure centres, gyms and sports facilities were ranked of higher importance by the public than access to outdoor spaces such as parks, forests, beaches and community trails for the health and wellbeing opportunities residents want to see more of. • An increase in residents' dissatisfaction with leisure centres between 2018 and 2022.	**Amend** The PIO 1 2022-23 to be amended for 2023-24 to reflect the performance improvement needs of the Council.

PIO 2: We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	**PIO 2:** We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	During 2022-23 progress was made against a number of key actions under this objective including: • Exceeding the targets set for the NI 'Go For It' Programme. • Supporting local businesses and creating new jobs through the Council's economic development programmes. • Exceeding all targets set through the Social Economy programme. However, there is still improvements to be made and the 2022 residents survey ranked 'improving skills, employability, and job prospects' and 'supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' as the 1st and 3rd highest priorities for improving the local area.	**Retain** This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2023-24.
PIO 3: We will improve the cleanliness of our district by addressing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling incidents	**PIO 3:** We will improve the cleanliness of our district by addressing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling incidents	During 2022-23 progress was made against a number of key actions under this objective including: • Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity campaigns and dog licences • Working with neighbouring County Council's on the border to raise awareness of the impact of fly-tipping along the border area. • Supporting community clean ups. However, improvement is still needed. While our recycling rate is above the 2020 target of 50%, we are still a long way off the 65% target set for 2030. Also, the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill has been increasing.	**Retain** This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2023-24

		The 2022 residents survey ranked 'dog mess and fouling' and rubbish or littering lying around' as the top two perceived problems in their local areas by residents.	
PIO 4: We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financia Assistance Scheme		The financial assistance scheme has awarded over £8M since 2015 to local communities for numerous projects and events with a 70% success rate of awarded funding. It is unlikely that this success rate will rise in any significant way as demand will almost always outweigh supply for funding. A survey carried out by the unit that runs the Financial Assistance Scheme revealed that 98% of applicants were happy with the support they received from the Programmes Unit. Targets have been exceeded for the number of participants taking part in capacity building sessions and the number of beneficiaries from the projects/events funded by the scheme.	**Remove** This performance improvement objective has been achieved
	PIO 4: We will improve our sustainability by reducing our impacts in relation to climate change	In both the 2021 -22 and 2022-23 consultation on the performance improvement objectives, climate change and sustainability has been consistently raised by respondents as a priority area for the Council. Managing waste, reducing climate change, investing in renewable energy etc was important to you. Green technology skills were the second most important training support needed to improve the growth of resident employability. 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure.	**New**
PIO 5:	**PIO 5:**	During 2022-23 progress continued to be made against a number of key actions including:	**Retain**

Back to Agenda

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme.	We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	• Working with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted. • Implementation of the new electronic planning system. However, much improvement is still required as the statutory standards for the average processing times of major and local planning applications and enforcement cases is still not being met and has increased in some instances.	This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2023-24

Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down

The Community Plan has been developed and agreed by the Community Planning Partnership Board. Entitled 'Living Well Together', the Community Plan provides a framework for collaborative working to deliver positive change for our communities, and sets out the following long term overarching vision for the District:

'Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs'.

The Community Plan sets out the following five positive outcomes:



Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-23

The Corporate Plan 2021-23 sets out the following mission statement and eight strategic objectives:

Council Mission Statement

'To support and advocate for a welcoming District which is progressive, healthy and sustainable, providing better economic, environmental and social outcomes for all'

Council Strategic Objectives

 **Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills** We will facilitate investment by new and growing businesses while contributing to the further development of workforce skills to retain existing and attract new industries.	 **Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities** We will help to reduce health inequalities and improve the quality of life for all by contributing fully to programmes, services, facilities and amenities.
 **Enhance, protect and promote our environment** We will contribute to tackling climate breakdown and reducing harmful impacts on the environment while enabling residents and visitors to enjoy our rich natural and built heritage.	 **Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage** We will support and advocate for increased investment and development in tourism which promotes our unique assets and increases visitor satisfaction and spend.
 **Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities** We will encourage people to play an active part in civic life in all its forms and develop the capacity of communities, particularly those in greatest need, to attract the right support to address needs and sustain valued projects and facilities	 **Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities** We will work with residents, businesses and our partners in regeneration to further develop desirable places to live, work, invest in and visit across the District.
	

Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District
We will build a high performing Council, fit for the future, that delivers efficient and effective services for the benefit of all	We will lobby and campaign with government and others to attract investment, develop modern infrastructure across the District, address needs and improve the quality of life for all.

Alignment with the Strategic Aspects of Improvement

In accordance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, each performance improvement objective seeks to bring about improvement in at least one of the following aspects:

- Strategic effectiveness
- Service quality
- Service availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

The table below outlines how Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's performance improvement objectives 2023-24 are aligned with the seven specified aspects of improvement:

Performance Improvement Objective	Seven Aspects of Improvement						
	Strategic Effectiveness	Service Quality	Service Availability	Fairness	Sustainability	Efficiency	Innovation
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	✓	✓	✓	✓			
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	✓	✓	✓				✓
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by reducing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling	✓		✓		✓		✓
We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change	✓				✓	✓	✓
We will improve the average processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the recommendations from the Planning Service Review	✓	✓	✓			✓	

The Council has also assessed the performance improvement objectives against the following criteria, and considers them to be:

- Legitimate
- Clear
- Robust
- Deliverable
- Demonstrable

Equality Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment

In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), whereby the Council must carry out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations, the Performance Improvement Plan has been subject to an equality screening. The outcome of the equality screening process determined that the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 is not subject to an equality impact assessment, with no mitigating measures required.

In accordance with the Rural Needs Act Northern Ireland (2016), the Council has given due regard to rural needs by carrying out a Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.

Consultation and Engagement

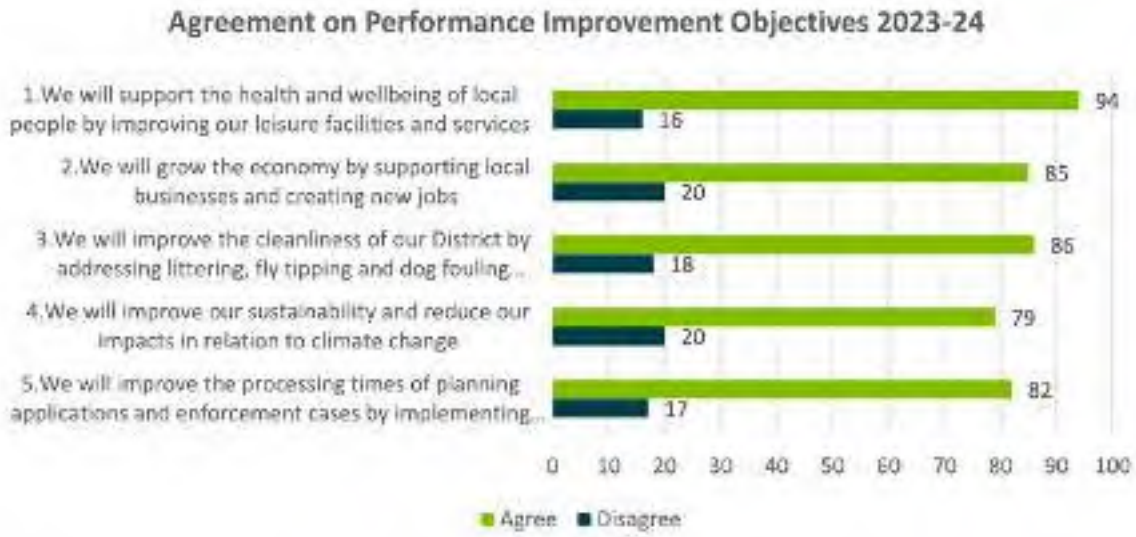
The Council is committed to listening to local people and taking on board their views. Since 2017, the Council has carried out extensive consultation and engagement, inviting key stakeholders, including Elected Members, residents, local businesses and community planning partners to put forward their views on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

This year, the Council used the Speak NMD platform to host the consultation and engagement process. As a dedicated online space, which is facilitated through the Newry, Mourne and Down Community Planning Partnership, Speak NMD enables residents to participate in local consultation and engagement activities and have their say on the issues and decisions which have an impact on their local area. Through Speak NMD, an electronic survey in relation to the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24 was published and promoted. The consultation and engagement process was promoted further through the Council's website and social media channels and circulated to key internal and external stakeholders.

The overall consultation and engagement process resulted in 123 completed surveys and engagement with 27 stakeholders through Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice, Newry and Mourne Senior Forum and the Cedar Foundation. This response has been supplemented by the input of 1,345 respondents to the consultation on COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan in 2020 and Residents Survey in 2022.

Electronic documentation, survey on the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24 on the Speak NMD platform.	Survey: 123 responses
Engagement with the: • Section 75 groups, including the Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice, Newry and Mourne Senior Forum and Cedar Foundation	27 consultees
Electronic survey and focus groups on the impact of COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020)	560 respondents to survey 21 participants in focus groups
Residents Survey (September 2022)	764 respondents

The consultation responses revealed widespread support for the proposed performance improvement objectives, with the majority of respondents agreeing with each of the five objectives.



The areas for improvement and issues raised through the overall consultation and engagement processes are clearly aligned to the five performance improvement objectives 2023-24, and will be addressed through the Performance Improvement Plan, and as part of the Council's business planning process.

Achieving Continuous Improvement

Transforming and improving how the Council delivers services is a key objective within the Corporate Plan. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to developing a 'can do' culture, where managing performance and achieving improvement is everyone's responsibility. In pursuing the corporate vision and objectives, the Council has identified the following three core values:

We will be:	What this means:
Accountable	We will be accountable for hoe we plan for and use resources sustainably
Collaborative	We will work in partnership with others
Transparent	We will be transparent in how we make decisions

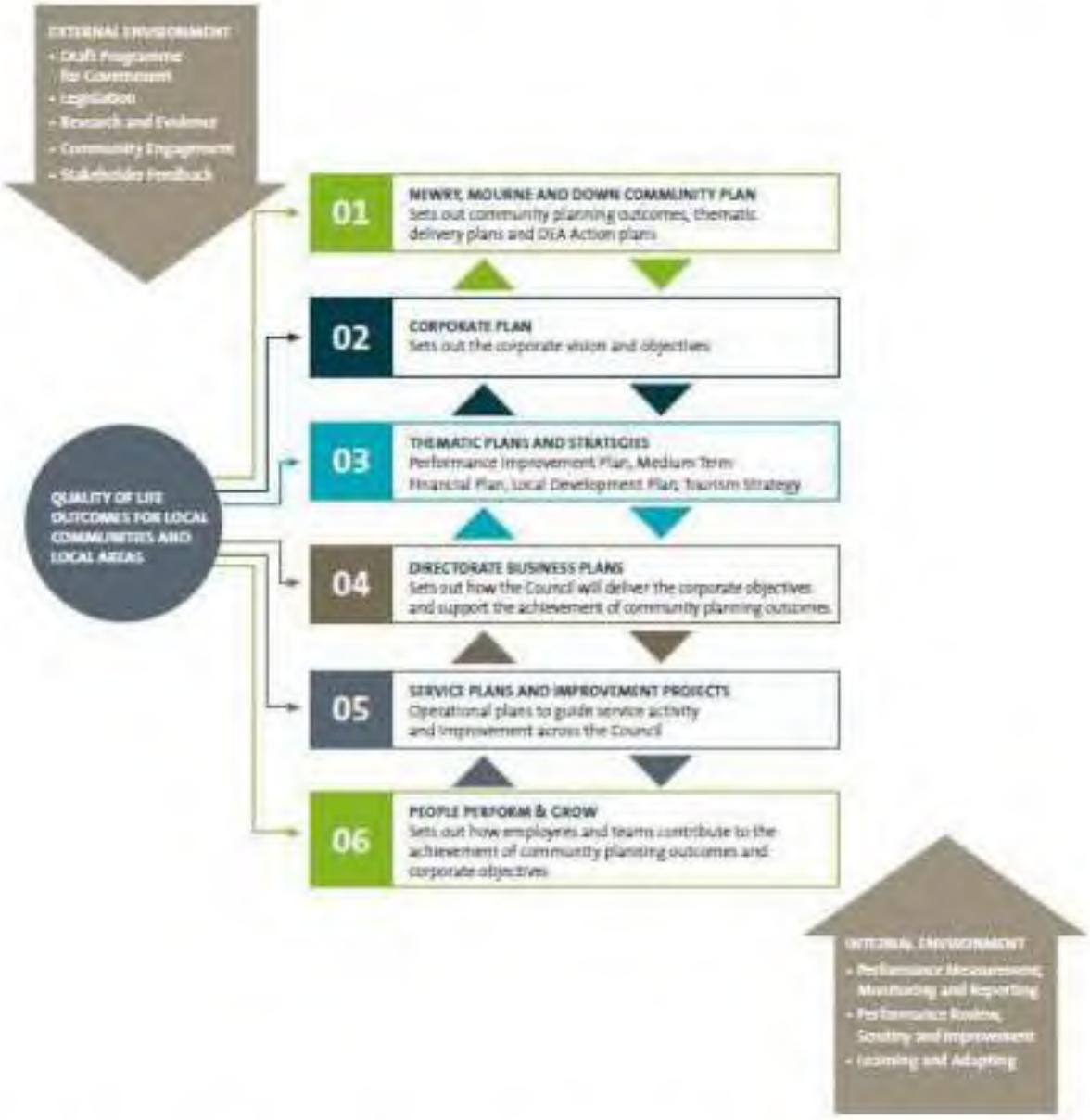
The Council has put in place a number of frameworks and systems to drive forward continuous improvement and facilitate a performance improvement culture. These include the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, Policy Development Framework, Equality Scheme, Governance Framework and Risk Management Policy.

The Council also assesses how performance compares with other Councils. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is working with the Association of Public Service Excellence to benchmark performance against the performance of Councils across Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions. This information is being used to collate a robust and reliable evidence base, to help identify and address future areas for improvement.

The Performance Improvement Plan underpins the Council's overall approach to effective performance management. It supports the Council in identifying more efficient and effective ways of working to facilitate the achievement of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and Directorate objectives, which together support the continued implementation of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework.

Business Planning and Performance Management Framework

The Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives are being delivered, with the primary goal of making life better for our citizens.



The Community Plan and Corporate Plan sit within a hierarchy of plans that informs the Council's overall direction of travel and guides all activity within the organisation. Community planning outcomes and corporate objectives are cascaded across the organisation through thematic plans and strategies and Directorate Business Plans. Performance indicators continue to be developed at all levels across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, in order to ensure performance is measured, monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis.

During 2023-24, the Council will continue to progress and mainstream the development, implementation and review of Service Plans and roll out of Individual Performance (People

Perform Grow), both of which seek to demonstrate the 'line of sight' between the work of employees and how they contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes and corporate objectives.

Through the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, the Council will manage performance at all levels across the organisation, in order to ensure the necessary steps are taken to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. Each level of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework is, and will be, accompanied by a relevant set of performance measures to monitor and assess the Council's progress in improving the quality of life for local communities.

The table below provides a description of the various plans and strategies that form part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework.

Community Plan	The Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down sets out the long-term vision for improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the District. Developed in collaboration with partners across the statutory, business and voluntary sectors, the Community Plan is underpinned by Priority Actions Areas and seven DEA Action Plans, which seek to deliver the five community planning outcomes at a local level. Progress in implementing the Community Plan is reviewed on a biennial basis.
Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan 2021-23 sets out the vision, values and strategic objectives for the Council. Each strategic objective is underpinned by 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success'. Progress in delivering the Corporate Plan is reported annually through the Assessment of Performance.
Thematic Plans and Strategies	The Council has put in place a number of Thematic Plans and Strategies to support the implementation of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan, including the Performance Improvement Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan and Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy. These plans provide the strategic context for multiple programmes of work across the organisation.
Directorate Business Plans	Business Plans are developed annually to demonstrate how Directorates contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives. Directorate Business Plans include suites of key performance measures to measure progress and drive continuous improvement, with performance being monitored and reviewed bi-annually by the relevant Committee.
Service Plans and Improvement Projects	Service Plans and Improvement Projects are operational and set out the direction for service areas across the Council. They outline how each service contributes to the delivery of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives, include key performance measures and provide a mechanism to manage performance consistently across the organisation.
People Perform Grow	The Council recognises the significant role employees play in contributing to the achievement of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Thematic

	Plans and Strategies, Directorate Business Plans and Service Plans. People Perform Grow demonstrates the link between the work of employees and how they contribute to the achievement of key plans and strategies, as well as the outcomes experienced by local communities.

The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework is complemented by the integrated cycle of activity outlined in the diagram below.

Governance Arrangements

Reviewing performance and reporting progress to Elected Members and other key stakeholders is very important, as it facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The governance arrangements to develop, monitor, report and review the Council's progress in implementing the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 are outlined below:



The Council must publish an Assessment of Performance by 30 September 2023 which will provide an overview of how the Council has performed during 2022-23. The Assessment of Performance will be published on the Council's website and is supplemented by the Mid Year Progress Report for the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.

The arrangements the Council has put in place to secure continuous improvement are subject to an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. Subject to the General Duty of Improvement being met, the Northern Ireland Audit Office will issue a Letter of Assurance to both the Council and Department for Communities.

How to Propose New Performance Improvement Objectives

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council welcomes your ongoing feedback on the performance improvement objectives 2023-24, as well as any suggestions you may have on how services can be improved in the future.

The Council can be contacted in the following ways:

In writing: Catherine Hughes
Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting)
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry
Co Down
BT35 8DJ

Telephone: 0300 013 2233

Email: performance@nmandd.org

Ag freastal ar an Dún
agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down
and South Armagh

0330 137 4000 (Council)
council@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

Oifig an Iúir
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road
Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation and Engagement Report on the Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Introduction

The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement, whereby all District Councils must put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions and set performance improvement objectives for each financial year. Each Council also has a statutory duty to consult key stakeholders on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

The five draft performance improvement objectives were considered and approved by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in March 2023. This was followed by an extensive consultation and engagement process which encouraged key stakeholders, including residents, Elected Members and partner organisations to have their say on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

This report provides an overview of the consultation and engagement methodology and an analysis of the responses which were received.

Consultation and Engagement Activity

Between 20 March–15 May 2023, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council carried out an eight week consultation and engagement process with key stakeholders on the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24, through the following mechanisms:

- Electronic survey and documentation on the Speak NMD platform, which was promoted through the Council's website and social media channels
- Public Notices in local newspapers
- Engagement with the following stakeholders:

    - Newry and Mourne and Down Youth Voice
    - Cedar Foundation
    - Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

This process was further supplemented by the consultation and engagement which was carried out to support the development of the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23:

- Residents Survey (September 2022)
- Consultation and engagement on the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and impact of COVID-19 (September 2020)
- Consultation and engagement on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23

Analysis Methodology

A total of 123 surveys were received in response to the consultation and engagement on the Council's draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the draft performance improvement objectives and if they had any comments to make regarding each objective. Respondents were also asked to put forward their suggested priorities for future improvement.

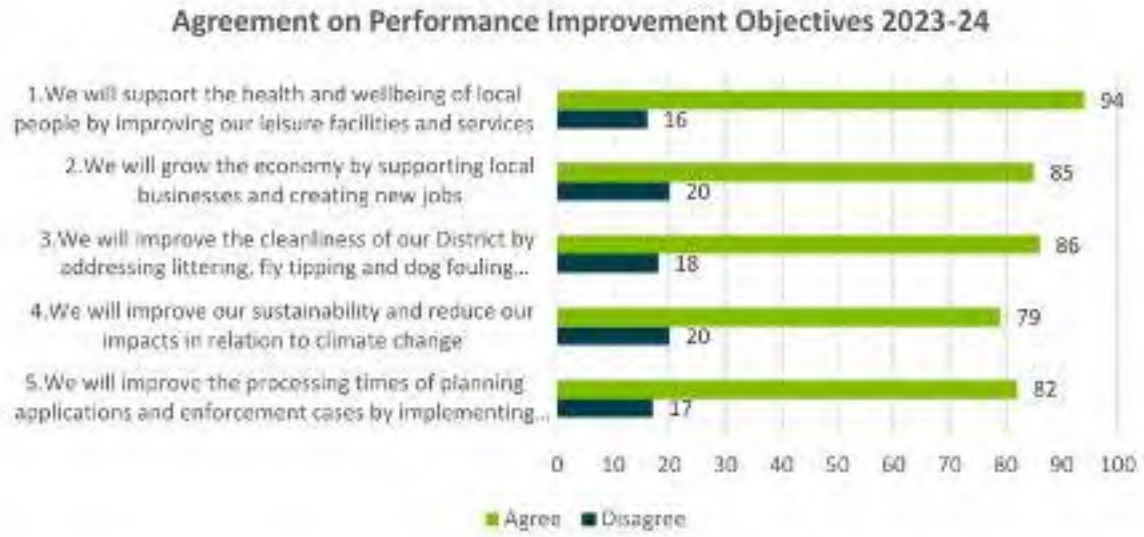
In carrying out the quantitative and qualitative consultation and engagement, a structured process was used to capture responses around each of the five draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24. This was supplemented by an engagement process with 27 key stakeholders, as outlined below:

Consultation and Engagement	Details
Newry and Mourne and Down Youth Voice	14 participants - 25 April 2023
Cedar Foundation User Forum	8 participants - 02 May 2023
Newry and Mourne Senior Forum	5 participants - 10 May 2023
Residents Survey (September 2022)	764 residents aged 16+ with quotas applied for age, gender, social class and District Electoral Area

Consultation and Engagement Findings

Analysis of Findings

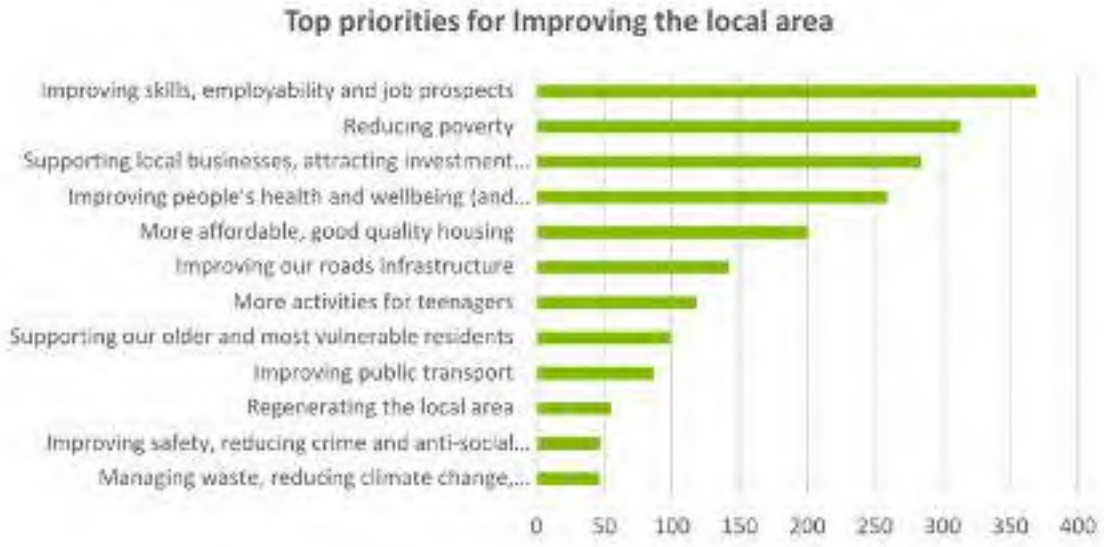
Responses to the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24 have been received from residents, elected members, local community organisations, local businesses, statutory organisations and others including those that work in the district. There has been a positive response to the five proposed performance improvement objectives, with the majority of respondents agreeing with each objective.



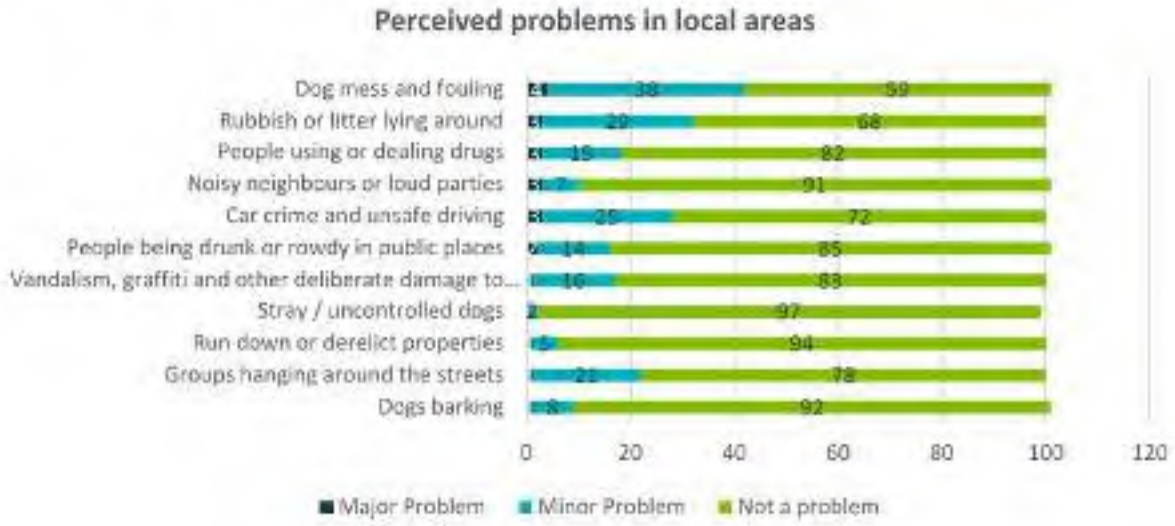
Residents Survey (2022)

These findings are further endorsed by the results of the Residents Survey which indicate that the performance improvement objectives broadly address the top improvements identified to make somewhere a good place to live.

- The local economy, health and wellbeing, housing, infrastructure, public transport, protecting the environment, climate change and managing waste are amongst the top priorities for improvement.
- Supporting communities, educational provision, accessible leisure centres, accessible arts centres/theatres and museums and opportunities for volunteering are amongst the lesser priorities for improvement.



These findings are further reinforced by the fact that residents identify dog mess and littering as the top perceived problems in the local area.



You Said, We Did - Overview of Consultation Feedback

Performance Improvement Objectives

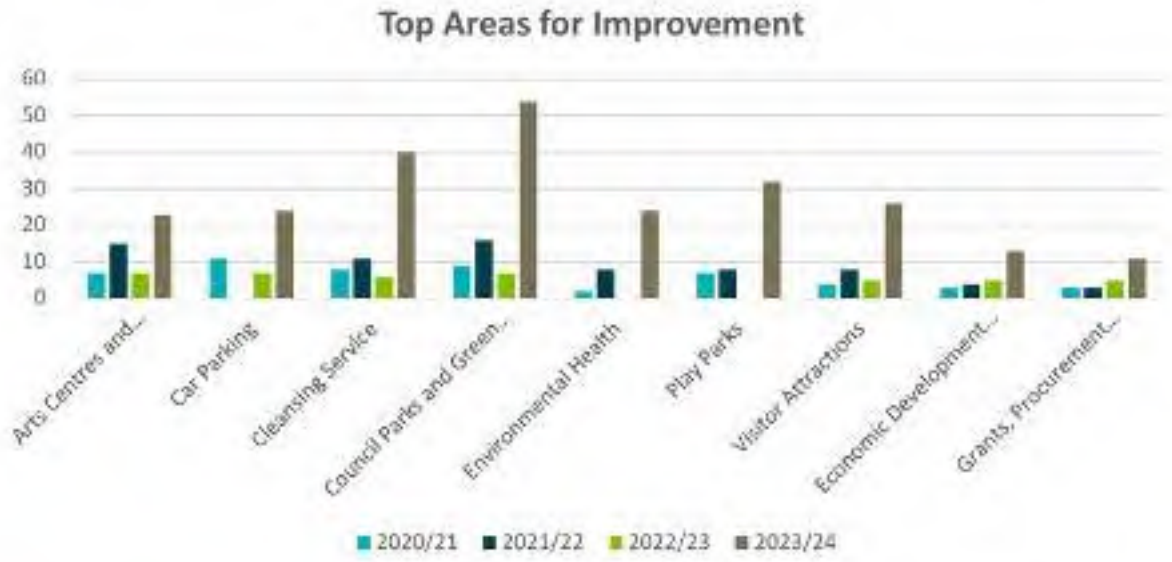
An analysis of the consultation and engagement findings indicates that the issues raised will be addressed through the proposed 2023-24 performance improvement objectives, 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success', or as part of the Council's business planning process. An overview of the amendments and revisions that have been made to the performance improvement objectives, throughout the consultation and engagement process are highlighted below.

	You Said	We Did
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	*'More areas for people to walk, cycle and walk their dogs'*	We have revised our target for community trails upwards to reflect the number of users in 2022-23 and in doing so recognising the importance of outdoor space and facilities for people's mental and emotional wellbeing.
	'Most young people feel health and wellbeing is curcially important and	A new measure has now been introduced in the Performance Improvement

	feel improvements would be good'	Plan 2023-24 focusing on the participation of young people in youth health and wellbeing initiatives. Revised the 2022-23 figure for paid attendances based on updated year end data which has also led to a revised target for 2023-24.
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs		Figures for economic development programmes have been revised. To reflect 2022-23 actual figures.
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents		
We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change		
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme		

Suggested Areas for Improvement

As part of the survey, and similar to previous years, respondents were asked to put forward their suggested areas for improvement. 'Council parks and open spaces', 'cleansing service', 'Leisure Centres' and 'Play Parks' are the top priorities for improvement in 2023-24.



Next Steps

Based on the feedback obtained through the consultation and engagement process, as well as the ongoing developmental work around each performance improvement objective 2023-24, there have been some minor amendments to the 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success', as outlined in the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.

The Consultation and Engagement report will be published on the Council's website by 30 June 2023, alongside the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24. It will also be circulated to key stakeholders to support the business planning process.

Summary of Consultation and Engagement Feedback

Performance Improvement Objective 1

Youth Voice

- What has happened to city park?.
- Albert Basin Park.
- What has happened to your park
- Kilkeel could use an upgrade (only 30 minutes)
- Could be an upgrade in Kilkeel
- Most young people feel health and wellbeing is curcuially important and feel improvements would be good
- Make sure other services in the Council don't suffer from the high levels of funding used in leisure centres

Cedar Foundation

- Over 60's membership is very good value for money.
- There are a lot of items damaged and broken in the leisure centre in Newry which is awful as it is such a new building and these need to be fixed.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- There should be toilets on the tow path.
- There are cars being parked on the cycle path in Warrenpoint which is a danger to cyclists who have to go round and onto the dual carriageway to get past.
- Play park in Bessbrook is a great asset and the toilets are clean and the Derramore woods are a great asset too.
- Thanks to the Southern Trust and the Age Friendly alliance for all the support they provide to older people's groups and individuals.
- Transport for older people is very important especially as more services are being moved to Craigavon and older people can't get to appointments, community transport needs to be maintained.
- Traffic lights at the court house need to be fixed, it's a danger as it's getting so busy.

NMD Speak Website

- Yes but. The senior management team consistently fail to deliver. Newry pool has had to close. And the council has ensured that people are locked out of their(i.e the public rate payers) sports pitches
- Not enough outdoor walks and parks for tourists vrs other areas...current places not looked after or maintained especially walking paths...mound of down path is a disgrace
- Daisy Hill in a Shambles Warrenpoint police station let go no GP service in Rostrevor. Loss of green space
- Consolidate what exists - no need for further investment in this regard at present.

- As leisure facilities are only in the main towns community centres need to be improved to allow for the provision of such services in rural areas
- Outdoor facilities which are not dedicated to field sports should be considered for development
- Ensure leisure facilities once available have high standard of cleanliness
- leisure facilities in Newry require significant improvement, as a regular user of the gym pool and soft play area of the NLC it is disappointing to see that the facilitiy is regularly not clean. I had to ask staff to clean urine from the floor in the changing area of the pool and ants all over the floor in another changing area. The soft play is regularly unclean with tables not wiped and the floor dirty. I really like being able to use NLC but it embarrassing especially as a staff member to see this new facility in such a state of uncleanliness. For years Newry is lacking in 4G pitches for soccer in the area and this needs to be improved.
- also improve outdoor facilities, not just swimming pools etc
- More greenways
- Newcastle is severely lacking in service availability
- Leisure facilities need to be open accessible hours
- Improved leisure facilities in Newcastle have been requested for decades. Kilkeel has great facilities but are criminally mismanaged and underused.
- Better facilities
- We want a park as promised
- You as a Council have ignored the wish of our Citizens in pushing ahead with White Elephant Projects dispite strong voter opposition to same
- Newry Leisure Centre is closed more times than it should be â€¦ broken equipment in the gymâ€¦ cold showers â€¦ tiles on pool floorâ€¦.restrictive timetable of classesâ€¦closed every Wednesday 2-3pmFor training !!! Really this is a disgrace and needs to be changed immediatelyâ€¦ train Sunday morning before opening
- I hope to see this being fulfilled in the kilkeel area. Our leisure facilities need repair and appropriate staffing. The limited opening times are restrictive and swimming lessons difficult to access.
- No fixed bridge on the southern relief road. Promoting more use of the canal and improving facilities would contribute to better community well-being
- I would like more appropriate facilities in my town, Newcastle.
- What about cycle path plan for newcastle. There is nothing. It's quite embarrassing for a tourist destination is
- Downpatrick has a first class leisure facility in DLC which is visible in the general numbers of a wide diverse range on ages that us the facility. But opening hours at the weekend are very much lacking and restrict the use of the service for a great number of people. Longer opening hours into the evening is required at the weekends.
- The management of Arts facilities needs to be contracted out to bodies which will appropriately promote and support arts and culture.
- Actions speak louder than words, at least make a start on the Park for Newry City.

- As a Newcastle resident, I have to travel 15 miles to my nearest leisure centre. Since the part demolition of the Newcastle Centre (without any plans for a new build) you can't even hire a room in the centre. The Gateway project information day had to be held in a local pub because of this.
- This is a good objective but you donâ€™t really do it the new leisure center has been closed a lot for cleaning and repairs and surely if it is staffed properly this would not be required.
- Nice â€˜sentimentâ€™ â€¦ but over past 10/20 years nothing much of a major improvement .. based on past â€˜performanceâ€™ am concerned about the future
- So we get our park then? This should be your top priority in leisure facilities. And it is an scandal and a shame that you have deliberately avoided doing this already.
- How will this be measured?
- Not enough opportunity within leisure facilities, swimming pool etc are disasters where people are traveling outside the district to go swimming
- some many from outside the area use facilities, there should be a charge for non rate payers
- Sort Newcastle lesiure centre out once and for all
- Very leisure facilities focused, this not only requires those to travel and limits participation to activites at those centres, but makes little use of natural area and beauty which often also attracts external visitors and hence expenditure
- This needs to be a priority over other infrastructure projects and the Albert Basin needs to be developed asap. HIgher profile of the leisure centre facilities, classes and opening hours to promote accessibility and interest More areas for people to walk, cycle and walk their dogs (dog parks, more pavements along busy rural roads) and along existing transport routes.
- Question? What did the council actually do to improve the health and wellbeing of the community?
- No
- As an older resident I feel we need to ensure our OAP s are offered first class facilities to encourage an active lifestyle.
- Special needs should b focal point
- Not everyone can afford to use the council facilities. The Peoples Park would deliver a better facility for more residents
- Where are the leisure facilities in Warrenpoint?
- It works well , it's a very well Disability Draft
- Ballynahinch is a growing town with no leisure facilities
- The Trust welcomes the objective of supporting the health and wellbeing of the local population and the links to the Council's Corporate and Community Plans. In particular, the Trust welcomes the Council's commitment to helping reduce health inequalities and improve the quality of life for all by contributing fully to programmes, services, facilities and amenities. The Trust is committed to building on new and existing partnerships with the Council, working in collaboration with key stakeholders to help reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

Youth Voice

- The Quays is too empty
- Attract more businesses to the quays and Hill Street
- Should invite bigger corporations / businesses into shopping centres
- Don't forget the rural areas
- Shopping centres need new businesses
- Any growth to economy will be a help to our area, would like new jobs in area but also would like opportunity to travel for work.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- A lot of small businesses have closed due to Brexit, Covid-19, war in ukraine and cost of living crisis and got no support.
- The rise in parking fees is unfair as it's mostly older people parking who are out in the towns spending money and contributing to the economy.

NMD Speak Website

- Would like to see the stats of what Jobs the council have brought to the whole district since 2015
- This council is only interesting in building houses so it becomes even more reliant on rates which is contrary to what the NIAO has told needs to change.
- Not enough done to support start ups
- Warrenpoint town centre turned into a social apartment centre and lost of every day business due to high rates
- What does "support" local businesses mean? Give them public money?
- Again - no requirement for investment in this field at present Consolidate the present situation, plan for the future.
- Local jobs for local people where are the contractors from who work within the old district.ie Downpatrick glossary,Killyleagh, what percentage of them is local
- Availability of affordable working spaces for new small business should be investigated
- Council work well with local stakeholders and entrapreneurs/businesses in the district to grow the NMD eonomy for everyones benefit
- develop the economy. Growth goes against the climate emergency that NMDDC declared a few years ago. You can not grow without having a damaging impact to the climate, biodiversity and the environment. You can however sustainably develop the economy.
- Encourage working from home within civil service so civil servants can support their local businesses, not Belfast city centre.
- Helping start new small businesses and improving rundown town centres allowing free parking facilities would encourage people out of the supermarkets and back into town centers
- This is important but its effectiveness is precarious, and I doubt the council will find an elegant solution. It should not be in the top 5 objectives.

- Increased rates will drive any bussiness trying to start within the district!
- You burden small and large businesses with accessive rates charges in return for little or nothing. You intend sacrificing parking at Cathederal for vain Projects
- Rates increases each yearâ€¦. Cost of bin collection â€¦. Newry is a ghost town and has nothing to offer to tourists apart from a spot of shopping and a nice hotel â€¦. Allow the regeneration of the CBD â€¦ embrace planning restrictions by working with the people trying to breathe new life into the town. Stop backward thinking and apply a mentality of progress
- How do you propose to do this ?
- How many jobs have you created in the past 10 years?
- What is your agenda sbd plAn to enable this - these are merely statements, one round need to see the plan of execution and how this would be achieved & timescale
- Jobs in Newcastle are mostly for the service industry. This means minimum wage and zero hours contracts are the norm in the area. This should be addressed to provide sustainable employment for local residents.
- Again a good point but We do not have enough street cleaners not enough bins but enough public toilets
- Do this by addressing the outrageous rates charged to local businesses driving many out of the area.
- Only fund those who can prove they are registered within Northern Ireland and have local employees
- Laziness
- How money is spent supportinh business has no impact goals and no measurement of success. Government funds alllcated by local council are spent to secure the highest number of votes this will attract.
- Support local business by supporting your own workers such as bin men
- There is a genuine and wide perception NMD does not focus enough on the County Town of Downpatrick
- There needs to be a pipeline of skilled workers to fulfil jobs created, therefore attention is needed in the educational sector and to support the economically inactive to do so. Higher profile on where there are job skills gaps for those in education etc. and flexibility in jobs so that those with benefits are not impacted by gradually becoming part of the workforce again.
- I am not aware of the council supporting anything in the local economy
- No
- I disagree that the council creates new jobs.
- Create jobs for people with disabilities

Performance Improvement Objective 3

Youth Voice

- Bins are full all the time.
- Bins not being emptied.
- Bins aren't being monitored
- Dog fouling and litter - Kilkeel is boggin
- Kilkeel is boggin
- Bin strike
- Littering is a huge problem and needs tackled. Have notices re: dog fouling but need to have more bins to put litter, dog poo etc.

Cedar Foundation

- Littering, dog fouling and fly tipping are significant issues across the District.
- The Council should issue more fixed penalty notices to offenders as the number is very small considering the littering around the District.
- There was a large fly-tipping incident out beside Slieve Gullion Forest Park.
- There is a signiciant amount of litter on Monks Hill and the Crieve Road, and areas which are poorly lit can often suffer from high levels of fly tipping.
- It would be good to see more community clean ups taking place.
- Good to hear that the Council offer bulky waste collection and assisted bin lifts to residents that need it.
- Council should have more signs up about not mowing the grass verges to protect the bees as people don't know and think it just looks untidy.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- Fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling will always be there.
- A lot of litter bins have been taken away but not all have been replaced.
- Street cleaners never seems to have brushed with them to clean hard to reach area under seats and its left.
- Places look untidy which is not conducive to good tourism and attracting people.
- Some areas are happy with the cleansing service they receive while other areas are not.
- Dog fouling is the biggest iissue.
- Like the idea of the paint re-use scheme, great to see an initiative like this in the Council area.

NMD Speak Website

- Have sufficient staff resources in place
- The council continues with the same failed systems and refuses to use technology like DNA testing for dog fouling or cameras for illegal dumping. Not to the mention the failure to deliver bird proof bins in coastal areas

- You do nothing about litter....shameful , please work with schools to stop littering, please provide bins and dog bins at least.
- Country roads and dual carriages way full of litter and illegal dumping for months
- Effective action is required in this regard throughout the district.
- Downpatrick is dirty also surrounding towns..how many mechanical sweepers are in dowpatrick. How many times are the estates clean compared to newry
- Must be a strong monitoring on litter. And dog fouling is shocking in Donyaguy water and Warrenpoint shore road. Litter all around the area is a disgrace on the country roads
- Resident could be paid low wage to litter pick at weekends. This would be good for residents well-being/fitness who might normally work retail or admin, earn extra cash, and offer council cheaper labour. Could be paid with vouchers for local businesses to support our local economy.
- More bins are required in tourist locations. If there is a bench or picnic rabke, then a bin is required in the visible area.
- Dog fouling is a big problem. Harsher penalties that are actually enforced would be good
- More dog wardens needed, hundreds of fines need to be issued. When people know the risk is they will be fined they will be less likely to let their dog foul
- Fly tipping in remote areas and dog fouling are major issues. Staffing and fines should be increased. Public awareness campaigns wastes money-people know it's wrong. Get creative.
- The council are failing at this now. Newry and surrounding areas are a disgrace.
- Council has not agreed on a weedkiller towns and cemetery's look awful
- There is a need to clean the roadside verges and have zero tolerance to any litter. The road from Camlough past the council dump is in a terrible state with rubbish in all the verges and hedges
- Any chance of sorting the potholes â€¦. Roads are not good
- NMDDC have abandoned littering prosecutions long ago. Its a case of " Hear no evil, see no Evil"!!! The little man will pay the litter lifting bill.
- I hope so â€¦. Dog foul is everywhereâ€¦. Flytipping a disgrace â€¦. How do you intend to manage this?
- Dog fouling is a permanent problem in kilkeel.
- More and bigger bins. Solar powered compacting bins. More name and shame of irresponsible dog owners
- Would suit you better to actually clean the streets in the first place
- Not enough bins in various towns across the district. Dog litter is terrible.
- No visible patrols. Island park Newcastle. Tennis club has broken glass outside every other night from underage drinkers
- This is a very significant issue and requires much work to address
- Council needs to employ a team or teams of people to ensure street cleaning in each city, town and village.
- My bins are constantly being left for 3-4 weeks between collection

- Again, what means are in place to support your objectives - I would like to see the actions snd your plans on how you aim to achieve these very broad statements - that is the part missing- the plans are the means of showing your thought process and timescales of delivery - what are your key measurements ?
- How much of the Council budget will be allocated to additional enforcement and dog wardens? Newcastle last weekend was absolutely disgusting with the amount of rubbish, overflowing bins and lack of toilets.
- Definitely this is not done our streets are a disgrace
- Improve the enforcement of existing laws and regulations.
- Need to provide locals who litterpick with coloured bags that can be deposited at Road junctions for bin lorries to lift whilst doing their rounds weekly.
- Not enough being done. Need to crack down more on littering dog fouling etc. Hit people where it hurts in their pockets. Residents constantly getting away with fly tipping on green areas
- more communal bins, schemes to fine people who litter &advertise penalties
- And washing the footpaths on Newcastle main street
- Not unless there is clear accountability - for example - so we see the terrible state of the district appear as a negative of the responsible executive staff members performance review ? Are they on a performance improve plan which is they donâ€™t resolve the issues they are ultimately found unfit for their job?
- How can you do this with the strikes?
- But actions speak louder than words
- Need more bins in more locations. Higher profile on littering being culturally unacceptable.. Get business to become more corporately aware of litter issues and CSR to clean around their premises areas to promote their sustainability etc. Educate on the results of littering, dog fouling, promote responsible dog ownership with classes. Ensure more of the items put for recycling are actually recycled.
- Only when itâ€™s point out by a councilor standing and pointing at it on Facebook.
- No
- There is a great deal of litter along the footpaths in the area, it would be great to see a litter free environment.
- Nothing worse than dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs. Owners also not controling their dogs remains a further issue.
- No one ever clears the dog poo on the paths where I live, Rathfriland Road area.
- The footpaths in Warrenpoint are a complete disgrace and there arenâ€™t enough bins for dog waste
- It's only on Monday last 1st of May 2023 that I was out for a walk near Slieve Gullion , somebody had been fly tipping . The objects that were dumped were babies dirty nappies . I did report at a Cedar Foundation meeting on the 2nd May 2023 . Two council officials were invited to the meeting with Cedar Foundation Newry User Forum . I went back the next

day , all objects were lifted . These objects should not have been dumped in the first place

- What measures will you take to address rural littering so that locals do not have to keep cleaning it several times per year ?
- Entire district is a disgrace

Performance Improvement Objective 4

Youth Voice

- Clanrye river and the Canal should be prioritised
- More wind turbines
- Wind turbines
- More direct action
- More wind turbines
- Inevitable natural order of the Earth, however we do contribute and that may be harmful, throwing nature off course. We need to slow down our contribution to it.
- Make sure this is a priority to the Council and not over looked due to funding issues.

CEDAR Foundation

- There needs to be a lot more EV charging points in the district.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- Council don't seem to have a maintenance strategy, the free wifi in Newry and Warrenpoint is not maintained and is never working. Hope these new EV charging points will be maintained.

NMd Speak Website

- Is there an active ISO in place for council ?
- This from a council who fails to deliver their biodiversity plan and won't protect trees which have tpos and have accepted aconsultation which proposes substandard greenways and active travel plans.
- How ? Nothing is done in Downpatrick to support the wildlife or environment. You should be ashamed.
- Lost of green spaces and coastal way losing our AONB
- Pragmatic and workable initiatives are required in this respect.
- This is not a suitable objective. Council do not have qualified scientists among their staff. The CO2 net zero aspirations of other councils in the UK, along with their 15 and 20 minute cities are based on a false premise. True science tells us that these policies do not help people or the climate. Instead they cause hardship, depopulation, loss of freedom, and the negative impacts are felt most keenly by the most disadvantaged in society. This objective is bad for business so it contradicts objective two. It is anti-health and family so it contradicts objective one.
- Vehicles are scrap constantly breaking down ,leaking oil ,fumes .where are the new vehicles that was promised for down
- Have strict supervision on the number of trees that are being cut downâ€¦..some just for house building
- see above re growth, the two conflict each other. Expalin how you can grow without increasing your impacts in relation to climate change
- Lead from the front

- This is the most sensible suggestion made, proportional to how urgent it is. Should be expanded to include enhancement of biodiversity and conservation/restoration of historically damaged natural spaces. To include totally rework Mournes Gateway Project, no gondola or visitor centre. Many great alternatives available.
- What are you doing to counter this, are council offices running off solar? Are vehicles electric?
- We need our park
- NMDDC will waste money and limited resources on vain Projects regardless of the Climate / Carbon footprint. Efficiency is not a focus for NMDDC
- The recycling centre operates limited opening hours making it difficult to access
- More electric car charging stations. Free town shuttle buses
- Again another great statement - the action plan reinforces the objectives which are very broad but in statements - your intent sounds great but proof of how this is carried out by means of a plan us what is like to read & see
- The vanity project of the Newcastle Gondola is one of the most environmentally destructive projects in recent years. What are your plans to mitigate the destruction caused and to offset the carbon footprint of the project.
- Should be done but You will probably waste a lot of time and money writing reports and having meetings about this rather than doing
- Re-opem the canal rather than driving more traffic through environmentally sensitive areas. Pedestrianise Hill Street to improve air quality, reduce emissions & bring an area you have managed to kill back to life.
- I am not in favour of low traffic neighbourhoods as people with disabilities need to be able to drive close to shops. I'm not in favour of getting rid of our central car parks. I'm not in favour of our farms having to reduce their nitrogen as farms are our only source of natural food. I'm not in favour of surveliance and monitoring our carbon foot print. I am not in favour of becoming a cashless society.I do agree with doing as much as we can to help our planet but big companies could do more.
- Better access to recycling centres.
- Planning for renewable energies must be prioritised look at area where acceptable. Have to stop Nimbyism and lobby for more support to change for renewable energy sources.
- When one off your warehouses burn down and you cover up its asbestos roof blowing around the town. St. Christopher park wear house in question.
- No
- We need to keep trying to improve our wind and solar power and give more information to the public.
- I donâ€™t see any effort to reduce environmental impact on climate change.
- Keep using recycling centres , and proper bins provided by the council

Performance Improvement Objective 5

Youth Voice

- Sustainable energy sources
- Planning permission isn't good in rural areas (e.g Kilkeel)
- Agree but do not feel this is as important a priority as the previous 4.
- Look into getting young people involved in the process.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- Tram station in Bessbrook is up for development and people want it to be developed as a tourist attraction, we need to preserve our villages and not build a petrol station and houses.

NMD Speak Website

- Your planning office is toxic and out of date
- Particular attention and effective powers must be given to enforcement where clear breaches of planning regulations have been made. Enforcement must create the environment that reverses building activities where planning has not been sought in advance or where planning recommendations have been ignored. The special nature of the environment throughout the district demands effective leadership in this regard. Retrospective planning requests should not be tolerated.
- I work in the planning department and I love my job, but it is disappointing to see targets not being met as staff work extremely hard. The planning dept. have lost more than 5 business support staff and this work results in the business support staff which are left being over worked and not getting their own work done. The planning officers have had to help business support to put new applications on the new portal resulting in planning officers not being able to process applications and is a short term fix as the new applications continually build up again and staff are swamped. The new portal and loss of staff has resulted in planning officers spending less time processing applications as there is now more admin tasks to complete than there ever was before for planning officers. There is a lack of staff also in the planning technical side as officers have not been replaced when off on long term sick, maternity and posts not filled when people leave. This has resulted in high case lists and workloads for the staff remaining and it is unfair. Planning surgeries do not happen anymore in the Newry office. The planning officers also do not have the correct IT infrastructure to carry out their jobs on site since the new portal as planners were to be given ipads to view drawings, this never happened and results in officers now having to print plans to take on site, which is a waste of time and paper. IT infrastructure is essential for site visits and officers should have an ipad each (similarly to building control officers) for doing their job. Staff receive no training and left to get on with the job, this is partly because everyone is so stretched with their workload. The poor work environment and workloads have resulted in a high turnover of staff with people leaving for other councils. Furthermore, it would be good to discuss this objective

directly with planning staff to see how we can work together to improve resources, IT and any other measures necessary to achieve this objective.

- The planning department is a joke. No transparency and no accountinility. Like the rest of the council they refuse to reply to emails and whoever is in charge of enforcement must be on gardening leave.
- There is no enforcement at all and already going against their own policies on planning
- Improve your processes this will help your processing times
- Again, a huge issue and welcome to address but not as priority.
- Only let planning through as long as the infrastructure can support it
- We want our park!
- We will wait and see. Currently the worst in N.I. and no sign of change. A planning mindset of "" how can we delay/ block / procrastinate instead of pushing ahead positively
- So far itâ€™s a disgrace !! Allow landowners more considerationâ€¦ allow growth and investment in the town â€¦. All change is necessary change â€¦. If a decaying building is listed â€¦ help get the building back to its state
- Takes far to long: this needs addressed!!
- So could you spell the improvements - what is the current processing time vrs how shall you improve it - statistics & plans are needed to back your side statements -
- Planning enforcement is non-existent at present. There are projects in newcastle which have been implemented without permission, shops with a change of use (again without permission) and no action has been taken by the planners, even when they have been informed.
- Should be done
- Improve on the reuse of existing buildings, especially in Newry town centre.
- Needs to be more specificâ€¦improve by what %
- What really is the point of having targets for processing planning applications, when there appears to be an alarming lack of consistency in decision making stemming from the Planning Committee arbitrarily overruling recommendations seemingly as a matter of policy? A work colleague who submitted an application for a dwelling said to me that their agent had told her not to worry about it's location because "Councillor XXX will sort it out for us!" When I checked the records I discovered that indeed a refusal recommendation had been overturned. What are the Council's guidelines on this practice?
- Need a consistent approach to planning and more staff. Need to lobby government to ensure existing housing stock is utilised e.g. all upstairs of retail units could be used for accommodation making premises safer more nightlife and then safer for people. Type of housing approved needs to suit a mix of needs and have access to public transport.
- Canâ€™t see happening, they have tried for years to make this happen.
- No
- I donâ€™t know enough about this to comment.
- What about the sewage treatment in Warrenpoint
- Need to speed up applications

Other comments
• Increased recycling targets and giving residents all the tools/equipment/ information to do same • Yes a vote of confidence in the management team. Stop making residents lives worse while continuing to expect them to bail you out by having to pay increasing rates every year • Downpatrick is a dump, shopfronts and buildings disgraceful, litter everywhere, no flowers or hanging baskets, no bins, parking and traffic situation a mess, roads a mess. Tourist sites not supported or maintained, nothing for kids to do, drug situation out of control, no parks or walks vrs population. Sewage in the river, animal abuse and dog fouling out of control, illegal lotteries not investigated, major drug dealing and money laundering etc etc you could go on for days. It would be interesting to see per capita spend for Downpatrick postcodes vrs the rest of Down. Investigation needed asap. Severe lack of funding vrs amount collected in rates. P.S your website is embarrassing.....everything is out of date....the least you can do is keep the info up to date and accurate. • They would need to tear the page out and start again. Having delivered on any of their commitments. They donâ€™t even acknowledge emails • I would like to see your Access to the Countryside Policy implemented in more than a token way. An audit of the current state of the existing public rights of way in the council area should be undertaken (many are blocked or not waymarked). An online map of them all should be published. • Improve the openness and transparency and accountability of all funding within all council departments. Endeavour to ensure effective performance while guaranteeing value for money, efficiency and excellence. • Level of council investment in Outdoor facilities and sports clubs which are not field sports. • Show the number of times an area is monitored and action taken. For example the speed on shore road between Warrenpoint and Rostrevor and the Moygannon Road. 30 speed limit is totally ignored and people do 60/70 but it is NEVER monitored and fines issued. You need to measure the impact of what you have done in practical ways dog fouling, littering are totally spoiling our countryside • No • increase in biodiversity by species level, habitat level. • peoples access to the natural world • increase in woodland cover • increase in protected areas to achieve 30 by 30 targets • reduce carbon to achieve net zero targets • Resident/ratepayers could be paid low wage/vouchers to litter pick at weekends/evenings. This would be good for residents well-being/fitness who might normally work retail or admin, earn extra cash, and offer council cheaper labour (cheaper than overtime & agency staff). Could be paid with vouchers for local businesses to support our local economy. This would increase pride in the local area.

- Increased footfall in leisure services. Access to leisure services in all areas.
- We will invest and develop the current infrastructure (revitalising and rejuvenating under used, vacant an derelict sites)in our towns and villages to provide suitable facilities for every community.
- We will consult with local communities on what their priorities and needs are from each service area that the council provides and target resources and funding to projects that communities identify as priorities.(eg Newry Park, reinstatement of Warrenpoint Swimming baths,
- The measurement of success is that everytime the council proposes a projec the majoritu of responses are positive and supportive.
- The measurementnof success is that ltowns and villages are rejuvenated thriving and prosperous- and residents feel they get value for miney for their high rate paying
- Stop wasting money on unwanted projects like the mourne gateway (which Newcastle cannot handle the increase of people)and spend the money on more useful things, like fixing the potholes, as the roads are in a terrible state. Town centres are in bad need for repairs to derelict buildings, and help to bring in small businesses to encourage people back in town centres.
- Financial assistance
- Make the process of applying for and spending grants more accessible for community groups/volunteers and more in line with streamlined processes in other councils. Appreciate your volunteers without them the community would be much worse off and the council would have to spend much more money on community development.
- Also community centres/town halls open at accessible times and Not charging a caretaker fee to open in the evenings/weekend - be more proactive in offering out our community halls and advertising the spaces - this will make them more cost effective
- The council is incredibly out-of-touch with the needs of residents, as is evident in these suggested objectives. Frivolous spending on auxiliary needs. Road maintenance, new road infrastructure, expansion of public transport provision, new council housing, fixed wastewater management, healthcare, schools, environmental health etc. These are the basics of a functioning society, and are clearly neglected. It's common sense that they be priority, anything else is shocking misuse of our money. Your suggestions scream "middle-class". The suggestions are mostly comfort based, while the silent majority need the basics I've described.
- More emphasis needed on objective 3
- improve visibility of council management leaders with a real vision for Newry city explained, consulted and delivered
- We want our park!
- Excellent, straightforward and clear objectives for the council to work towards.
- We only have to look at NMDDC sickness/ Absenteesim figures to give a picture of efficiency desires. It seems the Trade Unions actually call the shots in NMDDC

- When something is suggested by council there should be an obligation on council officials to take matters forward. So many ideas wither for lack of follow up and accountability for non action
- I would like the council to be more accessible. Last year I submitted a message from your direct contact message via your website and never received a reply. I followed it up with leaving a message with the receptionist that answered the phone. I never received a reply. That is not customer service.
- Objective 4 should be expanded to include electrical charging network and more cycle routes and dedicated bike parking. Benefits both environmental objectives and tourism, local business in newcastle
- Downpatrick has a first class leisure facility in DLC which is visible in the general numbers of a wide diverse range on ages that us the facility. But opening hours at the weekend are very much lacking and restrict the use of the service for a great number of people. Longer opening hours into the evening is required at the weekends.
- Transport/buses only take change and should take card and very hard to get buses in rural areas.
- The river and canal
- Transport, I can't get home anytime past 6 that's when I have lessons to make my way to and from home.
- Transport - make more efficient
- Public transport - be later at night especially around rural areas.
- Public transport in more rural areas
- More emphasis on the climate and environment and litter
- I strongly suggest that the generic statements listed - action plans snd timelines on how these will be achieved is key.

  Objectives need to be achievable and measurable . Newry is a beautiful city , the people need educated on preserving our beautiful town - not continue to throw rubbish in the canal or where they feel like it- high quality cameras are needed at the flytipping spots .

  I donâ€™t see any objective in respect of safety to the public - surely this should be high on the agenda.

  Additionally - Hill street once a booming street - small businesses squeezed out to the big shopping centres - hill street needs a plan to bring this place back to life and really support local businesses by encouraging the people back to this street .

  Very quick to get rid of our iconic old buildings - one should be harnessing from the hesitation of these old buildings and restore them.

  Newry could relish from an old snd new town .
  Unfortunately, Newry deemed a city but it is still very much a beautiful town not city- it lacks too much to be deemed a city. What benefit does this create by deeming Newry a city - it is far from city status .

One thing that seriously needs to be addressed is the crime & public disruption from alcohol & substance abuse - making Newry a safer city to walk about .

- I think I've covered enough above.
- You need to provide a FREE bulky refuge collection to help with fly tipping - not all can afford Â£10

  Also consider going back to making free community skips available

  And if trees are overhanging and leaving footpaths dangerous then remove the trees to save both time and money on this issue - trees need to be preserved but they also need to be in places where the leaves can be left ti decompose naturally without causing a hazard
- Increase funding and help to the arts and culture.
  A thriving local arts scene will drive the tourist economy and improve mental well-being among all ages.

  Supporting actions:
  1. Fund IÃºr Cinn Fleadh properly rather than relying on volunteers to run the entire programme on 20k.
  2. Work with artists and creatives to successfully complete simplified funding applications.
  3. Create and support accessible art spaces.

  Measure of success:
  1. Increase in tourism economy measured by spending in local industries, increased footfall in public areas, hotel & hospitality income.
  2. A reduction in those seeking MH support.
  3. Monitor national & international coverage of key events such as IÃºr Cinn Fleadh.
- We will seek the views of our population in relation to the delivery of services
- More effort of cleanliness, refuse collections etc. The likes of Newcastle workers seen on the streets daily carrying out duties of emptying bins etc. Workforce in Newry getting it too handy and not putting full day work in
- Enable a better customer experience online
- There is no value to performance improvement objectives if no one is held accountable when they arenâ€™t achieved - Iâ€™d like to see a named owner on each objective !
- Bring back Festival of Flight, it is the biggest event in our district and supports the local businesses so much as well as bringing 100k people to the area.
- Pay your staff correctly and you get a better happier workforce
- A measured strategy for investment in Downpatrick across all areas!
- Improvements to roads and infrastructure - poor quality roads and oor infrastructure causes noticeable traffic and congestion issues in significant number of NMD areas

For objective 1, contined improvement of green spaces in particular those of natural beauty, key recent benefits are, Tievenadarragh Wood which has significant footfall, Drumkeeragh forget which also has much increased footfall and recent drawing of visitors e.g. orienteering event, and those of glasswater Wood etc. Which has not only had increased footfall but also hosts other events e.g. the children's outdoor group • No • Yes, listen to relate payers regarding peopleâ€™s park. • More Bins and dog fouling bins • Live stream the meetings to ensure openness and transparency

Other improvements

- Better communication with your service users
- The recycling service to be improved.
- I would like to see the various recycling bins along the promenade, main street, and in the various parks and car parks.
- These sets of bins would consist of the normal rubbish bins, plus bins for paper , glass and plastic.
- We don't just need to recycle at home but also encourage it throughout the area.
- I would like a better cleaning service of the pavements in Newcastle. Ever since the Chinese paving was put down , those paving slabs have never been properly cleaned.
- More facilities for the people in Newcastle. For years we have cried out for an indoor swimming pool. I am disabled and cannot easily travel to Downpatrick.
- We also have a large school in the town, so I'm sure that a swimming pool would get use.
- I also think that a bowling alley would be a great asset. This sports facility can be used for all age groups, young , old and disabled. It would also be a facility for residents and visitors, to be used all year round.
- With the addition of a cafe it could also be a socialising area.
- mprove your maintenance in your bin lorries as they are constantly breaking down and out bins are frequently not emptied. Maybe change lease on them with the provider when purchasing bin lorry to save on costs and maintenance time. Free car parking for
- the small towns as the shops are struggling and this would be welcome also reduction in business rates would be welcome all over to help improve the economy and support business owners. There seems to be a lot of empty shops around NI and a lot of businesses closing due to the rising costs.
- Cycling and electric charging infrastructure
- Longer opening hours into the evening is required at the weekends at DLC
- Deliver the Albert Basin Park
- Abandoned buildings
- Diversity
- Concerts
- More diversity
- More concerts
- Diversity - all over
- Concerts / large events held in Newry
- Make areas attractive
- Empty shops etc. make the area unattractive
- More leisure facilities young people friendly, costs quite often prevent us using facilities.
- More diversity. More Concerts
- Abandoned buildings. Diversity. Concerts
- Keep things running smoothly

Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24

Delivery Plans have been developed to demonstrate the arrangements which have been put in place to support the effective implementation of each performance improvement objective. They provide an overview of:

- Responsible Officers
- Alignment with the Community Plan and Corporate Plan
- Governance arrangements for the Performance Improvement Plan
- Meeting the seven legislative criteria
- 'Supporting actions' and 'measures of success'
- Links to existing plans and strategies
- Resources
- Governance arrangements

In recognition of the dynamic nature of the information included within the Objective Delivery Plans, they should be considered as a 'work in progress', subject to change to a continuous basis.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will improve the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services			
Responsible Officers	**Director:** Activity and Healthy Communities **Assistant Directors:** Leisure and Sport		
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing	**Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23**	Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24	• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee. • Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.		
Meeting the legislative criteria	**Strategic Effectiveness:** Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives. Achieving this objective will deliver real benefits and outcomes for local communities and other key stakeholders. **Service Quality:** The quality of services will continue to improve through the planned increase in the number and variety of classes being offered, as well as health promotions taking place. **Service Availability:** The continued progression and delivery of Council leisure projects will improve access to and availability of key leisure services and contribute towards the improvement of people's health and wellbeing. **Fairness:** Includes opportunities for people across Section 75 categories to access the Council's leisure centres.		

What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	**Link to existing Plan/Strategy**	**Measures of Success**	**Resources**	**Governance Arrangements**	**Responsible Officers**
Progress the leisure projects agreed within the capital programme	AHC Business Plan 2023-24 Capital Works Programme	The number of new build and/or upgraded capital projects progressed in 2023-24	Amount agreed under the capital plan.	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2023-24 Ongoing monitoring of projects within the Capital Plan	Assistant Director Leisure and Sport Assistant Director Capital and Procurement

Continue to Progress and implement the review of leisure services	AHC Business Plan 2023-24	New job descriptions and structures in place	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director Leisure and Sport
Increase in paid attendances at indoor leisure facilities as part of the Covid Recovery Plan	AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Target set at 750,000 across the 6 leisure sites for 2023-24	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director Leisure and Sport Head of Indoor Leisure
Increase the number of people participating in targeted health programmes such as PARS, Be Active Health and Macmillan Move More	AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Target of 9,400 people to be participating in targeted health programmes	In partnership with the Southern and South Eastern Health Trusts	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2023-24 Reporting back to Health Trusts	Assistant Director Leisure and Sport Head of Indoor Leisure Sports Development Officer
Increase the number of young people participating in targeted youth health and wellbeing initiatives such as seasonal activity programmes and £1 summer promotions	AHC Business and Service Plans 2023-24	Target of 20,000 young people participating in targeted youth health and wellbeing initiatives	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director Leisure and Sport Head of Indoor Leisure
Maintain the number of recorded visits to the Council's community trails	AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Number of recorded visits in 2023-24: 1. Saul GAC - 2018/19, Downpatrick.	2023-24 SLA with ORNI: Going to committee in June	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport Head of Outdoor Leisure

WORK IN PROGRESS

		2. Ballynahinch Rugby Club - 2018/19, Rowallane. 3. Drumkeeragh Forest - 2019/20, Slieve Croob. 4. Tievenadarragh Forest - 2019/20 Slieve Croob. 5. Seaforde Plantation & Corry Wood - 2019/20, Slieve Croob. 6. Daisy Hill Wood 2020/21, Newry. 7. Aughrim Hill 2020/21, Mourne. 8. Glendesha Forest Trail, Forkhill, 2021/22, Slieve Gullion. 9. Lough Park/Windmill Hill Trail, Ballynahinch 2021/22, Rowallane 10. Tievenadarragh Forest Car Park, 2021/22, Slieve Croob.		Community Trail Management and Prioritisation Framework	
Implement a 'Mystery Visitor' Program for Indoor Leisure	AHC Business Plan 2023-24 Leisure and Sport Service Plan	Program Implemented and baseline established	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan and Service Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport Head of Indoor Leisure

Risk Management	
Risks	**Actions to Mitigate Risks**
Leisure facilities do not achieve the projected paid attendance levels	Targeted promotional and publicity campaigns including online campaigns are being carried out.
Targeted groups do not engage in physical activity programmes	Programmes are managed, monitored and publicised effectively across the District.
Capital Projects do not go ahead	Budgets have been set to include the leisure centre capital projects.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs			
Senior Responsible Officer	**Director:** Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism **Assistant Director:** Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration		
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	**Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23**	Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24	• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee. • Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.		
Meeting the legislative criteria	**Strategic Effectiveness:** Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, and will deliver tangible benefits to citizens, local businesses and social enterprises. **Service Quality:** The quality of services available to businesses and stakeholders will improve through the broad range of economic development programmes available. **Service Availability:** The continued roll-out of programmes to businesses, social enterprises and fishing dependent communities will improve access to and availability of key services, as well as the overall quality of life in the District. **Innovation:** Implicit within this objective are innovative, forward looking ways to promote / create new jobs and support businesses / social enterprises across the District.		

What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	**Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy**	**Measures of Success**	**Resources**	**Governance Arrangements**	**Responsible Officers**
Roll-out the NMD 'Make it Local' and 'A Place to Work' campaigns to safely stimulate footfall and revitalise our local economy	Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25	Communication and Engagement Implementation Plan delivered	Make it Local £80k NMD A Place to Work: £30k (provisional)	NMD A Place to Work – monitoring arrangements through the Labour Market Partnership Make it Local – Monitoring arrangements through the ERT Committee	Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Support the creation of new businesses, support existing	Corporate Plan 2021-23	Number of business plans created for start-	NMD contribution: £168k	Monthly meetings of the regional Management Team	Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration

businesses and promote new jobs through the new Entrepreneurship Support Service	Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25 ERT Business Plan 2023-24	up businesses and employer enterprises Number of new jobs promoted through business start-up activity Number of new businesses & employer enterprises supported to start up Number of existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions	Regional programme led by Belfast City Council	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2023-24	Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme		Number of social enterprise start ups supported Number of social enterprise jobs created	Social Enterprise Programme: £51k	Quarterly meetings with Newry Enterprise Agency Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration Head of Regeneration and Business Development Enterprise Development Officers

Risk Management	
Risks	**Actions and Controls to Mitigate Against Risks**
Failure to deliver the economic development programmes to support the economic recovery of the District	All programmes to be in place with robust management and governance arrangements.
The impact of Brexit and a non-functioning executive on delivering the various economic development programmes and achieving targets	Ongoing monitoring of key influences and economic development support adjusted to meet local demand.
Lack of interest in and applications made to participate in programmes	Publicity campaigns delivered through online and social media platforms. Signposting service in place.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by reducing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling			
Senior Responsible Officer	**Director:** Sustainability and Environment **Assistant Directors:** Waste Management / Health and Wellbeing		
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	**Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23**	Enhance, protect and promote our environment
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24	• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee • Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee		
Meeting the legislative criteria	**Strategic Effectiveness:** Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits and outcomes to local citizens. **Service Availability:** The availability of key services will improve, through support for community led initiatives and access to funding through 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns. **Innovation:** The Council has introduced innovative ways to improve civic and community pride across the District, as evidenced through support for Community Clean ups, Enforcement Improvement Plan, continued engagement with Keep NI Beautiful and the development of mobile apps to report and record environmental crime, identify emerging issues and address 'hotspots' across the District. **Sustainability:** Initiatives to encourage public participation in key campaigns, promote responsible dog ownership and reduce levels of littering, fly tipping and dog fouling will empower residents and support the delivery of a more sustainable service and cleaner District in the future.		

What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	**Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy**	**Measure of Success**	**Resources**	**Governance Arrangements**	**Responsible Officers**
Address issues around littering, fly tipping and dog fouling by: Implementing the Enforcement Improvement Plan	Corporate Plan 2021-23 Enforcement Action Plan Sustainability and Environment	LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index) Number of fixed penalty notices issued	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Waste Management Head of Waste Processing

Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of fly tipping along the border area Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres	Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	(littering and dog fouling) Number of fixed penalty notices paid (littering and dog fouling) The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings		Ongoing assessments of the Dog Fouling Strategy and Enforcement Action Plan	Head of Waste Management
Implementation of a Paint Re-Use Scheme at 7 Household Recycling Centres throughout the district	SE Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites.	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Waste Management Head of Waste Processing
Support local community clean ups, Participate in the Keep NI Beautiful 'Live Here Love Here' campaign	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Number of community clean ups supported	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Health and Wellbeing

WORK IN PROGRESS

Encourage community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'		Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects Number of community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'			
Commission surveys to monitor street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots Highlight the impact of littering on the marine environment	SE Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Surveys commissioned Work commenced in relation to littering and the marine environment	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the NS Directorate Business Plan 2023-24	Assistant Director: Waste Management Head of Waste Processing

Risk Management	
Risks	**Actions to Mitigate Against Risks**
Stakeholders do not get involved in community clean up's and 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns	All initiatives are promoted and publicised across the District, through social media, website, liaison with Council employees and word of mouth.
Failure to improve the level of street cleanliness and reduce the level of littering, dog fouling and fly tipping	The Council has a number of initiatives in place to encourage civic pride in the local area, promote responsible dog ownership, report littering and use enforcement action.
Failure to achieve the statutory targets for waste management	Programmes are in place to increase the rate of recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change			
Senior Responsible Officer	**Director:** Active and Healthy Communities / Sustainability and Environment **Assistant Director:** Health and wellbeing / Waste Management		
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	**Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23**	Enhance, protect and promote our environment
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24	• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee		
Meeting the legislative criteria	**Strategic Effectiveness:** Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits and outcomes to citizens. **Efficiency:** The procurement and availability of younger, less polluting cars as well as cars with alternative fuel sources will provide a more efficient and effective service to our customers as well as working towards protecting our environment. **Innovation:** Innovative mechanisms to allow more people access electric cars by providing more electric charging points will hopefully assist in the increase of cars with alternative fuel sources **Sustainability:** Implementing the Council's fleet replacement programme to ensure younger, less polluting cars as well as cars with alternative fuel sources are within our fleet which allows for the delivery of a more sustainable service across the District.		

What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	**Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy**	**Measure of Success**	**Resources**	**Governance Arrangements**	**Responsible Officers**

Implement the Council's Fleet Replacement Programe	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2023-24	% of Council fleet younger than 8 years Number of cars in Council fleet with alternative fuel source	Within existing resources	Annual and Bi-annual assessment of the AHC and SE Directorate Business Plans 2023-24 Reports considered and approved by the AHC and SE Committees	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Director: Health & Wellbeing
Development of the following strategies and plans: • Climate change and sustainable development strategy • Newry, Mourne and Down Biodiversity Strategy 2023-28 • Climate Change Adaptation Plan	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plans 2023-24 Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2023-24	All strategies and plans developed		Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 Reports considered and approved by the AHC Committee Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 Reports considered and approved by the SE Committee	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Director: Health & Wellbeing
Undertaking a baseline of the Council's carbon footprint	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plans 2023-24	Baseline established		Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 Reports considered and approved by the AHC Committee	

WORK IN PROGRESS

Implementing the Council's Tree Strategy	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2023-24	Number of trees planted on Council managed estate	Working with external partners as well as within existing resources	Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 Reports considered and approved by the SE Committee	Assistant Director: Facilities Management and Maintenance

Risk Management	
Risks	**Actions to Mitigate Against Risks**
Delivery issues with vehicles ordered	Getting approval for vehicles in time and ordering early to mitigate against time delays on delivery
Trees not taking root and dying	Planting the whips and trees at the appropriate time for the best results and maintaining care throughout the planting process
Too many plans and strategies to be complete and not getting done on time	Timetabling the process and adding additional resources when required.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Performance Improvement Objective 5

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme			
Senior Responsible Officer	**Director:** Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism **Chief Planner**		
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	**Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23**	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24	• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee • Annual Assessment of Performance 2022-23 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee		
Meeting the legislative criteria	**Strategic Effectiveness:** Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits to citizens. **Service Quality:** The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme and the new planning portal has, and will continue to improve the quality of the service provided by reducing the processing times of applications. **Service Availability:** Improved availability of the Planning Service, focused on reducing processing times, will contribute to the sustainable development of Newry, Mourne and Down. **Efficiency:** The purpose of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the service, by seeking to make better use of the resources available.		

What we are going to do

Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted	ERT Business Plan 2023-24	Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks) Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks) Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2023-24	Chief Planner

Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'		Number of planning applications in the system for 12-18 months Number of planning applications in the system for less than 12 months Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more			
Effectively implement the new electronic planning system	ERT Business Plan 2023-24	Successful implementation	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2023-24	Chief Planner

Risks Management	
Risks	**Actions to Mitigate the Risks**
Failure to meet the statutory performance standards for processing planning applications, enforcement cases.	The Planning Service Improvement Programme outlines the key areas for improvement, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis.
The Council does not reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system	The Planning Service Improvement Programme outlines the key areas for improvement, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Report to:	Strategy Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Directorate Business Plans
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Marie Ward – Chief Executive Josephine Kelly – Director: Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Marie Ward – Chief Executive Josephine Kelly – Director: Corporate Services

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	**X**	**For noting only**	

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	Directorate Business Plans provide an overview of planned activity for the year ahead, and contribute to the delivery of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and other key plans and strategies. They form an essential part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, which demonstrates how corporate objectives are cascaded across the organisation and provides assurance that they are being delivered. As Directorate Business Plans are directly aligned to the achievement of the Corporate Plan, they remain fairly high level, and do not necessarily capture the core, business as usual activity that is undertaken by individual departments. Alternatively, they provide an insight into the key, overarching objectives, supporting actions and measures of success for each Directorate in the year ahead, whilst setting the context for the development of departmental Service Plans which are operational in nature.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	**Assessment of Directorate Business Plans 2022-23** In order to improve transparency and accountability, and facilitate a performance led approach to business planning, each Directorate has undertaken an assessment of their Business Plan 2022-23. These assessments provide an overview of the performance of each Directorate and have been used to influence the development of the 2022-23 Business Plans. This exercise is an important part of the Council's statutory responsibility to strengthen the way performance is monitored, reviewed and reported across the organisation. The assessment of the Chief Executive's Business Plan and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2022-23 are attached at Appendices 1 and 2.
2.2	**Directorate Business Plans 2023-24** Directorate Business Plans 2023-24 outline the key objectives, supporting actions and measures of success each Directorate will work towards, which are aligned to the strategic objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23. Directorate Business Plans are also aligned to the current organisational structure and may be subject to amendment as 'Planning for the Future' progresses.

	The Chief Executive's Business Plan and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 are attached at Appendices 3 and 4.
2.3	It should be noted that further improvements to the business planning process are underway across the Council, particularly in relation to cascading corporate objectives in a meaningful way to employees through the introduction and roll-out of Service Plans and People Perform Grow. This process seeks to improve the use of performance measures at all levels of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and create a clear 'line of sight' between the work of individuals, teams and departments, and how they contribute to the achievement of Directorate Business Plans and the Corporate Plan.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	To consider and agree the: • Assessment of the Chief Executive's Business Plan and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2022-23 • Chief Executive's Business Plan and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2023-24
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	There are no financial resources implications within this report.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐

5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale: Consultation not required.
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☒
7.0	**Appendices**
	• Appendix 1 – Assessment of the Chief Executive's Business Plan 2022-23 • Appendix 2 – Assessment of the Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2022-23 • Appendix 3 – Chief Executive's Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 • Appendix 4 – Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2023-24
8.0	**Background Documents**
	• Directorate Business Plans 2022-23 • Assessments of Directorate Business Plans 2021-22

Chief Executive's Department

Annual Assessment Business Plan 2022-23

Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Introduction

This report provides an overview of progress in delivering the Business Plan 2022-23 for the Chief Executive's Department, across the following service areas:

- Business Transformation
- Performance and Improvement
- Evidence and Research
- Community Planning
- Democratic Services

The delivery of the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan 2022-23 supports the achievement of all community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, specifically the corporate objectives outlined below. Performance has also been tracked using the legend below.

Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district

Legend

Status	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved
	Target or objective partially achieved / likely to be achieved / subject to delay
	Target or objective not achieved / unlikely to be achieved

Chief Executive's Department

Key Office Objectives / Actions
Community Planning – Work with partners to lead the implementation of the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes for local people.
Evidence and Research – Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to underpin and inform future decision-making and policy development processes.
Performance and Improvement – Support the development of a performance improvement culture by embedding effective performance management arrangements.
Democratic Services – Support the decision making and political governance structures of the Council.

Community Planning			
OBJECTIVE **Work with partners to lead the implementation of the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes for local people**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Support the Strategic Stakeholder Forum in progressing priority projects, in relation to the Ukraine Crisis and social supermarkets	Q1 onwards		Information pack developed for Ukrainian support centre and distributed through Citizens Advice NMD. Scoping study complete in relation to social supermarket provision
Facilitate three Community Planning Partnership Board meetings	Q1 onwards		Community Planning Partnership Meetings held in May, September, and February 2022/23.
Progress the implementation of agreed actions within the 14 community planning priority subgroups and identify future workstreams	Q1 onwards		Actions continue to be developed. Actions in relation to digital poverty and active travel have now been designated as complete by the Partnership.
Organise three Participatory Budgeting celebration events and publish feedback report	Q1 – Q2		Three PB celebratory events were held in Downpatrick, Newry and

			Newcastle with 36 community groups attending. Participatory Budgeting brochure (including project scorecard) completed and presented to the Partnership
In collaboration with the Department for Communities, facilitate the 'People and Place' review for the District	Q1 onwards		On-going.
In collaboration with the Strategic Stakeholder Forum, conclude and evaluate the Community Foundation NI supported Citizens' Panel for the District	Q3		Initial project has been concluded and funding secured to extend the civic engagement platform for a further 12 months.
Prepare, progress and publish the Community Planning review	Q4		7 workshops engaging the community planning partners and stakeholders were conducted throughout 2022/23. Recommendation were presented to and adopted by the CPP.
Work with Community Planning partners to progress the development and implementation of further Participatory Budgeting projects across the District	Q4		PB workshop is now intended for 2023/24

Evidence and Research			
OBJECTIVE **Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to underpin and inform future decision-making and policy development processes**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Provide Geographic Information System (GIS) and	Q1 onwards		On-going. Analysis includes mapping of employees to address NI equality

data analytics support across the organisation			commission requirements, crime and planning data
Work with internal departments to develop service specific GIS applications to support service delivery	Q1 onwards		On-going. Examples include litter bin survey app, radon viewer and town signage viewer
Facilitate effective stakeholder consultation and engagement through online surveys and the NMD Citizens Panel	Q1 onwards		On-going. Examples include Community Planning Engagement, EA Youth Provision and Social Supermarket Engagement
Undertake the 2022 residents survey to inform the development of the Corporate Plan 2023-27 and review of the Community Plan	Q3		Survey carried out August/September 2022 results were presented to Elected Members SMT/ CMT and were incorporated into the review of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan.
Update baseline data for the Corporate Plan, Community Plan and departmental requirements	Q3 – Q4		The review of community planning indicators is now complete and has been agreed by the board. Baseline data for the Corporate plan is updated.
Develop a series of project scorecards for internal and community planning projects	Q3 - Q4		Examples include Participatory Budgeting Scorecards and Warm hub score cards

Performance and Improvement			
OBJECTIVE **Support the development of a performance improvement culture by embedding effective performance management arrangements**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Prepare and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23	Q1		The Performance Improvement Plan was published on the corporate website before 30 June

			2022, in line with the statutory timescale.
Prepare and publish the Assessment of Performance 2021-22	Q2		The Assessment of Performance 2021-22 provides an overview of progress in relation to the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23, and was published before 30 September 2022, in line with the statutory timescale. The summary document entitled 'Our Performance Looking Back, Going Forward' was also published on the corporate website.
Facilitate the Performance Audit and Assessment and implement the 'proposals for improvement' put forward by the Local Government Auditor	Q2/Q3		Following the Performance Audit and Assessments, the NI Audit Office has issued both the 2022-23 S95 report. The Council continues to comply with the statutory Duty of Improvement and implement the proposals for improvement.
Develop the 2023-24 performance improvement objectives, in line with the Corporate Plan	Q3/Q4		The draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23 have been developed and the public consultation and engagement process completed in May 2023.
Strengthen the alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and co-ordinate the business and service planning process	Q1 onwards		The alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework continues to strengthen through the Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan, Directorate Business Plans, Service Plans and People Perform Grow, which enables teams and employees to identify their contribution to achieving

			strategic outcomes and objectives.
Progress and finalise the Outline Business Case for an electronic Performance Management System	Q2		The Council has developed and finalised the Outline Business Case for the electronic performance management system, which was approved by the IT Projects Group in July 2022

Democratic Services			
OBJECTIVE **Support the decision making and political governance structures of the Council**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Provide administrative and governance support to the Council, Standing Committees, PCSP/Policing Committee and ad-hoc Working Groups	Q1 onwards		The Department continues to provide administrative and governance support to the monthly meetings of Council and its Standing Committees, as well as the quarterly meetings of the Audit Committee. Action sheets for each meeting are instrumental in monitoring and tracking progress in implementing Council decisions. Hybrid working continues however attendance in the chambers is being encouraged.
Prepare for the local government elections in May 2023	Q1 – Q4		Elections took place in May. Newly elected Councillors have been provided with their equipment and an induction programme is ongoing.
Organise the annual meeting of the Council and manage the appointment to positions of responsibility for the Council and Committees	Q1		The annual meeting of the Council took place in June 2022 and Elected Members were appointed to designated positions of responsibility for 2022-23, as well as the first term of

			Council in relation to political party representation.
Organise and publish the programme of Council and Committee meetings	Q1		The programme of Committee meetings for 2022-23 were organised, agreed and published on the corporate website.
Organise an induction, training and capacity building programme to support Elected Members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, including e-learning, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Decision Time, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Performance Management	Q1 onwards		Elected Members were invited to attend a number of training courses on Decision Time and Equality Training. A range of conferences organised by NILGA, National Association of Councillors and APSE were also attended by Elected Members.
Commence preparations to re-attain the Elected Development Charter for NMDDC	Q1/Q2		Initial Elected Member Development Working Group was held on 22 August 2022 however only 2 Members attended.
Support the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson in carrying out their role(s) as First Citizen(s)	Q1 onwards		The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson have a designated resource within the Council to support them in fulfilling their role(s) as First Citizen(s). The Chairperson hosted 34 civic receptions and attended 387 official events across the District.

Measures of Success			
Measure	**Actual**	**Status**	**Explanation**
Compliance with the statutory Duty of Improvement			
Compliance with the statutory Duty of Community Planning			
The number of events hosted on behalf of the Chairperson	34		Receptions held to recognise milestone achievements for groups and organisations throughout the District. Largest of these being the Chairperson's Civic Awards.

The number of official events attended by the Chairperson/Vice Chairperson	387		The Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson or Chairs of Committees in their stead attended a vast range of events across the District including photocalls, sporting events, cultural events and community festivals.

Corporate Services

Annual Assessment
Business Plan 2022-23

Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Introduction

This report provides an overview of progress in delivering the Corporate Services Business Plan 2022-23, across the following service areas:

- Finance, including Procurement
- Human Resources, including Safeguarding
- Corporate Planning and Policy, including Communications and Marketing
- Administration, including Legal Services, Compliance and Registration Services
- Information Technology
- Estates and Capital projects, including Health and Safety and Emergency Planning

The delivery of the Corporate Services Business Plan 2022-23 supports the achievement of all corporate objectives, particularly the following corporate objectives, and performance has been tracked using the legend below.

Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills

Enhance, protect and promote our environment

Legend

Status	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved
	Target or objective partially achieved / likely to be achieved / subject to delay
	Target or objective not achieved / unlikely to be achieved

Directorate objectives, supporting actions and measures of success

Key Office Objectives / Actions
Administration • Provide a Corporate Compliance Service • Deliver a Corporate Business Support Service and Registration Service • Provide a Corporate Legal Support Service **Corporate Planning and Policy** • Provide a Corporate Planning and Corporate Policy function, including including statutory duty compliance and Irish Language • Provide a corporate Communications and Marketing service including digital communications **Estates and Capital** • Provide adequate Emergency Planning and response • Provide appropriate Health and Safety and Insurance provision • Provide strategic Estate Management and Capital Project support to Council **Finance** • Provide an efficient finance function • Ensure appropriate risk management arrangements in place • Provide an effective procurement service **HR and Safeguarding** • Provide a professional HR service all employment matters, including employee relations, resourcing and development **IT** • Provide a highly available, accessible, and secure IT environment to support Council services. • Provide technical input and support to digital transformation projects

Administration			
OBJECTIVE **Provide a Corporate Compliance Service**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
When ratified by the NI Assembly, implement the new Retention and Disposal Schedule	Q3	😐	This target remains outstanding due to the absence of the NI Assembly – all internal work completed.
Develop an Electronic Document Records Management System Outline Business Case	Q3	🙂	Draft EDRMS OBC developed 16 February 2023 - submitted for internal consideration.

Update Records Management and Access to Information Policy and Procedures	Q4		Necessary updates are captured with both policies review dates occurring during 2023/24.
OBJECTIVE **Deliver a Corporate Business Support Service and Registration Services**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Align Business Support Team with outcome of Business Admin Review	Q3		Ongoing – reviewing resource against business need.
Implement new NIPSO Complaint Management Model	Q4		Ongoing – NIPSO have delayed sign off on new Model Complaints Handling Procedure until 1/7/23 – all internal requirements completed to date.
Provide training for staff and elected members on the new NIPSO Complaints Management Model in conjunction with NIPSO	Q4		Ongoing - NIPSO have delayed sign off on new Model Complaints Handling Procedure until 1/7/23 – work has commenced regarding internal training requirements – anticipated Q2 2023/24.
Develop a Promotional Package for Registration Services in line with Council's Digital First Strategy	Q2		Some progress - Council and GRO information updated but specific promotional package not developed.
OBJECTIVE **Provide a Corporate Legal Support Service**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Review of Council Standing Orders pending Departmental direction on specific aspects	Q4		On hold – awaiting Departmental guidance as to requirement.
Review the Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract used by Council and establish a common	Q3		Work has commenced but delayed due to change in postholder. Discussions ongoing across Directorates

approach across Directorates.			and will be considered if specific issues arise.
Continue to promote the provision of legal support to all sectors of Council by internal legal team – specific focus on legal title document management. Pursue expansion of legal research resource and scope-out options for a case-management system within legal section.	Q2		Action achieved. Case management system part of overall consideration of EDRMS/Case Management System which is sitting with ITPG.

Corporate Planning and Policy			
OBJECTIVE **Provide a corporate planning and policy service**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Development of Corporate Plan 2023-2027	Q4		During the reporting period the following took place - Residents Survey; staff, Elected Member and CMT/SMT focus groups, survey and workshops (November 2022); SMT reviewed mission vision and values and CMT developed the new strategic objectives and key actions. The draft Corporate Plan is being developed for consideration by the new Council following the local government elections taking place on 18 May 2023.
Development of Irish Language Strategy 2023-2027	Q4		Draft Irish Language Strategy 2023-2027 developed and proceeded to 12-week public consultation on 20/3/23.
Pursue and scope-out for a case-management system for the implementation of	Q4		Developed online system implemented for Irish

the Irish Language Bursary Scheme			Language Bursary Scheme 2023-2024.
OBJECTIVE Provide a corporate Communications and Marketing service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Begin development of new Corporate Website in terms of content management	Q2	😐	Awaiting corporate update on progress form ITPG.
Develop and lead on high profile (Gold and Silver Priority) campaigns via print and digital communications and marketing methods in order to increase profile of Council and our district	Q4	🙂	Development and implementation of monthly PR Plan working closely with SMT and CMT.
Pursue and scope-out for a case-management system for media management.	Q4	🙂	Agreed with IT that MS Office 365 provides solution for current requirements.
Pursue and scope-out for a case-management system for Communications and Marketing service requests.	Q4	🙂	Agreed with IT that MS Office 365 provides solution for current requirements.

Estates and Capital			
OBJECTIVE Provide adequate Emergency Planning and Response	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Enhance, protect and promote our environment		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Update of the Council Emergency Plan following review of JESIP Doctrine, including training of staff and elected members. Following this we plan to undertake a full scenario-based Emergency Plan exercise.	Q3	😐	Work commenced to update EP -learning training to be made available – subject to HR availability/ resources. A full scenario was not undertaken but a lessons learnt and reflection of major incidents day was undertaken in lieu.
Implementation of own plan Cyber Resilience and	Q2	🙂	Completed

Business Continuity planning (CRBC) and coordination with other directorates			
OBJECTIVE **Provide adequate Health & Safety and Insurance provision**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Enhance, protect and promote our environment		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Implementation of the new Health & Safety Policy to include training for staff and elected members	Q4		Additional training materials made available for managers – powerpoint, toolbox talk (May 2022) and availability of SHEP for delivery as requested (ongoing). Corporate H&S Committees meetings facilities to date.
Review of corporate H&S training requirements and implementation of a new framework of H&S training providers.	Q4		Contracts to commenced 1 November 2022. Mechanisms in place to organise/ plan the delivery of same with CMT/ HoS as required.
Review of all Council insurance requirements to ensure adequate insurance of Council assets are in place.	Q1 – Q4		Council obtained insurance under all policies. Recruitment for dedicated insurance officer has formally commenced.
OBJECTIVE **Provide strategic Estate Management and Capital Project support to Council**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Enhance, protect and promote our environment		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Implementation of Emerging Digital Technologies during the Design and Construction stages and utilising processes identified in 1SO19650 Organisation of information and Building Information Management (BIM)	Q4		BIM Processes firmly embedded in major Strategic and new Projects (NCCR, Warrenpoint & Camlough) with training and upskill. These processes will continue to be implemented in new projects moving forward.
Continue to identify, assess, and agree future use of all surplus assets that best	Q1 – Q4		Identification of all sites now complete.

suits the organisations need.			

Human Resources			
OBJECTIVE **Provide a professional HR service on all employment matters, including employee relations, resourcing and development and safeguarding.**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Roll out of next stage of People Perform Grow to employees and commence pilot of PPG for teams	Q1-Q4	😐	• Timescale extended from Q1 to Q4. • Work ongoing to ensure PPG takes place at T4 and above. • Decision made at CMT to postpone proposed Team Pilot pending post PFTF structures being established. • Revised targeted approach to Team Pilot for launch/further implementation in 23-24. • Review of training needs to support further implementation in 23-24.
Review and update our safeguarding policy and procedures in order to continue to mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks, for both Council & Citizens including Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery, Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and risk posed by individuals	Q1-Q4	🙂	Safeguarding policy updated, processes reviewed and updated guidance provided. • Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Policy introduced. • Designated Council facilities as Safe Place locations • Secured GOLD AWARD from ONUS in the Workplace Charter on Domestic Violence. • In addition to staff training and education, increased awareness for

			citizens and beyond through social media campaigns • NMDDC represented on a range of regional professional and working groups. • Safeguarding Risk Assessment protocol/process introduced to provide accountable decision making and mitigate risk.
Develop on apprenticeship programme, working with partnership organisations to develop skills and employability within the region	Q1 - Q4		Engaged with both regional colleges (SERC and SRC) in relation to apprenticeship programmes. Apprenticeship positions introduced across Corporate Services, Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism and Sustainability and Environment.
Actively participate in and support LGSC regional Talent Management Strategy in the development of processes to attract and retain employees, whilst facilitating the growth of individuals and flexibility within the organisation in terms of resourcing and deployment.	Q1-Q4		• Actively participated in LGSC regional Talent Management Strategy workshops. • Participation in development of Talent Management initiatives which are planned for implementation in 23-24.

Information Technology			
OBJECTIVE **Provide a highly available, and secure IT environment to support Council services**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Continue to develop and test response plans and capabilities in line with CAF (Cyber Assessment	Q1 – Q4		

Framework) and other relevant standards			
Implement and roll out additional security tools to staff and elected members, providing advice and training as required	Q1 – Q4		
Continue to increase User awareness and resilience through provision of training, advice and testing	Q1 - Q4		
OBJECTIVE **Provide technical input and support to digital transformation projects**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Contribute to digital transformation projects through the provision of technical advice and support.	Q1 – Q4		

Finance			
OBJECTIVE **Provide an efficient finance function**	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Develop and introduce a quarterly review of budgets by ADs to inform management accounts	Q2		Completed and variance analysis now completed by ADs on a quarterly basis going forward.
Develop and introduce new procedures around Accounts Receivable processes	Q2		In progress – Procedures to be developed in line with Trade Waste income procedures – Carried forward to next year's business plan.
Develop and introduce new procedures aligned to the new purchase to pay system	Q3		In progress – Procedures to be developed in line with revised P2P User Manual – Carried forward to next year's business plan.
Develop and introduce updated corporate payroll procedures	Q3		In progress – to be carried forward to next years Directorate Business Plan.
Develop and introduce Asset Management	Q1		Asset Management Procedure now effective.

Procedures including Capital Plan processes			Capital Plan process to be put to new SP&R Committee in August for approval.
OBJECTIVE	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN		
Ensure appropriate risk management arrangements are in place	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Anti-Fraud policy and Fraud Response plan to be reviewed and updated	Q3		Carried forward to the 2023/24 Business Plan
Whistleblowing policy to be reviewed and updated to reflect NIAO best practice on raising concerns	Q3		Carried forward to the 2023/24 Business Plan
Fraud Risk Assessment to be refreshed as per NIAO self-assessment	Q2		Carried forward to the 2023/24 Business Plan
OBJECTIVE	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN		
Provide an effective procurement service	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement		
Action	**Timescale**	**Status**	**Progress**
Procurement policy to be revised to reflect most recent PPN on contract variations	Q3	Carried forward to 2023-2024	Due to resourcing constraints, the Procurement policy was not updated during this timeframe. Therefore, this action has been carried forward and the procurement policy will be reviewed and an interim policy developed pending implementation of the new Procurement Act.
Continue to develop procedures to align to Social Value Procurement best practice and legislative changes	Q3	Ongoing	A question on Social Value in procurement was included in the most recent Residents Survey to help build an evidence base on the priorities for Social Value in Procurement once it becomes legally possible to implement. The overwhelming majority of residents surveyed

			prioritised increasing secure employment and skills through the Council's procurement activity. Procurement will continue to monitor developments in Social Value in Procurement so this action remains ongoing.
Explore options to integrate Multi Quote competitions with E-tenders NI and E-tenders.ie.	Q2	Ongoing	This action is ongoing; Procurement continue to engage with the developers of MultiQuote to promote the visibility of Council tender processes through advertising its competitions on other procurement portals on an all-island basis.

Measures of Success				
Measure	**Target**	**Actual**	**Status**	**Explanation**
Administration: 95% of responses to FOI/EIR/DP requests for information provided within statutory timeframe	95%	98%		See end of year statistics.
Finance: Pay 90% of invoices to suppliers within 30 days	90%	86%		Target was not achieved due to the implementation period of the new P2P system. Quarter one payments were delayed but payment times have significantly improved since Q3 and are greater than the target set. Q1: 72% | Q2: 88% | Q3: 91% | Q4: 94%
IT: 97.5% System "UP" Time	97.5%			
HR: Phase 2 People Perform Grow fully implemented	N/A	N/A		Measure of success worded incorrectly as target included to commence pilot of PPG for teams so could not have been fully implemented by year end.

Estates and Capital Projects: 90% of staff to receive training on the new Health & Safety Policy	90%			
Corporate Planning and Policy: 90% of media requests for information responded to within agreed timeframes	90%	96%		Qtr 1 & 2: Received 354 media enquiries. Qtr 3 & 4: Received 265 media enquiries. Response timeframes are appropriate to the nature of the request eg: **operational** – provide clarification, comment or update on subject matter to meet with daily/weekly publications; or **detailed response** – requiring access to information held on file, historical information etc. to meet with ICO guidance.

Chief Executive's Department

Annual Business Plan 2023-24

Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Contents

		Pages
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Background and Context	3
3.0	Purpose and Values	5
4.0	Challenges and Opportunities	6
5.0	Key Objectives and Supporting Actions for 2023-24	8
6.0	Performance	10
7.0	Department Structure	11
8.0	Financial Information	12
9.0	Governance Arrangements	12

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Chief Executive's Department is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation, supporting the delivery of all corporate objectives and ensuring legislative compliance with the Duty of Community Planning and Duty of Improvement, as outlined in The Local Government (NI) Act 2014. The Department also plays a key role in supporting open and transparent decision-making processes and assisting Elected Members in carrying out their roles as civic and community leaders.

1.2 The core responsibilities of the Department are:

- **Community Planning**
- **Evidence and Research**
- **Business Transformation**
- **Democratic Services**

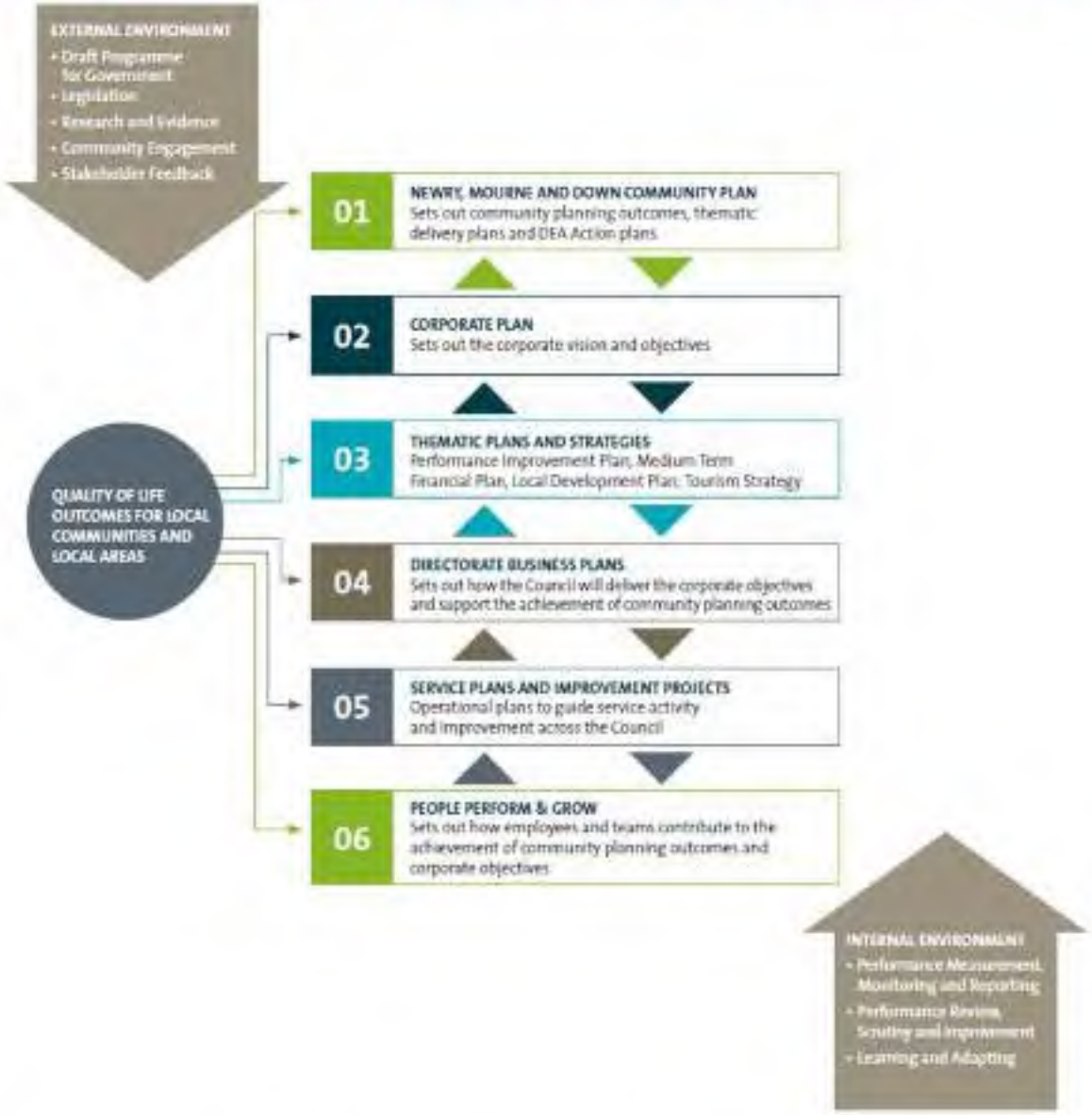
2.0 Background and Context

2.1 The Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan is developed within the context of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Performance Improvement Plan. The Community Plan sets out the long term outcomes for the District, based on the needs and aspirations of local people. The Corporate Plan sets out the key objectives for the Council between 2021-23, and how it will contribute to achieving the community planning outcomes..

2.2 The Community Plan and Corporate Plan are cross cutting and strategic in nature. They guide all activity within the organisation, as well as the subsequent allocation of resources, and sit within a hierarchy of plans, as outlined in the 'Business Planning and Performance Management Framework' (Figure 1).

2.3 The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that the Council is delivering its corporate vision and objectives, whilst securing continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. It provides a mechanism to join up and cascade the various plans and strategies across the organisation, demonstrating how employees contribute to achieving community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, for the ultimate benefit of the citizens we serve.

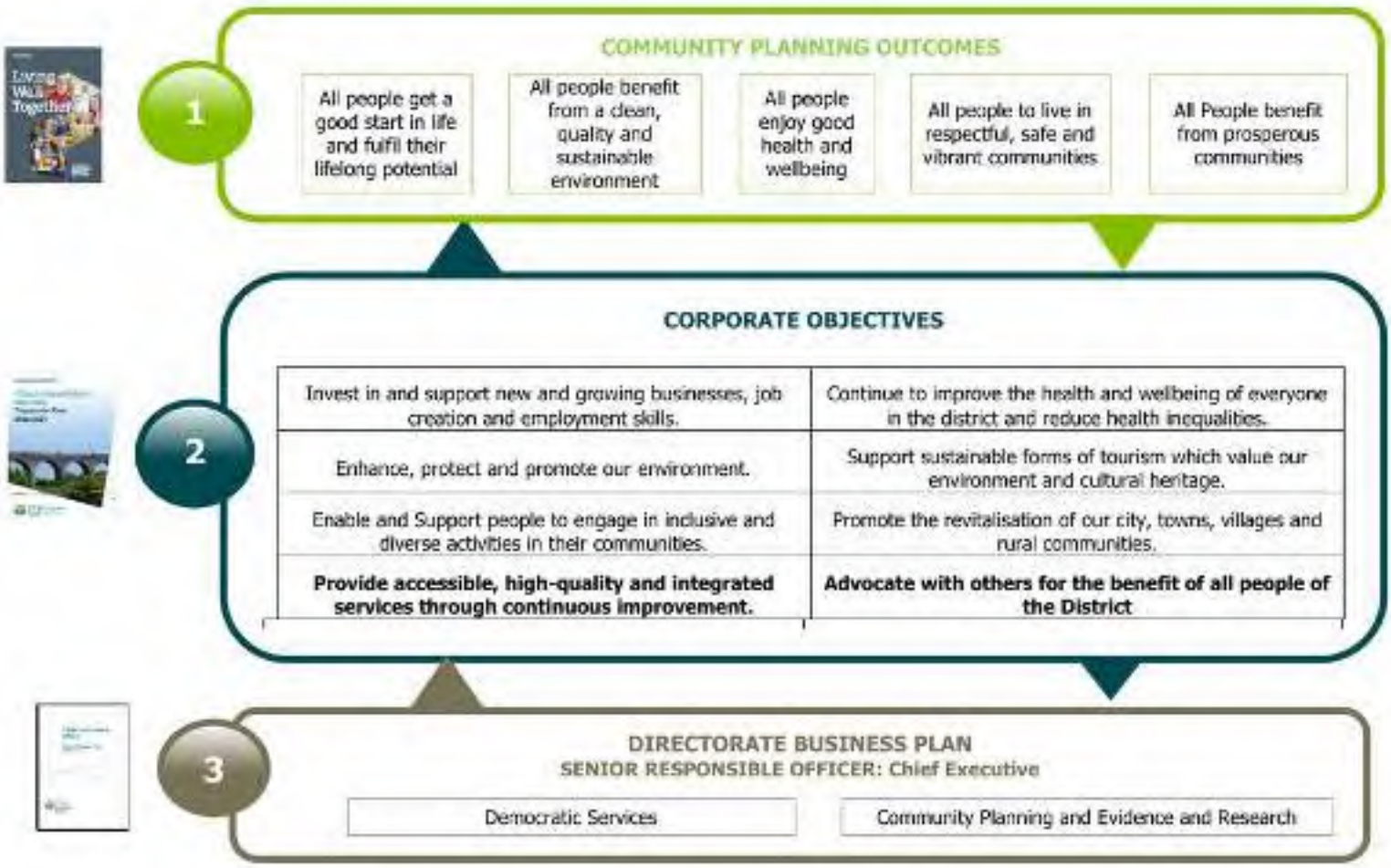
Figure 1: Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



2.4 Whilst the Corporate Plan focuses on issues which cut across the organisation and are strategic in nature, the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan provides an overview of the key operational activities for the coming year. These activities are explicitly linked to corporate objectives and coupled with 'business as usual' service delivery, provide clear direction for all employees within the Department (Figure 2).

2.5 The Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan is published annually and is the basis upon which performance is managed and reviewed by the full Council, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Senior Management Team.

Figure 2: Alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



3.0 Purpose and Values

3.1 Purpose

3.1.1 The Chief Executive's Department provides strategic direction and leadership to the organisation by developing, implementing and monitoring key frameworks, internally and externally, to support the achievement of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives. Whilst the department supports the achievement of all community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, the bulk of activity is aligned to the following corporate objectives:

- Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
- Advocate for others for the benefit of all people of the District

3.1.2 The Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan also supports and underpins the delivery of all corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives, through the:

- Process of community planning
- Provision of evidence and research
- Provision of democratic services

3.2 Values

3.2.1 The Department adheres to the Council's values which are outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23:

We Will Be	What This Means
Accountable	We will be accountable for how we plan for and use resources sustainably
Collaborative	We will work in partnership with others
Transparent	We will be transparent in how we make decisions

3.2.2 In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), the Chief Executive's Department is committed to carrying out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations. All new and revised policies, procedures and programmes of work will be subject to an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment (where appropriate).

4.0 Challenges and Opportunities

4.1 The Department was re-organised in 2017 following the reorganisation of the former Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate. The Department continues to evolve in line with organisational change and remains committed to developing and embedding the necessary plans, policies and processes to deliver improvement across the organisation.

4.2 Influences within the external and internal environment continuously present challenges and opportunities, which have an impact on the overall management and operation of the Chief Executive's Department. These influences can be summarised as follows:

External Environment

- **Legislation:** Ensuring legislative compliance with The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and subsequent Orders, specifically in relation to the Duty of Community Planning, Duty of Improvement and Political Governance.
- **Strategic Alliances:** Collaborating with a range of stakeholders to address the impact of COVID-19, Brexit and other emerging issues.
- **Community Planning**: Strengthening existing partnerships and progressing the implementation of the Community Plan.
- **Evidence Based Decision-Making**: Ongoing collation of national, regional and local datasets to inform and influence local decision-making, policy development and service provision.
- **Global trends**: Impact of COVID-19 on the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the District, shifts in citizen expectations, behaviour and demand for services, deeper social inequalities, complex social issues and the needs of a growing and ageing population on public service provision.

Internal Environment

- **Resources:** Identifying potential areas for innovation, resilience and efficiency amidst potential budgetary constraints.
- **Employees:** New ways of working and shifts in employee working patterns, expectations, aspirations and behaviour.
- **Democracy:** Ensuring Elected Members and the Council's decision-making structures/committees are provided with appropriate levels of support, to facilitate the effective and efficient discharge of their responsibilities.
- **Transformation:** Leading the development and implementation of a transformational programme of change at both strategic and operational levels, enabling employees and Elected Members to drive forward improvements that meet the needs and aspirations of citizens..
- **Risk Management:** Managing potential risks and opportunities in achieving the key objectives and actions outlined in the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan.

5.0 Chief Executive's Department

Key Office Objectives
Community Planning – Work with partners to lead the implementation of the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes for local people.
Evidence and Research – Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to underpin and inform future decision-making and policy development processes.
Democratic Services – Support the decision making and political governance structures of the Council.

Community Planning	
OBJECTIVE Work with partners to lead the implementation of the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes for local people	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district
Action	**Timescale**
Support the Strategic Stakeholder Forum in progressing priority projects including social supermarkets. hardship funds distribution and asylum seeker provision.	Q1 onwards
Facilitate three Community Planning Partnership Board meetings	Q1 onwards
Progress and review agreed actions within the community planning priority subgroups and identify future workstreams	Q1 onwards
Ensure representation of the Council and CPP at the Integrated Care Systems pilot within the Southern HSCT area.	Q1 onwards
In collaboration with the Department for Communities, facilitate the 'People and Place' review for the District	Q1 onwards
Facilitate the Thematic Summit for the Health and Wellbeing theme of the Community Plan.	Q3
Prepare, progress and publish the Community Planning review and 2023 Statement of Progress.	Q4
Work with Community Planning partners to progress the development and implementation of further Participatory Budgeting projects across the District	Q4
Evidence and Research	
OBJECTIVE Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to underpin and inform future decision-making and policy development processes	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	**Timescale**

Provide Geographic Information System (GIS) and data analytics support across the organisation	Q1 onwards
Work with internal departments to develop service specific GIS applications to support service delivery	Q1 onwards
Facilitate effective stakeholder consultation and engagement through online surveys and the NMD Citizens Panel	Q1 onwards
Update the evidence base documentation that underpin evidence-based decision making such as: - Health Inequalities - Socio economic needs of people in rural areas. Key findings (NMDDC) census 2021.	Q1 onwards
Prepare indicator update for the 2023 Community Plan Statement of Progress	Q3
Develop a series of project scorecards for internal and community planning projects	Q3 – Q4

Democratic Services	
OBJECTIVE Support the decision making and political governance structures of the Council	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district

Action	**Timescale**
Provide administrative and governance support to the Council, Standing Committees, PCSP/Policing Committee and ad-hoc Working Groups	Q1 onwards
Organise the annual meeting of the Council and manage the appointment to positions of responsibility for the Council and Committees	Q1
Organise and publish the programme of Council and Committee meetings	Q1
Organise an induction, training and capacity building programme to support Elected Members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, including e-learning, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Decision Time, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Performance Management	Q1 onwards
Commence preparations to re-attain the Elected Development Charter for NMDDC	Q2-4
Support the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson in carrying out their role(s) as First Citizen(s)	Q1 onwards

6.0 Performance

6.1 The Chief Executive's Department performs a key role in leading the development of robust and meaningful performance measures at all levels across the organisation.

6.2 In addition to managing and monitoring financial and human resources, the following performance measures will be monitored during 2023-24:

Measures of Success
Compliance with the statutory Duty of Community Planning
The number of events hosted on behalf of the Chairperson / Vice Chairperson
The number of official events attended by the Chairperson / Vice Chairperson

Chief Executive's Department: Plans and Strategies

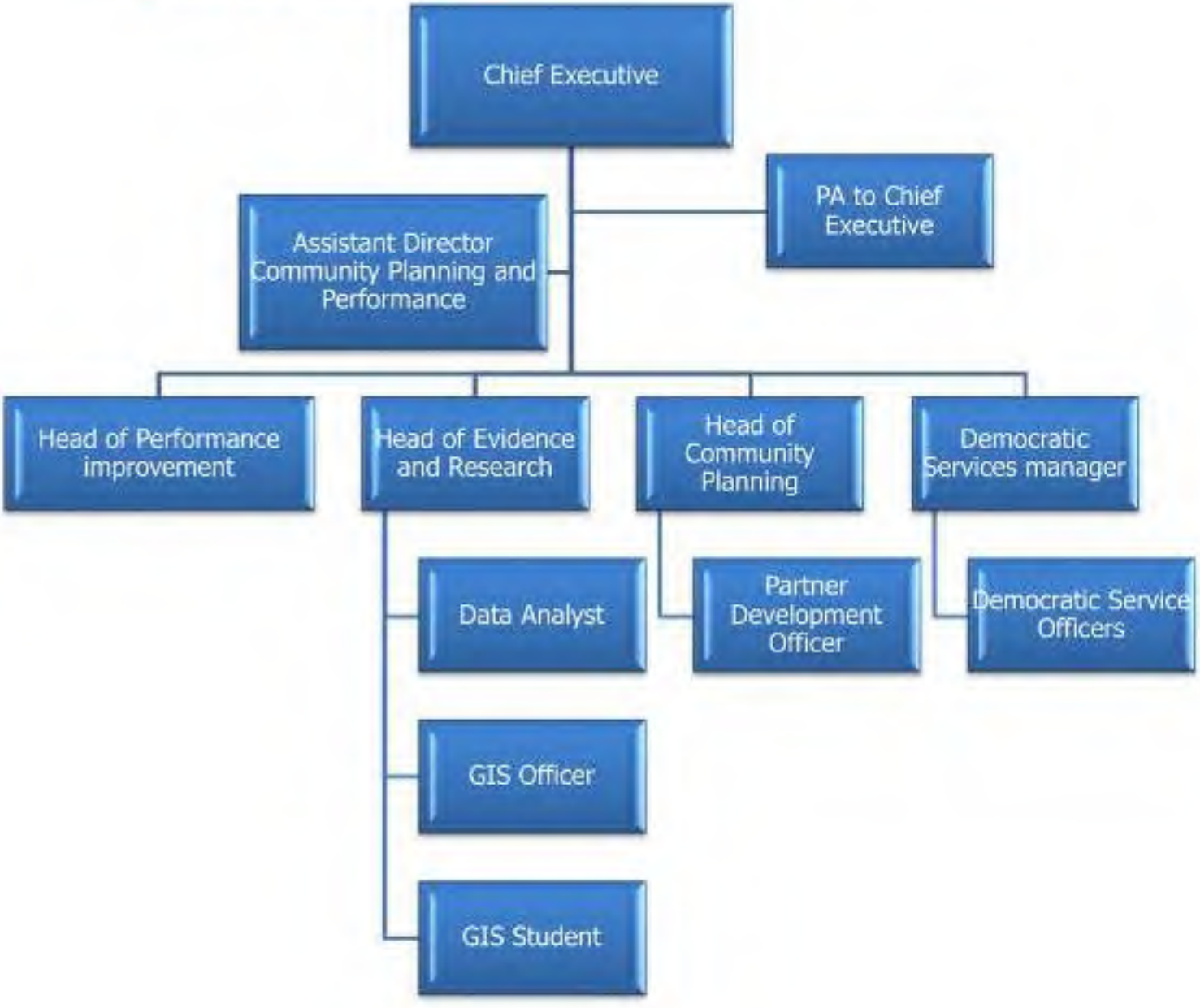
6.3 The Chief Executive's Department is responsible for leading the development, implementation and review of the following plans and strategies, which influence the work of the Department and Council:

- Community Plan
- Constitution

7.0 Office Structure

7.1 The Chief Executive's Department is one of five Departments, which together, comprise the management structure of the Council. The structure of the Chief Executive's Department is set out in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Chief Executive's Department



8.0 Financial Information

Net estimated expenditure 2023-24	
Community Planning and Performance	£
Corporate Management and Democratic Services	£
TOTAL: Chief Executive's Department	£

9.0 Governance Arrangements

Reviewing performance and reporting progress to Elected Members and other key stakeholders facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The organisational and political governance arrangements to develop, monitor and report the Council's progress in implementing the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan are set out in Figure 5.

These arrangements are supplemented by the Council's service planning process and regular reviews by the Chief Executive and her team. The governance arrangements the Council has put in place to deliver continuous improvement are also subject an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Figure 5: Governance Arrangements

Full Council
- Ratification of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan
- Ratification of annual review of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee / Audit Committee
- Scrutiny and challenge around the Duty of Improvement
- Provide assurance that performance management arrangements are robust and effective

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan
- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan

Senior Management Team
- Development, consideration and approval of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan
- Development, consideration and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan

Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down and South Armagh

0330 137 4000 (Council)
0330 137 4036 (Planning)
council@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

Oifig an Iúir
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row

Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road

Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

Corporate Services Directorate

Annual Business Plan 2023-24

Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Contents

		Pages
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Background and Context	3-5
3.0	Purpose and Values	5-6
4.0	Challenges and Opportunities	6-7
5.0	Key Supporting Actions for 2023-24	8-13
6.0	Performance	14
7.0	Organisation and Office Structure	15
8.0	Financial Information	15
9.0	Governance Arrangements	16

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Corporate Services Directorate is responsible for supporting the organisation to achieve the strategic objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2023-27. The Directorate is responsible for the overall management of the Council's staff and finances and plays a key role in providing professional advice and guidance to support and improve the services provided. The Directorate provides services directly to the public through corporate communications and marketing, as well as providing registration, digital and telephony, emergency advice and customer services.

1.2 The core responsibilities of the Department are:

- **Finance, including Procurement and Performance**
- **Human Resources, including Safeguarding**
- **Corporate Planning and Policy, including Communications and Marketing**
- **Administration, including Legal Services, Compliance and Registration Services**
- **Information Technology**
- **Estates and Capital projects, including Health and Safety and Emergency Planning**

1.3 The Corporate Services Business Plan 2023-24 is also focused on identifying opportunities for business recovery and transformation, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.0 Background and Context

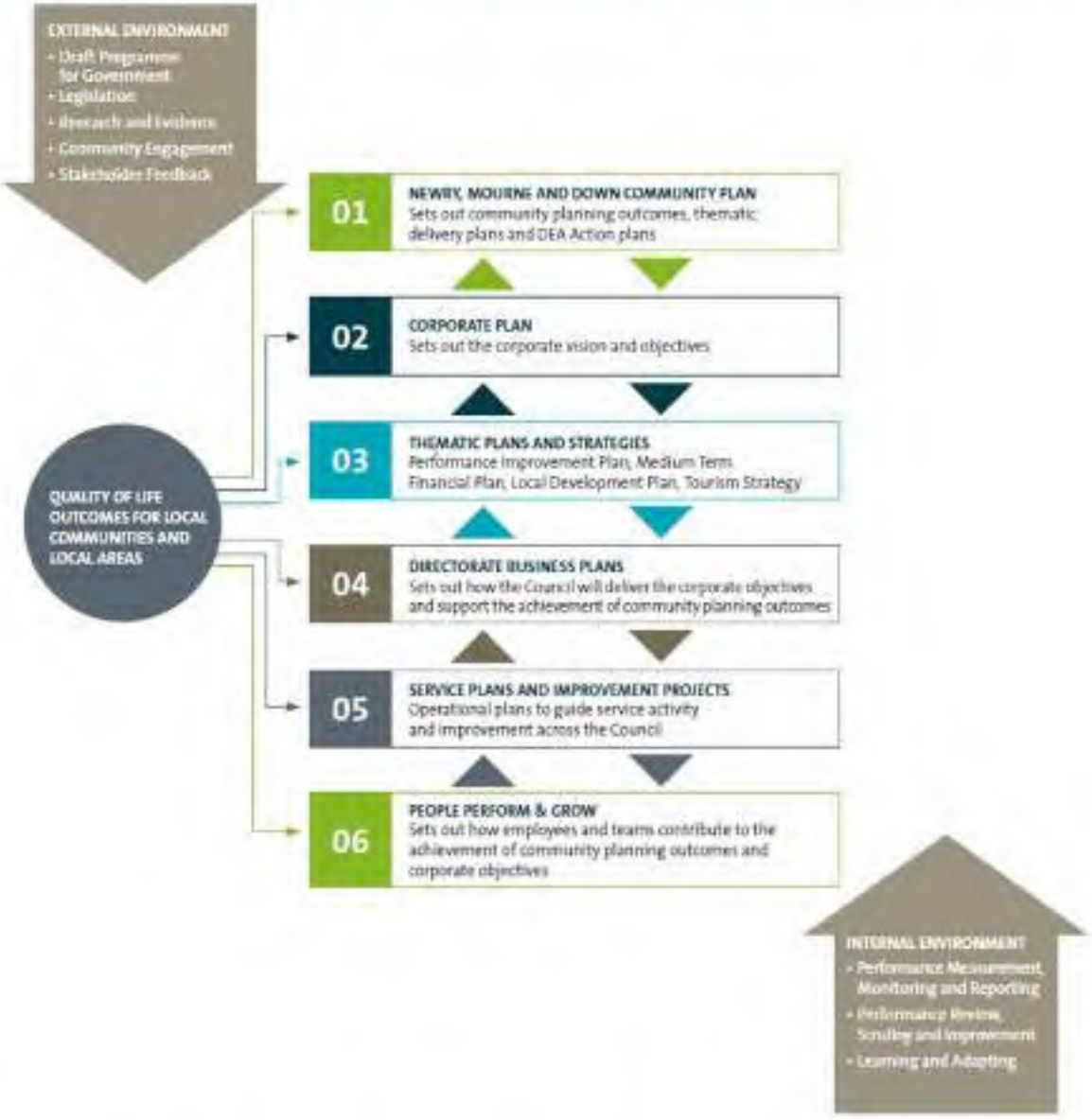
2.1 The Corporate Services Business Plan is developed within the context of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Performance Improvement Plan. The Community Plan sets out the long-term outcomes for the District, based on the needs and aspirations of local people. The Corporate Plan sets out the key strategic objectives for the Council between 2021-23, and how it will contribute to achieving the community planning outcomes. The Performance Improvement Plan highlights the improvements stakeholders can expect to see through the annual performance improvement objectives, which are clearly aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives

2.2 The Community Plan and Corporate Plan are cross cutting and strategic in nature. They guide all activity within the organisation, as well as the subsequent allocation of resources, and sit within a hierarchy of plans, as outlined in the 'Business Planning and Performance Management Framework' (Figure 1).

2.3 The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that the Council is delivering its corporate vision and

priorities, whilst securing continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. It provides a mechanism to join up and cascade the various plans and strategies across the organisation, demonstrating how employees contribute to achieving community planning outcomes and corporate priorities, for the ultimate benefit of the citizens we serve.

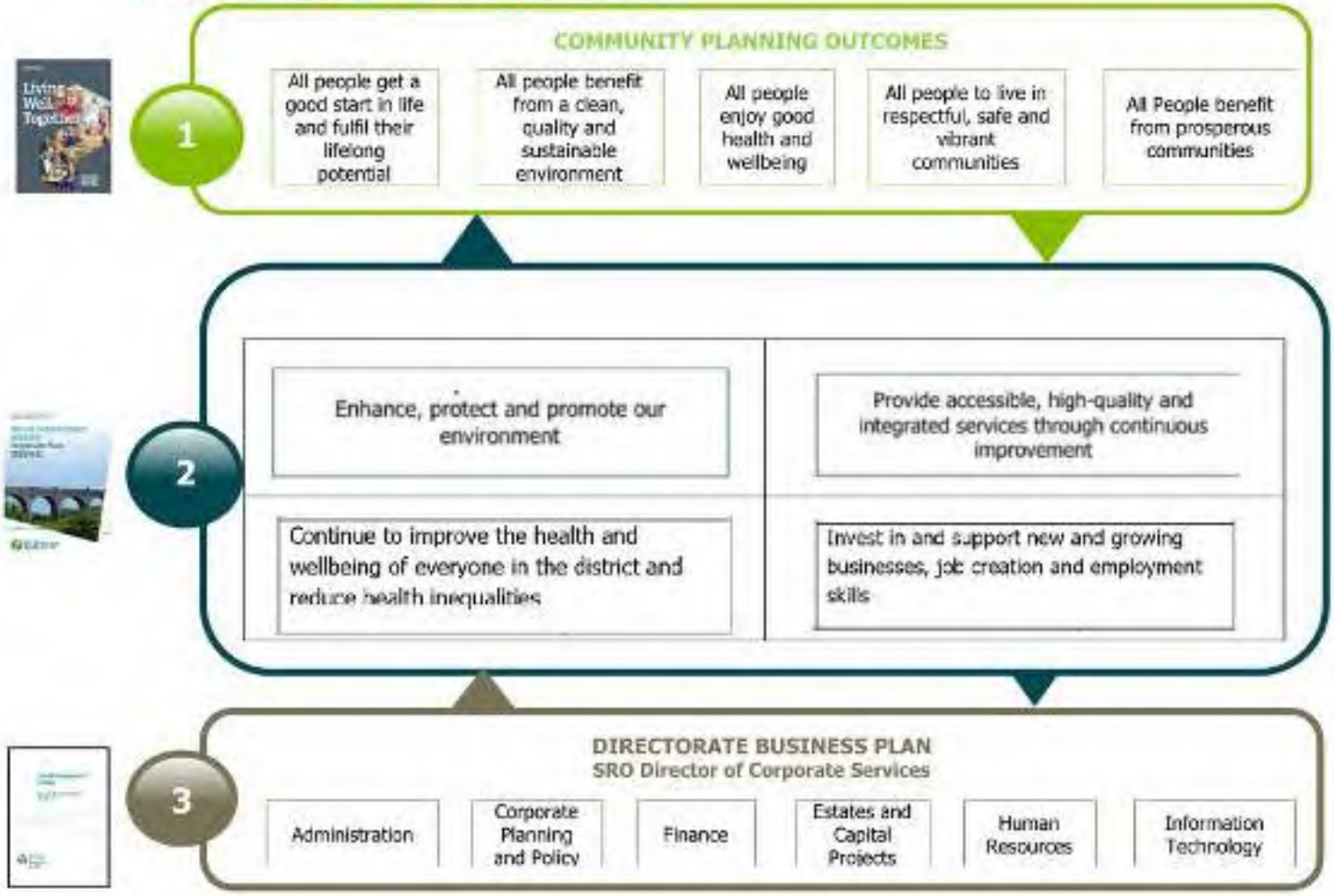
Figure 1: Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



2.4 The Corporate Services Business Plan provides an overview of the key operational activities for the coming year. These activities are explicitly linked to corporate objectives and coupled with 'business as usual' service delivery, provide clear direction for all employees within the Directorate (Figure 2). Directorate Business Plans are supported by Service Plans and the 'People Perform and Grow' initiative.

2.5 The Corporate Services Business Plan is published annually and is the basis upon which performance is managed and reviewed by full Council, the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Senior Management Team.

Figure 2: Corporate Services Alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



3.0 Purpose and Values

3.1 Purpose

3.1.1 The Corporate Service Directorate's primary purpose is to provide the resources and support required to the organisation to enable delivery of the strategic (corporate) outcomes for the Council. As a result, the bulk of Directorate activity is aligned with the Council's strategic objective:

- Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

3.1.2 However, there are other important Council strategic objectives where the Directorate makes a significant contribution in supporting the achievements of

the objectives. Further, more detailed information is provided in Sections 5.0 (Corporate Services Supporting Actions 2023-24) and 6.0 (Performance) of this Plan.

3.1 Values

3.1.1 The Department adheres to the Council's values which are outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23:

We Will Be	What This Means
Accountable	We will be accountable for how we plan for and use resources sustainably
Collaborative	We will work in partnership with others
Transparent	We will be transparent in how we make decisions

3.2.2 In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), the Chief Executive's Department is committed to carrying out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations. All new and revised policies, procedures and programmes of work will be subject to an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment (where appropriate).

4.0 Challenges and Opportunities

4.1 The Corporate Services Directorate was established in December 2014, as part of the organisational design of the new Council, to centralise the management of a number of existing Council functions as well as support new powers which were transferred to the Council on the 1 April 2015. From 1 April 2017, the functional areas of Corporate Planning and Policy, and Estates and Capital Projects have become part of the Corporate Services Directorate.

4.2 The Directorate continues to develop in line with organisational change. Over the course of this financial year, the Directorate will continue to develop and embed the necessary corporate frameworks, policies, processes and systems to deliver strategic improvement across the organisation, specifically in the areas of human resources, finance, administration and information technology.

4.3 The various (internal and external) challenges and opportunities for the Directorate are summarised as follows:

External Environment

- **Financial Planning:** Establishing the necessary financial plans within which Members' priorities for the District will be delivered.
- **Legislation and Regulations:** Ensuring legislative compliance with a range of legislation including S75 NI Act, Rural Needs Act, Health & Safety, Procurement regulations.
- **Corporate Planning and Policy:** Establishing the necessary corporate planning and policy frameworks within which Members priorities for the District will be delivered and statutory obligations met, and we communicate effectively.

Internal Environment

- **Management**: Successfully establishing the Directorate in terms of its structure, governance and internal processes and increased responsibilities.
- **Resources:** Identifying and securing the financial and non-financial resources needed for the Directorate to successfully develop.
- **Estate Planning and Asset Management**: Successfully developing and implementing the necessary frameworks, policies and processes to support the effective and efficient management of the Council's Estate.
- **Transformation & Efficiencies**: Successfully developing and implementing transformational change that drives out the efficiencies and improvements that both Members and the public demand.
- **Information Management:** Ensuring adequate policies and procedures are in place to effectively manage our information in accordance with legislative requirements.
- **Information Technology**: Establishing robust information technology infrastructure to support business transformation.
- **Compliance**: Establishing the necessary policies and procedures and monitoring arrangements to ensure corporate legislative compliance in respect of key statutory obligations, including Equality, Disability, Rural Needs, Health & Safety, Employment and Procurement legislation.
- **Risk Management:** Managing potential risks and opportunities in achieving the key actions outlined in the CS Business Plan by adhering to the Corporate Risk Management Policy and reviewing the CS Risk Register on a quarterly basis.
- **Performance Management:** Managing Council performance, highlighting areas of high-performance, identifying areas for intervention, developing a performance led approach to business and service planning and facilitating the development of a performance improvement culture.
- **Corporate Communications and Marketing:** Developing and delivering relevant communications activities, aligned to the corporate strategic priorities and agreed approach, ensuring staff, members, residents and other stakeholders are kept well informed about the work of the Council and other relevant activities in the district, in an appropriate, accessible and engaging manner.

5.0 Directorate Objectives and Supporting Actions

Key Office Objectives / Actions
Administration – Provide a Corporate Compliance Service Deliver a Corporate Business Support Service and Registration Service Provide a Corporate Legal Support Service **Corporate Planning and Policy** – Provide a Corporate Policy function including statutory duty compliance and Irish Language Provide a Corporate Communications and Marketing service including digital communications **Estates and Capital** – Provide adequate Emergency Planning and response Provide appropriate Health and Safety and Insurance provision Provide strategic asset strategy for Council **Finance** – Provide and efficient finance function Ensure appropriate risk management arrangements in place Provide an effective procurement service Support the development of a performance improvement culture by embedding effective performance management arrangements. **HR & Safeguarding** – Continue to mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks, for both Council & Citizens Provide a professional HR service all employment matters, including employee relations, resourcing and development Contribute to the further development of future workforce skills **IT** – Provide a highly available, accessible, and secure IT environment to support Council services.

Administration		
Provide a Corporate Compliance Service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Review and update the Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure (COIPP) including implementing a new monitoring and evaluation process.		Q1-4
Review and update the Gifts and Hospitality Policy and Procedure (G&HPP) including implementing a new monitoring and evaluation process.		Q1-4

Ensure SPRC receive an updated Access to Information and Records Management Policy and Procedure by their respective review dates.	Q1-4
Deliver a Corporate Business Support Service and Registration Services	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Design and implement service standards for all activities delivered by the corporate business support service	Q2
Provide improved corporate Complaints Management through implementation of and support for the NIPSO Model Complaints Handling Procedure	Q3
Provide a Corporate Legal Support Service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Complete a Retention and Disposal review of historical legal files extracting information which requires to be retained (R/BS and store review)	Q4
Work with Evidence Section to ensure all relevant Council assets are included on the ARC GIS system	Q1-4
In line with Council's Digital First policy move as far as possible to electronic files versus paper-based files	Q1-4
Corporate Planning and Policy	
Provide a corporate planning and policy service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Development of the Corporate Plan 2023-2027	Q3

Ensure Section 75, Disability and Rural Needs statutory duties compliance	Q4
Review Corporate Consultation and Engagement Framework	Q4
Development of Equality Action Plan 2023-2027	Q2
Development of Disability Action Plan 2023-2027	Q2
Development of Community Wealth Building Action Plan	Q2
Development of Irish Language Strategy 2023-2027	Q2
Review Irish Language Bursary Scheme	Q3

Provide a corporate Communications and Marketing service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Action	Timescale
Provide a Press Office service to include raising awareness of Council corporate priorities, services, facilities and responding to media enquiries across local, regional, national and special media	Q1 – Q4
Continue to manage, deliver and develop the Council's corporate social media channels	Q1 – Q4
Contribute to work on the development of a new corporate website with regards to content management (when required)	Q1 – Q4
Renew ESPO Framework for Advertising Solutions	Q3
Award tender for Media Monitoring Services	Q2
Review, update and implement Year 2 of Corporate Digital Communications Action Plan 2022-2024	Q1 - Q4
Develop a new Digital Advertising Staff Toolkit	Q1 – Q4
Finalise NMDDC Emergency Communications Plan	Q2
Establish the Roving Reporter approach as an integral resource in the C/M Service Plan	Q3
Develop a calendar of significant PR and digital opportunities to support the Chairperson 2023/2024	Q1 – Q4
Support the Chief Executive's Office in the development and delivery of signature projects 2023/2024	Q1 – Q4

Estates and Capital		
Provide adequate Emergency Planning and Response	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Action		Timescale
Update of the Council Emergency Plan following review of the JESIP Doctrine, including training of staff and elected members. Dependent on SMT/CMT structures in place.		Q3
Ensure debrief of emergencies/ incidents (internally & externally) as appropriate to capture learning – within 6 weeks of end of response phase. Including - SMT/ CMT/ EPIG/ LG Resilience/ Statutory Agencies		Q1-Q4
Provide adequate Health & Safety and Insurance provision	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Action		Timescale
Review of current H&S Policy and communication to staff to accurately reflect mechanisms for effective consultation & communication (governance & operational)		Q3
Proactive investigation and review of reported employee lost-time accidents working with relevant line manager and escalation of issues to SMT/CMT as required.		Q1-Q4
Continue to contribute to the library of e-learning H&S modules available for staff in line with Corporate H&S Training Framework/ Matrix – in conjunction with Learning & Development Staff (HR). SHEP request direct access to update content		Q1-Q4
Provide strategic Estate Management and Capital Project support to Council.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Action		Timescale
Deliver approved capital projects through design, procurement and delivery stages and provide regular and updated reports to departments.		Q1-Q4
Advise and assist departments in the identification of projects for consideration for inclusion in the capital programme, including advising of projected costs, programme, risks and procurement strategy.		Q1-Q4

Continuation with the identification and disposal of all surplus assets, including the direct liaison with directorates and external organisations.	Q1-Q4
Human Resources	
Provide a professional HR service on all employment matters, including employee relations, resourcing and development and safeguarding.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Continue to embed People Perform Grow across all services, supported by training and support to managers, employees and teams.	Q1-Q4
In conjunction with the recognised trade unions, review existing industrial relations structures, with a view to developing revised arrangements as required.	Q2-Q4
Finalisation for approval of the Outline Business case for HR Systems and review of existing HR Processes with stakeholder input	Q3-Q4
In conjunction with the Equality and Evidence & Research Teams, work with key stakeholders across the organisation to develop Affirmative Action measures to examine opportunities to promote NMDDC as an equal opportunities' employer.	Q1-Q4
Implementation of Tier 3 PFF management structures.	Q2-Q3
Support and protect everyone in our District from harm by working in partnership with other bodies, to implement and promote broader prevention measures, thereby continuing to mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks, for both Council & Citizens.	Q1-Q4
Information Technology	
Provide a highly available, accessible, and secure IT environment to support Council services.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale

Replace the Council's Computing Platform to improve its stability and resilience and operate it as a firm foundation to support future business requirements.	Q4
Continue to develop and test response plans and capabilities in line with CAF (Cyber Assessment Framework) and other relevant standards.	Q1-Q4
Continue to increase user awareness and resilience through the provision of training, advice and testing.	Q1-Q4

Provide technical input and support to digital transformation projects.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Action	Timescale
Finance	

Provide an efficient finance function	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Action	Timescale
P2P Procedures (as per IA report) – including Bank Details verification	Q3
Training on PECOS – recap and for new staff	Q3
Account Receivable Procedures including TW (as per IA report)	Q2
Review of Payroll Process (standarisation off both sites)	Q3
Payslips on CINTRA	Q3
New Capital Procedure – Business Cases and financial management	Q1
Quarterly Capital Management Reports detailing spend	Q1

	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN

Ensure appropriate governance/risk management arrangements are in place	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Review of Whistleblowing / Raising Concerns procedures	Q3
Review of Fraud Response Plan	Q3
Fraud Risk Assessment to be completed	Q2
Training for new Audit Committee Members	Q2

Provide an effective procurement service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Procurement policy to be updated to create an interim policy document pending full review upon implementation of new procurement legislation.	Q4
Procurement team to receive official training on new legislative framework prior to its implementation.	Q4
Continue to update and maintain Contract Register but make the Contract Register an internal resource available to all staff in the 'R' drive.	Q2
Continue to monitor developments regarding Social Value in Procurement and move to implementation once legally practicable.	Ongoing
Develop a MultiQuote quick guide for staff and host a virtual training session	Q3
Explore options to enhance visibility of Council tender processes, for example through working with Elcom to enable MultiQuote competitions to be advertised on E-tenders NI and E-tenders.ie.	Q4

Support the development of a performance improvement culture by embedding effective performance management arrangements	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Action	Timescale
Prepare and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24	Q1
Prepare and publish the Assessment of Performance 2022-23	Q2
Facilitate the Performance Audit and Assessment and implement the 'proposals for improvement' put forward by the Local Government Auditor	Q2-Q3
Develop the 2024-25 performance improvement objectives, in line with the Corporate Plan	Q3-Q4
Strengthen the alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and co-ordinate the business and service planning process	Q1 onwards
Implement the new electronic Performance Management System and embed the system through training of relevant officers	Q1-Q2

6.0 Performance

6.1 Corporate Services performs a key role in leading the development of robust and meaningful performance measures at all levels across the organisation. This exercise will also identify additional, suitable performance measures for the Corporate Services Directorate.

6.2 In addition to managing and monitoring financial and human resources, the following performance measures will be monitored during 2023-24:

Measures of Success	
Administration	95% of responses to FOI/EIR/DP requests for information provided within statutory timeframes
Finance	Pay 90% of invoices to suppliers within 30 days Compliance with the Statutory of Improvement
IT	97.5% System "UP" Time
HR & Safeguarding	People Perform Grow, rolled out across the organisation
Estates and Capital Projects	90% of staff to receive training on the new Health & Safety Policy
Corporate Planning and Policy	90% of media requests for information responded to within agreed timeframes

Corporate Services Plans and Strategies

6.3 The Corporate Services Directorate is responsible for leading the development, implementation and review of the following plans and strategies, which influence the work of the Office and Council:

- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Treasury Management Strategy
- Equality Action Plan
- Disability Action Plan
- Irish Language Strategy
- Corporate Communications Strategy
- Corporate Digital Communications Strategy
- Information Technology Strategy
- Estates and Asset Management Strategy
- Performance Improvement Plan
- Business Planning and Performance Management Framework
- Performance Improvement Policy

7.0 Organisation and Office Structure

7.1 Corporate Services is one of five Directorates, which together, comprise the Management structure of the Council.

8.0 Financial Information

Net estimated expenditure (2023-24)	
Corporate Planning and Policy	£
HR	£
IT	£
Finance	£
Administration	£
Estates and Capital Projects	£
TOTAL: Corporate Services	£

9.0 Governance Arrangements

9.1 Reviewing performance and reporting progress to Elected Members and other key stakeholders facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The political and organisational governance arrangements to develop, monitor and report the Council's progress in implementing the Corporate Services Business Plan are outlined below, and are supplemented by regular reviews by the Director of Corporate Services and her team. The governance arrangements the Council has put in place to deliver continuous improvement are also subject an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Figure 4: Governance Arrangements

Full Council
- Ratification of Corporate Services Business Plan
- Ratification of annual and bi-annual reviews of Corporate Services Business Plan

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee / Audit Committee
- Scrutiny and challenge around the Duty of Improvement
- Provide assurance that performance management arrangements are robust and effective

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of Corporate Services Business Plan
- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of Corporate Services Business Plan

Senior Management Team
- Development, consideration and approval of Corporate Services Business Plan
- Development, consideration and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of Corporate Services Business Plan

Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down and South Armagh

0330 137 4000 (Council)
0330 137 4036 (Planning)
council@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

Oifig an Iúir
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row

Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road

Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	2022/23 FOI/EIR/DP/RM monitoring statistics
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Edel Cosgrove Head of Compliance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Alison Robb Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision		**For noting only**	**X**

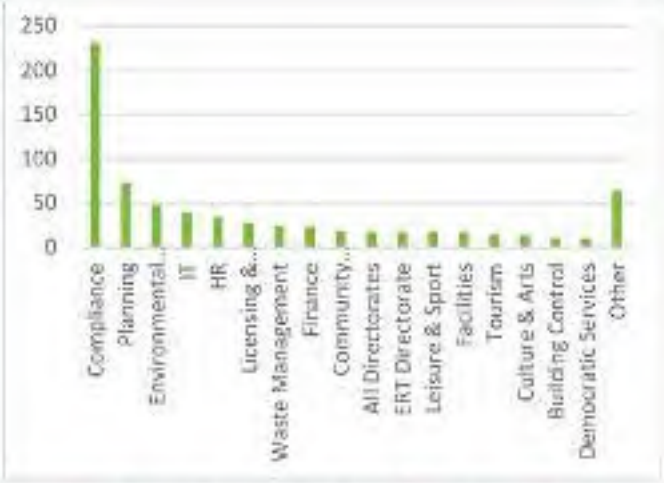
1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The purpose of this paper is to present the monitoring statistics for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 in relation to the: • 709 requests for information (RFI) received to Council and processed under either the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004, Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018; and • Internal Records Management project.
1.2	22 Breach Reviews are also included within the 709 count for FOI/EIR/DP RFI. Breach reviews are conducted in line with Council's Breach Management Plan. They ascertain if there has been a breach in Data Protection, capture learning to enhance compliance of the legislation and whether Council needs to inform the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Details of each individual breach are reported in the Corporate Services Quarterly Assurance Statement under the section risks realised.
1.3	Analysis for FOI/EIR/DP RFI commenced in the 2018/19 financial year. 2020/21 was the first year we reported progress on our Records Management work. See section 8 for background information.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	The collection and reporting of this information will enable Council to establish trends in requests for information and records management, allocate resource and determine staff training needs.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	Councillors are asked to note the monitoring statistics.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	None.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes***

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale:
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
	N/A
7.0	**Appendices**
	FOI/EIR/DP and Records Management monitoring statistics.
8.0	**Background Documents**

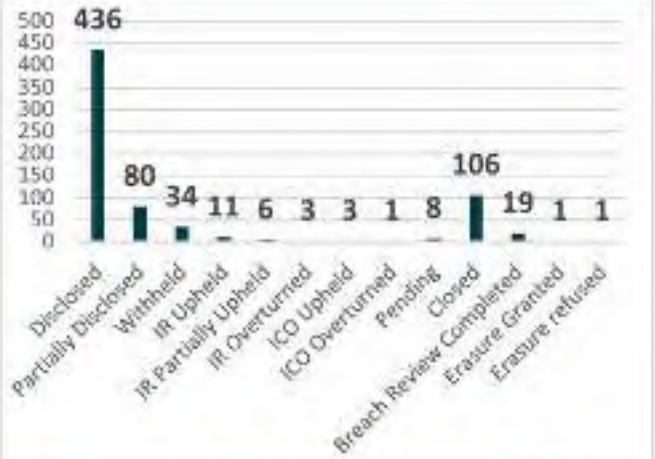
	Access to Information Policy and Procedure (presented to the Committee on 13 June 2019, pages 220 – 252). A copy of the 2018/19 statistics was presented to the Committee on 13 June 2019 (page 219) 2019/20 statistics on 11 June 2020 (page 234). 2020/21 statistics on 13 May 2021 (page 45), commencing collecting Records Management statistics. 2021/22 statistics on 12 May 2022 (page 65)



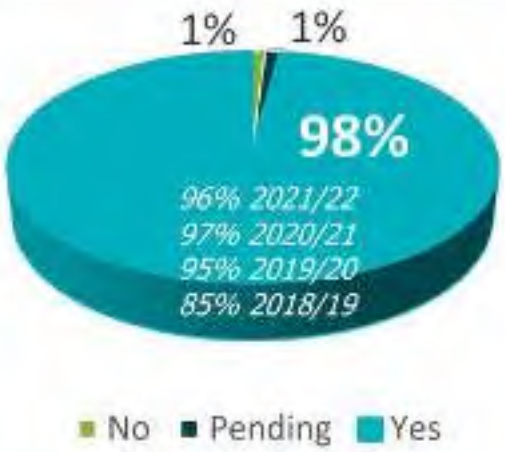
Number of annual requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2023 per quarter.



Number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2023 per lead Department.



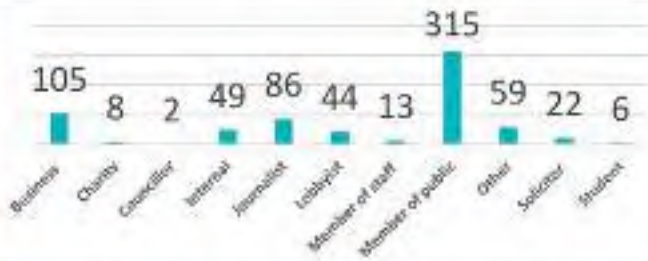
Decisions on the number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2023.



Percentage of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2023 responded within the deadline.

Most common reasons for withholding information:

- Personal information of a third party
- Information already publicly available
- Manifestly unreasonable



Type of Requester from 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2023



Number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2023 per regime.

Number of Data Breach reviews conducted from 1 April – 31 March 2023.





Number of ICO decisions from 1 April – 31 March 2023:

4

See decisions results above

Annual comparison on Confidential Waste Disposal:

Year	Collections	Cost	Weight (approx.)	Trees Saved
2019/20	35	£10,500.43	7200 kg	119*
2020/21	8	£40.00	13000 kg	221
2021/22	7	£518.06	7200 kg	122.75*
2022/23	12	£,1467.50	25345 kg	436

**Although the same weight, the difference in figures is due to different calculations applied*

The percentage saving based on the estimated cost of the ShredIt by the KG weight disposed:

Great White Destruction	£1,467.50
ShredIt	£39,962.97 (estimate based on 2019/20 charges)
% saving	96%

Recycling 25,345kg of paper saves around 35.5 million litres of oil and 672 million litres of water[1]

25,345kg of paper waste is the equivalent of 5 billion sheets of A4 paper – that's as tall as a 40 story building[2]

Retention and Disposal

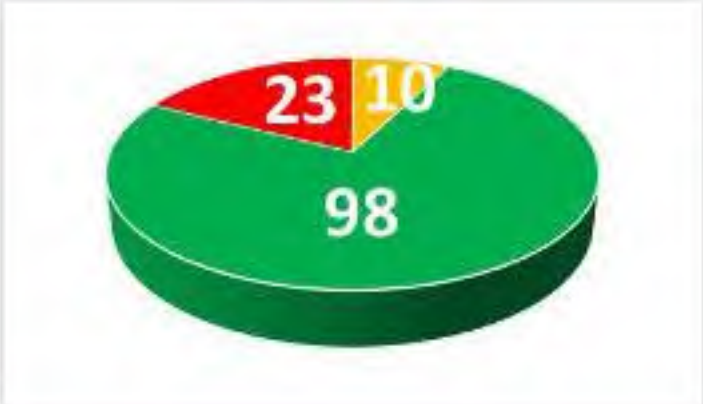
New Retention and Disposal Schedule approved by:

Council on 10 January 2022;

Department for Communities (DFC) 23 March 2022;

Laid before the NI Assembly 24 March 2022 and awaiting ratification;

Revised Planning R&DS approved by Council on 5 December 2022 and awaiting DFC approval



Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status on the number of Teams who have completed a records management task

[1] Esben Larsen and Karsten Bjerring Olsen - The World Counts

[2] University of California, Berkeley

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Annual report for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 on requests related to naming Council facilities, planting trees and to locate artworks/sculptures on Council property.
Reporting Officer:	Colin Moffett, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy (Acting)
Contact Officers:	Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision		**For noting only**	**X**

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	Requests related to naming Council facilities, planting trees and to locate artworks/sculptures on Council property fall within the scope of the following Council policies: • Policy on naming Council facilities • Policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property • Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property Applications are administered as per each policy's specific agreed guidelines and associated procedure.
1.2	During the reporting period Council received fourteen applications; eight related to the policy on naming Council facilities, three related to the policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property and three related to the policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property.
1.3	The following table sets out details related to the applications received during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023:

Applicant	Relevant Policy	Detail of request	Decision
1	Policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property	To provide 2000 trees to be planted across the council district.	Approved
2	Policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property	Request to plant trees at Norman Brown Park	Approved
3	Policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property	To plant a tree in Kilbroney Park	Approved

	4	Policy on naming Council facilities	To name walking trail An Chraobh Forest Community Trail	Approved
	5	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate a bench at the entrance to Fair Green Ballynahinch	Approved
	6	Policy on naming Council facilities	To inscribe two granite benches in The Square, Rostrevor	Approved
	7	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate a 'chatty bench' at Market Square, Ballynahinch	Approved
	8	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate Chatty Benches across the district	Approved
	9	Policy on naming Council facilities	To place an information panel acknowledging Charlie Smyth's significant contribution to the arts within the upgraded Newry Town Hall.	Approved
	10	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate a bench and plaque at the Greenway, Newry.	Request was refused. • Section 4.2 of the Council's Policy on Naming Facilities, Council does not accept requests to memorialise a deceased person (or family) on Council property.
	11	Policy on naming Council facilities	To rename Marine Parade, Warrenpoint as Biden Place/Boulevard	Applicant was advised that this request falls under Council's Development Naming, Postal Numbering and Erection of Nameplates Policy and was redirected to relevant department.
	12	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	To locate a statue to Pat Jennings on Council property	Approved. However, applicant has since identified a preferred site for the statute which is not Council property.
	13	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	To locate an artwork on Killean bus shelter	Approved
	14	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	To place an artwork of Tom Dunn in The Square, Rostrevor	Approved

2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	No issues have been identified.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	Members are asked to note Annual report for the 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 period on requests related to naming Council facilities, plant trees and locate artworks/sculptures on Council property.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	No financial or resources implications.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale:
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**

6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	**Appendices**
	N/A
8.0	**Background Documents**
	N/A

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Statutory reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023
Reporting Officer:	Colin Moffett, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy (Acting)
Contact Officers:	Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision		**For noting only**	**X**

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (the Act) became operational for government departments and district councils on 1 June 2017 and for the remaining public authorities listed on the schedule to the Act on 1 June 2018. In order to fulfil its statutory duty under the Act, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) must publish a Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report detailing the information compiled by public authorities on how they have exercised the due regard duty under section 1 (1) of the Act. DAERA has forwarded a note commissioning the annual returns for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023. DAERA have requested that completed returns be sent to rural.needs@daera-ni.gov.uk by Tuesday 20 June 2023.
1.2	The appendix accompanying this report, providing information related to twenty-eight rural needs impact assessments, submitted to DAERA on 30 May 2023 to meet DAERA's return deadline i.e. Annex I - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023. In advance, a draft copy of the annual return was submitted to DEARA for comment and has been returned to Council.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	There is a duty on public authorities to monitor and report. Under section 3(1) of the Rural Needs Act, Council must, in such manner as may be directed by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA): • compile information on the exercise of its functions under section 1 of the Act, • include that information in the public authority's own annual report; and • send a copy of that information to DAERA.

3.0	**Recommendation**
3.1	To note the completed annual return prepared and submitted to DAERA on 30 May 2023 to meet their requested deadline of 20 June 2023: • Appendix 1 - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale:
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service

	Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	**Appendices**
	Appendix I: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023
8.0	**Background Documents**
	• The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016



Appendix 2 - Template for Information to be Compiled

Information to be compiled by Public Authorities under Section 3(1)(a) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

(To be completed and included in public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report).

Name of Public Authority: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Reporting Period: April 20 22 to March 20 23

The following information should be compiled in respect of each policy, strategy and plan which has been developed, adopted, implemented or revised and each public service which has been designed or delivered by the public authority during the reporting period.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016[1].	*The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to[2].*	*Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service[3].*
Developing an agile working policy.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plan 2022-2023.	Cross cutting	When developing the Active and Healthy Business Plan consideration has been given to information provided by the Council's Evidence and Research Team in relation to the social and economic needs of people within the district. This sets out information including that related to population, multiple deprivation, access to services, economy, income and transport, housing, crime, and health and wellbeing. While the Active and Healthy Communities Business

		Plan details positive actions for all the community, there are some specific actions which will directly positively impact on people living in the rural areas. An example of this is the Home to Hospital volunteer driver schemes in the Slieve Gullion and The Mournes District Electoral Areas.
Developing a bulky collection service.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Chief Executive Directorate Business Plan 2022-2023.	Cross cutting	The actions and objectives detailed with the Chief Executive's Business Plan are corporate objectives which will benefit all residents of the district regardless of where they live. No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the policy on complaints, comment and compliment.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising and reviewing the conflict of interest policy and associated conflict of interest procedures.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2022-2023.	Cross cutting	The Corporate Services Business Plan details positive actions for all the community through the delivery of internal structures. However, there are some specific actions which will directly positively impact on people living in the rural areas. Capital project delivery is an objective with the Corporate Services directorate and some of the proposed projects identified as needed will be delivered within rural areas.
Revising and reviewing the Council's Disability Action Plan 2023-2027.	Cross cutting	The Council's Evidence and Research Team have provided information in relation to the social and economic needs of people within the Newry, Mourne and Down District. This sets out information including

		that related to population, multiple deprivation, access to services, economy, income and transport, housing, crime and health wellbeing. Having considered this information, there is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Disability Action Plan will have adverse impact upon people in rural needs differently from people in urban areas. The actions detailed within the Council's Disability Action Plan 2023-2027 will have a positive impact of all residents of the district, regardless of where they live.
Revising and reviewing the Council's Equality Action Plan 2023-2027.	Cross cutting	The Action Plan recommends key areas of activity and details positive actions, positive action measures have been set out under the five principles of the Equality and Diversity in Local Councils Framework. There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.
Developing the Irish Language Strategy 2023-2027.	Cross cutting	There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Irish Language Strategy will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.
Developing the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund	Cross cutting	Successful applicants to the fund are likely to be advantaged by it but it is an open and competitive process to which rural businesses are equally eligible to apply.
Developing the Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism Directorate Business Plan 2022-2023.	Cross cutting	The Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate Business Plan details positive actions for all the community. However there are some specific actions which will directly positively impact on people living in the rural areas such as the delivery of the Rural Development Programme.
Developing the fleet renewal policy.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.

Developing the fleet telemetry system policy.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising guidelines and associated procedure in relation to the offer and acceptance of gifts to Council.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing an ill health retirement policy.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing an interim policy on the issue/collection of wheeled bins.	Cross cutting	It is not anticipated the policy will impact on people in rural areas differently than people from urban areas.
Developing the Neighbourhood Services Directorate Business Plan 2022-2023.	Cross cutting	The Neighbourhood Services Directorate Business Plan details positive actions for all the community of the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area regardless of where they live within the district.
Reviewing the regeneration of Newry City through investment in a theatre/conference facility.	Cross cutting	The 2021 OBC Public Consultation Survey for the Newry City Centre Regeneration programme included an opportunity to respond on rural needs. These responses related to access to parking and rural to city accessibility (access to services and transport), and balance between rural and city investment (economy).
Developing nonstandard pay provision for staff.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising and updating Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2022-2023.	Cross cutting	Progress in delivering the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 has informed the 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success' which underpin the 2022-23 objectives and seek to have a positive impact across all areas of the district. 'Supporting actions' have been developed to address the needs and issues which have been identified, in order to deliver positive outcomes for rural areas:

		Performance Improvement Objectives 1 and 3. • Support for community clean ups. • Slieve Gullion Forest Park to renew 'Green Flag' status. Some objectives are underpinned by 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success' which will have indirect positive outcomes for rural areas. For example: • The Council has parks, open spaces and community trails in rural areas. • Economic development programmes can be accessed by businesses and individuals in rural areas. • Community clean ups are supported across the district, in urban and rural areas. • The Financial Assistance Scheme can be accessed by all communities, including those from rural areas. • The Planning Service is open to all stakeholders and customers across both urban and rural areas.
Revising and reviewing Council's performance improvement policy.	Cross cutting	Effectively mainstreaming the Performance Improvement Policy will support the implementation of key plans and strategies across the organisation, including the Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and Directorate Business Plans. These plans are the front facing documents of the organisation and have been developed using a robust and reliable evidence base which will have considered the social and economic needs of local communities across the district, including rural areas. The Performance Improvement Policy should therefore be regarded as an enabler to support the delivery of key plans and strategies and deliver services which improve the quality of life for all residents in urban and rural areas across the district.
Revising policy and associated procedure in	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural

signage on council land and property by third parties.		areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing and managing car parks.	Cross cutting	The Council's Evidence and Research Team have provided information in relation to the social and economic needs of people within the Newry, Mourne and Down district. This sets out information including that related to population, multiple deprivation, access to services, economy, income and transport, housing, crime, and health and wellbeing. Having considered this information, there is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the proposal to increase the number of car parks at which there is a parking tariff and/or a time restriction will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.
Revising and reviewing the collections development policy 2022-2025.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising and reviewing Council's museum loans policy and procedures.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the smoke free policy.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing a special leave policy.	Internal	No social and economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.

NOTES

1. This information should normally be contained in section 1B of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.

2. This information should normally be contained in section 2D of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.

3. The information contained in sections 3D, 4A & 5B of the RNIA Template should be considered when completing this section.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2023
Reporting Officer:	Colin Moffett, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy (Acting)
Contact Officers:	Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision		**For noting only**	**X**

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	In line with Council's Section 75 statutory duties and commitments within our approved Equality Scheme, policy screening reports are published quarterly. The Quarterly Report for the period January – March 2023, including screening reports, is available on Council's website www.newrymournedown.org. This information has also been forwarded to all equality consultees.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	As per the Council's approved Equality Scheme: • All policies Council proposes to adopt must be equality screened, prior to implementation, to assess the likely impact of the policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. • Council must publish quarterly reports on equality screening which are available on Council's website and forwarded to equality scheme consultees.
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	To note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2023.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes***

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations	☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	☐ ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves Consultation period will be 12 weeks Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	☐ ☐ ☐
	Rationale:	
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	☐
7.0	**Appendices**	
	Appendix I: Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2023.	
8.0	**Background Documents**	

	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Equality Scheme.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Section 75 Policy Screening Report
Quarterly Report January – March 2023

Policy	Details of policy	Screening Outcome
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24	The following five performance improvement objectives have been developed, all of which are clearly linked to the Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2021-23. 1. We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services 2. We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs 3. We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents 4. We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change 5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	No EQIA considered necessary
Proposal to increase the number of car parks with tariffs and / or time restriction	Following a review of car parking, in response to increased costs and matters regarding traffic management, including those related to enforcement, consideration is being given to increasing the number of car parks at which there is a parking tariff and / or a time restriction.	No EQIA considered necessary
Review of car parking tariffs	Following a review of car parking tariffs, in response to increased costs including those related to enforcement, consideration is being given to a proposal that the tariff be increased from 40p/hour to either 50p or 60p per hour.	No EQIA considered necessary

Menopause within the workplace	This guidance is aimed to support all employees working for the Council who may experience menopause-type symptoms. It is intended to raise awareness of menopause while also providing guidance for line managers and employees on how to access support/resources and reasonable adjustments.	No EQIA considered necessary

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	Digital Communications and Marketing Activity Report – Local Council Elections Count, 19 & 20 May 2023
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Veronica Keegan Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy (Acting)
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Patricia Murtagh Communications and Marketing Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:

For decision		**For noting only**	**x**

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	This report provides a summary of the digital communications developed and delivered during the Local Council Elections Count, 19 & 20 May 2023.
2.0	**Key Issues**
2.1	The Council's Communications and Marketing team brought the results live to followers on the corporate digital communications platforms via Facebook and Twitter.
2.2	With over 30,000 followers on Facebook and almost 9,500 followers on Twitter, social media provided a vital platform for all audiences to receive real-time updates from the Local Election Count Centre.
2.3	82 posts were delivered to both Facebook and Twitter across the two-day period.
2.4	The digital insights* reported that the 164 posts reached **1.1 million users,** achieving an engagement of **96,999.** *(*see Appendix I and II).*
2.5	The team provided continuous support to all accredited media who attended the Count Centre. A media hub was provided with a live audio feed from the Declaration Stage and PR opportunities with elected candidates were facilitated as requested.
2.6	It can be noted that BBC NI Journalists were on Industrial Action (Strike) on Friday 19 May resulting in no coverage of council election results on the first day of the Count. However, the Communications and Marketing team provided immediate updates to the BBC Digital team at each stage of the Count for reporting on their digital channels. BBC attended the Count Centre on Saturday 20 May and reported on the election results.
2.7	UTV attended on Friday 19 May and broadcast live for a short period of time.
2.8	The final results for each of the 7 District Electoral Areas (DEAs) were uploaded to the Council's website upon completion of the Count.

3.0	**Recommendations**
	Members are asked to note the contents of the report.
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	None. Digital communications and marketing activities were developed and delivered by the Council's Communications and Marketing team.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale:
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐

7.0	**Appendices**
	I - Data Insights – Facebook II - Data Insights - Twitter
8.0	**Background Documents**
	N/A

	Appendix II	
Facebook Post	**Reach**	**Engagement**
Welcome to our coverage of the Local Council Elections at Mourne House, Newry. Polling opened this morning at 7.30am in Northern Ireland. #LE23	3,457	2,256
Jan Poulton Update: DUNN (DUP) elected on the quota - 1,399 first votes polled. 431.01% turnout - 31.79% #LE23	8,178	1,900
Jan Poulton Update: CAMPBELL (DUP) elected on the quota - 1,216 first votes polled. 374.77% turnout - 27.89% #LE23	8,115	1,187
Jan Poulton Update: ALBUT, GEORGE elected on the quota - 11,757 total votes polled. 418.07% turnout - 69.58% #LE23	8,405	2,116
Jan Poulton Update: SMITH, BILL elected on the quota - 2,317 first votes polled. 71.39% turnout - 52.21% #LE23	8,154	726
Jan Poulton Update: TAIT, NOLAN elected on the quota - 11,337 total votes polled. 379.68% turnout - 67.09% #LE23	4,965	1,137
Jan Poulton: No buyers in room underway #LE23	2,800	506
Counting for Dromore has begun #LE23	5,130	617
Counting for The Mournes is about to begin #LE23	6,428	1,181
Jan Poulton Update: CLARKE, COLLUM elected on the quota - 22,734 total votes polled. 74.95% turnout - 65.79% #LE23	7,116	705
Counting for Slieve Gullion is underway #LE23	7,065	1,181
Jan Poulton Update: MURPHY, Eoin elected on the quota - 10,981 total votes polled. 35.92% turnout - 32.45% #LE23	9,130	1,964
Counting for Downpatrick is underway #LE23	10,290	2,408
RESULTS: Glyn Hanna (DUP), Mathew Ruth (Sinn Féin), and Willie Clarke (Sinn Féin) are declared elected for The Mournes at Stage 1. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	15,117	3,731
RESULTS: No one has been elected at Stage 1. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	7,078	2,062
STAGE 2: Valerie Harvey (Sinn Fein) is deemed elected for Dromore at Stage 2. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	11,399	3,000
RESULTS: No one has been elected at Stage 2. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	6,650	1,716
RESULTS: Aoife Finnegan (Sinn Fein), Oisin Quinn (Sinn Fein), and Declan Murphy (Sinn Fein) are deemed elected for Slieve Gullion at Stage 1. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	13,645	3,998
RESULTS: Oonagh Hanson (Sinn Fein) is deemed elected for Downpatrick at Stage 1. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	13,662	3,403
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 4. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	9,443	1,324
STAGE 5: Geraldine McGahan (Sinn Fein) is deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 4. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	9,638	1,961
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,960	911
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 6. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	7,662	1,548
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 7. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,179	911
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 8. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,982	99
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 9. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,430	981
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 10. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	2,962	53
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 11. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,198	111
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 12. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,195	91
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 13. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,987	98
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 14. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	3,274	41
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 15. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,861	209
STAGE 16: Gareth Sharvin (Sinn Fein) has reached the quota at the end of Stage 16A and is deemed elected. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	6,913	1,301
STAGE 17: Laura Devlin (SDLP) is deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 16. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	9,609	1,555
STAGE 18: Alistair McVicker (Ind.) is declared elected for Slieve Gullion at Stage 17. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	3,705	71
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 18. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,256	67
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 19. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,280	301
STAGE 20: Cadogan Enright (Alliance) and Philip Campbell (Sinn Fein) have reached the quota at Stage 19A and are declared elected. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	6,918	1,305
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 21. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	1,941	41
STAGE 22: Mark Gibbons (Independent) is deemed elected for Dromore at Stage 21. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,581	1,021
STAGE 23: Henry Reilly (SDLP) has reached the quota at the end of Stage 22, and is deemed elected. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,958	538
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 23. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,060	51
STAGE 24: Kate Murphy (Sinn Féin), Declan McAteer (Sinn Fein) and Jarlath Tinnelly (Independent) have been deemed elected for Dromore at Stage 24. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	7,707	1,481
At the end of the final count for Dromore 2023, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Mark Gibbons (Independent), Declan McAteer (SDLP), Selina Murphy (Sinn Fein), Kate Murphy (Sinn Fein), Micheal Ruane (Sinn Fein), Henry Reilly (SDLP) and Jarlath Tinnelly (Independent)	9,609	1,555
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 24. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	3,940	11
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 25. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,130	91
STAGE 26: Jill Truesdale (ALLIANCE) is deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 25. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,129	51
At the end of the final count for The Mournes 2023, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Willie Clarke (Sinn Fein), Laura Devlin (SDLP), Glyn Hanna (DUP), Leeanne McIlveen (Sinn Fein), Michael Rice (Sinn Fein), Henry Reilly (SDLP) and Jill Truesdale (Alli	9,638	1,961
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 26. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,068	41
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 27. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,176	1,462
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 28. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,102	71
STAGE 29: Cecile Duffy with (SDLP) is deemed elected for Downpatrick at Stage 28A. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	8,777	1,702
At the end of the final count for Downpatrick 2023, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Emily Campbell (Sinn Fein), Cadogan Enright (Alliance), Conor Gallagher (SDLP), Oonagh Hanlon (Sinn Fein), Gareth Sharvin (Sinn Fein) and Cecile Duffy (SDLP). #LE23	6,918	1,305
RESULTS: Peter Byrne (SDLP) is deemed elected for Slieve Gullion at Stage 30C. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	7,900	826
No further candidates were elected at Stage 31 for Slieve Gullion. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,460	98
STAGE 32: Mickey Lee Kit Chong Ford was elected at Stage 31 of the Slieve Gullion count (Oonagh Magennis (Sinn Fein) and David Taylor (UUP) cleared the last two seats) for Slieve Gullion. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,459	1,459
At the end of the final count for Slieve Gullion 2023, candidates elected are (in alphabetical order) Frank Burns (SDLP), Aoife Finnegan (Sinn Fein), Mickey Lee Kit Chong Ford (Sinn Fein), Oonagh Magennis (Sinn Fein), Declan Murphy (Sinn Fein), Nine Quinn (Sinn Fein) and David Taylor	9,638	1,301
We're having a short break now! Join us at 1pm to complete the count for Newry, Rowallane and Slieve Croob. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	10,048	961
Good Morning! The counting for Newry and Slieve Croob has begun. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	6,158	379
The counting for Rowallane has now begun. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,668	1,008
STAGE 1: Valerie Harvey (Sinn Fein), Jane Mathew (Sinn Fein) are deemed elected for Mourne at Stage 1. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	14,128	2,855
RESULTS: Valerie Harbinson (DUP) is deemed elected for Rowallane at Stage 1. May turned. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,395	211
RESULTS: Alan Lewis (DUP) and Jim Kirkham (Sinn Fein) are deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 1. The count continues #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,281	1,500
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 2. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,902	74
STAGE 3: Geraldine Kearney (Sinn Fein) and Aidan McEvoy (Sinn Fein) are deemed elected for Newry at Stage 2. May turned the votes upstairs. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,503	1,105
RESULTS: Tim Andrews (DUP) and Colum Bowsie (DUP) are deemed elected for Rowallane at Stage 2LC May turned for more updates. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	7,909	911
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 3. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,196	91
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 4. More updates coming soon. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,000	201
STAGE 5: Teresa Kelly (Alliance) and Daniel Lee-Surginor (Alliance) have been elected at Stage 4 of the Rowallane count. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,188	1,704
STAGE 6: No one has been elected at Stage 5 for Newry. #LE23 Electoral Office for the North Ireland	5,156	81
At the end of the final count for Rowallane DEA, candidates elected are (in alphabetical order): Terry Andrews (UUP), Callan Bowsie (DUP), Jonny Dickson (DUP), Teresa Kelly (Alliance) and Daniel Lee-Surginor (Alliance). #LE23 Electoral Office for the North Irela	5,912	911
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 6. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,098	104
STAGE 7: Declan McAteer (Sinn Fein) is deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 6. Get ready for more updates. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,000	1,410
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 8. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,978	91
STAGE 9: Andrew McMurray (Alliance) is duly elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 8. Stay tuned for more updates. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,967	91
#LE23 LIVE: No one has been elected at Stage 9. The count continues. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	5,354	201
STAGE 10: Siobhán O'Hare is deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 9. #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	10,276	1,410
At the end of the final count for Slieve Croob DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Jim Kirkham (Sinn Fein), Alan Lewis (DUP), Andrew McMurray (Alliance) and Siobhán O'Hare (Sinn Fein). #LE23 Electoral Office for Northe	5,156	201
#LE23 LIVE: The last two seats for Newry at Stage 09 have gone to Michael Savage (SDLP) and Doire Finn (SDLP). #LE23 Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	4,754	101
Here are the final results for Newry DEA, candidates elected are (in alphabetical order): Doire Finn (SDLP), Valerie Harte (Sinn Fein), Geraldine Kearney (Sinn Fein), Cathal Kelly (Sinn Fein), Jason Murphy (Sinn Fein) and Michael Savage (SDLP). #LE23 Electoral O	7,239	134
And that's a wrap! The completion the results for Newry, Mourne and Down elections. Seats are as follows: Sinn Féin 26, SDLP 8, Alliance 3, DUP 5, Independent 1 and UUP 1 Full election results can be found here: ...n.https://bit.ly/43xGwTE. Thanks for following. Over t	8,908	7,310
Thank you for following on the night and our #LE23 coverage. Over and out!	5,130	994
Totals	**535,477**	**85,449**
Total Posts: 80		

	Appendix II	
Tweet	**Impressions**	**Engagements**
Thank you for following us throughout our #LE23 coverage. Over and out!	3,803	65
And that's a wrap! This completes the results for Newry, Mourne and Down election. Seats are as follows: Sinn FÃ©in 10, SDLP 6, Alliance 5, DUP 5, Independent 3 and UUP 1. Full election results are here: ðŸ‘‰https://t.co/v7i6FlgvR7 Thanks for following ðŸ‘€. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/tpeVPvYVOt	3,795	465
Here are the final results for Newry DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Doire Finn (SDLP), Valerie Harte (Sinn FÃ©in), Geraldine Kearns (Sinn FÃ©in), Cathal King (Sinn FÃ©in), Aidan Mathews (Sinn FÃ©in) and Michael Savage (SDLP) #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/2wRA2RDuhw	3,477	68
RESULTS: The last two seats for Newry at Stage 8B have gone to Michael Savage (SDLP) and Doire Finn (SDLP). #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/bwUfHQVOf	26,692	1,097
At the end of the final count for Slieve Croob DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Jim Brennan (Sinn FÃ©in), Robin Howell (Sinn FÃ©in), Alan Lewis (DUP), Andrew McMurray (Alliance) and Siobhan O'Hare (Sinn FÃ©in) #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/aHGkqDdZW	2,429	51
RESULTS: Siobhán O'Hare (Sinn FÃ©in) is deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 6. #LE23 ieani_official #Leave https://t.co/wWHBFdgcuu	2,592	83
NEWS!! No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,622	129
RESULTS: Andrew McMurray (Alliance) is deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 6. Stay tuned for more updates. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/xdUTwvBC59	2,452	52
SLIEVE CROOB: No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 #ieani_official	2,146	51
RESULTS: Robin Howell (SF) is deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 5 (4). Stay tuned for more updates. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/FY2SDEobWL	2,789	92
SLIEVE CROOB: No one has been elected at Stage 4. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,980	39
At the end of the final count for Rowallane DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Terry Andrews (SDLP), Cullum Bleasdale (DUP), Jonny Jackson (DUP), Tierna Kelly (Alliance) and David Lee-Surginor (Alliance) #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/0Xb3gMEfwt	2,986	71
RESULTS: No one has been elected at Stage 3 for Newry. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,940	71
RESULTS: Tierna Kelly (Alliance) and David Lee-Surginor (Alliance) have been elected at Stage 4 of the Rowallane count. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/qoanuqQc54	5,446	159
SLIEVE CROOB: No one has been elected at Stage 3. More updates coming soon. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,779	39
ROWALLANE: No one has been elected at Stage 3. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,894	31
RESULTS: Terry Andrews (SDLP) and Cullum Bleasdale (DUP) are deemed elected for Rowallane at Stage 3 (A) #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/XmQbTvx2tB	3,781	166
RESULTS: Geraldine Kearns (Sinn FÃ©in) and Aidan Mathews (Sinn FÃ©in) are deemed elected for Newry at Stage 2. Stay tuned for more updates. #LE23 @ieani_official @ieani_official https://t.co/4CnGDXdnUy	2,550	77
ROWALLANE: No one has been elected at Stage 2. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,182	38
RESULTS: Valerie Harte (Sinn FÃ©in) and Cathal King (Sinn FÃ©in) are deemed elected for Newry at Stage 1. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/SDPWBHeqnB	2,196	84
RESULTS: Alan Lewis (DUP) and Jim Brennan (Sinn FÃ©in) are deemed elected for Slieve Croob at Stage 1. The count continues #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/O4pdoIdHQx	2,325	80
RESULTS: Jonny Jackson (DUP) is deemed elected for Rowallane at Stage 1. Stay tuned! #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/wnRKjTWmbk	3,238	48
The counting for Rowallane has begun. #LE23 #ieani_official #ieani_official for Northern Ireland	2,574	67
Good Morning! The counting for Newry and Slieve Croob has begun. #LE23 @ieani_official	5,290	261
We're taking a short break now! Join us at 9am to complete the count for Newry, Rowallane and Slieve Croob. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/HH1VoGdUW	2,722	126
At the end of the final count for Slieve Gullion DEA, candidates elected are (in alphabetical order) Pete Byrne (SDLP), Aoife Finnegan (Sinn FÃ©in), Mickey Larkin (Sinn FÃ©in), Oonagh Magennis (Sinn FÃ©in), Declan Murphy (Sinn FÃ©in), Aine Quinn (Sinn FÃ©in), David Taylor (UUP) #LE23 https://t.co/2H3BgRzCiv	6,280	259
RESULTS: Mickey Larkin (Sinn Féin) was elected at Stage 9 of the Slieve Gullion count. Oonagh Magennis (Sinn FÃ©in) and David Taylor (UUP) gained the last two seats for Slieve Gullion #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/5qhvSVBc2P	4,181	163
No further candidates were elected at Stage 8 for Slieve Gullion. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	13,604	291
RESULTS: Pete Byrne (SDLP) is deemed elected for Slieve Gullion at Stage (8A) #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/vnGeFSvKJY	6,366	87
At the end of the final count for Downpatrick DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Philip Campbell (Sinn FÃ©in), Cadogan Enright (Alliance) Conor Galbraith (SDLP), Oonagh Hanlon (Sinn FÃ©in), Gareth Sharvin (SDLP) #LE23 https://t.co/b3nDHac2Gs	11,056	334
RESULTS: Conor Galbraith (SDLP) is deemed elected for Downpatrick at Stage 10(A). #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/RXYXRJSCoR	2,352	28
SLIEVE GULLION: No one has been elected at Stage 7. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,090	39
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 9. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,922	36
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 8. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,052	36
At the end of the final count for The Mournes DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Willie Clarke (Sinn FÃ©in), Laura Devlin (SDLP), Glyn Hanna (DUP), Loraine McEvoy (Sinn FÃ©in), Michael Rice (Sinn FÃ©in), Henry Reilly (DUP) & Jill Truesdale (Alliance) #LE23 https://t.co/DxdueEx3TL	6,220	138
RESULTS: Jill Truesdale (ALLIANCE) is deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 6. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/WeAbaRJGbV	2,699	51
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 7. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,837	7
SLIEVE GULLION: No one has been elected at Stage 6. The count continues. #LE23 #ieani_official	2,194	33
At the end of the final count for Crotlieve DEA, candidates deemed elected are (in alphabetical order): Mark Gibbons (Independent), Declan Mickson (SDLP), Seána Murphy (Sinn FÃ©in), Kate Murphy (Sinn FÃ©in), Mickey Ruane (Sinn FÃ©in) and Jarlath Tinnelly (Independent) #LE23 https://t.co/uAU7JKbumy	9,888	264
RESULTS: Kate Murphy (Sinn FÃ©in), Mickey Ruane (Sinn FÃ©in) and Jarlath Tinnelly (Independent) have been deemed elected for Crotlieve at Stage 10. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/YhYTMqMyy	4,493	102
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 6. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,897	35
RESULTS: Harry Reilly (DUP) has reached the quota at the end of Stage 8(A) and is deemed elected. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/5oebbi4Z4k	1,845	31
RESULTS: Mark Gibbons (Independent) is deemed elected for Crotlieve at Stage 9. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/BYmeHFIOOE	2,595	64
THE MOURNES: No one has been elected at Stage 7. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,742	32
RESULTS: Cadogan Enright (Alliance) and Philip Campbell (Sinn FÃ©in) have reached the quota at Stage (6A) and are deemed elected. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/L7Yk4PYvaw	1,866	38
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,642	42
SLIEVE GULLION: No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,841	22
RESULTS: Declan McAteer (SDLP) is deemed elected for Crotlieve at Stage 8. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/WaUWWIIUJ	2,826	73
RESULTS: Laura Devlin (SDLP) is deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 6. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/837e8ERkeK	4,491	115
RESULTS: Gareth Sharvin (SDLP) has reached the quota at the end of Stage 5(A) and is deemed elected. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/GbDWRWB	2,005	64
SLIEVE GULLION: No one has been elected at Stage 4. The count continues. #LE23 #ieani_official	2,312	29
CROTLIEVE: No one has been elected at Stage 7. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,211	60
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 4. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	1,911	43
THE MOURNES: No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,496	130
SLIEVE GULLION: No one has been elected at Stage 3. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,310	66
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 3. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,286	29
CROTLIEVE: No one has been elected at Stage 6. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	3,580	199
THE MOURNES: No one has been elected at Stage 4. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,554	75
DOWNPATRICK: No one has been elected at Stage 2. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	2,064	51
SLIEVE GULLION: No one has been elected at Stage 2. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	4,240	210
CROTLIEVE: No one has been elected at Stage 5. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	3,952	150
RESULTS: Loraine McEvoy (Sinn FÃ©in) is deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 5. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/VMDuc7h6BO	8,323	312
CROTLIEVE: No one has been elected at Stage 4. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	4,042	140
RESULTS: Oonagh Hanlon (Sinn FÃ©in) is deemed elected for Downpatrick at Stage 1. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/gbHdNbvMA	6,317	265
RESULTS: Aine Finnegan (Sinn FÃ©in), Kim Quinn (Sinn FÃ©in), and Declan Murphy (Sinn FÃ©in) are deemed elected for Slieve Gullion at Stage 1. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/T2dqeQjEdn	10,731	485
THE MOURNES: No one has been elected at Stage 3. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	3,849	132
RESULTS: Seána Murphy (Sinn FÃ©in) is deemed elected for Crotlieve at Stage 2. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/wdowLJaWQ3	11,157	413
CROTLIEVE/E DEA: No one has been elected at Stage 3. The count continues. #LE23 @ieani_official	7,226	468
RESULTS: Glyn Hanna (DUP), Michael Rice (Sinn FÃ©in), and Willie Clarke (Sinn FÃ©in) are deemed elected for The Mournes at Stage 1. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/WHmoAwG3A	14,526	566
Counting for Downpatrick is underway. #LE23	3,469	89
Verification Update: NEWRY: Eligible electorate: 69,961 Total votes polled: 10,629 Turnout: 52.41% #LE23 https://t.co/SZyTGGMHP	5,499	193
Counting for Slieve Gullion is underway. #LE23	4,635	125
Verification Update: SLIEVE GULLION: Eligible electorate: 22,734 Total votes polled: 14,942 Turnout: 65.79% #LE23 https://t.co/JymNZ5YKaT	5,357	143
Counting for The Mournes is about to begin. #LE23	4,493	130
Counting for Crotlieve has begun. #LE23	5,496	156
Verification for Newry is now underway. #LE23	4,467	75
Verification Update: THE MOURNES: Eligible electorate: 22,227 Total votes polled: 13,945 Turnout: 62.69% #LE23 https://t.co/BJPAUomqfx	5,993	78
Verification Update: CROTLIEVE: Eligible electorate: 21,313 Total votes polled: 13,264 Turnout: 62.21% #LE23 https://t.co/RPWqo2YfKl	6,886	213
Verification Update: ROWALLANE: Eligible electorate: 13,960 Total votes polled: 8,115 Turnout: 58.15% #LE23 https://t.co/wauUdbZvAw	5,596	106
Verification Update: DOWNPATRICK: Eligible electorate: 15,891 Total votes polled: 8,284 Turnout: 52.8% #LE23 https://t.co/Acoq6vYBN7	6,691	106
Verification Update: SLIEVE CROOB: Eligible electorate: 15,787 Total votes polled: 9,083 Turnout: 56.99% #LE23 https://t.co/tvLtAQjc3M	20,139	499
Welcome to our coverage of the Local Council elections at Newry Leisure Centre! Stay tuned for live updates on our 7 District Electoral Areas. #LE23 @ieani_official https://t.co/wHHJMfMfN	3,202	269
Totals	**430,606**	**11,511**
Total Tweets: 82		

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	The Department of Health and Department of Justice draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2030 and associated Equality and Human Rights Screening
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gary Scott (Safeguarding Coordinator)
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gary Scott (Safeguarding Coordinator)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision		**For noting only**	**x**

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The Department of Health and the Department of Justice were consulting on the proposed regional Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy to cover the seven-year period from 2023 until 2030 (Appendix 2). This proposed strategy will replace the current 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland: A Seven Year Strategy March 2016' which is now in its final year.
1.2	The consultation response was due on 02 May 2023 and was an online response.
1.3	Due to the Council elections and the period of purdah, Council response was submitted directly to the Department of Justice and is therefore presented to committee for noting only.
1.4	Council response to this consultation is attached at Appendix 1.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	Council is committed to the principle that Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence is unacceptable behaviour and everyone has the right to live free from fear and abuse.
2.2	Domestic and sexual abuse continues to have a damaging and lasting impact on the lives of adults and children right across Northern Ireland. It is prevalent in every community and affects all people regardless of age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race or religion and yet it continues to be a crime that many feel they cannot report. Tackling domestic and sexual abuse is a cross departmental priority.
2.3	This strategy sets out the strategic direction and context of departmental work of tackling Domestic and Sexual Abuse in Northern Ireland.
2.4	The vision of the draft strategy is that domestic and sexual abuse is unacceptable within our homes and across all of society so that everyone can live without fear.
2.5	The overall strategic aim is to work together as partners, agencies and communities to make real, sustainable progress in tackling domestic and sexual abuse by addressing the root causes; ensuring those affected get the right support; and holding individuals who are abusive to account. To achieve this aim, the strategy is designed around four pillars: • Partnership: driving change together through joint commitment, leadership and partnership working. • Prevention: preventing domestic and sexual abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.

	• Support: ensuring that all victims of domestic and sexual abuse including children can access services supporting them to recover and rebuild their lives. • Justice: holding individuals who are abusive to account and ensuring justice responses are effective. Eight outcomes have been identified across the four pillars and key priority areas of work to deliver these outcomes are set out within the draft strategy and will be expanded on in further detail in a series of action plans that will be developed annually
2.6	Council supported the strategy with no significant comment
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	Members are recommended to note the consultation response on the draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2030 and Equality and Rural Needs Screening (Appendix 1)
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	There are no resource implications
4.2	Members should note responses to this consultation were submitted on-line therefore this typed word document response provided at Appendix 1 are for the purposes of this report, however, the actual response was submitted through the Department of Justice's website.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☒ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ *Rationale:*

	Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Impact Assessment have both been completed by the Department of Health and Department of Justice and are accessible through links provided in the background documents.
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable to Council - completed by the Department of Health and Justice as below at 8 – links in Background Documents – Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Impact Assessment If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	**Appendices**
7.1	1. Newry Mourne & Down District Council consultation response - The Department of Health and Department of Justice proposed Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2030. 2. The Department of Health and Department of Justice proposed Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2030
8.0	**Background Documents**
	The following link provides access to the following supporting documents Impact Screening Outcomes Full impact assessment documents for both Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Impact Assessment are available as part of the full suite of consultation documents, and can be accessed via the following links: DoH Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy consultation DoJ Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy consultation

Draft

Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy

2023-2030

Consultation Document

7 February 2023



Department of
Health
An Roinn Sláinte
Männystrie O Poustie
www.health-ni.gov.uk



Department of
Justice
An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Männystrie O tha Laa
www.justice-ni.gov.uk

Consultation Questions – Written Response Form

Your views are being sought on the new draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy.

As far as possible responses should be **made online through the NI Direct Citizen Space website** where the consultation document and response form can be found. This will assist for analysis purposes. Electronic or hard copy responses, using this template, should only be in exceptional circumstances.

Please submit your response online, **no later than Tuesday 2 May 2023**. Alternatively, you can:

Phone: 028 9052 3713
E-mail: DSAStrategyConsultation@justice-ni.gov.uk
Write to: Victims Support Division
Department of Justice
Room A4.03
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SG

A summary of the responses to the consultation exercise will be made available on the Departmental websites in due course. This will not contain any information that would identify individual respondents.

DoH Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy consultation
DoJ Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy consultation

SECTION 1: ABOUT YOU

Question (a):

I am responding as... (Please tick one option only)

[ ] A member of the public (Do not provide your name or email address)

[x] On behalf of an organisation – Please specify below and include your organisation's email address.

Newry Mourne and Down District Council

Gary.Scott@nmandd.org

SECTION 2: RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ON A DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL ABUSE STRATEGY

Question 1: Is the vision of the draft strategy reflective of what we want to achieve?
Agree (delete as applicable)
Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below
Question 2: Does the definition of domestic abuse, as outlined in the draft strategy, reflect what you understand this to mean?
Agree (delete as applicable)
Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below
Question 3: Does the definition of sexual abuse, as outlined in the draft strategy, reflect what you understand this to mean?
Agree (delete as applicable)
Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below
Question 4: Do you agree with the use of the four pillars in the draft strategy (Partnership, Prevention, Support and Justice) as levers for change? During the Call for Views we proposed a fifth pillar (or workstream) to take account of the needs of different groups of victims. Having taken on board the input and

views of a wide range of stakeholders, we have concluded that the needs of different groups should not be a stand-alone or separate agenda but rather it should be a fundamental part of all of the work that we do under each pillar: Partnership, Prevention, Support and Justice.

Agree
(delete as applicable)

Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below

Question 5: Do you agree with the outcome and key priority areas identified under Pillar 1 (Partnership) and how we will know we are making a difference?

Outcome	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Don't know**
A coordinated response to domestic and sexual abuse informed by victims' voices and community engagement.	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority areas: Working collaboratively across all government Departments and with statutory, voluntary and community and faith organisations to tackle domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
Having effective governance structures underpinning the strategy's delivery with a performance framework to monitor outcomes and impact.	☒	☐	☐
Informing policy, legislation and service development with better quality data, research and shared learning.	☒	☐	☐
Having increased opportunities for victims' voices to be heard and ensuring the strategy's delivery is underpinned by intersectionality recognising that many people have multiple needs and face multiple barriers.	☒	☐	☐
How will we know we are making a difference?			
Listening to views of victims, including children.	☒	☐	☐
Ensuring joined up working on cross cutting projects.	☒ ☒	☐	☐

Engaging regularly with key stakeholders at both a regional and local level.		☐	☐
Data from key stakeholders is shared, ensuring that as a system we understand and can respond to trends and emerging issues.	☒	☐	☐
Review of action plans and performance indicators on a regular basis by all partners to ensure progress is made.	☒	☐	☐
Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below			

Question 6: Do you agree with the outcomes and key priority areas identified under Pillar 2 (Prevention) and how we will know we are making a difference?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Outcome:			
The public is informed about the different types of domestic and sexual abuse and its impact on victims including children.	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority areas:			
Raising awareness, so that those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing domestic and sexual abuse, recognise it and know that help is available.	☒	☐	☐
Empowering people to safely challenge attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that foster domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
Outcome:			
An increase in the knowledge and skills of children, young people and adults about forming healthy relationships.	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority area:			
Supporting the education sector to build capacity, knowledge and skills to promote understanding about consent and healthy relationships and to teach about sensitive subjects such as domestic and sexual abuse, in an age appropriate and inclusive way, across schools and other youth	☒	☐	☐

settings, training facilities, Further Education Colleges and Universities. **Outcome:** **Domestic and sexual abuse is identified and responded to earlier.**	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority areas: Enabling people working in frontline and public-facing roles to identify and respond effectively to domestic and sexual abuse at the earliest opportunity.	☒	☐	☐
Supporting employers in the public, private and other sectors to make workplaces safer by raising awareness of domestic and sexual abuse and promoting workplace policies with effective measures to support staff.	☒	☐	☐
How will we know we are making a difference?	☒		
Public awareness of domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
Increased reporting of domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
Prevention initiatives supporting individuals to develop healthy relationships.		☐	☐
Referrals from a wider range of agencies to MARAC and domestic and sexual abuse services.	☒	☐	☐
Domestic abuse is recognised as a workplace issue.	☒	☐	☐

Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below

Question 7: Do you agree with the outcomes and key priority areas identified under Pillar 3 (Support) and how we will know we are making a difference?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Outcome: **Victims including children are supported and feel safe regardless of diversity of need.**	☒	☐	☐

Key Priority areas:			
Providing support for victims, including children, as well as wider family, to reduce the risk and impact of abuse; recover from trauma and improve their health and well-being; and engage in the justice system in a way that ensures they feel protected and safe.	☒	☐	☐
Ensuring there is a focus on tackling sexual abuse, including the sexual abuse of children and young people, and providing specialist support for victims.	☒	☐	☐
Enabling services to better understand intersectional needs of individuals to ensure victims get the responses and support they need.	☒	☐	☐
Outcome:			
All victims of domestic abuse including children can access safe accommodation-based services.	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority areas:			
Ensuring all victims and their children can access accommodation that is safe and appropriate to their needs and circumstances.	☒	☐	☐
Supporting victims of domestic abuse to remain safely in their home if they want to and it is safe to do so.	☒	☐	☐
How will we know we are making a difference?			
Victims of domestic and sexual abuse access support.	☒	☐	☐
Learning from the experience of victims to inform best practice.	☒	☐	☐
Provision of services.	☒	☐	☐
Fewer victims of domestic and sexual abuse withdraw from the criminal justice process.	☒	☐	☐
Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below			

Question 8: Do you agree with the outcomes and key priority areas identified under Pillar 4 (Justice) and how we will know we are making a difference?			
ADDRESSING ABUSIVE BEHAVIOURS	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Don't know**
Outcome:			
Individuals are responsible for their abusive behaviour, are held to account and supported to change, with the risk of harm reduced and victim safety enhanced.	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority areas:			
Supporting individuals to address and manage their abusive behaviours and sustain positive change.	☒	☐	☐
Encouraging individuals to change their abusive behaviour by removing barriers to participation.	☒	☐	☐
Working collaboratively to target the most prolific offenders, improving risk assessment and management.	☒	☐	☐
Providing integrated safety and support structures for victims where programmes to address abusive behaviours are undertaken.	☒	☐	☐
Improving protections for those at risk of abuse.	☒	☐	☐
How will we know we are making a difference?			
A reduction in repeat incidents of domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
Increase in levels of convictions for domestic and sexual abuse offences.	☒	☐	☐
Engagement in behavioural change programmes and associated reoffending levels.	☒	☐	☐
Increase in protection orders granted and reduction in associated breaches.	☒	☐	☐
JUSTICE SYSTEM			
Outcome:			
Victims feel confident to report domestic and sexual abuse, barriers to participating in the justice system are reduced and justice responses are effective.	☒	☐	☐

Key Priority areas:			
Understanding better the factors contributing to high attrition levels (drop out of cases) and under-reporting in domestic and sexual abuse cases in order to improve these.	☒	☐	☐
Providing victims of domestic and sexual abuse with information and services to support them through the criminal justice process.	☒	☐	☐
Key Priority areas:			
Improving the efficiency of the justice system and how domestic and sexual abuse cases are dealt with in criminal, civil and family courts.	☒	☐	☐
Strengthening the police and criminal justice response to domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
How will we know we are making a difference?			
Increased reporting of domestic and sexual abuse.	☒	☐	☐
Fewer victims of domestic and sexual abuse withdraw from the criminal justice process.	☒	☐	☐
Time taken for domestic and sexual abuse cases to be completed.	☒	☐	☐
Satisfaction with criminal justice system support.	☒	☐	☐

Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below

Question 9: Do you have any further comments that you wish to make about the draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy? If so, it would be helpful if you reference which part of the document you are commenting on.

Yes ☐

No ☒

If yes, please add any comments you wish to make in the box below
Question 10: Do you agree with the outcome of the Rural Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment?
Agree (delete as applicable)
Please add any comments you wish to make in the box below

February 2023



Draft

Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy

2023 – 2030

Department of Health
An Roinn Sláinte
Männystrie O Poustie
www.health-ni.gov.uk

Department of Justice
An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Männystrie O the Law
www.justice-ni.gov.uk

Accessing support

If you have been affected by domestic or sexual abuse, you are not alone. Help and support is available.

The **Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helpline** can be contacted free of charge, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on **0808 802 1414** or **help@dsahelpline.org**.

This is a confidential service available to both women and men. Web chat and a telephone translation service is also available. Trained helpline workers can talk about the help and support that you could get. You can also contact the Helpline if you are worried about a friend or relative and you want support on how to help them.

For more information visit www.dsahelpline.org.

Anyone who feels in immediate danger should dial 999.

If it is difficult to talk, use the **'silent solution'** by pressing **55** when prompted (if phoning from a mobile phone). This allows police to know it is a genuine emergency.

Alternative formats

Hard copies of this document and copies in other formats (including Braille, audio, large print etc.), can be made available on request. If it would assist you to access the document in an alternative format, or language other than English, please let us know and we will do our best to assist you.

Please email DSAStrategyConsultation@justice-ni.gov.uk or phone 028 9052 3713.

Contents

	Page
Foreword by DoH and DoJ Permanent Secretaries	1
Strategy at a glance	3
1. Introduction	5
Purpose and vision	5
What this strategy covers	6
What we have done so far	7
Why change is needed	9
A Call for Views	10
Other linked areas of work, strategies and action plans	11
2. Understanding domestic and sexual abuse	13
What is domestic abuse?	13
What is sexual abuse?	16
Additional barriers for different groups	18
3. Framework for action	21
Pillar 1: Partnership	22
Pillar 2: Prevention	24
Pillar 3: Support	26
Pillar 4: Justice	28
4. Delivering the strategy	32
Governance structures for co-ordination and delivery	32
Annual action plans	34
Monitoring progress and measuring success	34
Funding	34
Mid-term review and evaluation	35

Foreword by DoH and DoJ Permanent Secretaries

We are pleased to share with you a new draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy for 2023 – 2030.

Domestic and sexual abuse continues to have a damaging and lasting impact on the lives of adults and children right across Northern Ireland. It is prevalent in every community and affects all people regardless of age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race or religion and yet sadly it continues to be a crime that many feel they cannot report. Tackling it remains a priority for Executive Departments.

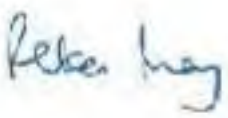
This new draft strategy is an ambitious seven-year programme which sets out a renewed focus on tackling domestic and sexual abuse. It follows the direction of travel set by the former Health and Justice Ministers and has been informed by detailed consultation and analysis which began with a Call for Views in January 2022. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to all the individuals and organisations who have been part of that process and in particular to those victims and survivors who have shared their experiences with such courage in order to inform our strategic response.

We have designed the strategy around four key pillars of Partnership, Prevention, Support and Justice. Each pillar has its own expected outcomes and key priority areas which will be expanded on in further detail in a series of action plans with timelines for implementation.

We are committed to fully implementing this strategy over the next seven years and believe that the outcomes delivered can make meaningful and sustainable progress in tackling domestic and sexual abuse; addressing its root causes; ensuring that those affected are able to access effective support; and in holding those who abuse to account. However it is important that we also acknowledge the difficult financial context in which this strategy is being issued. At the time of publication, full implementation of the strategy is subject to confirmation of additional funding. Subject to receiving this funding, it will be important to recognise that the scale and pace of our delivery will be informed by available resources, and that it will be important that we focus resources on those priorities which will have the most significant impact in tackling domestic and sexual abuse and supporting those affected by it. In parallel, we will continue to seek opportunities to secure additional resources to support ongoing implementation of the strategy.

The strategy will be implemented by way of annual delivery plans. The Year One Action Plan will focus on laying the foundations and progressing the enabling actions to support future delivery. Importantly, this preparatory work will include the development of a Performance Framework to ensure we can monitor and report on the delivery of key strategy objectives and the outcomes being achieved.

We want to be clear, domestic and sexual abuse has absolutely no place in our society and we remain committed to working together to realise our ambitions under the strategy over the coming years.





PETER MAY
Permanent Secretary
Department of Health

RICHARD PENGELLY
Permanent Secretary
Department of Justice

Strategy at a glance

Our vision is that domestic and sexual abuse is unacceptable within our homes and across all of society so that everyone can live without fear.

Our overall strategic aim is to work together as partners, agencies and communities to make real, sustainable progress in tackling domestic and sexual abuse by addressing the root causes; ensuring those affected get the right support; and holding individuals who are abusive to account. The strategy is designed around four pillars:

Pillar 1: Partnership *Driving change together through joint commitment, leadership and partnership working.*	
OUTCOME	**KEY PRIORITY AREAS**
A coordinated response to domestic and sexual abuse informed by victims' voices and community engagement.	Working collaboratively across all government Departments and with statutory, voluntary and community and faith organisations to tackle domestic and sexual abuse.
	Having effective governance structures underpinning the strategy's delivery with a performance framework to monitor outcomes and impact.
	Informing policy, legislation and service development with better quality data, research and shared learning.
	Having increased opportunities for victims' voices to be heard and ensuring the strategy's delivery is underpinned by intersectionality recognising that many people have multiple needs and face multiple barriers.

Pillar 2: Prevention *Preventing domestic and sexual abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.*	
OUTCOMES	**KEY PRIORITY AREAS**
The public is informed about the different types of domestic and sexual abuse and its impact on victims including children.	Raising awareness, so that those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing domestic and sexual abuse, recognise it and know that help is available.
	Empowering people to safely challenge attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that foster domestic and sexual abuse.
An increase in the knowledge and skills of children, young people and adults about forming healthy relationships.	Supporting the education sector to build capacity, knowledge and skills to promote understanding about consent and healthy relationships and to teach about sensitive subjects such as domestic and sexual abuse, in an age appropriate and inclusive way, across schools and other youth settings, training facilities, Further Education Colleges and Universities.
Domestic and sexual abuse is identified and responded to earlier.	Enabling people working in frontline and public-facing roles to identify and respond effectively to domestic and sexual abuse at the earliest opportunity.
	Supporting employers in the public, private and other sectors to make workplaces safer by raising awareness of domestic and sexual abuse and promoting workplace policies with effective measures to support staff.

Pillar 3: Support *Ensuring that all victims of domestic and sexual abuse, including children, can access services supporting them to recover and rebuild their lives.*	
OUTCOMES	**KEY PRIORITY AREAS**
Victims including children are supported and feel safe regardless of diversity of need.	Providing support for victims including children, as well as wider family, to reduce the risk and impact of abuse; recover from trauma and improve their health and well-being; and engage in the justice system in a way that ensures they feel protected and safe.
	Ensuring there is a focus on tackling sexual abuse, including the sexual abuse of children and young people, and providing specialist support for victims.
	Enabling services to better understand intersectional needs of individuals to ensure victims get the responses and support they need.
All victims of domestic abuse including children can access safe accommodation-based services.	Ensuring all victims and their children can access accommodation that is safe and appropriate to their needs and circumstances.
	Supporting victims of domestic abuse to remain safely in their home if they want to and it is safe to do so.

Pillar 4: Justice *Holding individuals who are abusive to account and ensuring justice responses are effective.*	
OUTCOMES	**KEY PRIORITY AREAS**
Addressing abusive behaviours	
Individuals are responsible for their abusive behaviour, are held to account and supported to change, with the risk of harm reduced and victim safety enhanced.	Supporting individuals to address and manage their abusive behaviours and sustain positive change.
	Encouraging individuals to change their abusive behaviour by removing barriers to participation.
	Working collaboratively to target the most prolific offenders, improving risk assessment and management.
	Providing integrated safety and support structures for victims where programmes to address abusive behaviours are undertaken.
	Improving protections for those at risk of abuse.
Justice system	
Victims feel confident to report domestic and sexual abuse, barriers to participating in the justice system are reduced and justice responses are effective.	Understanding better the factors contributing to high attrition levels (drop out of cases) and under-reporting in domestic and sexual abuse cases in order to improve these.
	Providing victims of domestic and sexual abuse with information and services to support them through the criminal justice process.
	Improving the efficiency of the justice system and how domestic and sexual abuse cases are dealt with in criminal, civil and family courts.
	Strengthening the police and criminal justice response to domestic and sexual abuse.

The outcomes and key priority areas identified will inform future action plans that will outline clear responsibilities and timelines for implementation. Similar to the previous strategy, this strategy covers a seven-year period, from 2023 – 2030.

1. Introduction

Purpose and vision

This is a seven-year, cross-departmental strategy for tackling domestic and sexual abuse from 2023 – 2030. The strategy has been developed by, and its delivery will be overseen by, the Department of Health and the Department of Justice. It has been informed by extensive stakeholder engagement with advice from across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors as well as by public feedback but, most importantly, it has been informed by the voices and experiences of victims including children.

Our Vision:
Domestic and sexual abuse is unacceptable within our homes and across **all** of society so that everyone can live without fear.

This vision is ambitious and cannot be achieved by one agency alone. To be successful, tackling domestic and sexual abuse must become everyone's business.

Our Aim:
To work together as partners, agencies and communities to make real, sustainable progress in tackling domestic and sexual abuse by addressing the root causes; ensuring those affected get the right support; and holding individuals who are abusive to account.

To achieve this aim, the strategy is designed around **four pillars**:



1. **PARTNERSHIP**
   Driving change together through joint commitment, leadership and partnership working.



2. **PREVENTION**
   Preventing domestic and sexual abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.



3. **SUPPORT**
   Ensuring that all victims of domestic and sexual abuse, including children, can access services supporting them to recover and rebuild their lives.

4. JUSTICE

Holding individuals who are abusive to account and ensuring justice responses are effective.



Within each pillar, outcomes and key priority areas are identified (see **Section 3**). These will be expanded on in further detail in a series of action plans that will outline clear responsibilities and timelines for implementation over the next seven years. This will allow our framework to evolve and to respond to new opportunities and challenges in order to deliver meaningful change over the long term.

Through this strategy we want to send a clear message that domestic and sexual abuse in all its forms, both physical and non-physical, is wrong. We want to challenge misconceptions and change the conversation around domestic and sexual abuse, so that people become more familiar with what it looks like and those that are affected feel empowered to reach out for help and support without fear of judgement.

What this strategy covers

Scope

It is important to be clear about what this strategy covers and what it does not cover. Our focus will be on tackling **domestic abuse and sexual abuse**, as defined in **Section 2**. Whilst we recognise the overlap with other crimes (for example, such as child sexual exploitation, 'honour-based' abuse including female genital mutilation, modern slavery and human trafficking as well wider violence against women and girls) these crime types are being addressed separately and as such, this strategy does not make specific provision to address them. However, we recognise the importance of sharing information around actions arising from the strategy with other cross-departmental groups to promote collaboration and to avoid duplication. This includes the cross-departmental Child Protection Senior Officials Group (CPSOG) which provides strategic oversight of work related to child protection. Links with wider areas of work, including CPSOG, are considered in **Section 5**.

An inclusive approach

This strategy recognises that **anyone can be a victim** of domestic and sexual abuse regardless of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability. It is for this reason that the strategy adopts an inclusive approach. Women, men, people from the LGBTQIA+ community, disabled people, young people, older people and people from ethnic minority communities, for example, can all experience domestic and sexual abuse. The strategy also recognises that abuse can take place in family relationships and between generations.

Terminology

Within this strategy we refer to those affected by domestic or sexual abuse as a 'victim'

(typically of a crime but not always), while acknowledging that some prefer the term 'survivor' or 'person with lived experience'.

What we have done so far

There is a great deal of activity already underway across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors to drive real improvements in tackling domestic and sexual abuse. There have also been a number of notable achievements across government over the lifetime of our previous strategy[1] which are outlined below. However, much work remains to be done. We must continue to build on our approach, connect with and learn from each other and find new ways to energise collective action.

Legislation

- **A new domestic abuse offence** was introduced in 2022, criminalising a pattern of non-physically abusive behaviour.
- **Protection from stalking legislation** was brought forward (which may also be outside a domestic or family context) as well as the Justice Act (NI) 2022 which provides for **new offences of up-skirting, down-blousing, non-fatal strangulation** and preventing the so called **'rough sex' defence.**
- Preparatory work progressed to introduce **Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders**.

Training and awareness raising

- **A new e-learning package** bolstered the introduction of the new domestic abuse offence. This continues to be available across the public sector, developed in partnership with our voluntary sector experts.
- **Raising awareness** of the new domestic abuse offence through a multi-media campaign 'Still Abuse', along with other campaigns delivered by PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland) including 'No Grey Zone', 'Behind Closed Doors' and 'Walking on Egg Shells'. Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week and 16 Days of Action have also raised awareness.
- **A Domestic and Sexual Abuse Workplace Policy** and Gold Workplace Charter Award for the NI Civil Service, with additional training for staff. Guidance for employers was also developed.

Schools

- **I-matter resources** for schools have been updated and new subjects added including healthy relationships, consent and sexual harassment.
- **Operation Encompass** was rolled out so that police can share information with schools where there has been domestic abuse involving a child.
- **Development of the CCEA Wellbeing Hub** providing a repository for wellbeing, resources, information and guidance for schools, teachers and pupils. The hub promotes understanding of the place and importance of wellbeing within the curriculum and enables effective delivery and consolidation of wellbeing in schools.

Services

- **Piloting Identification and Referral to Improve Safety ('IRIS')** to train and support GPs to recognise and respond to domestic and sexual abuse and refer patients to specialist advocacy support.
- **Free public transport** for those going to refuge or temporary accommodation as a result of domestic abuse.
- **Ask for Ani Code Word scheme** was introduced to allow those at risk or suffering from domestic abuse to discreetly signal to pharmacy staff that they need help to access support.

[1] *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy*, published by DoH and DoJ in 2016.

Funding

- **Funding key services** including the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helpline; emergency refuge provision; other accommodation-based services; floating support; advocacy; and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.

Learning and Review

- **Domestic Homicide Reviews** were introduced in 2020 to learn lessons from those tragic deaths arising from domestic violence.
- **The Gillen Review** into the law and procedures in serious sexual offences in NI was undertaken and made recommendations for systemic reform which are now being progressed.
- **Establishment of a Commissioner Designate for Victims of Crime** who, as well as representing the interests of all victims of crime, has specific functions in respect of victims of domestic and sexual abuse.
- **Learning from the challenges presented during the COVID-19 pandemic** and adapting to new ways of working.

Governance

- **Improvements in how we work**. Including enhanced governance structures with six monthly progress reports to Executive Ministers; expanded Strategic Delivery Board membership; problem solving workshops held with stakeholders; and expanding the work of Local Partnerships to include sexual violence.
- **A MARAC Operational Board** was established and a **MARAC review** undertaken.
- **A mid-term review** of the previous strategy and a ten week **Call for Views** was undertaken to help inform the strategic direction of this strategy.

Services

- **A new advocacy support service** for victims of domestic and sexual abuse who are engaging with the criminal justice system, ASSIST NI, was established in 2021. Advocates provide a central point of contact for those affected by abuse, by providing support, risk assessment, safety planning, information and signposting services.
- **Provision of behavioural change programmes** across NI for men showing concerning behaviour, who have not yet reached the criminal justice system and where children are at risk. This builds knowledge and skills to develop healthy, non-abusive relationships.
- **A domestic violence perpetrator programme** was tested at Derry / Londonderry magistrate's court, a Problem-Solving Justice initiative, aimed at breaking patterns of concerning behaviour in its early stages.
- **Piloting Sexual Offences Legal Advisers** – offering free objective legal advice to complainants in serious sexual offence cases.
- **The Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme** was established in 2018 to enable individuals to ascertain whether there is a risk posed by a partner/ former partner and make informed decisions about the relationship.
- **The Sanctuary Scheme** is operational across all Housing Executive properties, where appropriate. The scheme is voluntary and provides enhancements such as the installation of grills, cameras etc. to a designated room in tenants' properties.

Why change is needed

We want to provide a future where everyone can live safe lives, without the threat or experience of domestic and sexual abuse. While levels of domestic and sexual abuse continue to increase, in part due to increased confidence in reporting, we want to do all that we can to help and support those that are affected, taking account of their particular needs. We know that many live their lives in fear and are significantly impacted by the abuse they have suffered, be that domestic or sexual abuse. It can have an enormous impact on all aspects of a person's life: their physical and mental health; their identity and relationships with friends and family; housing and their finances. The issues involved are complex, needing a multi-faceted response.

For many there is also a stigma associated with being subject to domestic or sexual abuse, which can be more significant for certain groups, particularly those who already face additional barriers to reporting and seeking support, as outlined later in this section.

Victims may often internalise what has happened; they may fear the blame and judgement of others and as a result, they may be reluctant to tell anyone, report the abuse to the police or seek support. This is despite the fact that the only person who has done anything wrong is the person who has abused them.

We also know that children's experience of domestic and sexual abuse can result in lifelong trauma and may in some cases lead to abusive relationships in adult life. Too often those experiencing domestic and sexual abuse grow up not recognising abusive or unhealthy relationships, meaning that the cycle of abuse may be repeated.

In taking this new strategy forward we recognise that there are a number of areas that it will be important to focus on. These are:

- increased co-operation and more effective collaboration across government, working in partnership with others;
- addressing social attitudes, while promoting awareness and knowledge of healthy relationships;
- providing support for those affected by domestic and sexual abuse, informed by their experience and the needs of particular groups;
- working to prevent domestic and sexual abuse taking place, identifying and disrupting abusive behaviour while holding offenders to account; and
- providing a more robust and effective justice response, increasing protection and safety for those affected.

Going forward we want a stronger system: improving how we respond to domestic and sexual abuse and working together to support those affected with a trauma informed approach. We also want to harness every opportunity for positive intervention, so that

abusive behaviour can be called out and addressed, with improved outcomes for all.

A Call for Views

This strategy has been informed by a Call for Views, which ran from 10 January to 21 March 2022. The Call for Views asked a number of questions to gather ideas and experiences, a summary of which was published in July 2022.[1]

The Departments received 91 written responses and 661 surveys were completed online. Views were also shared at 22 stakeholder engagement events and five public events. We listened to and spoke with victims, frontline services including those working to support victims and other interested groups. These, as well as the many research reports submitted,[2] have helped us to identify the outcomes we want to achieve. We now need to translate what you have told us into positive action.

What you have told us



Other quotes from the Call for Views have been included throughout the strategy.

Another piece of work that has informed the strategy's development was the mid-term review of the previous *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy*, which was undertaken by the Strategic Investment Board in 2020. The findings of that review have also helped us to consider where energy should be focused over the next seven years and importantly how we will measure our success to ensure that actions taken forward are impactful.

We would like to extend our gratitude to every individual person and organisation that has contributed to the development of this strategy.

[1] Call for Views – Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy | Department of Justice (justice-ni.gov.uk)

[2] An overview of the research referenced can be found at Call for Views – Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy | Department of Justice (justice-ni.gov.uk)

Other linked areas of work, strategies and action plans

We acknowledge that there are many cross-cutting issues and work areas that link closely with this Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy, that are being taken forward and reported on separately and which may have some connected actions to help deliver the vision of this strategy.

Some of these areas at the time of drafting are highlighted below (this is not an exhaustive list).

The Executive Office is taking forward work on a new **Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy** that will identify actions to tackle violent and abusive behaviour directed at women and girls, precisely because they are women and girls. This includes crimes and unwanted behaviour in the physical and online world. PSNI has also published its first Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan.

While violence against women and girls can include domestic and sexual abuse, we believe that tackling this issue warrants a dedicated approach, an identifiable strategy with specific commitments. Nonetheless, it will be important that actions taken forward under the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy align with the key messages and wider actions of the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls agenda. The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy will, however, continue to adopt an inclusive approach applying to all regardless of gender or gender identity.

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy also has close linkages with the work being taken forward under the **Gillen Review** into the law and procedures in serious sexual offences, which contains 16 key priority areas including work in relation to remote evidence centres, Sexual Offence Legal Advisors, support for child victims (including consideration of a Child House 'Barnahus' type model) and addressing delay in the criminal justice system. While much of the work to tackle these issues will be undertaken outside this strategy there will be cross over with actions under this strategy dealing with these work areas.

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy will also have links with the suite of **Social Inclusion Strategies** in development by the Department for Communities: **Anti-Poverty, Disability, Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation**.

There are also other existing strategies and programmes of work that are also relevant to the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy at the time of drafting. This is not an exhaustive list but some examples include:

- Digital Justice Strategy 2020;
- Keeping Children and Young People Safe: An Online Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020–2025;
- Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services;

- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Strategy 2021–2022;
- the Department of Justice's programme of legislation to deal with stalking and sexual offences as well as action plans to implement Criminal Justice Inspections;
- Mental Health Strategy 2021–2031;
- Victims and Witnesses Strategy 2021–24;
- Safeguarding arrangements for children and adults at risk of harm including the development of new adult protection legislation; and
- Ending Homelessness Together – Homelessness Strategy 2022–2027 and Interdepartmental Homelessness Action Plans.
- The Child Protection Senior Officials Group (CPSOG) is a cross-departmental strategic forum which provides direction on existing or emerging child protection issues which require cross-departmental consideration and co-ordination. Its current work programme includes actions to address Child Sexual Exploitation as well as consideration of the Barnahus model, Female Genital Mutilation, Child Criminal Exploitation, the Executive's Online Safety Strategy, Information Sharing Guidance and consideration of Joint Child Protection Inspections.
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland work on harmful sexual behaviour and domestic and sexual abuse, including developing a Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework.

In progressing the work of this strategy, it will also be important that we take account of a number of international conventions and obligations. This includes the transposition of the EU Victims Directive (and associated Victim and Witness Charters that placed this on a statutory footing); UK ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention); the European Convention of Human Rights; the UN Convention on Elimination and Discrimination against Women; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention); and the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Going forward, given that this strategy is to apply over a seven-year period, we will also want to consider any future developments or changes which may be of relevance to its implementation and associated action plans.

2. Understanding Domestic and Sexual Abuse

What is domestic abuse?

Within this strategy, Domestic abuse is defined as: threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member

Domestic abuse can take many forms, which may involve physical violence. However, often it will not involve physical violence but may involve a wide range of non-physically abusive behaviour including what is often referred to as coercive control.

Domestic abuse can occur in an intimate or family relationship. It most commonly takes place in intimate partner relationships including same sex relationships. The victim and the abuser do not have to be living together. Teenagers can experience domestic abuse in their relationships and familial abuse may be perpetrated by children (child to parent abuse), grandchildren, parents, siblings or extended families. An area of increasing concern is familial abuse of parents by a young or adult child.

What does domestic abuse look like?

Domestic abuse can take many forms. It can include, but is not limited to:

- **controlling or coercive behaviour**, which may make a person dependant on the individual abusing them by isolating them, exploiting them, and/or regulating their everyday behaviour;
- **psychological/emotional abuse**, that can include verbal abuse (yelling, swearing and insults), gaslighting (making the victim doubt themselves by manipulating the truth), put downs, publicly embarrassing them or blaming them for everything;
- **physical abuse** (including violent – physical and sexual – or threatening behaviour) and/or indirect physically harmful behaviour. This may include hitting, kicking, slapping, choking, threatening with a weapon or physical assault;
- **sexual abuse**, when a person is forced (without consent) to participate in unwanted, unsafe or degrading sexual activity. It does not matter that there may previously have been consensual sex. Sexual abuse – through, for example, grooming and sharing of sexual images – can also occur online;
- **economic and financial abuse**, where one person deprives their partner or

family member of financial resources or ability to make money. This creates financial dependency and control, preventing them from leaving the relationship;

- **online and technological abuse**, where technology, social media or other online means are used to control or coerce victims; or
- **abusive behaviour** (which may encapsulate the above):
  - making the victim dependent on the individual abusing them;
  - isolating them from friends, family members or social interaction or support;
  - controlling, regulating or monitoring their day-to-day activities;
  - depriving or restricting their freedom of action; or
  - making them feel frightened, humiliated, degraded, punished or intimidated.

Other forms of abuse such as **stalking and non-fatal strangulation** may also occur alongside domestic or sexual abuse. Much of the work to tackle these issues is being undertaken separately to this strategy however there will, at times, be some cross over with actions under this strategy dealing with these specific areas.

Domestic abuse is a crime

Until 2022, domestic abuse as a crime was largely limited to physically abusive or violent behaviour in Northern Ireland. A domestic abuse offence was introduced in February 2022. This closed a gap in the law by criminalising a course of abusive behaviour (such as that set out above) that occurs on two or more occasions, against an intimate partner, former partner or close family member. The offence applies both to adults and to those under 18. Abuse against a child under 16 by a parent or guardian is dealt with under child protection provisions. However, the domestic abuse offence may be committed where a person makes use of a third party (including their child) to abuse another person.

The legislation also includes sentencing aggravators which can enable harsher penalties. Sentencing for the domestic abuse offence may be increased where a young person was involved (the child saw, heard or was present; they were used to abuse the other person; or the behaviour would likely adversely impact on a child). In addition, where there is a single incident involving domestic abuse, any other offence (for example criminal damage) may be aggravated by domestic abuse, meaning again that sentencing may be higher than what it would otherwise have been had the offence not involved domestic abuse.

Some facts and figures

An overview of the context of domestic abuse in Northern Ireland, as reported to the police, is set out below. However, the true figure is likely to be much higher due to underreporting by those who cannot or do not feel able to report to police. **In the 12 months to the end of September 2022 domestic abuse crime accounted for 20% of all police recorded crime.**

33,108

domestic abuse **INCIDENTS** responded to by police

22,288

domestic abuse **CRIMES** recorded by police

16

On average every **16 MINUTES** domestic abuse was reported to police

24/7 365

Took place **EVERY DAY** of the year

Tragically there were 9 **murders** with a domestic abuse motivation between 1 November 2021 and 31 October 2022. Four of the victims were female



68% of victims of domestic abuse crimes were **female** **32%** were **male**

83% of offenders were **male** **15%** were **female**

34% of relationships involved a former partner
24% a current partner
1 in 4 cases involved a **parent child relationship**

1 in 4 lesbian and bisexual women and **4 in 10 gay and bisexual men** experienced domestic abuse

94% of offenders were **aged 18 or over**

What is sexual abuse?

Within this strategy, sexual abuse is defined as: any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).

Sexual abuse can occur in intimate partner relationships, within families, between colleagues and friends or may be carried out by strangers. The majority of sexual abuse is committed by someone who the victim knows or trusts, rather than by a stranger. As with domestic abuse, sexual abuse can take many forms, which can be both physical and non-physical. Any behaviour of a sexual nature that occurs without consent is considered to constitute a form of sexual abuse. It may also include harmful sexual behaviour.

What does sexual abuse look like?

Sexual abuse can take many forms. It can include, but is not limited to:

- penetrative sexual activities such as rape (vaginal, anal or oral);
- sexual assault such as intentional touching, rubbing or groping;
- being made to perform masturbation on someone;
- sexual threats or harassment including unwanted sexual advances;
- indecent exposure;
- stalking (both physically and digitally);
- grooming (including via the internet);
- being made to look at/be involved in the production of sexual images and abusive material;
- virtual abuse including use of any technological mediums;
- being made to watch sexual activities (including pornography); and
- sexually exploiting someone for personal, commercial or financial gain.

Sexual abuse is trauma and as such it initiates a traumatic response like a fight, freeze or flop response. Everyone's response will be different, and there is no predictable textbook response, nor is any response more right or wrong or acceptable than any other. For many people it can be a number of years before they report sexual abuse; for some people, they may never tell anyone.

Some facts and figures

As is the case with domestic abuse, anyone can be affected by sexual abuse whatever their age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability. Similarly, while anyone can be a victim or an abuser, statistics show us that victims of sexual abuse are more likely to be women and abusers are more likely to be men. In relation to sexual abuse children and young people are also more likely to be affected.

An overview of the context of sexual abuse in Northern Ireland, as reported to the police, is set out below. Given the nature of these crimes, and the impact on those affected, we know that the true figure is likely to be much higher due to underreporting. **In the 12 months to the end of October 2022 sexual abuse crime accounted for 4% of all police recorded crime.**





78% of victims of sexual abuse were female,
21% were male

57% of sexual abuse victims were **under the age of 18**
14% were aged between **18 and 24**

Additional barriers for different groups

Domestic and sexual abuse can, and does, happen to anyone. The impact is personal to each individual affected and many people have multiple needs and face multiple barriers: to reporting (such as fear of not being believed, concerns about access to private information and delays in the system); to accessing support; and to engaging with the criminal justice system. We are committed to working together to help break down these barriers.

"Speaking directly with these groups and ensuring they have a voice is important."

What you've told us

During the Call for Views we heard from a wide range of people across Northern Ireland, from different ethnicities, ages, genders, sexual orientations and backgrounds who highlighted the particular issues that are faced by some groups. Many highlighted the barriers that are faced by those victims who present with a range of protected characteristics. There was a particular focus on the following groups and communities:

Women:

Women are disproportionately affected and more likely to experience multiple incidents and different types of domestic and sexual abuse. Women also face barriers to disclosing abuse and finding help. They can feel that they are reliant on the person abusing them in many ways, such as finance and housing, or they may fear that their children will be taken away should they leave. Many also fear not being taken seriously when they disclose abuse and are worried that they'll face comments like "why doesn't she just leave" if they are in a relationship together. Victims are at the highest risk when they leave a relationship or are thinking/planning to leave and for about 12 months after they have left. Domestic abuse can also get worse during pregnancy.

"We need to start looking at policy and strategy through a gendered lens rather than a one size fits all."

Men:

Men also suffer from domestic and sexual abuse. One of the main reasons men don't seek help is embarrassment and feeling "less of a man". There is also a fear of not being believed, fear of being accused as the perpetrator and losing contact with any children they may have with their abuser. Not knowing that support is available and believing services are for women only is another significant barrier for male victims.

"Men do not recognise they are victims in the first place. Even if they do, they feel ashamed."

LGBTQIA+ community:

Domestic and sexual abuse can happen to anyone but LGBTQIA+ people face additional challenges and barriers which are different to those experienced by heterosexual people. We know that some LGBTQIA+ people are afraid to report incidents of abuse and seek help due to fear of discrimination. They could also be facing coercive control, where they are in a relationship with their abuser, with threats to be 'outed'. Another significant barrier is not recognising that what they are experiencing is abuse, due to a lack of awareness and open conversation on what constitutes a healthy relationship. This can increase isolation of individuals who already lack family support or safety nets.

"The first barrier an individual has to face is having to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to someone from a mainstream organisation."

Children and young people:

While children's experience of domestic abuse is usually connected to their parents, they can also be victims in their own right. The impact of seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse is significant and the long-term consequences of this trauma can stretch into adulthood. Adverse childhood experiences can have lasting, negative effects on a child's development, health and well-being which can lead to behavioural problems, difficulties at school and increased risk of difficulties in future relationships.

"Children and young people... need to be recognised as equal victims in their own right."

Ethnic minority communities:

Domestic and sexual abuse is commonly under-reported in ethnic minority communities. People may be at particular risk because of language barriers and a lack of local connections or understanding of how to navigate local services. Cultural values can also prevent disclosures of abuse out of fear of dishonouring family or their community. An individual may also be dependent on the person abusing them for immigration status, lack financial independence and have no recourse to public funds.

"Migrant and ethnic minority victims of domestic abuse may be uniquely or particularly vulnerable to certain forms of coercive control."

Older people:

Domestic and sexual abuse can happen at any age and older people face a number of additional barriers to seeking support including generational views about faith, loyalty, shame and guilt. In many cases older people may wish to protect family members. They may find it difficult to report if the person abusing them is also their carer or they are financially dependent on them. They may also have normalised abuse that has been going on for a long period of time.

"The challenge is making people aware that it is okay to talk about domestic abuse, and that it is never acceptable."

People with a disability:

Disabled people are often in particularly vulnerable circumstances and may not recognise abuse or know how to report domestic and sexual abuse. They can be socially isolated; reliant on assistance with healthcare, housing or financial security; and may also face physical inaccessibility.

"Many people with a disability are unaware that domestic abuse services exist."

Rural communities:

Domestic and sexual abuse is no less prevalent in rural communities but can be less visible. People living in rural communities may also face additional challenges in accessing services or may have concerns about their information being shared with others if they live in a close-knit community. Isolation can also be used to further abuse someone, making it harder to escape.

"Abuse can manifest differently in a rural setting (isolation, infrastructure, rural economies, means of escape), and solutions that work in an urban context may not translate for rural victims."

3. Framework for action

The first step in moving forward with this strategy will be to develop a performance framework, in year one, with key performance indicators so that we can assess how far our work contributes to achieving the **eight outcomes which are built around four pillars** within this strategy:



Preliminary measures of success have been identified within each of the four pillars. These will inform plans to collect data once appropriate indicators have been finalised in partnership with delivery partners and key stakeholders.

Pillar 1: Partnership

Driving change together through joint commitment, leadership and partnership working.

What we know

No single agency can tackle domestic and sexual abuse alone. It is everyone's business and it is only by working together that we can develop our understanding, approach and services to make a real difference to people's lives. We are committed to doing everything we can to prevent, protect and support victims of domestic and sexual abuse and to ensure there is a focus across the whole of government to deliver this strategy.

"Ensure a joined-up approach"

We know that more can be done to promote integrated working across all sectors. We need robust and effective oversight structures with measurable outcomes that will create a central focal point for domestic and sexual abuse and ensure greater clarity and accountability for the delivery of key actions, as well as making clear connections with other related strategies.

This is an area in which every person should have an interest and all organisations have a role to play whether it be criminal justice agencies, housing, health and social care, education, our employment sector or local support services, to name but a few.

We also know that we need to bring together more comprehensive statistics on the prevalence of domestic and sexual abuse, on our service provision and on gap analysis. It is clear from the Call for Views that data and research specific to Northern Ireland is insufficient, with limited potential to consider the characteristics of those affected and yet we know that an effective response can only be achieved if we truly understand the nature and scale of domestic and sexual abuse in Northern Ireland. This is an issue that we will want to consider further going forward.

"Effective solutions must be informed by data."

Tackling domestic and sexual abuse is not something that government can achieve alone. It requires all partners and agencies to work together and to actively share local data and statistics to better understand domestic and sexual abuse. Some of the most successful interventions that we've seen so far have been multi-agency based and it is important that we continue to build on our collaborative approach sharing information, knowledge and experience. We are stronger working together in partnership.

What more we will do

Our focus in this pillar will be to have robust and effective governance processes and to improve the way that we work together as a region to tackle domestic and sexual abuse. Partnership working will be a critical enabler for the overall strategy.

Pillar 1: Partnership

Outcome 1:

A coordinated response to domestic and sexual abuse informed by victims' voices and community engagement.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

- Working collaboratively across all government Departments and with statutory, voluntary and community and faith organisations to tackle domestic and sexual abuse.
- Having effective governance structures underpinning the strategy's delivery with a performance framework to monitor outcomes and impact.
- Informing policy, legislation and service development with better quality data, research and shared learning.
- Having increased opportunities for victims' voices to be heard and ensuring the strategy's delivery is underpinned by intersectionality recognising that many people have multiple needs and face multiple barriers.

How will we know we are making a difference?

Listening to views of victims, including children.

Ensuring joined up working on cross cutting projects.

Engaging regularly with key stakeholders at both a regional and local level.

Data from key stakeholders is shared, ensuring that as a system we understand and can respond to trends and emerging issues.

Review of action plans and performance indicators on a regular basis by all partners to ensure progress is made.

Pillar 2: Prevention

Preventing domestic and sexual abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.

What we know

Sadly, many people feel that they cannot report domestic or sexual abuse. They may live with it for a long period of time and suffer a sustained series of incidents before asking for help. We want to encourage a culture of openness where victims are confident that they will be listened to, believed and not blamed. We must increase public awareness so that people, including those who are affected, understand what domestic and sexual abuse is, the different forms it can take and importantly how to get help.

"The challenge is making people aware that it is okay to talk about domestic abuse, and that it is never acceptable."

It is clear from the results of the Call for Views that we need to change attitudes that reinforce harmful stereotypes. People of all ages, ethnicities, religions, genders, gender identities, sexual orientation or disabilities can be a victim of domestic and sexual abuse. It can and does happen to anyone and having little knowledge, or negative attitudes, can be a real barrier to people speaking out and seeking support.

"Victims are not to blame and should not be made to feel ashamed."

We know that many victims are likely to be in contact with frontline services and may ask for help from someone they trust. That could include GPs, nurses, midwives, teachers, housing officers or community centres. Some may also call the police or may even approach their employer. That first response is crucial and likely to be a key factor in whether or not the individual ultimately goes on to access support services. A lack of knowledge and awareness can, however, lead to missed chances to help people. Together, we need to identify more opportunities to intervene early and equip people working in public facing roles so that they are able to respond appropriately.

Responses to the Call for Views also made it clear that there is much more to be done in schools and youth groups to help children and young people understand issues such as consent and respect from an early age.

"Education is the cornerstone of prevention."

We must continue to teach children and young people about healthy relationships and to understand what consent looks like to tackle the root causes of domestic and sexual abuse and nurture future generations. However, we know that this is not just about schools. It is also about how Further Education Colleges; training facilities and Universities deal with these important issues. Equally important is the need to build awareness amongst staff in those places so that they can learn practical skills to

respond to any disclosures. The Executive's Online Safety Strategy will also play an important role in the prevention of, and education about, sexual abuse in the online sphere. Preventing and reducing incidents of domestic and sexual abuse is everyone's business.

What more we will do

Our focus in this pillar will be to increase understanding of domestic and sexual abuse, what consent looks like and what constitutes healthy relationships, as well as effectively responding to abusive behaviour.

Pillar 2: Prevention

Outcome 2:

The public is informed about the different types of domestic and sexual abuse and its impact on victims including children.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

- Raising awareness, so that those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing domestic and sexual abuse, recognise it and know that help is available.
- Empowering people to safely challenge attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that foster domestic and sexual abuse.

Outcome 3:

An increase in the knowledge and skills of children, young people and adults about forming healthy relationships.

KEY PRIORITY AREA:

- Supporting the education sector to build capacity, knowledge and skills to promote understanding about consent and healthy relationships and to teach about sensitive subjects such as domestic and sexual abuse, in an age appropriate and inclusive way, across schools and other youth settings, training facilities, Further Education Colleges and Universities.

Outcome 4:

Domestic and sexual abuse is identified and responded to earlier.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

- Enabling people working in frontline and public-facing roles to identify and respond effectively to domestic and sexual abuse at the earliest opportunity.
- Supporting employers in the public, private and other sectors to make workplaces safer by raising awareness of domestic and sexual abuse and promoting workplace policies with effective measures to support staff.

How will we know we are making a difference?

Public awareness of domestic and sexual abuse.

Increased reporting of domestic and sexual abuse.

Prevention initiatives supporting individuals to develop healthy relationships.

Referrals from a wider range of agencies to MARAC and domestic and sexual abuse services.

Domestic abuse is recognised as a workplace issue.

Pillar 3: Support

Ensuring that all victims of domestic and sexual abuse, including children, can access services supporting them to recover and rebuild their lives.

What we know

Support for individuals affected by domestic and sexual abuse comes from many sources and is provided in different settings. It can often be part of the provision of other services such as education, welfare and housing, children's services and mental health service provision.

The statutory, voluntary and community sector also plays an important role in the provision of specialist domestic and sexual abuse services, including crisis response, outreach, advocacy and counselling services to help victims overcome trauma, recover and rebuild their lives. This also includes providing support to family and friends of someone experiencing domestic or sexual abuse.

A concern for many is that, when they are able to reach out and ask for help, they will have access to appropriate services in a timely manner.

"There must be clear pathways to help and support victims. It is vitally important that this is provided in the right way and at the right time so that victims are not put off taking action about their situation."

Victims of domestic and sexual abuse are often faced with numerous barriers to leaving an abusive relationship and seeking support (these have been considered in more detail in **Section 2** in terms of different groups). To ensure effective, accessible support, it is important that support providers fully understand these barriers.

We also know that victims and their children often need to leave their homes because of the dangers of further or repeated abuse and that economic barriers to leaving can make it more difficult. Refuges and other forms of temporary accommodation can provide a safe and supportive environment. Some victims may want to remain in their homes, as they miss the support of family and friends, and may also wish to maintain regular routines such as school attendance for their children, which requires a wider package of support.

"[We] need to tackle homelessness as a result of domestic abuse."

There is also a call for improved and expanded services during the criminal justice process, particularly to take account of the specific needs of children and the impact of abuse on them. Through this we can provide additional support and assistance to those affected by abuse, on their journey through the criminal justice system, during what can be a daunting time for victims.

What more we will do

Our focus in this pillar will be to support those affected by domestic and sexual abuse while also recognising the wider impact on family and friends. The outcomes and key priorities under this pillar are:

Pillar 3: Support

Outcome 5:

Victims including children are supported and feel safe regardless of diversity of need.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

- Providing support for victims including children, as well as wider family, to reduce the risk and impact of abuse; recover from trauma and improve their health and well-being; and engage in the justice system in a way that ensures they feel protected and safe.
- Ensuring there is a focus on tackling sexual abuse, including the sexual abuse of children and young people, and providing specialist support for victims.
- Enabling services to better understand intersectional needs of individuals to ensure victims get the responses and support they need.

Outcome 6:

All victims of domestic abuse including children can access safe accommodation-based services.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

- Ensuring all victims and their children can access accommodation that is safe and appropriate to their needs and circumstances.
- Supporting victims of domestic abuse to remain safely in their home if they want to and it is safe to do so.

How will we know we are making a difference?

Victims of domestic and sexual abuse access support.

Learning from the experience of victims to inform best practice.

Provision of services.

Fewer victims of domestic and sexual abuse withdraw from the criminal justice process.

Pillar 4: Justice

Holding individuals who are abusive to account and ensuring justice responses are effective.

What we know

Addressing Abusive Behaviours

While anyone can be a victim of domestic or sexual abuse, we know that those carrying out abusive behaviours tend to be predominantly male, while the majority of victims are female. We also know that many domestic and sexual abuse offenders are repeat offenders and that many victims unfortunately will also be repeat victims. We will want to take account of this both under this pillar and in terms of wider service provision under the strategy.

Effective and early risk assessment can help to reduce offending, prevent re-offending and reduce the number of people who become victims or have to suffer further abuse. The earlier we can identify, address and stop abusive and offending behaviour and its impact the better. Only by taking action to address domestic and sexual abuse, and associated concerning behaviour, can we reduce the risk of abuse occurring, reoffending and revictimisation. We also need more information and evidence on the causes and drivers of abusive behaviour plus what works well to address it.

"An opportunity to seek early intervention before offending behaviour takes place ... when behaviours of concern would first be identified before this would ever reach the criminal justice arena."

We know that effective management of those with a history of abusive behaviour is needed, including through ongoing engagement with statutory, voluntary and community sector partners. We also need to consider the use of multi-agency arrangements to best manage risk, address abusive behaviour and provide support. Protection of victims and feeling safe is also important, with further measures needed to secure this, including ensuring that where protective measures are in place, we can enable people to remain in their home rather than necessarily having to leave. Importantly, in this context, we want to bring forward measures that strengthen restrictions on individuals that are abusive in terms of contact with and proximity to their victims.

"The protections available need to be strengthened."

The Strategic Investment Board's mid–term review of the 2016 – 2023 strategy identified the need for an ongoing assessment of the capacity of the justice system to respond to current, new and emerging offences. It also stressed the need to continue to develop and deliver initiatives and interventions, based on best practice, to effectively address harmful and abusive behaviours. There was considered a need to focus on offending behaviour, with mainstreaming of current programmes. We also recognise that there are intrinsic links between this Justice pillar and that relating to Prevention, in terms of raising awareness around healthy and unhealthy behaviours. Tackling these together will help address levels of concerning and abusive behaviours.

Justice System

For many victims of domestic and sexual abuse, going through the criminal justice system will be a daunting experience that they may never have encountered before. This, combined with a range of factors (including, for example the trauma response to the domestic and sexual abuse they have been subjected to or concerns about the impact on their family) can result in disengagement from the criminal justice process. While domestic and sexual abuse recorded crime levels are just under 26,000 annually, we know that this is lower than the true picture, due to underreporting and victims disengaging with the criminal justice system. Not all domestic and sexual abuse incidents will be reported to police and even then, not all will result in a crime being recorded due to the level of the severity of the incident.

The Call for Views highlighted that reporting could be improved by increased awareness of abuse, increased understanding of the system, speedier progression of cases and better legal protections. Both underreporting and drop out of cases (attrition) are higher than we would want them to be.

"Survivors do not believe that the outcome of their report will be worth the trauma of reporting and reliving their experience."

The Call for Views highlighted the need to support victims on their criminal justice journey, both by informing victims of what they could expect and providing information about the criminal justice process itself, as well as ensuring access to timely and accurate case updates.

In looking at the experience of criminal justice, the Call for Views' victim survey reflected the need for clearer information, including on outcomes, and pressed for consideration of how domestic abuse cases could be fast-tracked, with many responses commenting on the time taken for cases to proceed through the criminal justice system and the level of delay encountered. However it should be also noted that reducing delay in the criminal justice system is a key priority for the Department of Justice and a significant programme of work is already underway, separate to this strategy, to address this issue.

Responses to the Call for Views also felt that improved and extended services are required as part of the criminal justice journey. In considering how we respond to these issues, we also need to further explore how best to meet the needs of particular groups of victims as part of the criminal justice journey.

"More must be done to ensure that the process of reporting is streamlined."

A number of responses to the Call for Views also set out proposals for improved linkages across the justice system, particularly in relation to the use of information across court types. The Call for Views also highlighted that there is currently limited knowledge and awareness amongst victims and wider society, of the range of criminal justice supports that are available to victims of domestic and sexual abuse, for example, the Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme, the existence of a legal aid waiver for non-molestation orders, etc.

Tragically we know that in some cases domestic violence can result in death. Provision is already in place for a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) to be held where a person is killed as a result of domestic violence, so that as a system, we are able to learn lessons and put in place improved practices to prevent future deaths. We recognise the need to ensure continued learning from DHRs and to keep the operation of DHRs under consideration to ensure that they are robust and effective. We are committed to improving our understanding of what may lead to fatalities as well as monitoring and effectively implementing systemic learning from these reviews in order to identify and put in place best practice and to reduce any missed opportunities to deal with abusive and potentially fatal behaviour.

What more we will do

Our focus in this pillar will be two-fold: to address abusive behaviours, reduce the associated risk of harm and improve protections for those affected; and to encourage victims to report domestic and sexual abuse, remain engaged in the justice process and provide an effective justice system response. The outcomes and key priorities under this pillar are:

Pillar 4: Justice

Addressing Abusive Behaviours

Outcome 7:	How will we know we are making a difference:
Individuals are responsible for their abusive behaviour, are held to account and supported to change, with the risk of harm reduced and victim safety enhanced.	***A reduction in repeat incidents of domestic and sexual abuse.***
KEY PRIORITY AREAS:	***Increase in levels of convictions for domestic and sexual abuse offences.***
• Supporting individuals to address and manage their abusive behaviours and sustain positive change.	***Engagement in behavioural change programmes and associated reoffending levels.***
• Encouraging individuals to change their abusive behaviour by removing barriers to participation.	***Increase in protection orders granted and reduction in associated breaches.***
• Working collaboratively to target the most prolific offenders, improving risk assessment and management.	
• Providing integrated safety and support structures for victims where programmes to address abusive behaviours are undertaken.	
• Improving protections for those at risk of abuse.	

Justice System

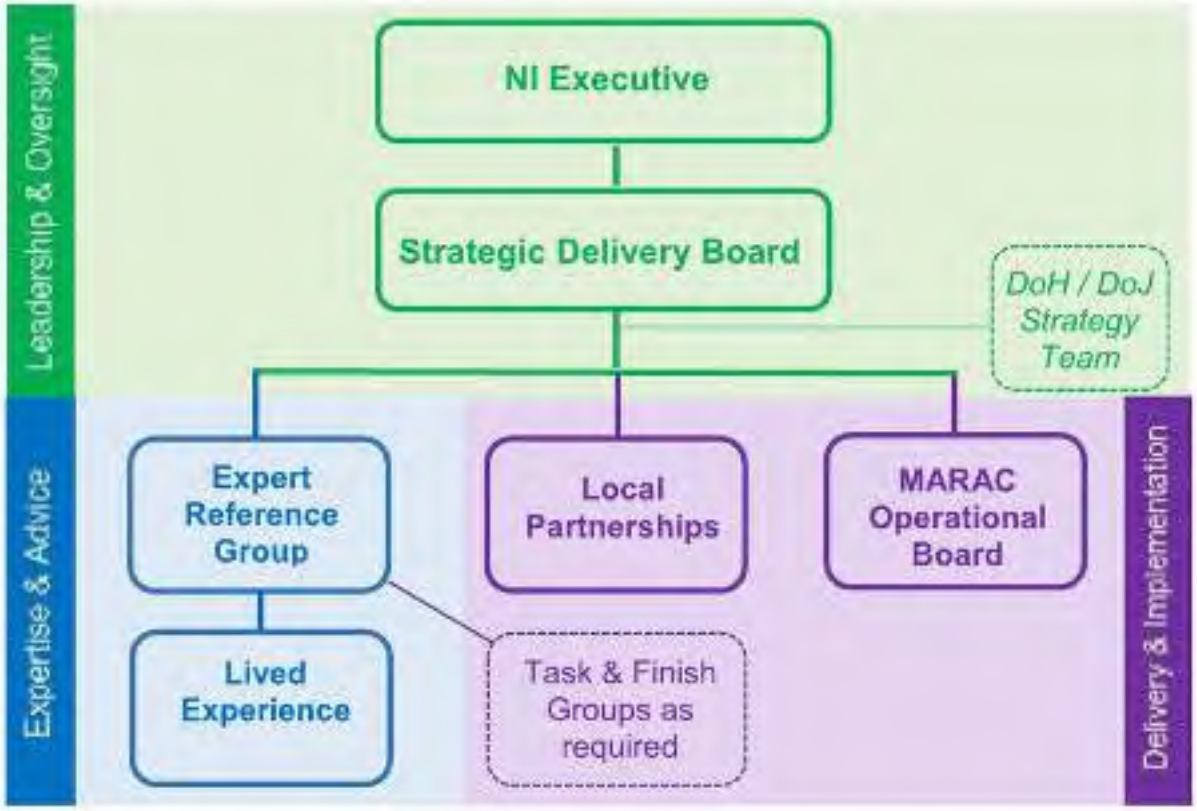
Outcome 8:	How will we know we are making a difference?
Victims feel confident to report domestic and sexual abuse, barriers to participating in the justice system are reduced and justice responses are effective.	***Increased reporting of domestic and sexual abuse.***
KEY PRIORITY AREAS:	***Fewer victims of domestic and sexual abuse withdraw from the criminal justice process.***
• Understanding better the factors contributing to high attrition levels (drop out of cases) and under-reporting in domestic and sexual abuse cases in order to improve these.	***Time taken for domestic and sexual abuse cases to be completed.***
• Providing victims of domestic and sexual abuse with information and services to support them through the criminal justice process.	***Satisfaction with criminal justice system support.***
• Improving the efficiency of the justice system and how domestic and sexual abuse cases are dealt with in criminal, civil and family courts.	
• Strengthening the police and criminal justice response to domestic and sexual abuse.	

4. Delivering the Strategy

Governance structures for co-ordination and delivery

The strategy is led jointly by the Department of Health and the Department of Justice but cuts across the work of other Departments, primarily the Department for Communities, the Department of Education and the Executive Office.

It is envisaged that the strategy could be monitored through the following governance structure, which is largely similar to the previous strategy. Given the ongoing development of an Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy it will be important to keep this under review, in order that structures between the two strategies can best align.



Leadership and oversight

The **Northern Ireland Executive** will set the strategic direction, providing political leadership and visibility. It will receive progress reports from the Strategic Delivery Board every six months.

The **Strategic Delivery Board** will report and be accountable to the Executive. It will meet quarterly and will be comprised of senior officials across the Health, Justice,

Communities, Education and Finance Departments; the Executive Office; and Police Service of Northern Ireland. Additional representatives from the local Domestic and Sexual Violence Partnerships and voluntary sector will also be invited to attend on a rotational basis. The Board's role will be to ensure delivery against targets and oversee accountability mechanisms with appropriate challenge and scrutiny. Links will also be established with other relevant strategic oversight groups including CPSOG to share information, promote collaboration and avoid duplication in relation to action plans.

Expertise and advice

A multi-agency **Expert Reference Group** comprised of partners from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors will provide advice to the Strategic Delivery Board from a cross-sectoral, frontline perspective. It will meet quarterly to share local data and best practice to inform and drive continued improvement in tackling domestic and sexual abuse.

Victims of domestic and sexual abuse will also be key to the strategy's delivery to ensure their lived experience and insight continues to inform our response. We are, however, mindful of the impact that this can have on individuals and the need to ensure there are structures available for support.

Initial stakeholder engagement has indicated that a number of lived experience groups are already in place across Northern Ireland, supported by key organisations across the voluntary and community sector. The Departments will continue to engage with those organisations with a view to identifying how best we can support victims to share their experiences in a safe space.

Delivery and implementation

Multi-agency Task and Finish groups will be established, as required, to inform policy development and take forward specific actions under the strategy (including how best we meet the needs of those with protected characteristics).

There will also be collaboration opportunities with the local Domestic and Sexual Violence Partnerships to ensure regional priorities are interpreted and delivered at a local level. To inform this, the Departments have asked the Innovation Lab within the Department of Finance to bring together key stakeholders to take a fresh look at how we can best work together at a local and regional level.

The existing Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Operational Board will also continue to feed into the implementation of the strategy. The Board provides strategic operational governance across all MARACS in Northern Ireland to ensure they operate effectively and have a measurable impact.

Annual action plans

"We recommend that the strategies clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of each Department so that there are clear lines of accountability."

The strategy will be delivered through annual action plans the detail of which will be delivered over the lifetime of the strategy. They will be developed in conjunction with our Expert Reference Group and will outline how each of the key priority areas within the four pillars will be driven forward, who will be responsible, and the timescales by which they will be completed.

Annual reports will also be published, at the start of each financial year, highlighting the work that has been delivered in the previous 12 months as well as performance against the strategy's outcomes. The Strategic Delivery Board will monitor and review the actions plans on a quarterly basis and ensure any corrective action or barriers to implementation are addressed.

Monitoring progress and measuring success

From the Call for Views, we know that it is important that there are effective arrangements in place to monitor and measure the delivery of the strategy. Therefore, a key action for year one will be to develop a Strategic Performance Framework with the position and progress of each outcome measured using a range of indicators. We want to ensure that there is a continuous review process with accountable and transparent monitoring and reporting against the work that is being undertaken and how this is delivering against the strategy's vision.

It is also intended that for significant new pieces of work that are being progressed we will develop scorecards to demonstrate delivery under the strategy. These will provide an overview of the service being delivered, partners involved in the project and provide a number of performance measures that will consider how much did we do, how well did we do it and is anyone better off as a result. This will also feed into the annual delivery reports.

Funding

"Money and resources must be ring fenced."

Many responses to the Call for Views stressed the importance of longer-term sustainable funding and a costed delivery plan in order to fully implement the strategy

and its action plans. In recognition of this, a cross-departmental bid was submitted as part of the Executive's draft 2022-25 budget which was issued for consultation in December 2021. In the absence of an Executive, that draft budget was not agreed and the future funding picture is uncertain. The Secretary of State announced a one-year budget for 2022-23 at the end of November 2022. However, there is currently no certainty around funding in future years.

Within this context, it is anticipated that Departments will seek to continue the implementation of priority objectives, including delivery of programmes of work, and the development of services commissioned by Departments that will allow us to deliver under the key pillars of the strategy, subject to available funding. The allocation of funding and work to be progressed will be considered as part of the development of annual delivery plans, which will be developed in partnership with key stakeholders and agreed by the Strategic Delivery Board.

Mid-term review and evaluation

A mid-term review and evaluation of projects will form a key element of the Strategic Performance Framework for the new strategy and how we can effectively deliver under this.

In addition to annual reporting, we will conduct an interim review of the strategy at the mid-way point of delivery (likely to be during 2026/27) to assess how far our work has contributed to achieving the strategy's eight outcomes. We will also use this as an opportunity to gather feedback from key delivery partners and stakeholders on what aspects of the strategy they think are working well and what could be improved. The findings of this evaluation will be made available and will be used to inform the remainder of the strategy's seven-year implementation.

As part of the policy development and implementation process, evaluations will also typically be undertaken on significant new projects. The purpose of this is to assess their effectiveness, determine what changes may be needed and identify areas for improvement. As part of an ongoing review process this will allow us to demonstrate the success of progress that has been made through the measures that have been introduced.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2023
Subject:	The Department of Justice consultation on Forms of Evidence of Domestic Abuse that should Trigger an Automatic Prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings and associated Equality and Human Rights Screening.
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gary Scott (Safeguarding Coordinator)
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gary Scott (Safeguarding Coordinator)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision		**For noting only**	**x**

1.0	**Purpose and Background**
1.1	The Department of Justice consultation on Forms Of Evidence of Domestic Abuse that Should Trigger an Automatic Prohibition on Cross-Examination in Person in Family Proceedings (Appendix 2) is seeking views on circumstances where prohibition of cross examination by an accused would apply.
1.2	The consultation response was due on 21 April 2023 and was an online response.
1.3	Due to the Council elections and the period of purdah, Council response was submitted directly to the Department of Justice and is therefore presented to committee for noting only.
1.4	Council response to this consultation is attached at Appendix 1.
2.0	**Key issues**
2.1	Council is committed to the principle that Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence is unacceptable behaviour and everyone has the right to live free from fear and abuse.
2.2	Domestic and sexual abuse continues to have a damaging and lasting impact on the lives of adults and children right across Northern Ireland. It is prevalent in every community and affects all people regardless of age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race or religion and yet it continues to be a crime that many feel they cannot report. Tackling domestic and sexual abuse is a cross departmental priority.
2.3	The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 ("the 2021 Act") makes provision (still to be commenced), to protect a victim of domestic abuse from being cross-examined by the perpetrator in person and vice-versa. An automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person will apply in specified circumstances and this consultation seeks views on what forms of evidence of domestic abuse, in addition to those already provided for in the legislation, should trigger the automatic prohibition.
2.4	The consultation seeks views on specified types of evidence which should be specified in regulations as evidence that will trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings. These include: • Binding over order • Undertaking • Fact-finding hearing • Expert report for court/tribunal • Letter or report from an appropriate health professional • Appropriate health professional referral to a domestic abuse support service

	• Multi agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) or other suitable local safeguarding forum • Letter from an independent advocacy service providing support to victims of domestic abuse • Letter from the Housing Executive • Letter from organisation providing domestic abuse support services • Domestic abuse support organisation refusal of admission to a refuge • Letter from a public authority • Economic abuse
2.5	Council supported the consultation that the prohibition from cross examination should apply where there is an underlying element of domestic abuse and this is reflected in the proposed draft consultation response contained within Appendix 1.
2.6	Council supported with no significant comment or contentious issue
3.0	**Recommendations**
3.1	Members are recommended to note the Department of Justice consultation on Forms of Evidence of Domestic Abuse that should Trigger an Automatic Prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings and associated Equality and Human Rights Screening (as at Appendix1)
4.0	**Resource implications**
4.1	There are no resource implications
4.2	Members should note responses to this consultation were submitted on-line therefore this typed word document response provided at Appendix 1 are for the purposes of this report, however, the actual response was submitted through the Department of Justice's website.
5.0	**Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)**
5.1	***General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes*** It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	***Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision*** Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐

5.3	***Proposal initiating consultation*** Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☒ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐
	Rationale: Equality screening and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment have both been completed by the Department of Justice and are provided in the Appendices 3 and 4.
6.0	**Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)**
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ Equality screening and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment have both been completed by the Department of Justice and are provided in the background documents Appendices 3 and 4. If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	**Appendices**
7.1	1. Newry Mourne & Down District Council consultation response – The Department of Justice consultation on Forms of Evidence of Domestic Abuse that should Trigger an Automatic Prohibition on Cross-examination in Person in Family Proceedings. 2. The Department of Justice consultation On Forms Of Evidence Of Domestic Abuse That Should Trigger an Automatic Prohibition on Cross-Examination in Person in Family Proceedings and Equality and Human Rights Screening
8.0	**Background Documents**
	3. Department of Justice Impact Screening Outcomes - Full impact assessment document Equality Impact Assessment 4. The Department of Justice Impact Screening Outcomes - Full impact assessment document Rural Impact Assessment

Appendix 2

Department of Justice | An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt Männystrie O tha Laa

Evidence of Domestic Abuse Consultation Questionnaire

Consultation on forms of evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings

Responding to the Consultation

Please use this questionnaire to tell us your views on the options.

The closing date for receipt of responses is **5pm on Friday 21 April 2023**.

Please note that it is unlikely that responses to the consultation will be accepted after this date.

Please indicate clearly if you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

Please send your response by email to: **AToJ.Consultation@justice-ni.gov.uk**

Privacy Notice

We intend to publish a summary of responses on our website on completion of the consultation process. Any contact details, which will identify a respondent as a private individual, will be removed prior to publication.

All information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Respondents should also be aware that the Department's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 may require that any responses, not subject to specific exemptions under that Act, be disclosed to other parties on request.

Consultee Details

Please indicate if you are responding as: (*please tick only one option*)

[ ] A member of the public
[x] On behalf of an organisation
[ ] Other.....(*please specify*)

Please enter your details below:

Full Name:	Gary Scott
Title:	[x] **Mr** [ ] **Ms** [ ] **Mrs** [ ] **Miss** [ ] **Dr** *(please tick as appropriate)*
Organisation: *(if applicable)*	Newry Mourne and Down District Council
Job Title: *(if applicable)*	Safeguarding Coordinator
Address, including Postcode:	Downpatrick Office Downshire Civic Centre Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road Downpatrick BT30 6GQ
Email Address:	gary.scott@nmandd.org

Appendix 2

Question 1.

Please consider each type of evidence listed below and indicate if you think that it should be specified in regulations as evidence that will trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings. Note that P and V referred to below must be a party or witness in the same family proceedings and there must be a personal connection between them.

Please explain the reason for your answer.

Form of evidence	Response
1(a) Binding over order Evidence of a court order binding over P in connection with a specified offence against V.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** This would be an indication of intimidating behaviour by P which may prevent V giving evidence
1(b) Undertaking An undertaking given in Northern Ireland or Scotland in place of a protective injunction or given in England and Wales under sections 46 or 63E of the Family Law Act 1996 by P for the protection of V (provided that no cross-undertaking relating to domestic abuse was given).	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Any form of protective injunction would indicate previous use of intimidating/aggressive or coercive/controlling behaviour by P making it difficult and intimidating for V to give evidence without support
1(c) Fact-finding hearing A copy of a finding of fact, made in previous legal proceedings,	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:**

including in a tribunal, in the United Kingdom, that there has been domestic abuse between P and V.	Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined by the alleged perpetrator
1(d) Expert report for court/tribunal An expert report produced as evidence in previous proceedings in the United Kingdom for the benefit of a court or tribunal, confirming that V was assessed as having suffered domestic abuse by P.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined by the alleged perpetrator
1(e) Letter or report from an appropriate health professional A letter or report from an appropriate health professional (e.g. doctor, nurse, dentist, psychologist, social worker) confirming that: a) the professional or another appropriate health professional has examined V, following a report of abusive behaviour by P; and b) in the reasonable professional judgement of the author, or the examining appropriate health professional, V has, or has had, injuries or a condition consistent with being a victim of domestic	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined by the alleged perpetrator

abuse.	
1(f) Appropriate health professional referral to a domestic abuse support service A letter or report from: a) the appropriate health professional who made the referral; b) an appropriate health professional who has access to the medical records of V; or c) the person to whom the referral was made, confirming there was a referral by an appropriate health professional of V following a report of domestic abuse by P, to a person who provides specialist support or assistance for victims of, or those at risk of, domestic abuse.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the report/letter outlining surrounding detail by the alleged perpetrator P
1(g) Multi agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) or other suitable local safeguarding forum A letter from any person who is a member of a multi-agency risk assessment conference (or other suitable local safeguarding forum) confirming that V has experienced domestic abuse by P. Note that: a local safeguarding forum would consist of more than one organisation/agency. Examples of bodies that might be part of other suitable local safeguarding forums are: police, probation service, prison service, health, housing, education, social services, domestic abuse adviser/advocate, victim support services, women and male support services, etc.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the report or any report outlining surrounding detail about the alleged perpetrator P's behaviour including information provided by V about P's behaviour

1(h) Letter from an independent advocacy service providing support to victims of domestic abuse A letter from an independent advocacy service in Northern Ireland providing support to victims of abuse, or an independent domestic or sexual violence advocate in England and Wales, confirming that they are providing, or have provided, support to V, following a report of domestic abuse by P.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the report/letter outlining surrounding detail of the alleged perpetrator Ps behaviour
1(i) Letter from the Housing Executive A letter from an officer employed by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or its equivalent in England and Wales or Scotland containing: a) a statement to the effect that, in their reasonable professional judgement, V is a victim of domestic abuse by P; b) a description of the matters relied upon to support that judgement; and c) a description of the support they provided to V.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the report/letter outlining surrounding detail of the alleged perpetrator Ps behaviour
1(j) Letter from organisation providing domestic abuse support services A letter from an organisation providing domestic abuse support services confirming that:	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the

a) in the reasonable professional judgement of the author of the letter, V is a victim of domestic abuse by P; b) a description of the matters relied upon to support that judgement; c) a description of the support provided to V; and d) a statement of the reasons why V needed that support.	surrounding detail of the alleged perpetrator Ps behaviour
1(k) Domestic abuse support organisation refusal of admission to a refuge A letter or report from an organisation providing domestic abuse support services in the United Kingdom confirming: a) that V was refused admission to a refuge; b) the date on which V was refused admission to the refuge; and c) that V sought admission to the refuge because of allegations of abuse by a party/witness to the proceedings. Note that: a refuge will be either a refuge established for the purpose of providing accommodation for victims of, or those at risk of, domestic abuse or a residential home established and maintained by a public body for any other purpose that also provides accommodation to the victims of, or those at risk of, domestic abuse. A reason for refusal could be on the grounds	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the surrounding detail of the alleged perpetrator Ps behaviour

that the refuge was full.	
1(l) Letter from a public authority A letter from a public authority confirming that V was assessed as being a victim of domestic abuse by P (or a copy of that assessment). Note that: "public authority" would have the same meaning as in section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the report/letter outlining surrounding detail of the alleged perpetrator Ps behaviour
1(m) Economic abuse Evidence which the court is satisfied demonstrates that V has been the victim of domestic abuse by P in the form of abuse which relates to economic matters. Note that: relevant types of evidence might include copies of bank statements, cancelled cheques and/or relevant letters from banks, credit card accounts, emails, text messages, etc.	**Yes ☒ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐** **Reason:** Domestic Abuse would be intimidating in nature and prevent V giving evidence when being cross examined on the evidence provided in court outlining surrounding detail of the alleged perpetrator Ps behaviour

Appendix 2

Question 2.

Is there other evidence of domestic abuse that ought to be specified in the regulations (bearing in mind that the (alleged) victim and (alleged) perpetrator must both be parties to the proceedings and personally connected, and the evidence needs to be sufficiently objective and robust to justify an automatic prohibition)?

Please tell us what this evidence is and why you think it should be included.

Yes ☐ / No x / Don't know ☐

If "yes" -

Type of evidence:

Reason for inclusion:

Question 3.

Do you think that section 5 (Penalties for concealing offences, etc.) of the Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967 has any implications for the forms of evidence that should be specified in the regulations (see paragraphs 3.8 - 3.10)?

If you think it does, please tell us why.

Yes x☐ / No ☐ / Don't know ☐

If "yes", reason: If P can intimidate V not to report abuse in context of section 5 then P could equally intimidate V in any cross examination in context of V being the law breaker and further intimidate.

Question 4.

Do you agree with the outcome of the screening exercises?

If you disagree, please tell us why.

Yes x / No ☐ / Don't know ☐

If "no", reason:

Appendix 1

Department of Justice | An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Männystrie O tha Laa

Consultation on forms of evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings

February 2023

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Background	4
3. Evidence of domestic abuse	8
4. Impact assessments	12
5. Consultation questions	13
6. Next steps	21
Annex A: Article 11D of the Family Law (NI) Order 1993	22
Annex B: S2 & 5 of the Domestic Abuse & Civil Proceedings Act (NI) 2021	23

1. Introduction

1.1 The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 ("the 2021 Act") makes provision, still to be commenced, to protect a victim[1] of domestic abuse from being cross-examined by the perpetrator in person and vice-versa. An automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person will apply in specified circumstances and this consultation seeks views on what forms of evidence of domestic abuse, in addition to those already provided for in the legislation, should trigger the automatic prohibition.

1.2 The Department would particularly welcome the views of victims of domestic abuse who have been involved in family proceedings, people who have represented themselves in family proceedings, and professionals, organisations and others who may be asked to provide evidence on behalf of a victim of domestic abuse. However, views are invited from all court users, people working in the family justice system, community and voluntary sector organisations, and anyone else with an interest in this subject.

[1] For the purposes of this paper, references to "victim" encompasses both victims and alleged victims and references to "perpetrator" encompasses both perpetrators and alleged perpetrators.

2. Background

Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021

2.1 Section 36 of the 2021 Act inserts new provision in the Family Law (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 ("the 1993 Order") to prohibit perpetrators of domestic abuse from personally cross-examining their victims in family proceedings, and vice versa (for convenience, the provision is set out in **Annex A**).

2.2 An automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person applies in specified circumstances as set out below. Where none of the automatic prohibitions apply, the court has a discretionary power to prohibit cross-examination in person where it would affect the quality of the witness's evidence or cause the party or witness significant distress, and it would not be contrary to the interests of justice.

2.3 Prohibiting a party from conducting cross-examination in person has the potential to impact that party's ability to put their case effectively to the court and Articles 6 (right to a fair trial) and 8 (right to family life) of the ECHR must be observed. The legislative provision, therefore, includes a power for a court to appoint a legal representative funded by the Department to conduct the cross-examination on behalf of a party prohibited from doing so in person.

2.4 An automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person will apply as follows:

- a party has been cautioned for, charged with or convicted of a specified offence, they cannot cross-examined the victim in person (and vice versa if the victim is a party);
- an on-notice protective injunction is in force against a party, they cannot cross-examine in person, a witness who is protected by the injunction (and vice versa where the protected person is a party); or
- specified evidence is adduced that a party has engaged in abusive behaviour against a witness to whom they are personally connected, they cannot cross-examine the witness in person (and vice versa if the victim is a party).

2.5 The lists of relevant offences, on-notice protective injunctions and other evidence of domestic abuse for this purpose will be specified in regulations made by the Department. This consultation is concerned with the forms of "other evidence" of domestic abuse that should be prescribed.

Background to the provision in the 2021 Act

2.6 Prior to the enactment of the 2021 Act, there was no specific statutory provision enabling family courts in Northern Ireland to prohibit perpetrators of domestic abuse from personally cross-examining the victim. Instead, family courts have relied on their general case management powers, although this would not extend to a power to appoint a legal representative to carry out cross-examination of a vulnerable witness on behalf of an unrepresented party.

2.7 A fundamental review of family justice in Northern Ireland was commissioned by the then Lord Chief Justice in 2015 and led by Lord Justice Gillen. The final report of the Review was published in 2017 and specifically considered the issue of protection of witnesses from cross-examination by personal litigants.[2] The report recommended that legislative powers, similar to those already available in criminal proceedings (i.e. Part III of the Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999), should be introduced in family proceedings in Northern Ireland to prevent a situation in which perpetrators of abuse can continue to exercise control over their victims and cause them further distress by cross-examining them in person.

Consultation on protecting victims of domestic abuse from being cross-examined by perpetrators in person in family proceedings

2.8 In July 2019, the Department consulted on options for legislation to protect victims of domestic abuse from being cross-examined in person by the perpetrator in family proceedings.[3]

---

[2] Review of Civil and Family Justice in Northern Ireland Review Group (2017) *Review Group's Report on Family Justice*. Available at www.judiciaryni.uk/publications/review-groups-report-family-justice.
[3] Department of Justice (2019). *Protecting Victims of Domestic Abuse from Being Cross-examined by Perpetrators in Person in Family Proceedings: A Consultation on Options for Legislation*. Available at https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-prohibition-cross-examination-family-proceedings.

2.9 As well as proposing an automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person where there is a relevant conviction, caution, charge or on-notice injunction, the consultation paper asked if there were any other circumstances in which an absolute prohibition on cross-examination in person should apply.

2.10 Of the 20 responses received, half made a number of suggestions in relation to other circumstances in which an absolute prohibition on cross-examination should apply. These were where:

- the party has committed a specified offence against the children or relatives of the person to be cross-examined;
- the party has been convicted of a relevant offence in respect of another victim;
- there are allegations of domestic abuse, child abuse, sexual violence, coercive control, stalking or harassment;
- there is any indication in whatever form of a history of domestic abuse;
- police have been called out to a domestic abuse incident;
- a police officer attests that there is evidence of domestic abuse;
- a DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence) risk checklist has been completed by the police and the abused party has been assessed to be high risk;
- a case has been referred to MARAC [Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference];
- an application has been submitted to the Northern Ireland Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme;
- domestic abuse has been disclosed to court staff;
- the court proactively asks the party to be cross-examined if the litigant in person has been abusive;
- a statutory agency or a voluntary support organisation attests that domestic abuse has been disclosed to them or they have provided support to a victim of domestic abuse;
- staff in a child contact centre indicate that they have concerns about domestic abuse;
- there is a report of domestic abuse in medical records.

2.11 Taking the views expressed by consultees into account, the Department gave a commitment in its response to the consultation, which was published in February 2020, to include a power in the legislation for the Department to specify in regulations additional evidence of domestic abuse in respect of which an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings would apply.[4]

Commitment to further consultation

2.12 When the Committee for Justice was scrutinising the Bill at Committee Stage, those who responded to its call for evidence broadly welcomed the provisions on the prohibition of cross-examination in person in family proceedings. Some, however, were of the view that the Bill should have included provision for an automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person where any allegation of domestic abuse is made. The Committee sought the Department's view on this.

2.13 The Department's response was that the protection of victims needs to be balanced with the need to ensure fairness in the proceedings for all parties, therefore, the forms of evidence of domestic abuse to be specified would need to be sufficiently objective and robust to justify an absolute bar. The Department stated, however, that it would consult on the forms of "other evidence" that should lead to an absolute prohibition before making any regulations under powers in the Bill. This consultation is being carried out further to that commitment.

[4] Department of Justice (2020), *Protecting Victims of Domestic Abuse from Being Cross-examined by Perpetrators in Person in Family Proceedings – A Consultation on Options for Legislation: Summary of Consultation Responses and Next Steps*. Available at https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-prohibition-cross-examination-family-proceedings.

3. Evidence of domestic abuse

3.1 As noted above, the Department is of the view that, in order to protect the right to a fair hearing of all parties, the forms of evidence to be specified should be sufficiently objective and robust to justify an automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person. Accordingly, it is considered that an automatic prohibition should not apply where a party simply makes a disclosure or allegation of domestic abuse to the court without further evidence to support this. It is also important to emphasise that production of any of the forms of evidence specified in regulations made under the 2021 Act will simply trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person, i.e. a procedural protection. The court will still have to determine the substantive issues in dispute between the parties (including any contested allegations of abuse) having regard to all of the evidence before the court.

3.2 In considering what forms of evidence might be specified in regulations, the Department has considered existing guidance and legislation which specifies items of evidence that can be provided as evidence of domestic abuse for a particular purpose.

Domestic abuse waiver in legal aid applications

3.3 In determining whether to apply the discretionary waiver of the financial eligibility test for access to civil legal services for victims of domestic abuse ('the domestic abuse waiver'), the Director of Legal Aid Casework has to be satisfied that the applicant for legal aid is, or appears to be, a victim of domestic abuse perpetrated by a party bringing proceedings under Article 8 (application for contact, residence etc.) of the Children (NI) Order 1995. Many of the items of evidence that may be considered for this purpose are already included in the provision to be inserted in the 1993 Order (as amended by the 2021 Act), i.e. a relevant conviction, caution, or on-notice injunction.[5] However the legal aid guidance also refers to "evidence provided by the PSNI that the respondent in the children proceedings has been a reported victim of domestic abuse by the applicant in the

[5] Department of Justice (2022), *Guidance on the Domestic Abuse Waiver in Legal Aid Applications*. Available at https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-domestic-abuse-waiver-legal-aid-applications.

proceedings" and "other evidence providing an equal level of assurance that the applicant is eligible for the waiver".

Position in England and Wales

3.4 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 makes provision in relation to the prohibition of cross-examination in person in family proceedings in England and Wales, corresponding to the provision for this jurisdiction in the [Northern Ireland] 2021 Act. Last year, the Ministry of Justice made regulations to specify the forms of evidence of domestic abuse which will trigger the automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person in the Family Court in England and Wales (see Schedule 3 to the Prohibition of Cross-Examination in Person (Civil and Family Proceedings) Regulations 2022).[6] With the exception of references to convictions, cautions, charges or on-notice injunctions (which, as in Northern Ireland, are already provided for in the primary legislation), the regulations mirror the forms of evidence of domestic abuse that can be provided for the purpose of applying for civil legal services in private family law cases in England and Wales (see Schedule 1 to the Civil Legal Aid (Procedure) Regulations 2012, as amended). It is worth noting that specified evidence of domestic abuse that has occurred in Northern Ireland is included.

3.5 Statistics produced by the Legal Aid Agency (E&W) for 2020/21 show that, out of approximately 16,335 pieces of evidence supplied in support of applications, the most common were: letter from a domestic abuse support organisation (37%); protective injunction (28%); letter from a health professional (10%); and evidence from an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (8%).[7]

Evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger a prohibition of cross-examination in person in Northern Ireland

3.6 Taking into consideration the responses to the Department's 2019 consultation, the evidential requirements to support applications for the domestic abuse waiver in Northern Ireland and the forms of evidence that have been specified as triggering an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family

[6] www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/568/contents/made
[7] *Legal aid statistics: July to September 2022*. Available at www.gov.uk/government/statistics/legal-aid-statistics-july-to-september-2022.

proceedings in England and Wales, the Department would welcome the views of consultees on the forms of evidence set out in the table in section 5 being specified in regulations as evidence that would trigger an automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person in family proceedings in this jurisdiction.

3.7 It should be noted that new Article 11D to be inserted in the 1993 Order provides that the evidence submitted must be in respect of abusive behaviour towards a party/witness in the proceedings by another person, who is also involved in the family proceedings as a party or witness and that they must be 'personally connected' (as defined, respectively, by sections 2 and 5 of the 2021 Act - see **Annex B**). Therefore, the regulations cannot include evidence of a party/witness having committed domestic abuse against a person who is not involved in the proceedings or between persons who are not personally connected. Examples of this would be:

- evidence that a party has committed a domestic abuse-related offence against the children or relatives of the person to be cross-examined;
- evidence that a party has been convicted of a domestic abuse-related offence in respect of another victim ; and
- information about a party's history of domestic abuse towards a previous partner shared by the police under the Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme.

3.8 In relation to specifying evidence of domestic abuse that would require to be provided by professionals, individuals working for support organisations and others, we have considered the potential effect of section 5 (Penalties for concealing offences, etc.) of the Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967. This provision places a duty on persons to report a serious offence to the police. However, an offence will not occur if there is a "reasonable excuse" not to report an offence to the police and any associated proceedings may only be instigated by or with the consent of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

3.9 The Attorney General has issued guidance to the PSNI and PPS on the application of s5 to victims of serious sexual offences and those to whom they

make disclosures.[8] In regard to what constitutes a reasonable excuse not to report a crime, the guidance states that it is important to note that, in the vast majority of cases, a failure to report what has happened to police will not amount to an offence, as a victim, or someone in whom they have confided, will be considered to have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information to the PSNI. For example, health professionals will normally be able to rely on their professional duty of confidentiality owed to patients and clients as a reason for not reporting an offence. Others, for example those working for support organisations, may be able to rely on the position of trust they have with the victim or the victim not wishing the incident to be reported to the police. In regard to the question of whether it is likely to be considered in the public interest to prosecute for the failure to report a crime, the guidance states that it is highly unlikely that this would be the case unless the person to whom the disclosure was made had a specific professional duty to do so or the failure to do so put others at serious risk of harm.

3.10 Having regard to this guidance and assuming a similar approach would be taken in relation to other types of serious offences, on the face of it, it seems unlikely that a criminal prosecution would be taken forward following the provision of evidence to a family court by a third party for the purpose of triggering an automatic prohibition on cross-examination under statutory provision. However, the Department would welcome consultees' views on the implications, if any, of s5 the 1967 Act.

3.11 Finally, it is also important to emphasise that, in any case where the absolute prohibition is not triggered, an application could still be made to the court to exercise its discretionary power (under new Article 11E of the 1993 Order) to prohibit cross-examination in person.

[8] The Attorney General's Human Rights Guidance (The Application of Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967 to Victims of Serious Sexual Offences and those to whom they make Disclosures) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020 - Explanatory Memorandum.
Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2020/113/memorandum/contents

4. Impact assessments

4.1 Options on evidence of domestic abuse to prohibit cross-examination in person in family proceedings have been screened for various impacts. The screening documents are available on the Department's website.

4.2 In relation to equality of opportunity, the proposed regulations would apply equally to all victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse, irrespective of whether they belong to a section 75 category. Statistical information, however, indicates that women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic abuse. It is, therefore, anticipated that the provision to protect victims of domestic abuse from being cross-examined by the perpetrator (and vice versa) would benefit a higher proportion of women than men. Whilst children affected by domestic violence would also be expected to benefit, as it is rare for children to give evidence as a witness of fact in family proceedings, the benefit for them is likely to be achieved indirectly through better outcomes as a result of adult witnesses being supported to give their best quality of evidence.

4.3 Conversely, men are more likely than women to be perpetrators of domestic abuse so a higher proportion of men than women are likely to be prevented from carrying out cross-examination in person under the regulations. This is mitigated by the court being able to appoint a legal representative to carry out the cross-examination instead and, accordingly, it is anticipated that any impact would be minimal and is unlikely to be negative.

4.4 Overall, we do not anticipate any adverse impact on any section 75 category and do not consider that an equality impact assessment is required.

4.5 The options on evidence of domestic abuse have also been screened in relation to the need to carry out a child rights impact assessment. Based on the findings of the screening, it was concluded that a full impact assessment is not required.

6. Next steps

6.1 You can respond to this consultation by emailing the consultation questionnaire, which is provided separately on the Department's website (see https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-evidence-domestic-abuse-family-courts) to AToJ.Consultation@justice-ni.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can respond online via Citizen Space on the nidirect website at https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/doj/evidence-domestic-abuse-family-courts/consult_view

6.2 The consultation will be open for nine weeks. The closing date for receipt of responses is **5pm on Friday 21 April 2023**. Please note that it is unlikely that responses to the consultation will be accepted after this date.

6.3 Hard copies of this consultation document and copies in other formats, such as Braille, large print, etc., can be made available on request. If it would help you to have to this document in a different format or in a language other than English, please let us know and we will do our best to assist you. If you require any further information on this consultation, please contact us by email at: AtoJ.Consultation@justice-ni.gov.uk.

6.4 We will consider all contributions within the scope of this consultation and take them into account when drafting regulations in due course.

Privacy notice

6.5 We intend to publish a summary of responses on our website on completion of the consultation process. Any contact details, which will identify a respondent as a private individual, will be removed prior to publication. All information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Respondents should also be aware that the Department's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 may require that any responses, not subject to specific exemptions under that Act, be disclosed to other parties on request.

Complaints

6.6 If you have any concerns about the way that this consultation process has been handled, please contact us by email at: Governance.Unit@justice-ni.gov.uk.

Annex A

Article 11D of the Family Law (Northern Ireland) Order 1993, as amended by the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021

Prohibition of cross-examination in person: evidence of domestic abuse

11D—(1) In family proceedings, where specified evidence is adduced that a person who is a party to the proceedings has engaged in behaviour that was abusive of a witness to whom that party is personally connected, that party may not cross-examine the witness in person.

(2) In family proceedings, where specified evidence is adduced that a person who is a witness has engaged in behaviour that was abusive of a party to the proceedings to whom the witness is personally connected, that party to the proceedings may not cross-examine the witness in person.

(3) In this Article, "specified evidence" means evidence specified, or of a description specified, in regulations made by the Department of Justice.

(4) Regulations under paragraph (3) may provide that any evidence which satisfies the court that a person has engaged in abusive behaviour, or abusive behaviour of a specified description, is specified evidence for the purposes of this Article.

(5) The following apply for the purposes of this Article as they apply for the purposes of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 (to give meanings to certain expressions)—

(a) section 2 (as read with section 3(2)) of that Act,

(b) sections 4 and 5 of that Act.

Annex B

Sections 2 and 5 of the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021

What amounts to abusive behaviour

2.—(1) This section contains provision for determining for the purposes of this Chapter when behaviour of a person ("A") is abusive of another person ("B").

(2) Behaviour that is abusive of B includes (in particular)—

(a) behaviour directed at B that is violent,

(b) behaviour directed at B that is threatening,

(c) behaviour directed at B, at a child of B or at someone else that—

(i) has as its purpose (or among its purposes) one or more of the relevant effects, or

(ii) would be considered by a reasonable person to be likely to have one or more of the relevant effects.

(3) The relevant effects are of—

(a) making B dependent on, or subordinate to, A,

(b) isolating B from friends, family members or other sources of social interaction or support,

(c) controlling, regulating or monitoring B's day-to-day activities,

(d) depriving B of, or restricting B's, freedom of action,

(e) making B feel frightened, humiliated, degraded, punished or intimidated.

(4) In subsection (2)—

(a) the reference in paragraph (a) to violent behaviour includes both sexual violence and physical violence,

(b) in paragraph (c), "child" means a person under 18 years of age.

(5) None of the paragraphs of subsection (2) or (as the case may be) (3) is to be taken to limit the meaning of any of the other paragraphs of that subsection.

Meaning of personal connection

5—(1) This section has effect for the purposes of this Chapter.

(2) Two people ("A" and "B") are personally connected to each other if any of these applies—

(a) they are, or have been, married to each other,

(b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other,

(c) they are living together, or have lived together, as if spouses of each other,

(d) they are, or have been, otherwise in an intimate personal relationship with each other, or

(e) they are members of the same family.

(3) They are members of the same family—

(a) if B is A's parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother or sister, or

(b) if—

(i) one of them is in a relevant relationship with someone else ("C"), and

(ii) the other of them is C's parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother or sister.

(4) One person is in a relevant relationship with someone else if—

(a) they are married to, or are civil partners of, each other, or

(b) they are living together as if spouses of each other.

(5) In determining family membership—

(a) a relationship of the half blood or by affinity is to be treated as a relationship of the whole blood, and

(b) a stepchild of a person is to be treated as the person's child.

Appendix 3

Department of Justice | An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt Männystrie O tha Laa

DOJ section 75

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

Title of policy:

Consultation on evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings

Revised template Feb 2018

FORM CONTENTS

	Page No
The legal background	3
Introduction	3
Screening decisions	4
Screening and good relations duty	4
Part 1	
Definition of a policy	5
Overview of policy proposals	5
Policy scoping	5
Information about the policy	6
Implementation factors	7
Main stakeholders affected	7
Other policies with a bearing on this policy	7
Available evidence	8
Needs, experiences and priorities	10
Part 2	
Screening questions	11
In favour of 'none'	11
In favour of a 'major' impact	11
In favour of a 'minor' impact	11
Screening questions	12
Additional considerations - multiple identity	14
Part 3	
Screening decision	15
Timetabling and prioritising	16
Part 4	
Monitoring	17
Part 5	
Formal record of screening decision	18
Part 6	
Approval and authorisation	18
Quality assurance	19
Annex	
A – Screening flowchart	20
B – Main groups identified as relevant to the section 75 categories	21

The legal background

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is required **to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:**

- person of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without[1].

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the Department is also required to:

- **have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group; and**
- **meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.**

Introduction

1. This form should be read in conjunction with the Equality Commission's revised Section 75 guidance, "Effective Section 75 Equality Assessments: Screening and Equality Assessments" which is available on the Equality Commission's website. http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/Public%20Authorities/S75Advice-ScreeningEQIA.pdf

Section 75 statutory duties apply to **internal policies** (relating to people who work for department), as well as **external policies** (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the department).

2. The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations and so determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is necessary. Screening should be introduced at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy.

[1]A list of the main groups identified as being relevant to each of the section 75 categories is at **Annex B** of the document.

3. The lead role in the screening of a policy should be taken by the policy decision-maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy and should involve, in the screening process:

- other relevant team members;
- those who implement the policy;
- staff members from other relevant work areas; and
- key stakeholders.

A flowchart which outlines the screening process is provided at **Annex A**.

4. The first step in the screening exercise is to gather evidence to inform the screening decisions. Relevant data may be either quantitative or qualitative or both (this helps to indicate whether or not there are likely equality of opportunity and/or good relations impacts associated with a policy). Relevant information will help to clearly demonstrate the reasons for a policy being either 'screened in' for an equality impact assessment or 'screened out' from an equality impact assessment.

5. The absence of evidence does not indicate that there is no likely impact but if none is available, it may be appropriate to consider subjecting the policy to an EQIA.

6. Where data/evidence gaps exist consider engaging with the main representative groups directly, for example Disability Action, Rainbow, and NICCY to find out what you need to know. Bring stakeholders together to discuss policy or link up with other UK bodies who may have similar policies.

7. Screening provides an assessment of the likely impact, whether 'minor' or 'major', of its policy on equality of opportunity and/or good relations for the relevant categories. In some instances, screening may identify the likely impact is none.

8. Contact EqualityandStaffSupportServices@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk at any stage of the process for support or guidance.

Screening decisions

9. Completion of screening should lead to one of the following three outcomes. The policy has been:

i. 'screened in' for equality impact assessment;
ii. 'screened out' *with* mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
iii. 'screened out' *without* mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

Screening and good relations duty

10. The Commission recommends that a policy is 'screened in' for equality impact assessment if the likely impact on **good relations** is 'major'. While there is no legislative requirement to engage in an equality impact assessment in respect of good relations, this does not necessarily mean that equality impact assessments are inappropriate in this context.

Part 1

Definition of policy

There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of section 75. To be on the safe side it is recommended that you consider any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies or changes to those already in existence. It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in an "overarching" policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if further screening or an EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

Overview of policy proposals

The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and terms of reference well defined. You must take into account any available data that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the s75 categories.

Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Policy scoping

11. Information about the policy

Name of the policy/decision to be screened

This screening considers the implications for equality of opportunity of policy options being consulted on in relation to forms of evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings.

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy/decision?

New policy options.

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 makes provision to prohibit perpetrators (or alleged perpetrators) of domestic abuse from cross-examining their (alleged) victims in person in family proceedings and vice-versa. An automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person will apply in specified circumstances.

The consultation seeks views on what types of evidence of domestic abuse, in addition to those already provided for in the legislation, should be specified in new secondary legislation, to be made under a power in the 2021 Act, to trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person.

In order to protect all parties' right to a fair hearing, the types of evidence specified need to be sufficiently objective and robust to justify an automatic prohibition. However, where a party is prohibited from carrying out cross-examination in person, the court will have a power to appoint a legal representative to conduct the cross-examination instead.

Are there any section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

The new Regulations would apply equally to all victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse, irrespective of whether they belong to a section 75 category.

Statistical information, however, indicates that women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic abuse. It is, therefore, anticipated that the provision to protect victims of domestic abuse from being cross-examined by the perpetrator would benefit a higher proportion of women than men.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The policy options were developed by the Department of Justice ("the Department").

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The policy is owned by the Department and it will primarily be responsible for the implementation of next steps following consultation, for example making secondary legislation.

12. Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Yes.

If yes, are they

Tick Box

- ☐ financial
- ☒ legislative
- ☐ other, please specify:

13. Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

Tick Box

- ☐ staff (e.g. NICTS)
- ☒ service users (e.g. legal representatives)
- ☒ other public sector organisations (e.g. health & social care trusts, NIHE)
- ☒ voluntary/community/trade unions (e.g. Women's Aid and Men's Advisory Project)
- ☐ other, please specify

14. Other policies with a bearing on this policy

what are they?

The "domestic abuse waiver", i.e. evidence that can be provided when applying to the Legal Services Agency for a discretionary waiver of the financial eligibility test for access to civil legal services in certain family law cases for victims of domestic abuse.

who owns them?

Enabling Access to Justice Division

15. Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Set out all evidence/data (both *qualitative and quantitative) below along with details of the different groups you have met and / or consulted with to help inform your screening assessment. Specify details for each of the section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/data
Religious belief	There is limited data available in Northern Ireland (NI) on domestic abuse in relation to religious belief. Evidence collated for the development of the Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence & Abuse in NI Strategy, which was published in 2018, indicated that domestic abuse is not confined to any one religious belief.
Political opinion	There is limited data available in NI on domestic abuse in relation to political opinion. Evidence collated for the development of the Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence & Abuse in NI Strategy indicated that domestic abuse is not confined to any one political opinion.
Racial group	PSNI statistics for 2020/21 show that nearly nine in ten victims were of white ethnicity.
Age	PSNI statistics for 2020/21 show that young adults (those in their 20s and 30s) are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than those in other age groups.
Marital status	There is limited data available in NI in relation to domestic abuse and marital status. For example, PSNI statistics group spouse, partner, girlfriend, boyfriend, etc. together in one relationship category. However, the statistics suggest that there is no significant difference of experiencing domestic abuse whether in a marital/civil partnership or former marital/civil partnership. While 2020/21 statistics show that 59% of victims were abused by a partner/former partner, it is important to note that domestic abuse is not confined to marital/civil partnership status; it can occur in a number of different familial relationships, e.g. parent/child (24%) and siblings (8%). The MARAC [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference] Dashboard for June 2022 shows that in half of the 132 cases considered that month, the alleged perpetrator was a former intimate partner and in 38.63% of cases, the alleged perpetrator is a current intimate partner.
Sexual orientation	There is limited data available in NI in relation to domestic abuse and sexual orientation. The MARAC Trends & Statistics 2016 management report ("the MARAC 2016 report") shows that, of the 10,752 high risk cases discussed since records began, 0.46% of victims were from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. The MARAC Dashboard for June 2022 shows that there were no LGBT victims that month.

Men and women generally	PSNI statistics for 2020/21 show that 69% of victims of domestic abuse were women. The options for specified evidence discussed in the consultation paper impact those persons who do not have legal representation (known as "litigants in person" (LIPS)) in family proceedings hearings. The UUJ Study, "Litigants in person in NI: barriers to legal participation, 2018", found that there were more male LIP participants whose cases were disposed of than female LIPs between 2012 -16. The proportion of male LIPs was around three-fifths of all LIPs across both family and civil business areas.
Disability	There is limited data available in NI in relation to domestic abuse and disability. The MARAC 2016 report shows that, of the 10,752 high risk cases discussed since records began, 1.5% of victims had a disability. The MARAC Dashboard for June 2022 recorded 9.85% of victims as having a disability.
Dependants	There is limited data available in NI in relation to domestic abuse and dependants. MARAC statistics for December 2017 show that, from January 2010, of the 12,181 cases discussed and the 2771 repeat cases, there were 15,709 children in the households.

***Qualitative data** – refers to the experience of individuals related in their own terms, and based on their own experience and attitudes.

***Quantitative data** – refers to numbers (that is quantities), typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population.

16. 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 evidence/information
Religious belief	It is not considered that any of the options on the types of evidence of domestic abuse that should be specified in new Regulations to trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person would have a significant effect on the needs, experiences and priorities of this category.
Political opinion	As 'religious belief' above.
Racial group	As 'religious belief' above.
Age	As young adults are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse, they are, therefore, more likely to benefit from new Regulations which will further protect victims of domestic abuse giving evidence in family proceedings.
Marital status	Those in a current or former marital/civil partnership are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse and they are, therefore, more likely to benefit from new Regulations which will further protect victims of domestic abuse giving evidence in family proceedings.
Sexual orientation	As 'religious belief' above.
Men and women generally	Statistical information indicates that women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic abuse. It is, therefore, anticipated that they are more likely to benefit from new Regulations which will further protect victims of domestic abuse from being cross-examined by the perpetrator. Conversely, men are more likely than women to be perpetrators of domestic abuse so a higher proportion of men than women are likely to be prevented from carrying out cross-examination in person under the new Regulations.
Disability	As 'religious belief' above.
Dependants	Children affected by domestic abuse may be expected to benefit indirectly from new Regulations which will further protect victims of domestic abuse giving evidence in family proceedings.

Part 2

Screening decisions

17. **Decision - in favour of none**

If the conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the decision may be to screen the policy out. If a policy is **'screened out'** as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

- **Considerations –**
- The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

18. **Decision - in favour of a 'major' impact**

If the conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure (EQIA).

- **Considerations -**
- Is the policy significant in terms of its strategic importance?
- The 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.
- The potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged.
- 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.

19. **Decision - in favour of 'minor' impact**

If the conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the section 75 equality categories and/or good relations 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 and/or good relations.

- **Considerations –**
- The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible.
- The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting mitigating measures.
- 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.
- By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Screening questions

2.1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the section 75 equality categories?		
Section 75 category	**Details of policy impact**	**Level of impact? Minor/Major/None**
Religious belief	The new Regulations, specifying evidence of domestic abuse which would automatically prohibit cross-examination in person in family proceedings, would apply equally to all s75 categories, so it is not considered that there would be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for this category.	None
Political opinion	As 'religious belief' above.	None
Racial group	As 'religious belief' above.	None
Age	While the new Regulations are more likely to benefit young adults, overall it is not anticipated that there would be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for any particular age group.	Minor
Marital status	While the new Regulations are more likely to impact on those in a current or former marital/civil relationships, overall it is not anticipated that there would be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for any particular marital status.	Minor
Sexual orientation	As 'religious belief' above.	None
Men and women generally	As statistical information indicates that women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse, it is, therefore, anticipated that the new Regulations would benefit a higher proportion of women than men. Conversely, as men are more likely to be perpetrators, a higher proportion are likely to be prevented from carrying out cross-examination in person. This would be mitigated by the court appointing a legal representative to carry out the cross-examination instead and, therefore, any impact is unlikely to be negative.	Minor
Disability	As 'religious belief' above.	None
Dependants	As it is rare for children to give evidence in family proceedings, the benefit for them from the new Regulations is likely to be indirectly through better outcomes as a result of adult witnesses being supported to give their best possible evidence.	None

2.2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	**If Yes, provide details**	**If No, provide reasons**
Religious belief		No, as the new Regulations, specifying evidence of domestic abuse which would automatically prohibit cross-examination in person in family proceedings, would apply equally to all s75 categories.
Political opinion		As 'religious belief' above.
Racial group		As 'religious belief' above.
Age		As 'religious belief' above.
Marital status		As 'religious belief' above.
Sexual orientation		As 'religious belief' above.
Men and Women generally		As 'religious belief' above.
Disability		As 'religious belief' above.
Dependants		As 'religious belief' above.

2.3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	**Details of policy impact**	**Level of impact Minor/Major/None**
Religious belief	The options for evidence of domestic abuse, which would automatically prohibit cross-examination in person in family proceedings being consulted on are not likely to have any impact on good relations between people of different religious belief.	None.
Political opinion	As above.	As above.
Racial group	As above.	Above.

2.4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	**If Yes, provide details**	**If No, provide reasons**
Religious belief		There are no opportunities for promoting good relations between specific categories as the new Regulations, specifying evidence of domestic abuse which will automatically lead to a prohibition on cross-examination in person, will apply equally to all s75 categories.
Political opinion		As above.
Racial group		As above.

Additional considerations - multiple identity

20. 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.)

Multiple s75 identities may make an individual more likely to be a victim of domestic abuse. However, the new Regulations specifying evidence of domestic abuse which will automatically lead to a prohibition on cross-examination in person will apply equally to all s75 categories and any combination of these categories.

21. Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant section 75 categories concerned.

No data is available.

Part 3

Screening decision

3.1. Screened in –
If the decision is to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the rationale and relevant evidence to support this decision.

3.2. Screened out – no EQIA necessary (no impact)
If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the rationale and relevant evidence to support this decision.

An EQIA is not necessary as we do not anticipate any adverse equality-related impacts on any s75 category. Although minor impact was identified in respect of age, marital status and gender, it is unlikely that this will be a negative impact. It is considered that the new Regulations, which will specify evidence of domestic abuse which will automatically lead to a prohibition on cross-examination in person and so will protect victims of domestic abuse giving evidence in family proceedings, would be a positive change for all victims affected by domestic abuse, regardless of s75 category, by helping to improve their experience of the justice system.

3.3. Screened out – mitigating actions (minor impacts)
When the decision is 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 or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy. Explain how these actions will address the inequalities.

Timetabling and prioritising

22. Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

23. If the policy has been **'screened in'** for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

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

Priority criterion	**Rating (1-3)**
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority'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 in timetabling. Details of the Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

25. Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

- If yes, please provide details.

Part 4

Monitoring

26. Section 75 places a requirement on the Department to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services, etc., and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equal opportunity.

27. Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

28. Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy/ decision on equality, good relation and disability duties.

Equality	This equality screening will be published alongside the consultation paper and comments on it invited.
Good relations	N/A.
Disability duties	N/A.

Part 5

Formal record of screening decision

Title of proposed policy/decision being screened
Consultation on evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings.

I can confirm that the proposed policy/decision has been screened for –

☒	**Equality of opportunity**
☒	**Good relations**
☒	**Disability duties**

On the basis of the answer to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy/decision is –

☐	**Screened in – necessary to conduct a full EQIA**
☒	**Screened out – no EQIA necessary (no impacts)**
☐	**Screened out – mitigating actions (minor impacts)**

Part 6

Approval and authorisation

(Have you sent this document to the Equality Unit prior to obtaining signature?)

Screened/completed by:	**Grade**	**Date**
Name: Norma Dempster	**DP**	**31/01/23**
Approved by (Grade 7 or above):		
Name: Jane Maguire	**Acting G6**	**02/02/23**

Quality Assurance

Prior to final approval the Screening Form should be forwarded to EqualityandStaffSupportServices@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk for comment/quality assurance. Contact the branch should you require advice or have any queries prior to this stage.

When you receive a response and there are no further considerations required, the form should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, this would normally be at least Grade 7.

The completed Screening Form should be placed on the DoJ Website where it will be made easily accessible to the public and be available on request. In addition, it will be included in a quarterly listing of all screenings completed during each 3 month period and issued to consultees.

The screening exercise is now complete.

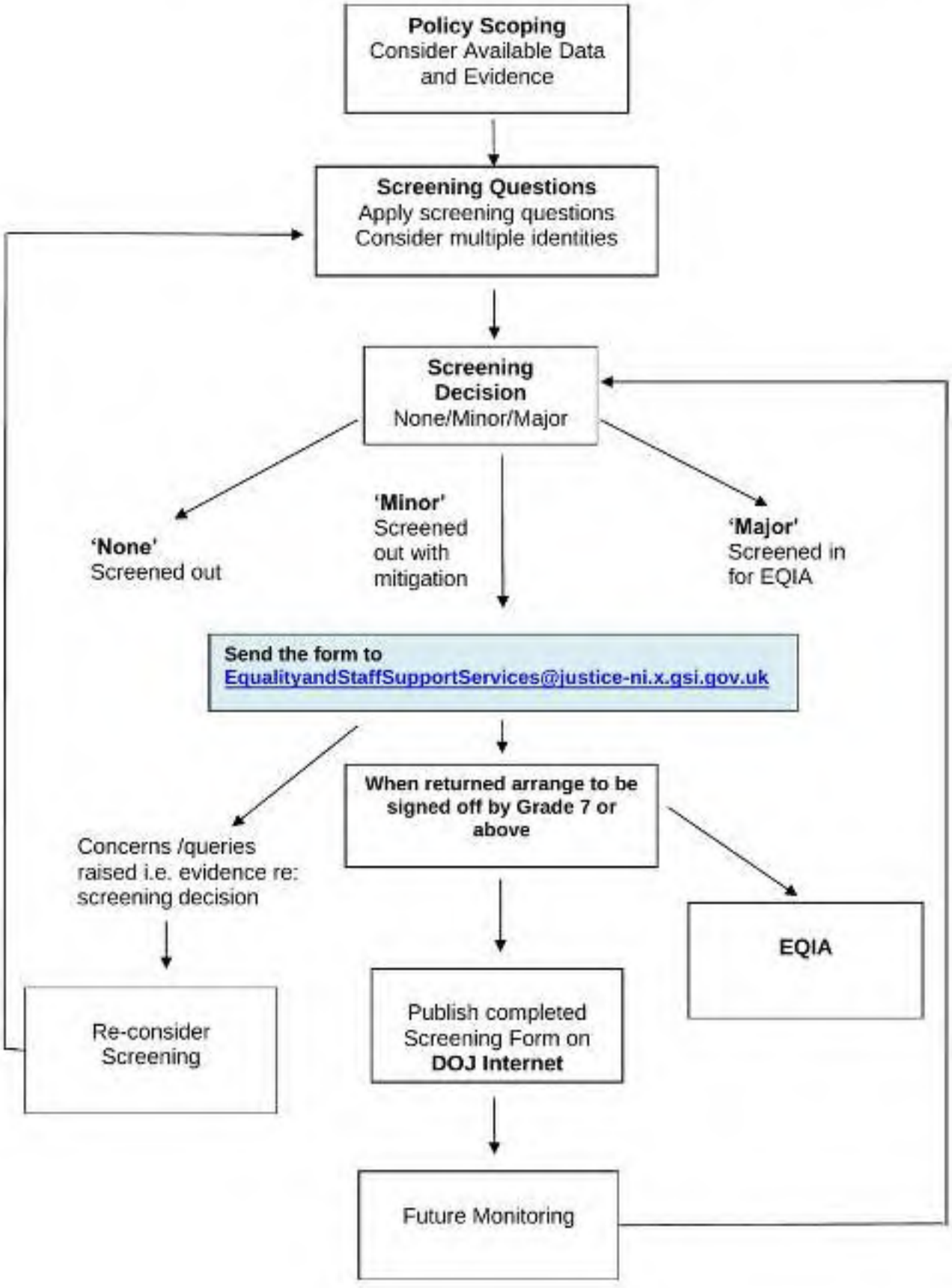
Please retain a record in your branch and send a copy for information to:-

Equality and Staff Support Services (ESSS)
Room 3.4, Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SG
Tel: 02890 522611

or e-mail to EqualityandStaffSupportServices@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

SCREENING FLOWCHART



Annex B

MAIN GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS RELEVANT TO THE SECTION 75 CATEGORIES

Category	Main Groups
Religious Belief	Protestants; Catholics; people of other religious belief; people of no religious belief
Political Opinion	Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party
Racial Group	White people; Chinese; Irish Travellers; Indians; Pakistanis; Bangladeshis; Black Africans; Afro Caribbean people; people of mixed ethnic group, other groups
Age	For most purposes, the main categories are: children under 18; people aged between 18 and 65. However the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration. For example, for some employment policies, children under 16 could be distinguished from people of working age
Marital/Civil Partnership Status	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people; civil partnerships
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexuals; bisexual people; gay men; lesbians
Men and Women generally	Men (including boys); women (including girls); trans-gender and trans-sexual people
Persons with a disability and persons without	Persons with a physical, sensory or learning disability as defined in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants and persons without	Persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for a dependent elderly person.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

The Department of Justice.

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

The Department is consulting on forms of evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings, in addition to those already provided for in the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (NI) 2021. The outcome of the consultation will inform the drafting of regulations to be made under a power in the 2021

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy	X	Strategy		Plan	
Adopting a	Policy		Strategy		Plan	
Implementing a	Policy		Strategy		Plan	
Revising a	Policy		Strategy		Plan	
Designing a Public Service						
Delivering a Public Service						

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Consultation on evidence of domestic abuse that should trigger an automatic prohibition on cross-examination in person in family proceedings.

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The overall aim of the policy is to specify in secondary legislation evidence of domestic abuse that would trigger an automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person in family proceedings. In order to protect all parties' right to a fair hearing, it is considered that the types of evidence to be specified need to be sufficiently objective and robust to justify an automatic prohibition.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).	X
Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).	
A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.	

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

Not applicable

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

Not applicable

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Not applicable

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes [X] No [ ] If the response is NO GO TO Section 2E.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

Domestic abuse occurs across the whole of Northern Ireland and is not confined to rural or urban areas. Therefore, the types of evidence of domestic abuse, which would trigger an automatic prohibition of cross-examination in person in family proceedings that are discussed in the consultation paper would apply to victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse in rural areas, as well as urban areas. We do not consider that the forms of evidence specified in regulations will impact in a different way in rural areas compared to urban areas.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas *differently* from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

Not applicable

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	
Rural Tourism	
Rural Housing	
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	
Education or Training in Rural Areas	
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	
Poverty in Rural Areas	
Deprivation in Rural Areas	
Rural Crime or Community Safety	X
Rural Development	
Agri-Environment	
Other (Please state)	

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

-

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes ☐ No ☒ If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	☐	Published Statistics	☐
Consultation with Other Organisations	☐	Research Papers	☐
Surveys or Questionnaires	☐	Other Publications	☐
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			☐

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

-

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

-

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

The Department has not identified any potential differential impact on the social or economic needs of people in rural areas. The forms of evidence of domestic abuse outlined in the consultation will apply equally to all victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse across Northern Ireland.

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

As the legislative options would not impact in a differential way in relation to rural areas, no social or economic needs were identified specific to persons in rural areas.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes [ ] No [X] **If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

-

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

No specific rural needs were identified as the proposed options for evidence of domestic abuse will not impact on rural areas in a differential way.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled. X

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Norma Dempster
Position/Grade:	DP
Division/Branch	Civil Justice Policy Division
Signature:	Signed: Norma Dempster
Date:	31/01/23
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Jane Maguire
Position/Grade:	Acting G6
Division/Branch:	Civil Justice Policy Division
Signature:	Signed:
Date:	02/02/23

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Mournes Gateway Project - Project Board Meeting held on Friday 3rd March 2023, 10.30am
Hybrid: Council Chamber, Downpatrick & MS Teams

In Attendance:

Programme Board Members

Councillor Willie Clarke - Chair
Councillor Laura Devlin
Councillor Glyn Hanna
Councillor Andy McMurray

NMDDC Officials
Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Josephine Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Andy Patterson, Assistant Director, Tourism Culture & Events
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Conor Woods, Strategic Capital Projects Manager
Caolain Boyd Assistant Director: Capital Projects & Procurement
Michelle Boyle, Head of Tourism, Product Development and Visitor Experience
Tracie McLoughlin, PA

External Members
Ainsley McWilliams, Tourism NI
Theresa Slevin, BRCD Regional Programme Services
David Scullion, Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD)

Apologies
Councillor Roisin Howell

MMGP/001: Conor Mallon welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made from each Member of the Project Board.

MMGP/002: Nominate Chair of Mournes Gateway Project – Project Board

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor L Devlin, seconded by Councillor G Hanna it was agreed to appoint Councillor Willie Clarke as Chair of the Mournes Gateway Project Board for the remainder of this Council Term**

MMGP/003: Project Governance Arrangements

Mr Andy Patterson went through the Project Governance Arrangements as circulated and advised these would be updated and tabled at the next Project Board meeting.

Cllr Devlin proposed that National Trust be included on the Project Board. Mr Mallon advised that officials would approach National Trust inviting them to be represented on the Project Board.

Mr Patterson advised additional stakeholders would also be considered as the project progresses. Mr Mallon advised this can be discussed as per Item 7 on today's agenda.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor L Devlin, seconded by Cllr A McMurray it was agreed that officers contact National Trust inviting them to be represented on the Project Board.**

MMGP/004: Update on Contract For Funding

Mr Patterson said officials continue to work with Tourism NI (TNI) and BRCD Programme Management Office (PMO) on City Deal. Ms Ainsley McWilliams said the Contract for Funding had been reviewed internally and a further update was expected soon.

Cllr McMurray asked what does the contract funding entail.

Ms McWilliams replied the contract was a standard template and a number of annexes tailored to be project specific with different modules and milestones that fit into the contract.

Cllr McMurray enquired how dependent are all facets of this project.

Mr Patterson responded the OBC was for the entire project.

Cllr Hanna said Donard Park had experienced issues with coaches parking and asked if byelaws are in place, if not, can this be considered. He also asked if parking or park & ride services be in place in advance of the gondola project.

Mr Caolain Boyd said Council were aware of the issue with coaches. Mr Mallon advised this will be considered going forward within the overall project and confirmed it was the intention that parking will be in place in advance.

MMGP/005: Update on Comms/Public Information Event

Mr Patterson advised an information event has been scheduled for 9th March 2023 to be hosted in Newcastle. He said communication will be out in the press and on social media platforms.

Cllr McMurray welcomed this engagement and asked how Council would process any concerns.

Mr Patterson clarified this was an information event, it will be an opportunity for officers to engage with the public and stakeholders, and all feedback would be recorded and considered going forward. He said comprehensive engagement and a number of workshops were held in 2017.

MMGP/006: Progress on Procurement

Mr Conor Woods provided an update on current procurement status:

- Stage 2 Design complete.
- Working on finalising the procurement documents which will issued to appoint a professional services team of multi skill consultants. Estimated Oct 2023.
- Stage 3 to commence when design team on board, expected to be end of 2023 through to 2024.
- NMDDC invited by BRCD PMO to attend event to profile City Deal on 23rd March – C Woods and C Boyd to attend.

Mr David Scullion said CPD would work with Council to produce and sign off the relevant procurement documents.

Cllr McMurray asked:

a) What surveys had been carried out;
b) Will there be a design of the gondola;
c) What is the detailed cost of design, build and upkeep.

Mr Mallon confirmed that the details of all the report and surveys carried out to date had been included in the OBC which had been approved through Council Committee structures, Tourism NI / BRCD / Dept of Economy / Dept of Finance.

The Chairman asked if there where any planning considerations members should be aware of at this stage.

Mr Anthony McKay said it was early days but it would be dependant on the progression of the project and the legislative requirements at that time.

Mr Mallon said significant surveys and detailed reports will be carried out during design development and this will be more evident when design teams are in place.

Cllr Hanna asked if this project would be considered as a regionally significant development. Mr McKay said it would be difficult to determine at this early stage.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor L Devlin, seconded by Councillor G Hanna it was agreed to take a paper to March Strategy Policy & Resources Committee to proceed with the procurement for the ICT on the Mournes Gateway Project up to appointment Stage.**

Cllr McMurray said he had concerns that this project would industrialise the Mournes and there could be issues with an increase in footfall over the grounds with visitors being 'dropped off' up the mountain.

Mr Mallon said a comprehensive visitor management plan is proposed as part of the project, and that more information would be made available at the information event on the 9th March.

Cllr McMurray said it could be hard to mitigate against this.

MMGP/007: Proposal for Stakeholder Forum

Mr Patterson said alongside this Project Board there would be Project Teams and a Stakeholder Forum.

Examples of members of the Project Team are NMDDC, BRCD PMO, CPD, Tourism NI, etc.

Examples of Stakeholder Forum members are NMDDC, NI Environment Agency, National Trust, local residents, schools, community groups, etc.

Cllr McMurray said it would be important to include Mountaineering Ireland, Sport NI, NIFRS and local outdoor centres on the stakeholders forum. He noted reference to the "wider Mournes area" and thought this might be too wide of a scope.

Cllr Devlin agreed with Cllr McMurray and also suggested Newcastle Chamber of Commerce and environmental groups should be considered.

The Chairman agreed with Cllr McMurray and Cllr Devlin's suggestions and asked the YMCA also be included.

Mr Mallon said its likely a stakeholder forum and a stakeholder group would be required.

Details of each would be presented to the board at the next meeting.

Cllr Hanna asked that Rivers Agency be included.

The Chairman asked that Mr Mallon compile the draft list of membership of each group for the next Project Board Meeting.

Action: **Mr Mallon compile lists of Project Team, Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Groups for consideration at the next meeting of the Project Board.**

MMGP/008: Date for Future Meetings

Mr Patterson advised it is expected the Project Board would meet every 2 months, therefore the next meeting to be scheduled for June 2023.

The Chairman suggested a meeting be convened after the information event scheduled for the 9th March to update members on feedback.

Mr Mallon confirmed a short meeting could be arranged for the end of March.

Agreed: **It was agreed a brief meeting of the Project Board be arranged at the end of March 2023 to update members on feedback from the information event scheduled for 9th March.**

The next full meeting of the Mournes Gateway Project – Project Board be arranged for every 2 months, therefore next meeting to take place in June 2023.

This concluded the business of the Meeting. The Meeting ended at 11.40am

For Noting at
Strategy Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday 15th June 2023

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on Thursday 23rd March 2023, 10.00am Hybrid: Council Chamber, Newry & MS Teams

In Attendance:

Programme Board Members

Councillor Pete Byrne - Chair (Teams)
Councillor David Taylor (Teams)
Councillor Declan Murphy

NMDDC Officials
Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Paul Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport
Conor McGeown, Strategic Capital Projects Manager: Capital Projects & Procurement
Tracie McLoughlin PA

External Members
Damian Mulholland, DFC

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised the rotation of Chair of Programme Board would take place at the next meeting when the new Council was in place.

NCCR/157: Project Board Action Sheets

a) NMD & BRCD Project Board Mtg – 2nd March 2023
b) Newry City Park Project Board Mtg – 9th March 2023

In relation to the NMD & BRCD Project Board Action Sheet, the Chairman enquired why the BREEAM target for the Civic Hub is excellent but the Theatre/Conference facility is 'very good'.

C Mallon advised the Civic Hub would be a new build and could achieve an 'excellent' rating but the Theatre/Conference involves the refurbishment of the older fabric of the listed Town Hall building and a rating of 'very good' is the best it can achieve.

The Chairman advised he had been contacted by an arts representative enquiring if there would be a dedicated gallery space to display art in the new facility. The Chairman asked if there would be engagement with the arts community to address this.

C McGeown advised he also received communication for an arts representative on this matter and confirmed spaces had been identified within the new Theatre and in addition to the atrium area, flexible spaces would also be available in the Town Hall and the new Conference facility. C Mallon advised that we can programme exhibitions in advance in areas throughout all the facilities in prior consultation with exhibitors. C McGeown said he was preparing a draft response to the communication.

In relation to Item NMD/BRCD/176 in the 2nd March Minutes, The Chairman asked for clarification where it states *"DM advised that they are putting £5m into Public Realm, he asked would they be able to split costs for building and Public Realm. AB advised that she will make a note to separate out the costs at the next meeting"* C Mallon said the minutes can be amended to provide clarity that the Public Realm funding could only be used on Public Realm and not on buildings. D Mulholland said CPD would be vouching invoices and will keep focus on public realm scheme.

In relation to Item No.6 in the 9th March Minutes of Newry City Park Project Board where it states "*C Haughey updated on Meanwhile Use project. Contractors to mobilise and commence work next week, equipment orders progressed*" the Chairman asked if this meant that work had commenced on 'Meanwhile Use'. P Tamati confirmed work would commence on 'meanwhile use' by w/c 27th March.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor D Taylor, seconded by Councillor P Byrne it was agreed to Note Action Sheets of NMD & BRCD Project Board Mtg 2nd March 2023 and Newry City Park Project Board Mtg 9th March 2023 and amend Item NMD/BRCD/176 in the NMD/BRCD Project Board Report 2nd March 2023 to reflect £5m costings for Public Realm.

NCCR/157: Newry City Park Stakeholder Update

P Tamati advised that all Expressions of Interests had been considered and approved and the first meeting scheduled for 30th March 2023. P Tamati said this will be the first engagement with the new stakeholder group. The Chairman said it was important that officials ensure the format and delivery of the meeting is considered in advance to maximise engagement with stakeholders. P Tamati advised Cllr Byrne would Chair the meeting. He said the consultants will be in attendance to present on works to date and DFC will provide an update on the OBC. He advised the meeting would be 'in person' and breakout discussions would also take place.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Cllr D Taylor it was agreed to proceed with the proposed format of the first meeting of the Newry City Park Stakeholder Meeting scheduled for 30th March 2023 as detailed above.

AGREED: **It was agreed that Members of the NCCR Programme Board be invited to attend the Newry City Park Stakeholder Group Meeting on 30th March 2023**

RESTRICTED –

NCCR/158: NCCR Programme Dashboard and Graphics

a) NCCR Programme Dashboard Report (Encl)
b) Civic & Regional Hub and Theatre/Conference Dashboard Graphics (Encl)
c) Newry City Park Dashboard Graphics (encl)

C McGeown went through the detail of the Dashboard Report and advised expected timelines for planning were:

- Theatre/Conference - August
- Office Accommodation – August
- Civic Hub - October

C Mallon said he would meet with D Mulholland post election regarding the Grade A Office process.

C Mallon asked members to note that if targets on planning and procurement etc are met, construction will begin on the Theatre/Conference facility early 2024. It is therefore necessary to not take any future bookings for Newry Town Hall or Arts Centre beyond December 2023. User groups will be advised in advance and alternative venue's will be offered.

The Chairman asked that officers monitor the planning process and advise users in advance if it appears that delays are likely which would enable users the opportunity to use the facilities in early 2024.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor D Taylor it was agreed to note the updates on the:**

- **Civic & Regional Hub**
- **Theatre/Conference Facility**
- **Public Realm**
- **Grade A Office Space**
- **Newry City Park.**

Members also agreed to note the intention to cease bookings for Newry Town Hall from Jan 2024 due to anticipated commencement of construction and officials to notify user groups now. This will be monitored by officials and if any delays expected, this will be communicated at the earliest opportunity to Town Hall user groups.

NCCR/159: Client Accommodation at Civic & Regional Hub

Cllr Taylor asked if there was any update on client accommodation in the Civic & Regional Hub? C Mallon advised there was no update at present but he would be progressing a range of options in the coming months and will update members at the next Programme Board Meeting.

NCCR/160: Date for Next Meeting

Next meeting to be scheduled for June 2023.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Approved by Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board.
For Noting at the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee 15th June 2023