



June 11th, 2020

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are invited to attend the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 11th June 2020 at 6:00 pm** in **Skype Call**.

The Members of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee are:-

Chair: Councillor G Sharvin

Vice Chair: Councillor O Hanlon

Members: Councillor P Brown Councillor P Byrne

Councillor S Doran Councillor C Enright

Councillor H Gallagher Councillor R Howell

Councillor A Lewis Councillor H McKee

Councillor O Magennis Councillor D Murphy

Councillor B Ó Muirí Councillor M Savage


Councillor W Walker

# Agenda

## 1.0 Apologies & Chairperson's Remarks

## 2.0 Declarations of Interest

## 3.0 To agree start times for SP&R Committee Meeting from June 2020 to April 2021. (Attached)

 *Proposed start times for consideration at SP&R Committee meeting June 2020.pdf*

*Page 1*

## 4.0 SP&R Emergency Business Plans

 *SPR Cover Report Emergency Business Plans April-September 2020.pdf*

*Page 2*

 *Appendix 1 Chief Executives Department Emergency Business Plan 29 May 2020.pdf*

*Page 7*

 *Appendix 2 - CS Emergency Business Plan.pdf*

*Page 24*

## 5.0 Action Sheet arising from SPR Committee Meeting held on 12 March 2020

 *SPR-Action Sheet arising from 12 March 2020 (002).pdf*

*Page 53*

 *Regeneration Bill Letter -22 Nov 2016.pdf*

*Page 58*

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### *Corporate Services*

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## 6.0 Replacement of Councillor Harte on Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group

 *Report on Replacement of Cllr Harte on ABTFWG - SPR 11062020.pdf*

*Page 60*

 *Appendix 1 - Albert Basin Park Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference.pdf*

*Page 62*

## 7.0 Notice of Motion - Referred from Council Meeting held on 2 March 2020

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Byrne:

This Council believes that;

Every employee, facing the trauma of a terminal illness diagnosis, should be treated with

compassion and understanding in order to assist them at such a distressing time.

This Council resolves to;

1. Support the TUC's Dying to Work campaign and sign up to its Charter outlining the principles in which terminally ill employees should be treated if they wish to continue to work.
2. Ensure as an employer that our employees will be given the freedom to make an informed decision for themselves as to the best course of action for them and their families
3. Ensure that all financial details, including death in service benefits, are fully explained so that any decision taken is an informed decision.
4. Write the principles of the Charter into our procedures and train our staff accordingly
5. Encourage employers throughout our city/town/borough/district/county to sign up to the Charter.

 *DTW NOM Covering Report.pdf* *Page 65*


 *Copy of Comparison of TUC Charter and NMDDC Critical Illness Guide.xlsx* *Page 67*

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### *Corporate Planning and Policy*

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## **8.0 DAERA Report on the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016**

 *DAERA Report on the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 January 2020.pdf* *Page 69*

 *Appendix I - Memo dated 28 May 2020 from Paul Donnelly Director of Rural Affairs DAERA.pdf* *Page 72*

 *Appendix II - Report on the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 Jan 2020.pdf* *Page 74*

## **9.0 Suspended Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2020-2021**

 *Report on suspended Irish language Bursary Scheme 2020-2021.pdf* *Page 150*

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### *For Noting*

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## **10.0 Albert Basin Action Sheet 21 May 2020 & 29 May 2020**

 *Action Sheet - 21 May 2020.pdf* *Page 155*

 *Action Sheet - 29 May 2020.pdf* *Page 159*

## **11.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board**

## **Meeting held on 28 November 2019**

 *Minutes of Newry CCR PB Meeting - 28.11.19 FINAL.pdf*

*Page 162*

## **12.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on 15 January 2020**

 *Minutes of Newry CCR PB Meeting - 15.01.2020 FINAL.pdf*

*Page 167*

## **13.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on 21 April 2020**

 *Minutes of Newry CCR PB Meeting - 21.04.2020 FINAL.pdf*

*Page 173*

## **14.0 Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2020**

 *Statutory reporting - Quarterly Policy Screening Report for period January - March 2019 Annual Report to ECNI.pdf*

*Page 175*

 *Appendix I - Section 75 Quarterly Policy Screening Report January - March 2020 (002).pdf*

*Page 177*

 *Appendix II - NMDDC Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2019-2020.docx*

*Page 182*

## **15.0 Statutory reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020**

 *Statutory reporting - Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020.pdf*

*Page 219*

 *Appendix I - NMDDC Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.pdf*

*Page 221*

## **16.0 FOI/EIR/DP monitoring statistics**

 *FOIEIRDP monitoring statistics.pdf*

*Page 233*

 *App 1 - 2019-20 Stats.pdf*

*Page 234*

## **17.0 NMDDC Annual Report Fair Employment & Monitoring Returns 2 January 2019 - 1 January 2020**

 *AMR SPRC Report Jan19-Jan20 110620.pdf*

*Page 235*





 *Annual Monitoring Return 01.01.2020.pdf*

*Page 237*

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

## 18.0 Council Finances

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.

 <i>Report re Council Finances.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>Letter dated 8 June 2020.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>Appendix 1 Copy of Non Payroll Estimates Revised.xlsx</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>Appendix 2 Copy of SUMMARY BY AD COVID.xlsx</i>	<i>Not included</i>

## 19.0 Management Accounts - April 2020

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.

 <i>Management accounts report.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>Copy of Income Expend.(By Director) at 30.4.20 - All.xlsx</i>	<i>Not included</i>

## **20.0 Furlough - Workers and Employees**

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.

 *SPR Report - Furloughing 11.06.2020 (003).pdf* *Not included*

 *Appendix 1 daodof0620\_3 CJRS.pdf* *Not included*

## **21.0 NI Public Services Ombudsman Complaint**

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

 *Report to SPR Meeting 11 June 2020.pdf* *Not included*

 *Letter18052020.pdf* *Not included*

## **22.0 Replacement Planning IT System**

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.

 *SPR 11 June Planning IT system.pdf* *Not included*

 *Appendix 1 Report to SPR 14 March 2019.pdf* *Not included*

 *Copy of Appendix 2 Planning IT System - Funding Proposal for FBC (10 Council Model).xlsx* *Not included*

## **23.0 In-House Cost Recovery for Legal Matters**

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.

 *SPR - June 2020 - In-House Legal Billing.pdf*

*Not included*

## **24.0 Tender for the Provision of Corporate Graphic Design & Print Management Services**

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.

 *Report for Graphic Design and Print Management Services Tender.pdf*

*Not included*

 *Business Case for the Provision of Graphic Design and Print Management Services (003).pdf*

*Not included*

## **25.0 Rental Agreements**

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.

 *Rental Agreements 11062020.pdf*

*Not included*

## **26.0 Annual Leave (Chief Officers)**

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a government department and employee of, or office holders under, the Council and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *Chief Officers Annual Leave SPRC 11 June 2020.pdf*

*Not included*

# Invitees

- Cllr Terry Andrews
- Cllr Patrick Brown
- Cllr Robert Burgess
- Cllr Pete Byrne
- Mr Gerard Byrne
- Mrs Dorinnia Carville
- Cllr charlie casey
- Cllr William Clarke
- Cllr Dermot Curran
- Cllr Laura Devlin
- Ms Louise Dillon
- Cllr Sean Doran
- Cllr Cadogan Enright
- Cllr Hugh Gallagher
- Cllr Mark Gibbons
- Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
- Cllr Glyn Hanna
- Cllr Valerie Harte
- Cllr Roisin Howell
- Miss Veronica Keegan
- Cllr Mickey Larkin
- Cllr Alan Lewis
- Mr Michael Lipsett
- Mrs Regina Mackin
- Cllr Oonagh Magennis
- Mr Conor Mallon
- Cllr Gavin Malone
- Cllr Cathy Mason
- Mr Johnny Mc Bride
- Colette McAteer
- Cllr Declan McAteer
- Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
- Jonathan McGilly
- Cllr Harold McKee
- Patricia McKeever
- Cllr Karen McKeivitt
- Cllr Andrew McMurray
- Catrina Miskelly
- Mr Colin Moffett
- Mr Ken Montgomery
- Mr Roland Moore
- Cllr Roisin Mulgrew



Cllr Barra Ó Muirí  
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Mr Fearghal O'Connor  
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Linda O'Hare  
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Cllr Gerry O'Hare  
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Cllr Henry Reilly  
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Ms Alison Robb  
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Cllr Michael Ruane  
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Cllr Michael Savage  
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin  
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Donna Starkey  
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Cllr Gary Stokes  
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Sarah Taggart  
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Cllr David Taylor  
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly  
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Cllr John Trainor  
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Central Support Unit  
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Cllr William Walker  
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Mrs Marie Ward  
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**STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
11 June 2020	TBC at the first Committee Meeting	Remotely via Skype
13 August 2020	TBC	TBC
17 September 2020	TBC	TBC
15 October 2020	TBC	TBC
12 November 2020	TBC	TBC
17 December 2020	TBC	TBC
14 January 2021	TBC	TBC
11 February 2021	TBC	TBC
11 March 2021	TBC	TBC
15 April 2021	TBC	TBC
13 May 2021	TBC	TBC

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Emergency Business Plans April-September 2020
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Marie Ward – Chief Executive Dorinnia Carville – Director: Corporate Services
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Marie Ward – Chief Executive Dorinnia Carville – Director: Corporate Services

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

For decision	X	For noting only
<b>1.0</b>		<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1		<p>The social and economic disruption caused by COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our District, our citizens, our services and the way we provide them. Effectively planning ahead will determine how well the organisation adapts to the challenges and opportunities within the current and post COVID-19 environments, as lockdown restrictions ease, social distancing measures are relaxed and service provision gradually recovers, transitions and adjusts to the 'new' normal.</p> <p>Emergency Business Plans for each Directorate were developed in April and updated in May 2020. They provide a mechanism to manage the Council's response to COVID-19, co-ordinate activity and plan ahead to support and anticipate business recovery. These plans provide an overview of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial and human resources</li> <li>• Challenges, opportunities, customer needs and risk management implications</li> <li>• New / essential / statutory / ongoing / delayed / suspended activity</li> </ul> <p>This report summarises the key findings, common issues and emerging themes across all Directorate Emergency Business Plans.</p>
<b>2.0</b>		<b>Key issues</b>
2.1		<p><b>Emergency Business Plans 2020-21</b></p> <p>Emergency Business Plans are dynamic, flexible and responsive to the turbulence and volatility of the internal and external environments. As such, they are living documents which represent the current and planned activity of each Directorate at a certain point in time (29 May 2020). To be effective, Emergency Business Plans should be reviewed and updated regularly, particularly in response to any legislative changes arising from future reviews of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020, as carried out by the NI Executive.</p>
2.2		<p><b>Financial and Human Resources</b></p> <p>Each Emergency Business Plan provides an overview of the current financial and human resources for each Directorate and department, which have been revised in response to the impact of COVID-19 and will be subject to continuous review.</p>

2.3

**Additional Considerations**

Emergency Business Plans provide an overview of the key challenges and opportunities for each Directorate, customer needs and expectations and the associated risk management implications, as summarised below:

**Challenges**

- Impact of COVID-19 on local communities and businesses, which may influence the provision of Council services.
- Loss of income across many Council services.
- Delivery of capital projects in line with external funding arrangements.
- Ongoing impact of social distancing on the way services are provided, coupled with the effective delivery of externally funded programmes.
- Supply and professional services markets may be restricted due to reduced levels of manufacturing and resource availability.
- Creating an organisational culture which values remote working, virtual teamwork and dispersed employees.

**Opportunities**

- Closer collaboration with stakeholders, including local communities, businesses and partner organisations.
- Renewed emphasis on environmental and social wellbeing, particularly climate change.
- Critical review of service provision, identifying opportunities for business transformation, exploring new models of service delivery and finding more efficient and effective ways to operate.
- Digital transformation, agile working arrangements, virtual meetings and online capability of services.
- Utilisation of the e-learning platform and mainstreaming flexible working arrangements for employees.

**Stakeholder Needs and Expectations**

- How citizens and stakeholders behave after lockdown, and in response to COVID-19, remains unclear and uncertain.
- Ongoing leadership and guidance from the Council through the provision of reliable, up to date information, advice and communications.
- Expectations in relation to physical and psychological social distancing, as well as good hygiene standards, may lead to suppressed demand and a restricted appetite for some Council services and activities.
- Access to support packages and recovery programmes for local businesses, tourism sector, sporting and community organisations.
- Potential links between the health status of citizens, economic decline, social deprivation and deeper inequalities.
- Customers of some services may expect alternative ways of working and new models of service provision.

**Risk Management**

- Preparedness for a prolonged pandemic, increase in infections, further lockdowns, second wave of COVID-19 and operating in a volatile, uncertain environment.
- Suspension of key activities and deliverables, as agreed in externally funded programmes.

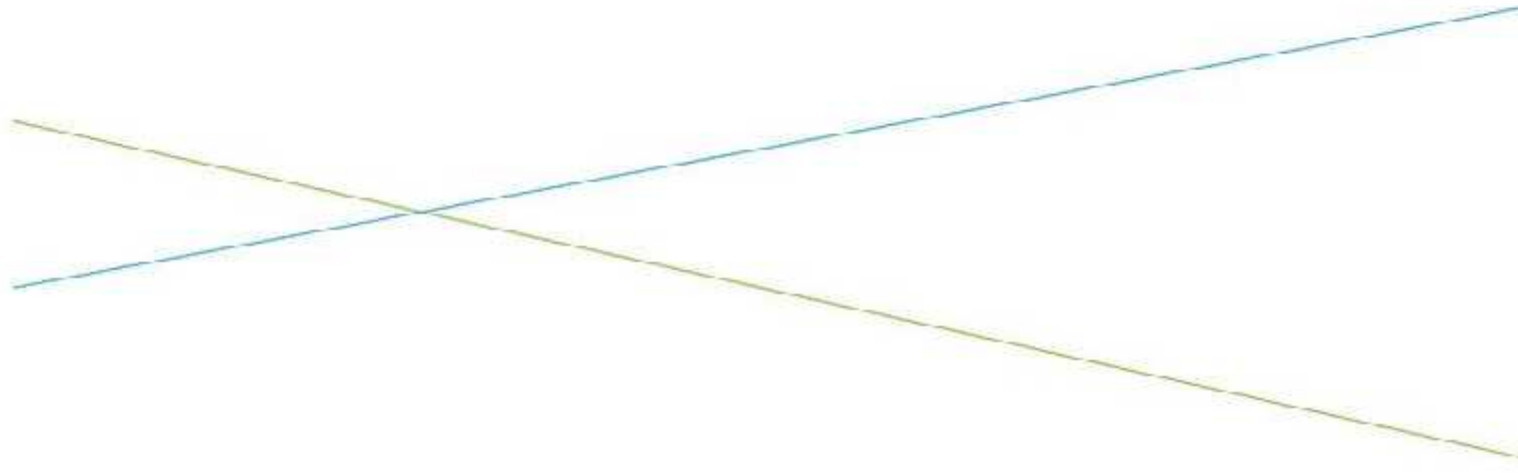
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcing guidelines around social distancing and hygiene standards in the workplace, and the subsequent impact on effective service provision.</li> <li>• Issues around the virtual work environment, organisational culture, data protection and cyber security.</li> </ul>
2.4	<p><b>Council Activity</b> Emergency Business Plans confirm that all Directorates have introduced new activity in response to COVID-19, whilst continuing to deliver essential and statutory services. However, many services and projects have also been delayed or suspended, as summarised below:</p> <p><b>New Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The establishment and management of the Community Coordination Hub, led by the AHC Directorate and supported by a number of departments including Community Planning, Communications and Human Resources.</li> <li>• Virtual physical activity / wellbeing initiatives and economic development / tourism programmes to support local communities and businesses to address, navigate and recover from the impact of COVID-19.</li> <li>• Assistance with contact tracing and advice around enforcing social distancing guidelines.</li> <li>• Introduction of new working practices and operating procedures in Building Control, Planning, Refuse Collection, Burial Service, Facilities Management, Customer Services, Ethnic Minority Support Centre, Business Support, Communications and the way Committee and Management meetings are facilitated.</li> <li>• Back office support in relation to financial and human resources, risk management, IT and reviewing community planning priorities and strategic objectives, within the context of COVID-19.</li> </ul> <p><b>Essential / Statutory / Ongoing Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible, ongoing and tailored delivery of funded programmes, particularly in the Economic Development and Community Engagement departments.</li> <li>• Progressing key external and internal projects including the Belfast Region City Deal, UNESCO Global Geopark Status, Managing Attendance Procedure and Employee Terms and Conditions.</li> <li>• Statutory duty compliance in relation to Performance and Improvement, Equality, Disability, Rural Needs, GDPR and Freedom of Information.</li> <li>• Review of Capital Programme, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on current and planned projects.</li> <li>• Ongoing maintenance of all Council facilities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Delayed / Suspended Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure of leisure facilities and delay of key programmes including Everybody Active and the Summer Activity Programme.</li> <li>• Closure of community facilities, implementation of DEA Action Plans, launch of Financial Assistance and delivery of the Irish Language Bursary Scheme, Affordable Warmth Programme and Home Safety Scheme.</li> <li>• Registration of births and marriage ceremonies.</li> <li>• Completion of onsite capital schemes, including Derrymore Demesne and Village Environmental Improvement Schemes, and delayed start dates for some projects.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of upcoming tourism events and programmes in Arts Centres / Museums, Artisan Markets and the roll-out of the Council Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme.</li> </ul>
2.5	<p><b>Plans and Strategies</b></p> <p>Developing and finalising the following plans and strategies, some of which have been delayed, should also consider the short and medium term implications of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan 2020-23</li> <li>• Performance Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Local Development Plan</li> <li>• Economic Development Strategy</li> <li>• Arts and Culture Strategy</li> <li>• Community Facilities Strategy</li> <li>• Open Space Strategy</li> <li>• Sports Development Strategy</li> </ul>
2.6	<p><b>Statutory Performance Indicators / Returns to Central Government</b></p> <p>The timely submission of a number of returns to the various central government departments, outlining progress in relation to agreed programmes of work and statutory performance indicators, has been impacted by COVID-19. Where it is anticipated that targets may not be achieved, progress will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.</p>
2.7	<p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <p>A review of the implementation of each Emergency Business Plan will be carried out in June 2020. The purpose of this review is to monitor and evaluate the Council's response to COVID-19, identify areas of good practice and shared learning and explore opportunities to sustain, progress and embed business transformation at all levels of the organisation. Responding to the impact of COVID-19 may well have accelerated the planned programme of change, creating the catalyst for business transformation and organisational resilience, and helping the Council to perform more effectively in this unprecedented new reality.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>To consider and agree the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive's Department Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020</li> <li>• Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	<p>There are no resource implications arising from this report, as the delivery of each Emergency Business Plan should be resourced from the agreed budget for 2020-21.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
5.1	<p>There are no equality or good relations implications arising from this report. However specific actions and projects within each Emergency Business Plan may be subject to their own statutory equality screening, the outcomes of which will be reported as part of future Officer recommendations.</p>

<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural proofing implications</b>
6.1	There are no rural proofing implications contained within this report. However specific actions and projects within each Emergency Business Plan may be subject to their own statutory rural needs screening, the outcomes of which will be reported as part of future Officer recommendations.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix 1: Chief Executive's Department Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020</li> <li>• Appendix 2: Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020</li> </ul>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	None

# Chief Executive's Department

## Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020





	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Financial and Human Resources	3
3.0	Additional Considerations	3
4.0	Governance Arrangements	5
5.0	Action Plan	7
6.0	Performance Indicators / Government Returns	17

## 1.0 Introduction

The Chief Executive's Departmental Emergency Business Plan provides an overview of the key activities that will take place across the department between April-September 2020. The key responsibilities of the Directorate are:

- **Community Planning**
- **Evidence and Research**
- **Performance and Improvement**
- **Democratic Services**

Adapting to the 'new' normal and reviewing how we deliver services effectively is a key priority for both the organisation and department. Preparations are underway to manage the safe return of employees to the workplace and ensure our facilities comply with social distancing requirements and health and safety guidelines.

## 2.0 Financial and Human Resources

Responding to COVID-19 has had an impact on the working arrangements of our employees and planned expenditure during 2020-21. The financial and human resources for the Chief Executives Department are outlined below and will be subject to continuous review throughout the year.

Net estimated expenditure	£2,137,745
Total number of employees (FTE equivalent)	19

\*Information is subject to continuous review.

## 3.0 Additional Considerations

The Chief Executive's Department has additional issues and opportunities to consider and progress as part of the Council's response to COVID-19, as summarised below:

### Challenges

#### Legislation

- Effective compliance with the statutory duties of improvement, community planning and democratic services during and beyond the current lockdown restrictions, as the organisation adapts to the 'next' normal.
- Guidance is required from the Department for Communities in relation to the publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21 in June 2020, as the current draft objectives are no longer relevant nor achievable.

#### Community and Stakeholders

- The needs and expectations of citizens may change and evolve, in response to the key influences in the external environment, which will have an impact on the role of Elected Members, strategic priorities of the Council and Community Planning Partnership, as well as existing models of service provision.

- Maintaining and strengthening the role of the Community Planning Partnership, using collaborative working practices to support the recovery of organisations across all sectors, in order to meet the needs of citizens.
- Maintaining and strengthening the 'social capital' of positive, collaborative working relationships established in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Organisation and Resources**

- The organisation, partners and employees retreat to the ways of working in the pre COVID-19 environment, which may not comply with social distancing measures and facilitate business recovery.
- The digital infrastructure must be in place to facilitate the virtual work environment, supported by an organisational culture and working practices which value and connect a dispersed workforce.

### **Democracy**

- Alternative arrangements are required to facilitate and sustain local democratic processes and decision-making in the current and post COVID-19 environments, particularly in relation to Council meetings.
- Alternative arrangements are required for external parties, including the press and members of the public, to attend future meetings, virtually or in person.
- Consideration should be given to the role of the Chairperson during 2020-21, as the civic and community leader, and how engagements and events are organised and managed going forward.

### **Opportunities**

#### **Legislation**

- If the organisation is required to publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21, draft objectives in relation to the economic and community recovery from COVID-19 can be developed to monitor, review, report, evaluate and learn from the Council's response to the pandemic.

#### **Community and Stakeholders**

- Increased use of technology to facilitate meetings and events with external stakeholders, including Participatory Budgeting events and Community Planning Partnership Meetings.
- Capitalising on the multi-agency collaboration forged in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and learning from the immediacy of necessary action, recognising 'we can do it this new way'.
- Improved recognition of the respective roles of the various organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors, and accelerating the move towards more collaborative working and the co-design of solutions around key issues such as climate change.

#### **Organisation and Resources**

- Increased use and normalisation of technology and virtual working for all employees in the department will build a more agile workforce and deliver efficiencies in terms of mileage and officer time.

- Increased use of online training, capacity building and webinars for Elected Members and employees.
- The 'new' normal working environment may present opportunities to modernise and transform traditional working practices within the department and across the organisation.

#### **Democracy**

- Virtual meetings and alternative mechanisms to facilitate local decision-making processes for Elected Members will deliver efficiencies in terms of mileage, hospitality and time.

#### **Customer / Stakeholder Needs and Expectations**

- Guidance from the Department for Communities in relation to the deferral arrangements for statutory Duty of Improvement remains outstanding, and will have an impact on the publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21, Performance Audit and Assessment and Assessment of Performance 2019-20.
- The evolving needs and aspirations of citizens will have an impact on the civic leadership role of Elected Members, including the Chairperson, which will influence the work of the Democratic Services Team and organisation.
- Elected Members, the press and public may welcome virtual working arrangements, which may improve accessibility to the Council and its services.
- Managing the Community Coordination Hub demonstrates the significance of community and voluntary sector networks, which has stimulated co-designed service provision and raised the expectation and justification for strengthened multi-agency collaboration in the future.

#### **Contingency Planning / Risk Management**

- Preparation for the Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21 has commenced and whilst the consultation on the draft objectives is complete, the process was limited.
- Progress in embedding the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework has been limited, as Business Plans and Individual Performance have been delayed, and the development of Service Plans has been suspended.
- In the event that there is a second wave of the pandemic, absenteeism may increase, succession planning should be considered and all employees should be equipped to work from home or on site on a rotational basis.

## **4.0 Governance Arrangements**

The Emergency Business Plan is dynamic and subject to continuous change. The Chief Executive will monitor and review implementation on a weekly basis, with progress being reported to the Senior Management Team. Assistant Directors may also report progress to the Corporate Management Team as required.

The Chief Executive will carry out a full review of the Emergency Business Plan in June 2020, in line with lockdown restrictions being eased and social distancing measures being relaxed. This review will help identify areas of good practice, areas for improvement and areas for business transformation. It will also ensure that both the organisation and department have the necessary arrangements and infrastructure in place to respond to a potential second wave of COVID-19 in a robust and swift way.

## 5.0 Chief Executive's Department Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020

Community Planning				
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>				
Review agreed key strategic priorities of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board in context of COVID-19 and planning for recovery	Q1-2	Revised priorities addressing the social, economic and health impact of COVID-19 and assisting recovery		
Review agreed priorities within action plans of the Thematic Priority Sub-groups and identify those which can be implemented during 2020/21	Q2	Practical action plan for deliverable elements of existing plans	Head of Community Planning	Within existing resources (staff time)
Re-formulate Priority Sub-groups as required to address emerging priorities	Q2	New collaborative linkages to address new issues		
Assist the Strategic Stakeholder Forum towards self-management and the development of a 2020-21 Action Plan	Q1-2	Capitalise on the unleashed initiative and huge collaborative effort between the community, voluntary and public sectors		
<b>Essential</b>				
Identify and collaborate on new initiatives which are developed through NMD CP Partners' relationships	Q2-Q4	Revised actions addressing the social, economic and health impacts of COVID-19 and assisting recovery	Head of Community Planning	Within existing resources (staff time)

Identify and collaborate on new initiatives – pragmatically as external opportunities arise	Q2-Q4	Revised actions addressing the social, economic and health impacts of COVID-19 and assisting recovery	
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>			
Develop scorecards for planned key projects and new initiatives of Priority sub-groups	Q2	Scorecards produced for specific initiatives	Head of Community Planning
Outline and agree an approach to progress the 2021 Review of the Community Plan	Q2	Plan for review agreed	
<b>Desirable</b>			
Deliver two Participatory Budgeting Feedback events for the Downpatrick and Newry DEAs	Q2	Online video feedback process designed and piloted	Within existing resources
Work with Community Planning partners to progress the development and implementation of the Participatory Budgeting small grants initiatives across a further two DEA's	Q1-Q4	DEAs identified and relevant PB process organised in context of continuing COVID-19 measures	£2,500 Community Planning, with additional CP Partner contributions
Collaborate with Community Planning Partners to pilot Participatory Budgeting 'at scale'	Q2-Q4	Capitalise on the unleashed initiative and huge collaborative effort between community, voluntary and public sectors	Within existing resources (staff time)
Lead the Community Foundation NI supported Citizens' Panel initiative	Q1-Q4	Completed trials of inclusive engagement technologies suitable for implementation of representative NMD Citizens' Panel	Up to £5000 – (CFNI-sourced / routed via CDRCN)
Through the 'PB for Youth' European project, develop a best	Q1-Q4	Toolkit produced	EU Erasmus funded project, led by Community Places

practice toolkit for Youth Participatory Budgeting						
Build Climate Change actions across the Community Plan via Priority sub-groups	Q2		Priority sub-groups action plans reviewed			Within existing resources (staff time)
<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>	<b>Original Timescale</b>					
Hold a Strategic Priorities Workshop with the CPP Board	Q1		Further prioritisation of joint working across CP partners at strategic level			
Review the revised Chairing arrangements	Q3		Arrangements reviewed and revised as necessary		Head of Community Planning	Within existing resources (staff time)
Appoint the new Chair for 2021 from the Sustainable Development grouping	Q3		Chair for 2021 appointed			



## Evidence and Research

Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>				
Develop and maintain a community resources directory for COVID-19 response. Create secure website to store and update information input by Council and CVS Officers	Q1	Community resources / retail viewers for internal / external stakeholders	Head of Evidence and Research Evidence and Research Team	Additional resources provided by ERSI free of charge
Support the COVID-19 response through the development and publication of scorecards	Q1	Data management templates Published scorecard to key stakeholders	Head of Evidence and Research Evidence and Research Team	Within existing resources (staff time)
<b>Essential</b>				
Provide ongoing GIS and statistics helpdesks to enable and facilitate remote working for employees	Q1/Q2	Deployment of remote GIS licenses New internal mapping sites Provision of statistics and analysis	Head of Evidence and Research GIS Officer / GIS Student	Within existing resources (staff time)
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>				
Provide a robust and reliable evidence base to support internal and external stakeholders, including Policy and Equality and Performance and Improvement	Q1/Q2	Continue to review and support ongoing strategic projects and statutory duties across the organisation	Head of Evidence and Research Data Analyst	Within existing resources (staff time)

<p>Audit the Community Planning indicators and measures to assess their reliability, accuracy, appropriateness and timeliness in preparation for the 2021 Community Plan review</p>	<p>Q1/Q2</p>	<p>Audit of community planning indicators complete</p>	<p>Head of Evidence and Research Data Analyst</p>	<p>Within existing resources (staff time)</p>
<p>Maintain, develop and improve mechanisms for citizen engagement including online survey consultations, establishment of a citizens panel and preparation of business case for Resident's Survey</p>	<p>Q1/Q2</p>	<p>Several surveys have been suspended due to Officers being redeployed to other projects</p>		
<p><b>Desirable</b></p>				
<p><b>Delayed / Suspended</b></p>				
<p>Work with internal departments to develop service specific GIS applications to support service delivery</p>	<p><b>Original Timescale</b> Q1 onwards</p>	<p>Support to internal departments delayed</p>	<p>Head of Evidence and Research GIS Officer / GIS Student</p>	<p>Within existing resources (staff time)</p>
<p>Develop and deploy a GIS training programme to raise awareness of new and existing GIS facilities</p>	<p>Q1 onwards</p>	<p>Training programme delayed and online options explored</p>		

**Performance and Improvement**

Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>				
Establish Working Group to lead and co-ordinate the development and review of Directorate Emergency Business Plans	Q1/Q2	5 Emergency Business Plans developed, approved and reviewed		
Co-ordinate the development of the Chief Executive's Departmental Emergency Business Plan	Q1	CX Emergency Business Plan developed and approved	Head of Performance and Improvement	Within existing resources (staff time)
Identify opportunities to drive forward organisational transformation and continuous improvement	Q1/Q2	Report prepared, considered and approved		
<b>Essential</b>				
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>				
Facilitate Performance Audit and Assessment and implement the 'Proposals for Improvement'	Q2/Q3	Performance Audit and Assessment complete and statutory compliance achieved	Head of Performance and Improvement	£20,000 budgeted for Performance Audit and Assessment
Complete and publish the Assessment of Performance 2019-20 and summary 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward'	Q2	Assessment of Performance and summary document approved and published	Data Analyst	Within existing resources / £1,000 budgeted for 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward'

Report progress in implementing the Proposals for Improvement put forward by the Local Government Auditor in 2019	Q2	Report considered and approved	Head of Performance and Improvement	Within existing resources (staff time)
Co-ordinate and support the development of Directorate Business Plans October 2020-March 2021/Review of 2019-20 Business Plans	Q2	Directorate Business Plans / Review of 2019-20 Business Plans developed, considered and approved		
Co-ordinate APSE Performance Networks and submit Performance Indicator Templates 2019-20	Q2	APSE performance data captured and submitted for 2019-20 across a range of services	Head of Performance and Improvement	£7,500 APSE subscription
Prepare the Performance Profiles, including an analysis of the results of the 2018-19 APSE performance indicators	Q2	Performance Profiles complete and issued to Directors and Assistant Directors	Data Analyst	Within existing resources (staff time)
<b>Desirable</b>				
<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>	<b>Original timescale</b>			
Complete and publish Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21	Q1	Publication of Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21 delayed – awaiting deferral arrangements from DfC	Head of Performance and Improvement	Within existing resources (staff time)
Carry out the APSE Customer Satisfaction Surveys across indoor leisure facilities	Q4 2019-20	APSE Customer Satisfaction Surveys delayed until leisure facilities are fully operational	Head of Performance and Improvement Assistant Director: Sport and Leisure	Within subscription to APSE Performance Networks
Support the Efficiencies Working Group and identify areas for continuous improvement	Q1 onwards	Efficiencies Working Group meetings are delayed until further notice	Head of Performance and Improvement	Within existing resources (staff time)

<p>Lead and co-ordinate the development, implementation and review of Service Plans</p>	<p>Q1 onwards</p>	<p>Service Plans suspended until the 2021-22 financial year</p>	
<p>Provide performance management training and capacity building for Elected Members and Officers</p>	<p>Q1 onwards</p>	<p>Training and capacity building delayed until further notice / online options for training and development to be explored</p>	

Democratic Services				
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>				
Organise an Emergency Council Meeting to put interim arrangements in place, in response to the outbreak of COVID-19	Q1	Emergency meeting set up and emergency powers for Chief Executive and Party Leaders in place		
Cancel all scheduled Council and Committee Meetings	Q1	Meetings cancelled and potential for alternative arrangements being investigated, particularly for the Annual Meeting	Democratic Services Manager	Within existing resources (staff time)
Deploy Democratic Services Officers to assist with the Community Hub; Southern, Northern and Regional Emergency Planning Groups	Q1/Q2	Staff providing support for Southern Emergency Planning Group and the virtual Community Hub	Democratic Services Team	
<b>Essential</b>				
Organise the Annual Meeting, taking into account restrictions due to COVID-19	Q1	Alternative plans currently being investigated	Democratic Services Manager	Potential cost for hiring sound equipment: £1000 approx.
Manage the appointment of positions of responsibility for the new term of Council and Committees for 2020/21	Q1	Currently working on potential alternative methods to hold the Annual Meeting. Work is ongoing with regard to positions of responsibility and committee allocation	Democratic Services Team	Within existing resources
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>				

Organise the Planning Committee Meeting, giving due regard to social distancing	Q1/Q2	Potential for alternative arrangements being investigated	Democratic Services Manager	Potential cost for hiring sound equipment: £1000 approx.
Provide administrative and governance support to the Council's decision-making structures	Q1/Q2	Weekly conference calls/Skype calls with Party Leaders and SMT being facilitated with agenda and minutes for record taken	Democratic Services Team	Within existing resources (staff time)
<b>Desirable</b>				
Organise a programme of Committee Meetings for the first year of the new term of Council, taking into account restrictions due to COVID-19	Q1	Examining and planning for alternative arrangements with regard to Committee Meetings, giving due regard to social distancing	Democratic Services Manager	Within existing resources (staff time)
Support the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson in carrying out their role(s) as First Citizen taking into account the restrictions	Q1	Ongoing liaison with the incoming Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, advising on alternative ways of working, in line with COVID-19 arrangements	Democratic Services Manager Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>	<b>Original timescale</b>			
Induction, training and capacity building programme to support Elected Members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities	Q1 onwards	Training and capacity building delayed under further notice	Democratic Services Manager Democratic Services Team	Within existing resources and allocated budget

### 6.0 Statutory Performance Indicators / Returns to Central Government

Community Planning		
Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)	Government Department	Impact on PI / Target
None relevant during this plan period		
Evidence and Research		
Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)	Government Department	Impact on PI / Target
None		
Performance and Improvement		
Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)	Government Department	Impact on PI / Target
Statutory Duty of Improvement: Performance Improvement Plan / Self Assessment / Performance Audit and Assessment / 7 Statutory Performance Indicators	Department for Communities NI Audit Office	Awaiting 2020-21 deferral arrangements in relation to Part 12 of the Local Government Act
Democratic Services		
Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)	Government Department	Impact on PI / Target
None		



# Corporate Services

## Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020



	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Financial and Human Resources	3
3.0	Additional Considerations	3
4.0	Governance Arrangements	8
5.0	Action Plan	9
6.0	Performance Indicators / Government Returns	27

## 1.0 Introduction

The Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan provides an overview of the key activities that will take place across the Directorate between April-September 2020. The key responsibilities of the Directorate are:

- **Administration**
- **Corporate Planning and Policy**
- **Estates and Asset Management**
- **Finance**
- **Human Resources and Safeguarding**
- **Information Technology**

Adapting to the 'new' normal and reviewing how we deliver services effectively is a key priority for both the organisation and department. Preparations are underway to manage the safe return of employees to the workplace and ensure our facilities comply with social distancing requirements and health and safety guidelines.

## 2.0 Financial and Human Resources

Responding to COVID-19 has had an impact on the working arrangements of our employees and planned expenditure during 2020-21. The financial and human resources for the Corporate Services Directorate are outlined below and will be subject to continuous review throughout the year.

Net estimated expenditure	£5,216,153
Total number of employees (FTE equivalent)	121

## 3.0 Additional Considerations

The Corporate Services Directorate has additional issues and opportunities to consider and progress as part of the Council's response to COVID-19, as summarised below:

### Challenges and Opportunities

#### ADMIN:

- GRO changes to service may provide an opportunity for more services to be available on-line in future
- Complaints, Administration of Property Certificates, Compliance and Legal Administration Services can largely operate remotely with limited requirement to access hard copy files. Will assist with social-distancing in workplace and service continuity
- Skype for Business enables effective connectivity with teams and outside organisations assisting with business as usual
- Success of remote telephony provides an opportunity to consider alternative models of how business support is provided
- Challenges in relation to data protection, data sharing and cyber security posed by remote working and new initiatives such as health tracking and contact tracing

- Challenge of managing a dispersed workforce particularly for vulnerable/shielding staff and maintaining good communication channels and connectivity to workplace
- Challenge to culture of organisation posed by social distancing/remote working/increased use of Skype.

### CPP: Challenges

- Current style and format of meetings
- Collation of information and governance / scrutiny of annual reports to Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and DAERA prior to submission.
- Suspension of Irish Language Bursary Scheme.
- Delay of initiative to award Silver Poppies to surviving World War II veterans during May 2020
- Due to 'lockdown' restrictions unable to deliver upon the community engagement actions contained within the Irish Language Strategy
- Implement effective COVID-19 Communications in view of the huge amount of information and news sources in the public domain
- Ensure all stakeholders (internal and external) are kept informed in a regular and timely way (things changing hour by hour) in terms of advice and council decisions relating to services and day to day operations
- Prioritise the need to provide information and reassurances to citizens and stakeholders
- Add complex new online platforms to the corporate digital channels
- Develop a new secure Staff Area on the Council's corporate website for timely and accessible COVID-19 information

### CPP: Opportunities

- Develop new ways of working from home using IT
- Provide the opportunity to focus in on specific actions
- Enhance the Council's corporate digital communications offering
- Further develop the corporate website to accommodate all COVID-19 related information

### HR: Challenges

- Continued & heightened risk of harm (lockdown restriction) – main focus changing (Leisure to Community Coordination Hubs & citizen homes)
- Need to consider risk by posed by staff (domestic abuse and that some may be abusers at home)
- Ensuring staff are supported and skilled when traditional face to face/classroom-based training delivery is suspended
- Ensuring disparate team members continue to feel part of a team
- Non-availability of key personnel due to illness (COVID-related and non, due to volume and pace of work activities).

### HR: Opportunities

- Potential for wider team/stakeholder engagement where larger numbers are involved; through the introduction of Microsoft Teams' or other flexible cloud-based meeting rooms (Zoom or Meeting Room). Would enable connectivity within teams and external stakeholders, partners, LG Working Groups etc
- Reduction in mileage claims and other expenses
- Positive impact of home working in terms of work/life balance
- Utilisation of eLearning platform

- More flexible staff engagement and working hours

### Finance: Opportunities

- The number of days taken to pay suppliers will increase, as staff need to be on site to complete payment runs.
- The payment of cheques is a manual task which requires a signature of the Assistant Director of Finance.
- The staff resource cover within the insurance function is agency, and therefore not able to work. Staff continuity and access to ongoing case files more difficult.
- Financial Accounts process will be a more difficult process due to remote working, while trying to stick to original NIAO deadlines.

### Finance: Challenges

- Skype for Business enables effective connectivity with teams and outside organisations assisting with business as usual.
- More flexible staff engagement and working hours

### IT:

- Supply and professional services markets could be restricted as a result of reduced levels of manufacturing and resource availability.
- An early break into ways of working project offers lessons to be considering before broadening the scope.
- Unannounced implementation of some technologies can lead to rejection/resistance from users.

## Customer / Stakeholder Needs and Expectations

### ADMIN:

- **ICO has advised:** We understand that resources, whether they are finances or people, might be diverted away from usual compliance or information governance work. We won't penalise organisations that we know need to prioritise other areas or adapt their usual approach during this extraordinary period. We can't extend statutory timescales, but we will tell people through our own communications channels that they may experience understandable delays when making information rights requests during the pandemic.
- Council has worked with Post Office to ensure incoming and outgoing mail service is maintained without unnecessary travel
- Registration Service has worked with undertakers to ensure the smooth transition to new death registration process
- Registration Service has worked with DoF/GRO to implement changes to service delivery
- Customers may seek and expect alternative models of service delivery in relation to Registration and Reception – expectation that more services will be available on-line

### CPP:

- Re-open the Irish Language Bursary Scheme
- Continue to deliver on community development and capacity building with the Irish Language community
- Provide residents with up to date, accurate and accessible information on COVID-19
- Provide clear, unambiguous information about Council services and facilities

- Ensure residents know how to access support from the local Community Hubs
- Support residents and staff with information to help adapt and maintain their health and wellbeing
- Help local businesses know where to access assistance they need
- Provide clear advice and guidance on visitor attractions and outdoor recreation
- Support the media providing up to date and accurate information
- Show leadership, provide clarity and guidance during these uncertain times
- Improve the Council's reputation and build public trust
- Support strategic partners through communications

#### HR:

- Ability to progress Employee Relations matters has been impacted to the extent that, in many cases, it has not been possible to progress or conclude some issues which can have a negative impact on individuals and their view as recipients of HR services

#### Finance:

- All staff are getting paid as they would normally expect.
- Suppliers should envisage having to wait a few more days for payment, due to reduced number of payment runs.
- Possibility that the next Audit Committee meeting in June will be virtual.
- Internal Audit Plan will commence remotely for the 2020/21 year.

**IT:** Service responsiveness has reduced due to IT workload.

### Contingency Planning / Risk Management

#### ADMIN:

- Possibility of further lock-downs – need to identify current gaps in working from home -v- office and find out what will fully enable staff to work remotely
- Returning staff to work – working group established to identify numbers and guidance for staff. Needs to be aligned to essential and statutory service provision.
- Planning required around returning staff to work and the requirements around hygiene arrangements, cleaning, social distancing and clear communication plan for both staff and the public while restriction measures apply
- Large section of Department can work remotely with limited access to hard copy files – will assist with social distancing
- Registration has strong complement of staff – 4 in core team, 5 trained casual staff and further 5 casual staff currently undergoing training
- If large backlog of Registration applications – enhanced pool of staff will enable consideration to be given to extended opening hours
- Adjustments made to receptions and registration accommodation to enable social distancing
- Business Support staff operating on a rota basis to limit risk to staff
- CMT being serviced via Skype Meetings

#### CPP:

- All four employees within the Corporate Policy Section, including the Irish Language Unit, are working from home. While the Irish Language Unit Manager does not have a laptop, she can access emails on her iPad.
- Irish Development Officer (Community Liaison) is currently on maternity leave. Maternity cover for this post has not been recruited and this will be required to be addressed.
- Communications and Marketing resources were initially redeployed to service Covid-19 communications. Other 'business as usual' activities were suspended but have now been resumed.
- Media Relations continues to be serviced,
- All Council notifications and updates are being communicated via corporate digital platforms and corporate PR activities.
- Corporate Publications have been suspended due to printers furloughing staff so corporate materials are developed digitally and placed on Council's digital platforms.
- Minimal sourcing of Council branded items has taken place due to higher costs at this time.
- Communications and Marketing expenditure relating to Covid-19 has been allocated to the appropriate Covid-19 budget.
- All Communications & Marketing staff are working from home and all additional hours worked have been recorded by the team at this time.
- Working arrangements have been reviewed, agreed and implemented to support the Communications/Marketing team during this challenging period.
- The Marketing Student does not have a corporate laptop and uses her personal device for work. These are cloud-based applications presenting minimal risk.
- Publication of the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-23 has been postponed.

#### HR:

- The increased provision of remote IT connectivity has significantly improved the contingency & business continuity arrangements as initially, there was only a small number of HR team members able to work remotely.

#### Finance:

- Possibility of further lock-downs – need to identify current gaps in working from home -v- office and find out what will fully enable staff to work remotely – is it possible payment runs, and payroll reports can be done completely off site.
- Returning staff to work – working group established to identify numbers and guidance for staff. Needs to be aligned to essential and statutory service provision.

#### IT:

- Grey IT is developing as users try to work around controls in order to get operational on their terms. Further controls being considered to reduce associated risk.

## 4.0 Governance Arrangements

The Emergency Business Plan is dynamic and subject to continuous change. The Director of Corporate Services will monitor and review implementation on a weekly basis, with progress being reported to the Senior Management Team. Assistant Directors may also report progress to the Corporate Management Team as required.

The Director of Corporate Services will carry out a full review of the Emergency Business Plan in June 2020, potentially in line with lockdown restrictions being eased and social distancing measures being relaxed. This review will help identify areas of good practice, areas for improvement and areas for business transformation. It will also ensure that both the organisation and Directorate have the necessary arrangements and infrastructure in place to respond to a potential second wave of COVID-19 in a robust and swift way.



### 5.0 Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan April-September 2020

Administration			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)
			Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>			
<b>Essential</b>			
Provide a Registration Service	Q1, Q2	Service meets customer demand	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Registrar and Registration Team
Provide a Corporate Business Support Service (telephony/mail/filing/Property Certificates)	Q1, Q2	Service meets corporate and customer demand	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Business Support Manager and Business Support Team
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>			
Provide a Complaints Support Service	Q1, Q2	Council Policy complied with Complaints not escalated to NIPSO	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Provide a Compliance Service	Q1, Q2	Statutory response requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOI/EIR/DP response deadlines met</li> </ul> Council records compliant with GDPR/DPA	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Head of Compliance and Compliance Team
			Within existing resources
			Within existing resources
			Within existing resources

Provide a Legal Support Service	Q1, Q2	Service meets corporate demand	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Head of Legal Administration and Legal Administration Team	Within existing resources
Provide Assurance Statements	Q1, Q2	Assurance provided to Director	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)	Within existing resources
<b>Desirable</b>				
Conflicts of Interest Project	Q2	All staff captured – voluntary	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration) and Head of Legal Administration	Within existing resources
Conflicts of Interest Project	Q1	SMT approve new approach to identify and capture high risk staff	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration) and Head of Legal Administration	Within existing resources
<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>				
Registration of Births Service	Q1, Q2	Births cannot currently be registered	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Registrar and Registration Team	Loss of income re Registration of Births for 1/4/19-30/9/19 - £12,088 – nb this is total revenue and subject to a deduction by GRO. It is anticipated that any postponed registrations will take place within a short period of normal service resuming

Marriage Ceremonies	Q1, Q2	Wedding ceremonies cannot be performed	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Registrar and Registration Team	Loss of income re Marriage Ceremonies for 1/4/19-30/9/19 - £7024 and Marriage Notices £48,984 – nb this is total revenue and subject to a deduction by GRO. It is anticipated a high number will be rescheduled within the current financial year
Review Complaints Process and training for staff	Q2	Contingent on NIPSO moving to a 2 Stage Process	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)	Within existing resources
Review and update Retention and Disposal Schedule	Q2	Requires approval by PRONI and ratification by Assembly	Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), Head of Compliance and Compliance Team	Within existing resources

Corporate Planning and Policy			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)
<b>New</b>			<b>Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement COVID-19 Communications</li> </ul>	Q1 – Q2	Keep all stakeholders (internal and external) informed in a regular and timely way in terms of advice and council decisions relating to services and day to day operations	Communications & Marketing team
			<b>Staff Time</b>
			Costs associated with new Covid -19 Communications, Campaigns and Platforms

Essential				
<b>Mainstream Corporate Policy Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare policy register for Audit</li> <li>• Review and revise Policy Development Framework</li> <li>• Agreed Policy Development Process</li> </ul>	Q1	Policy register submitted to Audit	Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer & Equality Officer	N/A
	Q1	Revised draft Policy Development Framework	Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer & Equality Officer	N/A
	Q2	Corporate Policy Development Process considered and agreed by Council	Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer & Equality Officer	N/A
<b>Embed Consultation / Engagement Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Consultation / Engagement Framework Process</li> </ul>	Q2	Revised Consultation / Engagement Framework Process agreed	Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer & Equality Officer / Head of Evidence & Research	N/A
	Q1	Reviewed and revised Irish Language Strategy 2020-2023	Head of Corporate Policy / Irish Language Unit Manager / Irish Language Officer (Development)	N/A
<b>Implement Irish Language Strategy 2020-2023</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review responses to 12-week public consultation on Irish Language Strategy</li> <li>• Begin translation of current website pages</li> </ul>	Q1	Bank of translated website pages for migration to new website	Irish Language Unit Manager / Irish Language Officer (Development)	N/A

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on Progress six monthly to Irish Language Strategy Working Group</li> </ul>	Q2	Report considered by Irish Language Strategy Working Group	Irish Language Unit: Manager / Irish Language Officer (Development)	N/A
<p><b>Corporate Communications and Marketing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate the digital offering by adding new online platforms to the corporate digital channels</li> <li>Issue press releases to local, regional and national media</li> <li>Respond to local, regional and national media enquiries</li> <li>Manage the corporate graphic design contract</li> <li>Manage the corporate advertising contract</li> <li>Assist with the development and distribution of internal communications to all staff</li> <li>Consider and agree a new Strategic Approach to</li> </ul>	<p>Q1 – Q2</p> <p>Q1 – Q2</p> <p>Q1 – Q2</p> <p>Q1 – Q2</p> <p>Q1 – Q2</p> <p>Q1 – Q2</p> <p>Q1</p>	<p>Enhanced corporate digital communications offering</p> <p>Promoting the work of the Council and the district</p> <p>Providing Press Office service and ensuring corporate lines are published</p> <p>Contract Management Compliance and Performance</p> <p>Contract Management Compliance and Performance</p> <p>Ensuring staff are kept informed in a regular and timely manner</p> <p>Set out the strategic direction for the Council's communication and</p>	<p>Communications &amp; Marketing team</p> <p>Communications &amp; Marketing team</p> <p>Communications &amp; Marketing team</p> <p>Head of Communications &amp; Marketing</p> <p>Head of Communications &amp; Marketing</p> <p>Communications &amp; Marketing team</p>	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Costs of new platforms</p> <p>Staff Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p>

<p>Communications &amp; Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment of Corporate Graphic Design Agency</li> </ul>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>marketing over the next 3 years in line with the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-23</p> <p>Provision of Graphic Design Services for corporate priorities and activities</p>	<p>Head of Communications &amp; Marketing</p> <p>Head of Corporate Communications &amp; Marketing</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan 2020-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Corporate Plan 2020-23</li> </ul>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>Corporate Plan 2020-23 reviewed, finalised, adopted and publicised</p>	<p>AD and AD Steering Group</p>	<p>Consultation, redesign and publication costs.</p>
<p><b>Ongoing / Statutory</b></p>				
<p><b>Ensure Statutory Duties Compliance</b></p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual progress report for period 2019-2020 to ECNI on implementation of Section 75 statutory duties</li> </ul>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>Report prepared to enable submission deadline of 31 August 2020</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer &amp; Equality Officer</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual progress report for period 2019-2020 to ECNI on implementation of Disability Duties</li> </ul>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>Report prepared to enable submission deadline of 31 August 2020</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer &amp; Equality Officer</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual report for period 2019-2020 to DAERA on implementation of Rural Needs Act</li> </ul>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>Report prepared to enable submission deadline of 30 September 2020</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy Officer &amp; Equality Officer</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review responses to 12-week public consultation on Equality Action Plan &amp; Disability Action Plan</li> </ul>	Q1	Reviewed and revised Equality Action Plan 2020-2023 and Disability Action Plan 2020-2023 prepared for submission to Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	N/A
<b>Desirable</b> NOTHING HERE				
<b>Delayed / Suspended</b> Implementation of Irish Language Bursary Scheme suspended temporarily.	Q1 – Q2	All applications currently received are deemed "safe". They will be checked against eligibility criteria and draft letter of offer prepared for when the scheme re-opens.	Irish Language Unit: Manager / Irish Language Officer (Development)	<p>Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2020-2021 budget allocation for period April – September 2020 is £45,000 (total annual budget allocation £50,000).</p> <p>Should the scheme not re-open during the period April – September 2020 this will leave an underspend of £45,000</p>
Award of Silver Poppies to surviving World War II veterans during May 2020 has been delayed (provisionally delayed to Q2)	Q1	<p>Procurement of silver poppies delayed due to retailers being closed.</p> <p>Letter has been forwarded by Council Chairperson to the veterans advising the initiative has been delayed and that Council will be in contact to make alternative arrangements when</p>	Head of Corporate Policy / Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	No financial impact should the initiative proceed during Q2

Commence development of a new Communications & Marketing Strategy (pending finalisation of Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans)	Q2	restrictions are lifted, and it is safe to do so.	Head of Communications & Marketing	Staff Time
Detailed Strategy and Action Plan which will set out how the Council will plan and manage key strategic communications and marketing activities over the next three years.				

Estates and Asset Management				
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>				
Covid-19 Emergency Planning	Sept 20	Provide Covid-19 emergency planning advice across Council, liaise with other councils and report to the Local Government Liaison Officer to ensure a consistent approach during the 6-month period.	Kelly McNiff	
Covid-19. Impact on Construction Industry	Sept 20	Regularly review government guidance and best practice for the phased recovery of the construction industry following Covid-19. Advise Council departments on associated restrictions for the delivery of construction projects (works and services).	Colin Quinn	
<b>Essential</b>				
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>				



Delivery of capital programme.	2020	Review implementation of the delivery of capital construction projects by all Council departments in accordance with best practice guidelines and amend as required taking consideration of: impact of Covid-19, legislation and regulation changes.	Tom McClean/Collin Quinn	
Estate Assets Strategy	Sept 2020	Continue to develop and deliver the Estates Asset strategy in accordance with the Estates Asset Management Policy, ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuation of the Estates mapping exercise in partnership with GIS and Legal staff. Target for completion by Sept 20: 150 out of the 335.</li> <li>- Agree action plan for all surplus assets identified.</li> </ul>	Gavin McVeigh	
Surplus Assets	Sept 2020	Continue to review and update surplus assets, with a view to maximise the value of all surplus assets for disposal. Target for completion by Sept 2020 - site boundaries of play parks to identify unused lands.	Gavin McVeigh	
<b>Desirable</b>				
Review Council Health & Safety policy	2020	Review and update Councils Health & Safety Policy, including provision of defined roles and responsibilities.	Kelly McNiff	
Emergency Planning	Sept 2020	Training for elected members.	Kelly McNiff	

<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>					
Emergency Planning	2021	Undertake an Emergency Planning desktop exercise.	Kelly McNiff		

Finance					
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)	
<b>New</b>					
Establishment of live COVID19 Risk Register – updated regularly by SMT	Q1	Risk Register regularly updated by SMT, Council Officers will have responsibility for the implementation actions to reduce overall risk of COVID19 to Council.	Gerard Byrne	n/a	
<b>Essential</b>					
Provide up to date Governance Training through the e-learning Platform	Q3	Staff will be aware of their roles and responsibilities. Best practice examples will be highlighted.	Gerard Byrne	n/a	
Complete contracts mapping process	Q4	Complete the contracts mapping process to ensure all high-level expenditure is regularized through contracts/frameworks. Contracts register will monitor spend to highlight any overspends or when contracts are expiring.	David Barter	n/a	
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>					
Ensuring the Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21 is complete	Q4	A full year audit plan will give the CE the assurances to sign of the financial statements. Audits which can be best	Gerard Byrne	n/a	

		carried out remotely will be targeted first.			
Raising Concerns Policy to be developed when NIAO best practice guide released	Q2	NIAO to release a new best practice guide on 'Raising Concerns'. There will be a separate procedure for members of public to raise concerns.	Gerard Byrne	n/a	
Update Procurement Policy, provide training and continue to monitor performance and adherence to same.	Q2	Update Procurement Policy in line with best practice and audit recommendations. Ensure staff are aware of changes.	David Barter	n/a	
Develop a Contracts Management Procedure	Q2	Develop a contracts management procedure as per internal audit recommendation and in line with best practice	David Barter	n/a	
<b>Desirable</b>					
Ensuring CRM looks at merging risks/H & S/insurance and audit tracking	Q4	To ensure consistency of service. Avoid duplication of work, which will lead to Officers time being dedicated to front line work. Lead to savings long term.	Gerard Byrne/Kelly McNiiff	£20k estimate	
Move towards alignment of payroll practices across the council and review of underlying process	Q4	To ensure consistency of service. Avoid duplication of work, which will lead to savings and efficiencies long term.	Brenda Phillips	n/a	
Review existing coding structures to improve management reporting	Q4	The monthly management accounts will become more meaningful provide SMT/CMT with instant feedback of where they should focus their attention	Brenda Phillips	n/a	
More strategic focus on long-term rates planning	Q3		Brenda Phillips	n/a	

Human Resources and Safeguarding				
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)
<b>New</b>				
Identification of available resources to support redeployment of employees to support Covid-19 key frontline activities.	For the duration of the emergency	Delivery of key frontline services are supported with appropriate levels of resource	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Phillip Preen, Louise Fitzsimons	N/A
Develop new processes for notification, recording and reporting of absence (Covid-19 related and non). Required because of number of different HR systems in existence, none of which are sufficiently flexible or comprehensive.	Implement beginning of May 2020	Absence /attendance information is available across the organisation to identify key absence /attendance metrics for example, at work, working from home, absent due to Covid-19 (shielding, sick etc.)	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Anne Jennings Jennifer Spence	N/A
Development & implementation of a safeguarding protocol for Community Coordination Hubs	By end April 2020	Guidance and Operating Protocol in place for Volunteers, Employees, and service users in order to mitigate risk	Lead Officers: Gary Scott, Martina Flynn (Safer Communities & Good Relations Manager)	N/A
<b>Essential</b>				
Launch of Managing Attendance Procedure to employees.	April 2020	Employees directly impacted, notified by 1 April 2020. Procedure communicated by end April 2020	Lead Officers: Philip Preen, Donna Mackle	Not connected with this activity
Commence work on Phase 2 T&Cs; presenting options for MS decision making and negotiation	April 2020	Negotiated agreed part 3 Green book provisions for all employees which provide a platform for	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Phillip Preen,	Not within HR Business Plan but affordability considerations will apply

towards securing an agreed set of pay related (part 3 Green Book) provisions Maximise use of elearning as an alternative method for employee communication, training and learning on the new Managing Attendance Procedure	Commence by end April 2020	continued service transformation and value for money to the ratepayer E-learning module completed and ready for use as an alternative to planned face to face briefings and training sessions	Donna Mackle (HR), Deirdre Hanna (Payroll)	Reduced spend in Corporate Training Budget & Room Hire
Adapt and tailor elearning modules for the Council's LMS as an alternative to 'traditional' training methods.	Commencing April 2020	Records Management / Procurement / Governance / Equality/ Project Management/ Code of Conduct/ Performance Management/Induction modules. implement improvements to mitigate risk through improved learning outcomes.	Lead Officers: Aveen Magorrian, Council Subject matter experts	Reduced spend in Corporate Training Budget, Room Hire & Refreshments
Update Safeguarding training to meet both user and organisational needs; taking account of social distancing restrictions etc.	First Update April 2020		Lead Officers: Gary Scott, Aveen Magorrian	Reduced spend in Corporate Training Budget & Room Hire
Mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks (linked to lock down and changes in working practices), for both Council and citizens	Commencing April 2020	Introduction of new Domestic Abuse Policy and procedures to support and protect staff from harm who are subject to abuse & sexual violence and signpost staff to support services.	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Gary Scott	N/A
Update of HR Systems, individual employee records and communication to employees re: implementation of agreed Phase 1 new Terms & Conditions of employment. Launch & Communicate new supporting Procedures to HR, Line Managers and all employees	Q1 2020-2021	Effective date for implementation is 1 April 2020 -i.e. backdated amendments required	Lead Officers: Anne Jennings, Philip Preen	Delayed JTUS ballot and results means late implementation and increased work for HR

<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>						
In conjunction with Community Planning & Community Engagement, examine opportunities to create/extend Volunteering Opportunities within and external to the Council	Suspended	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Further Develop Work Experience/Work Placement Programmes across the Council	Suspended	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Phillip Preen, Louise Fitzsimons	N/A
Pursue options relating to joint working with (a) Cluster Council on new Job Evaluation Procedures	Delayed - Revisit H2	Development of agreed procedures for completing job evaluation on a local/cluster basis based on the GLPC job evaluation scheme			Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Phillip Preen	N/A in relation to developing the Procedures; potential costs of re-evaluation(s)
Conclude People Perform & Grow (PPG) Pilot, evaluate pilot findings & recommendations.	Q3 / Q4 20-21 (in line with business and service planning process for 21-22)	Pilot re-instigated through working group and volunteer managers & employees, to enable refinements to be made ready for implementation (to include any necessary pre-launch communication/training/briefing.			Lead Officers: Aveen Magorrian, Kate Bingham, Catrina Miskelly, PPG Steering & Implementation Groups	N/A
Implement a process which recognizes individual and team contribution aligned to Corporate and Service Plans and which supports the development and Growth of employees. (People Perform & Grow (PPG))	Q1 2021/2022	Implementation Plan in place to ensure the PPG process is operational; supported by training taking account of record completion and storage.			Lead Officers: Aveen Magorrian, Kate Bingham, Catrina Miskelly, PPG Steering & Implementation Groups	Cost of producing materials (not yet known)
Corporate Training Programme & Departmental Training	April – September 2020	1. All classroom-based training sessions suspended where it			Lead Officer: Aveen Magorrian, supported	Reduced spend in Corporate & Departmental Training

			<p>conflicts with Government advice of social distancing.</p> <p>2. No Departmental Training applications to be accepted unless defined as essential for business in the 'new normal' and can be delivered technically in a way Council supports</p> <p>3. Essential L&amp;D activities will be organised in an alternative format and additional eLearning materials developed</p>	by Subject Matter Experts	Budgets, hospitality costs, travel costs etc.
Employee Qualification Assistance Scheme (EQA)	2020-2021	No EQA Applications to be accepted. 50 % reimbursements costs can be made on those who have completed current courses only	Lead Officer: Aveen Magorrian	Removal of EQA Budget	
Mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks (linked to lockdown and changes in working practices), for both Council and citizens	Delayed pending reopening of Council facilities	Develop and implement the Safe Place initiative to support, protect and signpost citizens who are subject to abuse & sexual violence	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Gary Scott	Expenditure for Safe Place sits with PCSP	
Engagement with and development of existing and potential partnership working with internal external stakeholder groups	Impacted upon by lockdown & social distancing	Sharing of learning and awareness through partnership working to mitigate risk through improved learning outcomes will be more fragmented and slower, temporarily & marginally increasing	Lead Officer: Gary Scott	Reduction in travel costs	

Increase Safeguarding awareness with stakeholder groups through communication & marketing to increase staff and citizen knowledge & understanding of safeguarding	H1 2020-2021	Production of additional corporate literature and marketing comms	Lead Officer: Gary Scott, supported by Marketing Department	£800 marketing expenditure not used
Planning for The Future	Q1, Q2 and Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued communication to and consultation with affected employees / groups due to delays</li> <li>Planned L&amp;D activity to be rescheduled for Q2</li> <li>Assessment Centre to be held end of Q2 or beginning of Q3 taking account of social distancing</li> <li>Tier 4 proposal to be presented to June or August 2020 SP&amp;R Committee</li> </ul>	Louise Fitzsimons	Financial implications of project to be revisited by the Chief Executive
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>				
Support the reduction of Sickness Absence	2020-2021	Sickness Absence Levels within NMDDC equal to the Local Government: Average or below (as measured by NIAO)	Lead Officers: Catrina Miskelly, Louise Fitzsimons, Anne Jennings	Not within HR Business Plan but salary and people availability costs
Mitigate safeguarding risks in existing arrangements, emerging issues and future practice for both Council and citizens	2020-2021 Ongoing	<p>a. Develop and implement solutions/arrangements which improves practice, procedure and reduces the risk of harm/abuse; thereby mitigating organisational risk and staff</p> <p>b. Identify gaps in procurement of contracted services and</p>	Lead Officer: Gary Scott	
			Lead Officer: Gary Scott, Procurement Department	



			third-party provision and collaborate with procure dept in addressing these		
Information Technology					
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Output/Outcome	Human Resources (responsible officers)	Financial Resources (expenditure / loss of income / funding re-allocated)	
<b>New</b>					
Support Mobilisation of Staff	Q1	>400 staff enabled for home working	All IT	Funding contained with IT Programme Budget)	
Support Return to Office	Q1-Q4	All staff able to function upon return to the office	All IT		
<b>Essential</b>					
Microsoft Enterprise Arrangement	Q1	New contract in place by June 2020	GR		
WAN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Implementation</li> <li>Dismantle Legacy Arrangements</li> </ul>	Q1	New contract live and legacy service cease orders issued by end of Q1	SR/EM		
Ways of Working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worker Style Identification</li> <li>Hardware Procurement, Build and Deploy</li> </ul>	Q2	Determine worker styles for all staff by end of Q1 and achieve 35% implementation by end of Q2	GR		
Fixed Telephony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dismantle Legacy Arrangements</li> <li>Integrate with eMail Service</li> </ul>	Q2	Cease orders issued on legacy services by end of Q1. eMail integration complete by end of Q2.	DF/PM		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Automate Reporting to Service Managers</li> </ul>				
Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery	Q2	New server storage and backup infrastructure implemented and tested by end of Q2	PM/SR	
Managed Print	Q2		GR/DF	
<b>Ongoing / Statutory</b>				
System Administration	On-going		All	
Service Desk (User and Device Support)	On-going		RG/TM/AM	
Moves/Adds/Changes	On-going		RG/TM/AM	
Third Party Support Facilitation	On-going		RG/TM/AM	
Contract Management	On-going		GR	
Tenant Support	On-going		All	
Procurement	On-going		GR	
Business Engagement	On-going		All	
<b>Desirable</b>				
Resolve Legacy Contractual Issues	Q1		GR	
Chamber Delegate System	Q2		GR	
Merchant Services	Q2		GR/DF	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Merchant Services provision</li> </ul>				
WiFi	Q2		DF/EM	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dismantle Legacy Arrangements</li> <li>Continue Phase 2 Implementation</li> </ul>				
Planning ePIC Replacement	Ongoing		GR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute as required</li> </ul>				
Continue Implementation of IT Transformation Programme	Ongoing		All	
<b>Delayed / Suspended</b>				

Most projects will have slipped due to priority refocusing and supplier availability, but we still aim to complete as originally planned.			All	
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## 6.0 Statutory Performance Indicators / Returns to Central Government

Administration		Government Department	Impact on PI / Target
Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)			
<b>Registration:</b>			
<b>PI 12a</b> Cost of Registration per head of population	APSE	None	
<b>PI 16b</b> Service User satisfaction with registration services (percentage of users that were satisfied or very satisfied)	APSE	Potential for lower levels of customer satisfaction due to some services being suspended	
<b>Legal Services:</b>			
<b>PI 14a</b> Cost of Legal Services per head of population	APSE	None	
<b>PI 44a</b> Total income / amount in receipts derived from Legal Services only per head of population	APSE	Some transactions may be delayed or not proceed due to financial constraints	
<b>PI 46a</b> Total net expenditure on Legal Services per head of population	APSE	Some transactions may be delayed or not proceed due to financial constraints	
<b>PI 16a</b> Service user satisfaction with legal services (percentage of users that were satisfied or very satisfied)	APSE	Potential for lower levels of customer satisfaction due to delays in service provision	
<b>Complaints:</b>			
<b>PI 34b</b> Number of complaints received per 1000 head of population	APSE	Suspension of services may lead to higher level of complaints	
<b>PI 35a</b> Average time taken (in working days) to successfully conclude a complaint	APSE	Availability of staff and limited access to hard files may delay response being processed	

<b>PI 36a</b> Percentage of complaints rectified within target time	APSE	Availability of staff and limited access to hard files may delay response being processed
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<b>Corporate Planning and Policy</b>		
<b>Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)</b>	<b>Government Department</b>	<b>Impact on PI / Target</b>
Annual progress report for period 2019-2020 to ECNI on implementation of Section 75 statutory duties (Equality Scheme) / submission deadline 31 August 2020	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	Action being undertaken to prepare report
Annual report for period 2019-2020 to DAFRA on implementation of Rural Needs Act / submission deadline 30 September 2020	DAFRA	Action being undertaken to prepare report
Annual progress report for period 2019-2020 to ECNI on implementation of Disability Duties / submission deadline 31 August 2020	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	Action being undertaken to prepare report

<b>Finance</b>		
<b>Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)</b>	<b>Government Department</b>	<b>Impact on PI / Target</b>
Financial Audit – Audit Strategy issued	NI Audit Office	Working towards original deadline – however is a changing situation.
Prompt Payments	DfC	The time taken to pay suppliers will increase due to less payment runs and remote working

<b>Human Resources</b>		
<b>Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)</b>	<b>Government Department</b>	<b>Impact on PI / Target</b>

Sickness Absence	NI Audit Office	Potential for delay in return of information to HR and subsequent validation of same
Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return	ECNI	Due 1 May 2020 – on target or short delay which ECNI have confirmed they will accept
Quarterly Business Survey (conducted on a statutory basis under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 and failure to make a return can incur penalties under Article 8 of the Order).	NISRA	Next return due beginning of June 2020
<b>Safeguarding</b>		
<b>Statutory PI / Government Return (including target)</b>		<b>Impact on PI / Target</b>
Annual Adult Position Report – adult abuse referrals, training, conference/event returns	Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership	Low return on numbers
SBNI Section 12 Audit Report (yearly or as required) – child abuse referrals, training, conference/event returns	Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland	Low return on numbers

**ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2016 – ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.**

SPR/282/2016	Correspondence from the Department for Communities Regeneration Bill	Council to write to the Minister for Communities asking him to reconsider the decision not to progress the Regeneration Bill.	L Hannaway	To be completed once a Minister for Communities is in place.	To discuss at SP&R 11 June 2020 (see letter appended)
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**ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2018 – ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.**

SPR/149/2018	Presentation from Department for Communities	It was agreed that officers would draw up a policy statement on submission of proposals to the Department and this to be brought back to a future Committee Meeting for Members' consideration.	F O'Connor	Following the meeting clarification was requested from DFI on any proposed changes to Departmental policy in this area. A response was received from DFI on 04/01/19 indicating that "The Department is currently considering the matter of the review of the disposal of council lands policy."	Y Verbal update to be provided
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**ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2019**

SPR/125/2019	Disposal of Surplus Assets	<p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve the open market sale on the following assets – NIM167 - Derryleckagh Playing Fields, NIM123-Kilkeel Town Hall and DDC068-Meadowlands Recreation Area.</li> </ul>	C Mallon	<p>Consider expressions of interest from Rugby Club for Derryleckagh Playing Fields</p> <p>Kilkeel Town Hall - Allow 4 weeks for expressions of interest from the community</p>	Y Verbal update to be provided
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**ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 12 MARCH 2020**

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
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**ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

SPR/37/2020	COVID 19 – Update Council Action & Contingency Plans – Verbal Update	<p>It was agreed to note the detailed update provided by the Chief Executive in relation to Councils Emergency Planning Procedures, including procedures for calling emergency meetings of Council as necessary to ensure Council remains proactive to development in this area.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Council would continue to communicate regularly and proactively respond to guidance from PHA as it develops.</p>	M Ward	Noted	Y
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**On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew, seconded by Councillor Burgess, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session**

SPR/38/2020	Action Sheet of SPR Meeting held on 12 February 2020.	It was agreed that the Action Sheet be noted and actions removed as Marked	D Services	Noted	Y
Y					
SPR/39/2020	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2020 - 2023	It was agreed to consider the draft Newry, Mourne And Down District Council Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023.	R Mackin	Noted	Y
SPR/40/2020	Draft Performance and Improvement Objectives 2020-21	The following was agreed; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft performance improvement objectives 2020-21, as outlined in Appendix 1.</li> <li>The proposed approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21, by 30 June 2020, including authorisation to proceed with an eight week public consultation programme between 18 March – 13 May 2020, as outlined in Appendix 2.</li> </ul>	K Bingham	Agreed The public consultation process was limited to an online survey in response to the pandemic	Y
SPR/41/2020	Section 75 statutory duties compliance: Revised Equality Scheme – Five year review of Council's Equality Scheme	It was agreed to approve Council's revised Equality Scheme, and that further to approval, the Equality Commission.	R Mackin	Approved	Y
SPR/42/2020	Health and Safety Compliance Policies	It was agreed to approve the content of the report.	D Carville	Noted	Y
SPR/43/2020	Managing Attendance Policy	It was agreed to approve the recommended policy to be adopted by Council for implementation.	C Miskelly	Approved	Y



SPR/44/2020	The National Association of Councillors – Annual Payment	It was agreed to note the contents of the report and approve Council's annual subscription to the National Association of Councillors.	M Ward /Democratic Services	Noted	Y
SPR/45/2020	Updated Policy on Arrangements for Books of Condolence	It was agreed to add Newry Leisure Centre as per the officer's report and it was further agreed to add Downpatrick Leisure Centre as an additional location for books of Condolence.	M Ward /Democratic Services	Noted	Y
SPR/45/2020	Updated SRA Allowance	It was agreed to note the report on updated SRA Allowance.	D Carville	Noted	Y

**ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

SPR/47/2020	Castlewellan Forest Park	It was agreed that Council select option 1b as detailed in the officer's report as the preferred business model of Castlewellan Forest Park.	C Mallon	Noted	Y
SPR/48/2020	Appointment of Director: Economy, Regeneration and Tourism	It was agreed that Members note the contents of the report and agree to proceed with the recruitment of a Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism and nominate three elected members, being the Chairperson of Council and two other elected members in the Shortlisting & Interview Panel for the recruitment process.	C Miskelly	Noted	Y
SPR/49/2020	Terms and Conditions (non-pay)	It was agreed to approve the Terms and Conditions as detailed in appendix 1 for implementation with effect from 1 April 2020.	C Miskelly	Noted	Y

SPR/50/2020	Albert Basin Task and Finish Action Sheet dated 20 February 2020.	On a point of accuracy Councillor Savage advised He had been in attendance at the meeting which had not been recorded.  It was agreed to note the Albert Basin Task and Finish Action Sheet dated 20 February 2020.	D Carville	Noted	Y
SPR/51/2020	Reimbursement of payments made by NMMDC in settlement of legacy Planning complaints to the NI Public Service Ombudsman	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	A Robb	Noted	Y

END



**Regional Development Office  
Business Support Unit  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Lighthouse Building  
1 Cromac Place  
Gasworks Business Park  
Ormeau Road  
Belfast  
BT7 2JB**

Mr Liam Hannaway  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down Council  
District Council Offices  
O'Hagan House  
Monaghan Row  
Newry  
BT35 8DJ

Dear Mr Hannaway,

22 November 2016

The Minister for Communities has written to the Lord Mayors, Mayors and Chairpersons of Councils to advise of his decision not to progress the Regeneration Bill in this mandate. This was announced by way of an oral statement to the Assembly on 22 November. The Minister also announced reviews of the Department's current strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and of the population thresholds for physical regeneration programmes.

As you will be aware the powers to regenerate towns and cities across Northern Ireland currently sit with the Department for Communities. However, through the Reform of Local Government, it had been agreed that these would be extended to the new Councils but this was unable to progress within the mandate of the previous Assembly.

In the intervening period new Central Government Department's have been established with a broader range of functions and a new approach to the Programme for Government has been adopted by the NI Executive.

The Minister believes that the Programme for Government sets out an entirely new context for the delivery of our services, including the way in which we address poverty and disadvantage, and the way that we use our statutory powers to drive economic growth and lever new investment to benefit everybody in this society. The key message from the Executive is that we all, whether in central government, local government or outside of government, must ensure we work in a joined-up way, across departmental, organisational and sectoral boundaries, and that we must use all our resources and skills to deliver lasting change.

It is the Minister's assessment therefore, that the new context calls for a new direction of travel with the Department at the forefront of that change, using all of the powers and resources at its disposal to achieve the outcomes and the ambition the Executive has for our society as set out in the Programme for Government. The Minister has stated that this is not the time to tinker with who is responsible for what, or to concern ourselves with

the splitting up of the regeneration budget. Rather it is the time for all the stakeholders to work together to maximise our joint effect and achieve positive change.

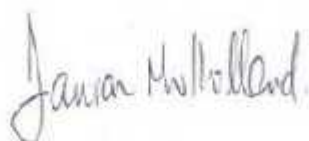
The Minister wants to see both central and local government, operating within our respective existing legislative, community planning and resource frameworks, working with other stakeholders whether in the community, or private sectors, to maximise the impact that we can make together.

The Minister's announcement also indicates that the Department will be reviewing the current strategies for tackling deprivation, including Neighbourhood Renewal, with a view to replacing them with a programme that will be more closely aligned to support the delivery of the new Programme for Government outcomes.

In addition the Minister wants to explore whether there is a case for extending our regeneration activities to settlements of less than 5,000 people. There are many small settlements which serve the same role in the community as larger places but which, because of our current policy to restrict access to town centre regeneration funding to towns with populations above 5,000, do not directly benefit from the investment in the enhancement of public and shared space available to their larger neighbours.

In closing the Minister expresses his hope that the excellent arrangements and relationships that have been built up between the councils and the Department will continue as we work together on delivering these key services for the citizens of Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,



**Damian Mulholland**  
**Director**  
**Regional Development Office**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy & Resources (SP&R)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Replacement of Councillor Harte on Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Michael Lipsett, Director: Active Health and Communities
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Paul Tamati, Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport

		For decision	X	For noting only	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose</b>				
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To consider replacement of Councillor Valerie on the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group.</li> </ul>				
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Background</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillor Harte had indicated at a meeting held on that she could no longer sit on the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group due to her conflict of interest from sitting on the Planning committee.</li> <li>Councillor Casey had asked if Councillor Harte could be replaced by another Councillor from her party. It was agreed to refer this decision to Strategy Policy and Resources for consideration.</li> </ul>				
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>				
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All appointments to the Working Group must be made by the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee</li> <li>Section 2 of the Terms of Reference attached at Appendix 1 states that Membership of the Working Group shall be as follows: Voting Members - All Newry DEA Councillors and a representative from the Unionist Grouping</li> </ul>				
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>That the Committee decide on the appointment of a replacement Councillor to sit on the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group.</b></li> </ul>				
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>				
4.1	None				
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>				
5.1	There are no anticipated equality and good relations arising from this specific report.				
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>				
	There are no rural proofing implications arising from this specific report.				

<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix 1: Terms of Reference for the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	None



## Albert Basin Park Task and Finish Group

### -TERMS OF REFERENCE-

#### Scope

- The Albert Basin Park Working Group ("the Working Group") shall be responsible for assisting the Council with the identification, as well as the development and delivery of a 15 acre Park for Newry City.
- The purpose of this Terms of Reference document is to set out the governance arrangements for the Working Group. The Terms of Reference may be reviewed by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee from time to time and amended accordingly.

#### 1. Role of the Working Group

- (i) Acting on behalf of the Council in the development of collaborative working relationships with external stakeholders in support of the delivery of the Park;
  - (ii) Performing the role of a Strategic Programme Vehicle (SPV) or Programme Board, defining the scope of the project providing political direction, guidance and support to project development and implementation;
  - (iii) Resolving strategic and directional issues within the project;
  - (iv) Ensuring the project is delivered within agreed boundaries (i.e. costs, timetable, organisational impact as well as benefits); and
  - (v) Monitoring project implementation as well as progress against programme and project plans.
- The Working Group shall **not** have any decision-making authority but shall make recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

#### 2. Membership

Membership of the Working Group shall be as follows:

##### Voting Members

- **All Newry DEA Councillors and a representative from the Unionist Grouping**

##### Consultees<sup>1</sup>

- **3 named representatives from Newry 2020**

##### Footnote

ToR Agreed at SRPC 12 September 2019 ratified by Council on 7 October 2019

<sup>1</sup>Substitutions can only be made with the approval of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee

- **1 named representative from Newry Chamber of Commerce**
- **1 named representative from Drumalane Community Centre**

The Stakeholder Forum exists as a body of consultees, any member of which can be invited by through the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee as and when required to attend the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group.

Any consultee on the Stakeholder Forum can apply through the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee to attend the Working Group if they believe they can contribute to an item on the agenda.

Requests from the Stakeholders Forum shall be considered by the Working Group and agreed by the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee.

The Strategy Policy and Resources Committee shall consider any request by other groups or local stakeholders to attend the Working Group as Consultees and may grant such request if deemed necessary.

### **3. Term**

The Working Group shall be established for a maximum of four (4) years. <sup>2</sup>

### **4. Meetings**

All meetings of the Working Group shall be governed by Standing Orders of Council, the Councils policy on Conflicts of Interest and the Code of Conduct for Members. Those members and Consultees who are not Councillors shall be provided with a copy of the Councils Policy of Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct and shall be asked to familiarise themselves with the content of those documents which set out the levels of conduct required of Members / Consultees of this Working Group. Each member and consultee shall be asked to sign to confirm receipt of the documents.

Meetings shall be held at 4.00 pm on the third Thursday of the following months:-

February, May, August and November

The Chairperson of the Newry DEA shall Chair the meetings. If the Chairperson is not present, the meetings shall be Chaired by the Vice Chair of the Newry DEA . If neither are available the Members present shall agree by consensus which of the Councillors present shall chair the meeting.

Council staff will provide secretarial, administrative and other support services.

### **5. Quorum**

The quorum for a meeting of the Working Group shall be 3 Elected Members.



## 6. Voting

The Working Group shall strive to agree all matters before it by reaching a consensus. In the absence of such consensus, any question shall be decided by a majority of the Elected Members of Council present and voting by a show of hands.

## 7. Officer Support

Primary officer support shall be provided by the Director of Active and Healthy Communities, who shall be the Senior Responsible Officer assigned to this Working Group

Additional support shall be provided by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and other relevant Officers.

## 8. Communication & Reporting<sup>1</sup>

The Action Sheet of the Group shall be reported for approval at the next available meeting of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee<sup>2</sup> and for those recommendations that have resource and/or policy implications, a separate report shall be sent via the relevant Council Officer.

## 9. Confidentiality

Although the nature of the implementation of the work of the Working Group is public, it has been agreed that some of the information exchanged in the context of this Work can be confidential. Only documents and other elements explicitly provided with the statement "confidential" shall be regarded as such. Where documents which are stated to be confidential are shared with Members, each Member undertakes to treat such documents in a confidential manner.

### Footnote

<sup>1</sup>ToR Agreed at SRPC 12 September 2019 ratified by Council on 7 October 2019

<sup>2</sup>Recommendations of the Working Group require ratification of the Strategy Policy and Resources and Full Council prior to any action being taken

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Dying to Work – Notice of Motion
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Catrina Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services: (HR & Safeguarding)
<b>Contact Officers (Including Job Title):</b>	Philip Preen, HR Policy & Projects Manager

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

	For decision	For noting only	x
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>		
1.1	<p>At the Council Meeting of 2 Mar 2020, the following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Byrne:</p> <p><i>This Council believes that;</i></p> <p>Every employee, facing the trauma of a terminal illness diagnosis, should be treated with compassion and understanding in order to assist them at such a distressing time. This Council resolves to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the TUC's Dying to Work campaign and sign up to its Charter outlining the principles in which terminally ill employees should be treated if they wish to continue to work.</li> <li>2. Ensure as an employer that our employees will be given the freedom to make an informed decision for themselves as to the best course of action for them and their families</li> <li>3. Ensure that all financial details, including death in service benefits, are fully explained so that any decision taken is an informed decision.</li> <li>4. Write the principles of the Charter into our procedures and train our staff accordingly</li> <li>5. Encourage employers throughout our city/town/borough/district/county to sign up to the Charter.</li> </ol>		
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>		
2.1	Members may recall that at the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee of 12 March 2020, the Managing Attendance Policy for employees was approved for adoption by Council.		
2.2	Among the aims of the Managing Attendance Policy is that employees are treated fairly, sympathetically and with dignity . This is enabled through the Managing Attendance Procedure. Both the Policy and the Procedure were agreed between Management and the recognised Trade Unions at the Local Consultative Negotiating Forum on 9 March 2020.		
2.3	Within the Council's Managing Attendance Procedure, there is a dedicated section which deals specifically with circumstances where an employee is diagnosed with a terminal illness and refers employees and managers to the Critical Illness Guide; which itself also extends to support employees who are carers or family members of someone who has a critical illness. The Guide is a document to support discussions and to ensure employees are aware of the range of support mechanisms available to them.		

2.4	The Council's 'Critical Illness and Work Guide for Employees and Managers' both supports and goes beyond the principles of the TUC Dying to Work Charter. A comparison of the key provisions is contained in the appendix to this report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	That members note the content of this report and appendix provided.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
4.1	None arising from this Notice of Motion
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
5.1	None arising from this Notice of Motion
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>
6.1	None arising from this Notice of Motion
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
7.1	Matrix setting out how the key provisions within the Council's 'Critical Illness and Work Guide' against the principles of the TUC Dying to Work Charter.
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	None

## Comparison of TUC Dying to Work Charter with Council's Critical Illness Work Guide

TUC Charter Statement	NMDDC Critical Illness Guide	Section No	Section Title
1 This charter sets out an agreed way in which our employees will be supported, protected and guided throughout their employment, following a terminal diagnosis.	The guide sets out the help, support and sources of information for employees diagnosed with a critical illness. The guide also supports employees whose parent, spouse, partner or child is diagnosed with a critical illness.	1 & 2	Introduction & Underlying Principles
2 We recognise that terminal illness requires support and understanding and not additional and avoidable stress and worry.	Whilst every case is unique the guide provides a process for managers and employees to discuss a diagnosis, what, if anything to tell colleagues, customers and contacts about their illness. It sets out the Council's efforts to support colleagues who wish to work through treatment, how their absence will be managed, reintegration back into the work place following treatment and also advice from Occupational Health of BHSE.	3 & 4	On Diagnosis of a Critical Illness & Discussing your Diagnosis
3 Terminally ill workers will be secure in the knowledge that we will support them following their diagnosis and we recognise that, safe and reasonable work can help maintain dignity, offer a valuable distraction and can be therapeutic in itself.	The guide provides advice and information to employees who wish to continue working about work place flexibility, light duties, working from home and about seeking help with work from colleagues. Changes to working hours and increased rest breaks are also provided for.	5, 6 & 7	Working During Treatment, Time off for Treatment & Returning to Work after Treatment
4 We will provide our employees with the security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for themselves and their families which helps them through this challenging period with dignity and without undue financial loss.	At every stage of supporting an employee with a critical illness the information contained within the guide provides the employee with a range of options to help with their decision making. The guide provides direction in relation to returning to work after treatment or deciding to stop work and reassess their lives and future priorities.	5, 6 & 7	Working During Treatment, Time off for Treatment & Returning to Work after Treatment

Comparison of TUC Dying to Work Charter with Council's Critical Illness Work Guide

TUC Charter Statement	NMDDC Critical Illness Guide	Section No	Section Title
<p>5</p> <p>We support the TUC's Dying to Work campaign so that all employees battling terminal illness have adequate employment protection and have their death in service benefits protected for the loved ones they leave behind.</p>	<p>Decisions relating to ill health retirement and death in service benefits are complex and should not be taken without seeking appropriate financial advice. In some circumstances a commuted incapacity pension may be more advantageous to an employee than a death in service benefit. An employee in this situation will be supported in making the right decision in light of their own circumstances.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Deciding to Stop Work</p>

16.1 of the Council's Managing Attendance Procedure deals specifically with circumstances where an employee is diagnosed with a terminal illness and refers people to the Critical Illness Guide which itself also extends to support employees who are carers or family members of someone who has a critical illness. The Guide is a document to support discussions and to ensure employees are aware of the range of support mechanisms available to them. It also deals with the sometimes overlooked areas of death in service or commuted pension benefit and provides advice in relation to time off and flexible working to enable employees to support their family member during their critical illness (sections 10-15).

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11th June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	DAERA Report on the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

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

<b>For decision</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>For noting only</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p>The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. DAERA recently established a working group to review of the implementation of the Act.</p> <p>The main purpose of the review was to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) evaluate the effectiveness of the support measures put in place by DAERA to assist public authorities with implementing the Act; and,</li> <li>2) review the monitoring and reporting arrangements with a view to identify any potential improvements that could be made.</li> </ol>
1.2	<p>Suzanne Rice, Council's Corporate Policy and Equality Officer was invited to be a member of DAERA's working group, alongside representatives from the Department for Infrastructure, Department of Finance, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Education Authority, Housing Executive, South Eastern and Social Care Trust, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) and Rural Community Network.</p> <p>In addition to the working group, a questionnaire was also circulated to other public authorities and rural stakeholders providing them with the opportunity to forward comments on the implementation of the Act.</p> <p>The first meeting of the working group was held in September 2019 and the review was completed in February 2020. Based on the findings of the review and recommendations of the working group, a report titled '<i>Review on the Review of the Implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016</i>' was produced.</p> <p>On 28 May 2020, DAERA forwarded email correspondence and the review report to all public authorities encouraging them to take the necessary steps to implement the recommendations applicable to them.</p>

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<p>The findings detailed within the report have been informed by the evidence available which included input from the working group members, and consideration of responses to the questionnaire which was issued to all public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act, responses to the questionnaire issued to Rural Stakeholders, an assessment of the sample of published Rural Needs Impact Assessment Templates and a review of the returns submitted by public authorities for the previous two reporting years.</p> <p>The report sets out 25 recommendations and identifies the relevant authority recommended to implement each of them.</p> <p>A breakdown of the recommendations is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 recommendations – to be implemented by DAERA;</li> <li>• 6 recommendations – to be implement by all Public Authorities;</li> <li>• 1 recommendation – to be implemented by AFBI.</li> </ul> <p>The specific recommendations highlighted for Public Authorities (Council) to implement are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) It is recommended that public authorities host regular workshops for decision makers within their organisation (subject to need) for the purposes of increasing awareness and understanding of the duties on public authorities under the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</li> <li>2) It is recommended that public authorities review the resources allocated to supporting the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 with a view to ensuring that Rural Needs Coordinators have access to the resources necessary to undertake their role effectively.</li> <li>3) It is recommended that public authorities take steps to seek to embed the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 in their organisation, for example, by incorporating compliance with the Act in their Assurance Statements, Submission Templates and Audit and Risk Procedures.</li> <li>4) It is recommended that public authorities seek to develop effective relationships with rural community organisations, and, where appropriate, to seek to engage with the rural community sector in a meaningful and timely manner as part of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment being undertaken in respect of Section 1 activities.</li> <li>5) It is recommended that public authorities be open to adopting new and innovative approaches with engaging with the rural community sector when seeking to gather information on rural needs including taking measures to engage with people in rural areas who may not normally participate in public consultations or stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>6) It is recommended that public authorities publish their RNTA Templates on their website on a single webpage and the annual monitoring report include a link to each public authority's webpage.</li> </ol>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	It is proposed that Council welcome the report and actively progress the implementation of the recommendations detailed in the report for public authorities.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	There are no additional resource implications required for Council to undertake the implementation of the recommendations.

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
5.1	Appropriate and relevant training, consultation and engagement and evidence-based decision-making are key principles of Council's Equality Scheme and it is anticipated the recommendations will have a positive impact.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>
6.1	It is anticipated that the implementation of the recommendations listed for public authorities will further assist Council in continuing to meet its rural needs statutory duty obligation to have due regard to rural needs.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: Memo dated 28 May 2020 from Paul Donnelly, Director of Rural Affairs, DAERA Appendix II: Report on the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 [January 2020]
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016



**FROM: PAUL DONNELLY**

**DATE: 28 MAY 2020**

**TO: ALL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES**

## **REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RURAL NEEDS ACT (NI) 2016**

As the Department with responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (the Act), DAERA recently established a Working Group to undertake a review of the implementation of the Act. The main purpose of the review was to evaluate the effectiveness of the support measures put in place by DAERA to assist public authorities with implementing the Act and to review the monitoring and reporting arrangements with a view to identifying any potential improvements that could be made.

The Working Group has now completed its work and has reported back to DAERA. I am therefore pleased to provide you with a copy of the *Report on the Review of the Implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016* which the Working Group has produced. The report sets out the findings from the review as well as the recommendations made by the Working Group. While the majority of the recommendations are for DAERA, a small number of recommendations apply to all public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act and one recommendation applies to the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI). A list of the recommendations can be found at Appendix 1 of the report.

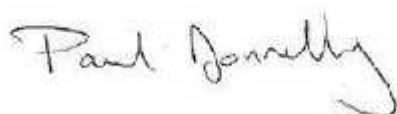
DAERA has now accepted all of the recommendations that are applicable to it and has developed an Implementation Schedule to manage implementation. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to encourage other public authorities to take the necessary steps to implement those recommendations which are applicable to them. I recognise that these are unprecedented times due to the Covid-19 pandemic and understand that all public authorities are facing unique pressures. However, I believe that by implementing all of the recommendations contained in the report we will help ensure ***Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.***

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.

that the rural needs legislation is implemented effectively and this will help deliver better outcomes for rural dwellers.

Finally, I would like to thank those public authorities who participated on the Working Group (Department for Infrastructure, Department of Finance, Housing Executive, Education Authority, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust and AFBI) and to acknowledge the valuable contributions that they made to the project. I would also like to thank those public authorities who provided information to help inform the review through the completion of the rural needs questionnaire.

Yours sincerely



**PAUL DONNELLY**  
Director of Rural Affairs

**Sustainability** at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.



# **Report on the Review of the Implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016**

January 2020



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 1 - Introduction and Background</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section 2 - Methodology</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Section 3 - Measures to support the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Section 4 - Findings from the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Section 5 - Recommendations in relation to overcoming the barriers to the effective implementation of the due regard duty</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Section 6 - Recommendations in relation to the measures put in place to support public authorities</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Section 7 - Recommendations in relation to research and information gathering</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Section 8 - Recommendations in relation to the monitoring and reporting arrangements</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Section 9 - Recommendations in relation to the co-operation arrangements</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Section 10 - Recommendations in relation to the review of the list of bodies and persons set out in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1 - List of Recommendations	<b>58</b>
Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference (Objectives)	<b>64</b>
Appendix 3 – Questionnaires	<b>66</b>
Appendix 4 – Glossary of Terms	<b>74</b>

## Foreword by the Chairperson

I am pleased to present this report on the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 which was undertaken by the Rural Needs Working Group during the period October to December 2019.

The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 is a key rural policy tool for DAERA in seeking to ensure that the needs of people in rural areas are routinely considered by public authorities when carrying out their functions and is one of a suite of rural policy initiatives led by DAERA designed to help deliver better outcomes for rural dwellers.

DAERA recognises that the needs of people in rural areas can be different to those in urban areas and that the impact of a policy can have a different impact on people in rural areas due to the different circumstances pertaining to rural areas. It also recognises that rural areas are not homogeneous and that a one size fits all approach by government is not always appropriate. It is important therefore that public authorities are open to considering different approaches and tailored solutions in respect of rural areas in order to deliver more equitable outcomes for rural dwellers.

The purpose of the review was to look at how the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 was being implemented by public authorities and to consider what further support measures might be introduced to help public authorities comply with the legislation. It is recognised that the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 has only been in place a short time and therefore the focus of the review was on the implementation of the legislation by public authorities and the support provided by DAERA rather than on the policy outcomes and the impacts on public services resulting from the legislation.

The review carried out by the working group is an important step in the implementation of the Act and I believe that the acceptance of the recommendations made by the working group will help ensure that the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 is implemented more consistently and effectively by public authorities going forward.

The review was an intensive piece of work which required considerable dedication in order to deliver the objectives set out in the Terms of Reference and I am pleased that this report has been delivered within the required deadline.

I would like to thank all those who participated in the working group for the creativity and experience which they brought to the project. I am also grateful for the commitment and enthusiasm which they demonstrated in taking forward the work and for the constructive and convivial atmosphere in which the meetings were conducted. There was a clear willingness on the part of the public authority

representatives on the working group to seek to ensure that the legislation was implemented effectively within their organisation and a clear commitment from all members of the working group for DAERA, other public authorities and rural stakeholders to work together to help deliver better outcomes for rural dwellers.

The report contains a total of 25 recommendations covering all sections of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and while the majority relate specifically to DAERA there are a number which relate to other public authorities. I believe that the recommendations can make a positive difference to how the legislation is implemented and I hope that they will be accepted.

## **CHAIR OF THE RURAL NEEDS WORKING GROUP**

## Executive Summary

The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 places a statutory duty on Northern Ireland departments, district councils and certain other public authorities in Northern Ireland to have due regard to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas in the development, implementation, revision and adoption of policies, strategies and plans and in the design and delivery of public services. The Act came into operation for departments and councils in June 2017 and for the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act in June 2018.

In September 2019 DAERA established a working group to undertake a review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for the purposes of assessing how the legislation was being implemented by public authorities to date and identifying what further support measures might be introduced to help public authorities comply with the legislation. The Terms of Reference for the review set seven specific objectives for the working group to address as part of the review. In undertaking the review the working group collected evidence from a wide range of public authorities and rural stakeholders in order to ensure that the recommendations resulting from the review were evidence based.

The review found that there continues to be a lack of awareness among some decision makers of the need to comply with the due regard duty and a lack of understanding of among some decision makers as to what a public authority is required to do specifically in order to fulfil the due regard duty. It also found that lack of access to the information necessary to inform decision makers of the needs of people in rural areas was a key barrier to implementing the due regard duty. The review also found that not all decision makers were complying with the guidance on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 in relation to the carrying out of Rural Needs Impact Assessments and that there was evidence that the completion of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template was sometimes being viewed as a 'tick box' exercise;

In seeking to address the findings from the review the working group has made 25 recommendations covering all aspects of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. These include recommendations on increasing awareness of the legislation, new measures to help public authorities comply with the legislation, improving the monitoring and reporting procedures, improving access to statistical information and new measures to facilitate better co-operation between public authorities. A full list of the recommendations is provided at Appendix 1 of the report.



# Section 1

## Introduction and Background

## Introduction

- 1.1. The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (the Act) places a statutory duty on departments, district councils and certain other public authorities in Northern Ireland to have due regard to rural needs in the development, implementation, revision and adoption of policies, strategies and plans and in the design and delivery of public services (section 1 activities).
- 1.2. The Act came into operation for departments and district councils in June 2017 and for the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act in June 2018. While departments in Northern Ireland had previously been signed up to the Northern Ireland Executive's policy on rural proofing, the introduction of the Act meant that for the first time in Northern Ireland the consideration of the needs of people in rural areas had been placed on a statutory footing.
- 1.3. In July 2019 DAERA took a decision to undertake a review of the implementation of the Act with a view to determining how the legislation was being implemented by public authorities and to identifying any further measures that might to be taken to help public authorities comply with the requirements of the legislation. By this stage the Act had been in operation for 2 years for departments and district councils and for 1 year for the other public authorities. As the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 had only been in place for a short time, the review focussed on how the legislation was being implemented by public authorities and on the support measures provided by DAERA rather than on the policy and delivery outcomes resulting from the legislation.
- 1.4. The Department subsequently established a Rural Needs Working group to undertake the review which was made up of representatives from DAERA, other departments, local councils, other public authorities, academia and rural stakeholder organisations. This report sets out the findings from the review and the recommendations made by the working group.

## Background to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

### Rural Proofing

- 1.5. The Northern Ireland Executive first made a commitment to rural proofing in 2002 with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) being the department with responsibility for rural proofing in Northern Ireland. The NI Executive's policy on rural proofing only applied to government departments in

Northern Ireland and did not extend to other public authorities although some public authorities did adopt rural proofing voluntarily during this period.

- 1.6. In 2009 DARD brought forward proposals to the NI Executive to reinvigorate rural proofing which resulted in the introduction of rural proofing training and the publishing of revised guidance 'Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing' in 2011. However despite this reinvigoration of rural proofing concerns continued to be raised around the implementation of rural proofing by Departments, particularly around how effectively rural proofing was being implemented by Departments and what was perceived as a lack of transparency on how rural proofing was being implemented across Departments.

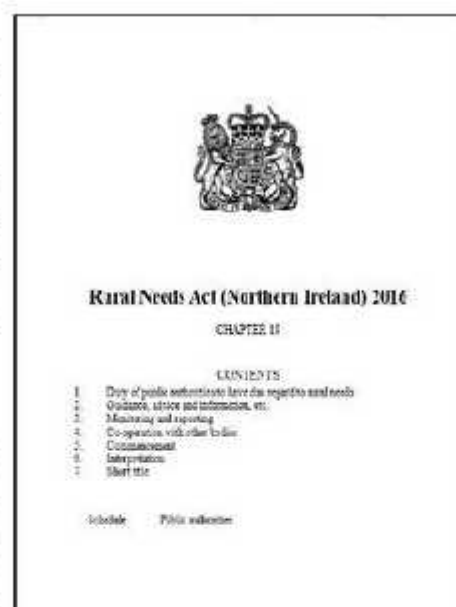
### Rural Needs Bill

- 1.7. In 2015 proposals were brought forward for a Rural Needs Bill which aimed to ensure that public authorities consider the needs of people in rural areas when undertaking certain activities and to provide greater transparency on how public authorities consider rural needs in respect of these activities. The Rural Needs Bill received Royal Assent in May 2016 and became the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

### Rural Needs Act

- 1.8. The aim of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 is to improve outcomes for rural dwellers by ensuring that the social and economic needs of people in rural areas are given due regard to by public authorities in their decision making processes and to increase transparency on how public authorities consider rural needs when undertaking their functions.

- 1.9. The Act places a duty on departments, local councils and the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act to have due regard to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas in the development, implementation, revision and adoption of policies, strategies and plans and in the design and delivery of public services. The Act came into operation for departments and district councils in June 2017 and for the other public authorities in June 2018.



1.10. The Act also requires public authorities to compile information on how they have exercised the due regard duty and to send that information to DAERA and for DAERA to publish the information sent to it in an annual report and to lay the report before the Assembly. DAERA published the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report on its website in December 2019.

1.11. The policy implemented by the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 differs from the Executive's previous policy on rural proofing in that the Act imposes a **statutory** obligation on public authorities to have due regard to rural needs rather than the **non-statutory** commitment to rural proof which departments were previously signed up to. The scope of the Act is also wider than the scope of the previous policy on rural proofing in that it applies to **policies, strategies, plans** and **public services** rather than just policies and strategies; it also applies to **district councils** and **certain other public authorities** rather than just government departments. The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 effectively superseded the Executive's previous policy on rural proofing and therefore DAERA no longer uses the term 'rural proofing'.

Rural Needs Act - Timeline of Events	
March 2016	Rural Needs Bill receives Royal Assent
April 2017	Roll out of Awareness Training to Public Authorities commences
June 2017	RNA comes into operation for Departments and Councils (Phase 1)
June 2017	Guidance on RNA published
January 2018	Review of Phase 1 Implementation
April 2018	Revised Guidance on RNA published
June 2018	RNA comes into operation for other Public Authorities (Phase 2)
December 2018	1 <sup>st</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report Published
September 2019	Working Group established to undertake review of the implementation of the RNA
December 2019	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report Published
February 2020	Report on Review of the Implementation of the RNA submitted

## Background to the Review

1.12. DAERA took a decision to undertake a review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 in June 2019, two years after the Act first came into operation for departments and district councils and one year after it came into operation for the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act. The main purpose of the review was look at how the legislation was being implemented by public authorities and to identify any further measures that might be taken to help public authorities comply with the requirements of the legislation.

- 1.13. The review also provided an opportunity to evaluate the support measures which DAERA had put in place to assist public authorities implement the Act and to evaluate the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting arrangements which DAERA had put in place with a view to identify any improvements that could be made. It also provided the first formal opportunity for public authorities to provide feedback to DAERA on their experiences of implementing the legislation and to highlight any issues of concern and for rural stakeholders to provide their perspective on the implementation of the legislation particularly in relation to the issues such as stakeholder engagement and transparency.

## Terms of Reference for the Review

- 1.14. Terms of Reference for the review were drawn up by DAERA which incorporated seven specific objectives. These objectives included undertaking reviews of the implementation of section 1(1) of the Act and of the monitoring and reporting arrangements and making recommendations. Details of these objectives are set out at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 1.15. The Terms of Reference required the working group to provide a written report to DAERA's Director of Rural Affairs by 14th February 2020 setting out the findings arising from the review, the barriers and potential barriers to the effective implementation of section 1(1) of the Act and the recommendations put forward by the working group.
- 1.16. The Terms of Reference also committed the working group to adopting an evidence based approach to the review and to engaging widely with interested parties.

## Roles and Responsibilities of DAERA

- 1.17. DAERA is the department in Northern Ireland with responsibility for rural affairs. As part of its rural affairs the department leads on a range of rural policy initiatives aimed at delivering better outcomes for rural communities including the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016, the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-20, the Rural White Paper Action Plan and the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework.

- 1.18. As the Department with responsibility for the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016, DAERA provides support to other public authorities to help them comply with the requirements of the legislation including the provision of advice, guidance and information, the delivery of training and the hosting of co-operation events. Full details of the support measures provided by DAERA are set out in Section 3 of this report.
- 1.19. While DAERA provides support to public authorities, responsibility for complying with their statutory duties under the Act lies with individual public authorities and DAERA has no role in enforcing the legislation.
- 1.20. DAERA also has responsibility under the legislation for publishing an annual report containing information compiled by public authorities on how they have exercised the due regard duty and to lay this report before the Assembly. DAERA published its 2<sup>nd</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report on its website in December 2019.
- 1.21. In addition DAERA also has a duty to make arrangements with public authorities with a view to securing co-operation and the exchange of information and to review the list of public authorities to which the Act applies at least every 3 years. DAERA also has powers to provide advice, guidance and information on rural needs and to undertake, commission or support (by financial means or otherwise) research into any matter relating to rural needs.

## **Section 2**

### Methodology

## Introduction

2.1. The review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 was undertaken by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs during the period September 2019 - January 2020. The key stages in the review are set out below.

## Establishment of Working Group

2.2. In September 2019 DAERA established a Rural Needs Working Group to undertake the review. The working group consisted of representatives of DAERA, other departments, district councils, academia, rural stakeholder organisations and the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. The membership of the working group was as follows:

<b>Rural Needs Working Group Membership</b>		
<b>Newry Mourne &amp; Down District Council</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Housing Executive</b>	<b>Department of Finance</b>
<b>Education Authority</b>	<b>Department for Infrastructure</b>	<b>Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute</b>
<b>Rural Action</b>	<b>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council</b>	<b>Rural Community Network</b>
<b>Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</b>		<b>South Eastern Health &amp; Social Care Trust</b>

2.3. Terms of Reference for the working group were drawn up by DAERA which set the working group seven specific objectives including undertaking a review of the implementation of section 1(1) of the Act and undertaking a review of the monitoring and reporting arrangements. Details of the objectives for the review are set out in Appendix 2 of this report.

2.4. The working group met four times as part of the formal review process while a number of informal meetings between DAERA and individual working group members also took place. The working group also operated as a pilot group for the piloting of a new training course on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 which has



been developed by DAERA and aims to support rural needs co-ordinators in public authorities.

## Gathering of Information

2.5. The working group gathered information to inform the review from a range of sources including the following.

- A questionnaire for public authorities (Appendix 3) which was issued to all departments, councils and other public authorities listed in the schedule to the Act. A total of 16 responses were received equating to a return rate of approximately 42%.
- A questionnaire for rural stakeholders (Appendix 3) which was issued to over 200 rural stakeholder organisations represented by the Rural Community Network with a total of 47 responses received.
- A sample of 11 Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) templates that had been published on line. The sample of RNIA templates included templates completed by departments, district councils and other public authorities.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report published in December 2018 and the returns submitted by public authorities in respect of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report which was subsequently published in December 2019.

Timeline for the Review
September 2019 – Working Group established to undertake the Review
September 2019 – Questionnaire issued to Public Authorities
October 2019 – 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of Working Group
October 2019 – Questionnaire issued to Rural Stakeholders
October 2019 – Draft Findings Paper issued
November 2019 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Working Group
November 2019 – Draft Recommendations Paper 1 issued (Objectives 2, 3 & 5)
November 2019 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Working Group
November 2019 – Rural Needs Act - Training for Rural Needs Co-ordinators Pilot
November 2019 – Draft Recommendations Paper 2 issued (Objectives 4, 6 & 7)
December 2019 – 4 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of Working Group
January 2020 – Draft Report on Review issued to Working Group Members
January 2020 – Draft Report on Review formally agreed by Working Group Members

- Oral evidence taken from members at the first meeting of the Working Group on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019.

## Analysis of Information

2.6. The information gathered was collated and presented to the working group in the form of a paper titled "*Evidence used to inform the Review of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016*". This paper incorporated:

- The results of the questionnaire Issued to Public Authorities
- The results of the questionnaire Issued to Rural Stakeholders
- Links to the sample of 11 Rural Needs Impact Assessment Templates
- A link to the 1st Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report
- A copy of the questionnaire issued to Public Authorities
- A copy of the questionnaire issued to Rural Stakeholders
- A summary of the evidence provided by working group members at the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the working group.

2.7. An analysis of the evidence was undertaken by a sub group of the working group and included assessments of the sample of RNIA Templates and of the monitoring information submitted in respect of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Reports and reviews of the implementation of the due regard duty and of the monitoring and reporting arrangements.

2.8. The outcome of the work of the sub-group was presented to members of the working group in the form of a paper titled "*Draft Findings from the Review of the Implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016*". This paper incorporated the findings from both the review of the implementation of section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and the review of the monitoring and reporting arrangements as required under the Terms of Reference.

2.9. The draft findings paper was discussed and agreed by the working group at its 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and provided the evidence to inform the development of the working group's subsequent recommendations.

2.10. The findings from the review are set out in Section 4 of this report.

## **Section 3**

Measures to support the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

## Introduction

3.1. As the department with responsibility for the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016, DAERA put in place a range of measures to help public authorities prepare for the commencement of the legislation and to support public authorities in implementing the legislation after it came into operation. A summary of these measures is set out below.

### ***Guidance on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016***

3.2. DAERA published revised guidance on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 in April 2018 - *A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) for Public Authorities (Revised)*. The guidance is designed to help public authorities understand their duties under the Act and to help ensure they fulfil their obligations under the legislation.

3.3. The guidance recommends the undertaking of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment in respect of those activities which fall within the scope of section 1(1) of the Act.

3.4. This revised guidance replaced previous guidance issued by DAERA in May 2017.



### ***Guidance on completing the 'Appendix 2 Template'***

3.5. DAERA issued guidance in April 2019 to assist public authorities with completing the 'Template for Compiling Information' provided at Appendix 2 of the guidance. The purpose of this guidance is to help improve the quality and consistency of the information submitted by public authorities for inclusion in the annual monitoring report and to help ensure that the information submitted is meaningful and relevant.

### ***Awareness Training for Public Authorities***

3.6. DAERA arranged for awareness training to be provided for all public authorities prior to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 coming into operation which provided a broad overview of the legislation and of the implications that it would have for public authorities.

### ***Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template***

3.7. DAERA included a new RNIA Template as part of its revised guidance document published in April 2018. This new RNIA Template is designed to record the steps taken by public authorities in carrying out a Rural Needs Impact Assessment and provides evidence to help demonstrate that the due regard duty has been complied with.

### ***Information on the DAERA Website***

3.8. DAERA provides information on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 on the Rural Needs section of the DAERA website. This includes copies of the guidance, templates, annual monitoring reports and other useful information relating to rural needs.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/rural-development/rural-needs>

### ***E-learning Package***

3.9. As part of its preparations for the legislation coming into operation DAERA developed an on line training package for public authorities which provided a broad overview of the implications of the legislation for public authorities.

### ***General Advice and Support***

3.10. DAERA's Sustainable Rural Communities Branch provides advice and guidance to public authorities on issues relating to rural needs. This includes advice on undertaking Rural Needs Impact Assessments and completing RNIA Templates. DAERA also provides support to rural needs co-ordinators in public authorities in relation to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

### ***Co-operation Events***

3.11. DAERA hosts an annual co-operation event for all public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act. The purpose of these events is to facilitate co-operation and the exchange of information between public authorities.

### ***Rural Needs Database***

3.12. DAERA has developed a Rural Needs Database to assist public authorities in compiling the information required for the annual monitoring report and to help ensure more accurate reporting. DAERA is currently piloting the database within

DAERA with a view to making the model available to other public authorities in 2020/21.

### ***Internal Measures***

3.13. DAERA has implemented a range of internal measures aimed at embedding the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 within the department. These include incorporating the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 within its audit and risk procedures and its submission templates.

### ***Rural Needs Training***

3.14. DAERA has developed a new intensive training course on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 aimed at providing Rural Needs Co-Ordinators with the knowledge and expertise necessary to enable them to provide effective support to their organisation. This training will be made available to Rural Needs Co-Ordinators from April 2020.

## Section 4

# Findings from the Review of the Implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

## Introduction

- 4.1 This section sets out the findings from the review of the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and incorporates the review of the implementation of section 1(1) of the Act and the review of the monitoring and reporting arrangements as required to be undertaken by the working group under its Terms of Reference. The review also looked at the support provided by DAERA to assist public authorities with implementing the legislation and at the steps taken by DAERA to secure co-operation and the exchange of information between public authorities.
- 4.2 The findings have been informed by the evidence available including input from working group members, the responses to a questionnaire issued to all public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act, the responses to a questionnaire issued to rural stakeholders, an assessment of a sample of published Rural Needs Impact Assessment Templates and a review of the returns made by public authorities in respect of the 1<sup>st</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report published by DAERA in December 2018 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report which was subsequently published by DAERA in December 2019.
- 4.3 These findings were used to inform the working group in its consideration of the issues set out in its Terms of Reference and provided the evidence for the recommendations made.

## Review of the Implementation of Section 1(1)

### Awareness of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

- 4.4 Most public authorities who responded to the questionnaire indicated that the level of awareness of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (the Act) within their organisation is medium or high, however a number indicated that awareness is still low.
- 4.5 There is therefore a need for DAERA to continue to work with public authorities in raising awareness of the Act and to recognise that awareness raising is not a one off event but rather requires an ongoing approach to take account of staff turnover etc. It is noted that the equality legislation has been in place in Northern Ireland for many years and that the Equality Commission continues to hold awareness raising sessions for public authorities. It is also recognised that levels



of awareness may vary within individual public authorities and therefore there is a need to ensure that awareness raising is appropriately targeted within organisations.

- 4.6 While DAERA has developed a range of measures aimed at raising awareness of the Act including the roll out of awareness training for all public authorities, the provision of guidance, access to e-learning and the hosting of co-operation events, there is an opportunity to do more in the way of 'on the ground' promotion activities such as workshops, poster campaigns etc.
- 4.7 The results of the rural stakeholder survey showed that awareness of the Act among rural stakeholders is not particularly high and therefore there is also scope for more to be done by rural stakeholder organisations to help raise awareness among rural stakeholders.

#### Rural Needs Impact Assessments

- 4.8 The guidance produced by DAERA recommends that public authorities undertake a Rural Needs Impact Assessment in respect of those activities which fall within the scope of section 1(1) of the Act (section 1 activities), namely the development, implementation, adoption and revisions of policies, strategies and plans and the design and delivery of public services. A Rural Needs Impact Assessment is a six step process designed to help ensure that public authorities fulfil the due regard duty.
- 4.9 Information submitted by public authorities for inclusion in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Monitoring Report indicates that public authorities are routinely completing (RNIA) Templates in respect of section 1 activities. However it is recognised that while the RNIA Template is designed to capture information relevant to each stage of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process, completion of an RNIA Template does not in itself equate to having undertaken a Rural Needs Impact Assessment nor does it equate to having fulfilled the due regard duty.
- 4.10 There is evidence from the review of RNIA Templates that in some cases the completion of the RNIA Template has taken place after the section 1 activity has been completed and that no Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been carried out. There is also evidence that some public authorities have not followed the guidance in some instances (it was reported that one official had enquired if they needed to read the guidance) and that in some cases the completion of the RNIA Template appeared to be treated as a form filling exercise rather than a means of documenting information relevant to the Rural Needs Impact Assessment (it was

reported that one official had enquired as to how quickly the template could be filled in).

- 4.11 Where public authorities do not follow the guidance and do not undertake a Rural Needs Impact Assessment, there is a risk that the due regard duty will not be fulfilled. There is therefore a need to remind public authorities of the importance of following the guidance and to encourage public authorities to ensure that an appropriate Rural Needs Impact Assessment is undertaken in respect of section 1 activities. There is also merit in raising awareness of the need to commence the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process as early as possible and to work through the process step by step.

#### *Difficulties experienced in undertaking a Rural Needs Impact Assessment*

- 4.12 Some public authorities reported having experienced no difficulties in undertaking Rural Needs Impact Assessments with one reporting that it was a “straight forward process”. However some public authorities have reported experiencing difficulties with the most common difficulty identified as being inability to access the appropriate statistical and other information necessary to inform decision making, including accessing data at local level and obtaining urban-rural statistical breakdowns.
- 4.13 Other difficulties identified by public authorities include not understanding the social and economic needs relevant to the section 1 activity, not knowing whether a Rural Needs Impact Assessment is required in respect of a particular activity (or at what point it was required) and what needs to be done differently to ensure that the due regard duty is fulfilled.
- 4.14 There is merit in looking at what more can be done to improve access to statistical and other information for public authorities and in making available good examples of Rural Needs Impact Assessments through the provision of case studies. There is also a need for public authorities to ensure that they are familiar with the guidance and to seek legal advice where appropriate.

#### *Action taken by public authorities to help ensure compliance with the due regard duty*

- 4.15 Public authorities have undertaken a range of internal measures to help ensure that the due regard duty is complied with including awareness raising, the provision of in-house training and the incorporation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 into their communications plans and briefing templates and as an agenda

item at senior management and board meetings. Some organisations have appointed rural needs co-ordinators or have dedicated internal rural units/representatives in place who provide direct support and advice on issues relating to rural needs.

4.16 In some public authorities rural need awareness has been integrated into their equality awareness sessions and into their equality documentation thereby ensuring that the two statutory duties are promoted jointly. Some public authorities have also established a database for compiling information on RNIA Templates to assist with the monitoring process and to help ensure more accurate reporting.

#### Main barriers to implementing the due regard duty

4.17 Public authorities have identified two main barriers to implementing the due regard duty, namely a lack of understanding/awareness in relation to what public authorities are required to do in order to fulfil the due regard duty and a lack of availability of statistical and other information/evidence to inform their decisions.

4.18 Other barriers identified include treating the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process as a tick box exercise and not considering the due regard duty until the section 1 activity is already well under way. Risk of adopting an inconsistent approach towards completing Rural Needs Impact Assessments was also highlighted as a particular issue. Some public authorities also reported that the absence of a 'screening out' process risked 'rural needs fatigue' due to decision makers having to invest significant time and resources completing RNIA Templates in respect of a considerable number of internal or technical policies which had no potential to impact on people in rural areas.

4.19 Lack of appropriate training and resource pressures were also highlighted as potential barriers to effectively implementing the due regard duty.

#### Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Templates

4.20 The RNIA Template is designed to capture information relevant to each stage of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process and helps to provide evidence that a public authority has fulfilled the due regard duty.

4.21 The new RNIA Template provided in the revised guidance was found to be much more user friendly than the previous RNIA Template provided in the previous

version of the guidance and has led to a reduction in requests to DAERA for help with completing the RNIA Template. One public authority stated that the revised RNIA Template “provided a useful step by step guide to aid public authorities through the [Rural Needs Impact Assessment] process”

- 4.22 The review of a sample of RNIA Templates found that completed RNIA Templates were of variable quality with some showing evidence of a detailed Rural Needs Impact Assessment having been carried out while others provided little evidence of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment having been undertaken.
- 4.23 Some Public Authorities have designed their own RNIA Template based on the DAERA RNIA Template while others have combined the DAERA RNIA Template with their Equality Screening Template. In some cases public authorities who combined the EQIA Template with the DAERA RNIA Template were found to be adopting a ‘screening out’ approach to the due regard duty although the rural needs legislation does not provide for the screening out of an activity. It is important that public authorities recognise that the duties under the equality legislation and the rural needs legislation are distinct and separate.
- 4.24 The review also found that some public authorities continued to use the old RNIA Template based on the previous guidance raising questions of how aware some public authorities are of the revised guidance published by DAERA in April 2018 which incorporated a revised RNIA Template.
- 4.25 There was evidence that some public authorities were not following the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process as recommended in the guidance and some concerns that rural needs was being treated merely as a ‘tick box’ or ‘form filling’ exercise. It is important that public authorities are aware that the completion of an RNIA Template does not in itself equate to fulfilling the due regard duty.
- 4.26 There were some good examples of completed RNIA Templates which demonstrated that a detailed Rural Needs Impact Assessment had been undertaken and which provided evidence of how the public authority had sought to identify the needs of people in rural areas, how those needs were considered and how the section 1 activity had been influenced by the rural needs identified. In one case a public authority had set out both the direct and indirect impacts of the public service on people in rural areas.
- 4.27 The evidence from RNIA Templates showed that some public authorities have taken significant steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural

areas through a range of methods all of which have been detailed on the RNIA Template. However there are other examples where it was not clear what steps have been taken to identify the needs of people in rural areas as no details had been recorded.

4.28 The RNIA Template is designed to record information relating to the Rural Needs Impact Assessment and should contain sufficient evidence to help demonstrate that the due regard duty has been fulfilled. There is a concern that not following the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process set out in the revised guidance or using an amended RNIA Template that does not include all the steps set out in the process, may result in a public authority not providing sufficient evidence that the due regard duty has been complied with.

4.29 A majority of those RNIA Templates in the sample which had been properly completed indicated that the policy, strategy, plan or public service had been influenced by the rural needs identified. This indicates that the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 is having a positive impact on how public authorities undertake their functions. This is also supported by the survey of rural stakeholders which showed that some rural stakeholders recognise that the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 has made a positive difference in some areas.

4.30 While it is recognised that not every activity will have a particular rural dimension and that there will not always be scope to influence a particular activity there is potential for more to be done to encourage public authorities to take the necessary steps to identify the needs of people in rural areas and to seek to deliver better outcomes for people in rural areas which take account of rural circumstances.

4.31 The review of the sample of RNIA Templates raised some concerns about the contents of some templates and the terminology used. It also appeared that in some cases the focus may have been on “filling the box” rather than giving due consideration to answering the particular question set out in the RNIA Template. It is important for public authorities to be aware of their audience and to use appropriate terminology. It is also important to adopt a proportionate approach to the amount of information contained in an RNIA Template, with the amount of detail proportionate to the potential impact and relevance of the activity, and to ensure that the information provided is easily understood.

4.32 While all of the RNIA Templates sampled were published on line, mostly in relation to a public consultation exercise, it was noted that published RNIA

Templates using the DAERA RNIA Template tended to be better presented than those published using a public authority's own model of the RNIA Template.

4.33 It is recognised that the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 only came into operation for departments and district councils in 2017 and other public authorities in 2018 and therefore public authorities are still in a learning process. It is also recognised that the absence of a NI Assembly may have resulted in less scrutiny of RNIA Templates than might otherwise be the case. There is therefore merit in DAERA continuing to work closely with public authorities in seeking to ensure that the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 becomes firmly embedded within organisations and that Rural Needs Impact Assessments are carried out and RNIA Templates completed to a satisfactory standard.

#### Rural Stakeholder Engagement

4.34 While there is evidence that some public authorities have engaged directly with rural stakeholders in seeking to identify the needs of people in rural areas the results of the rural stakeholder survey show that very few rural stakeholder organisations have engaged directly with a public authority in relation to the undertaking of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

4.35 While there continues to be a lack of awareness among rural stakeholders that public authorities routinely undertake Rural Needs Impact Assessments and complete RNIA Templates in respect of their policies, strategies, plans and public services, it is recognised that rural stakeholders are an important source of information both in relation to the challenges facing rural communities and the unique circumstances in rural areas. There is therefore scope for public authorities to engage more effectively with rural stakeholders in seeking to identify the needs of people in rural areas.

4.36 There is also merit in DAERA working with public authorities and rural stakeholders to explore how engagement between public authorities and rural stakeholders can be more effective and help to deliver better outcomes for rural dwellers.

## Review of the support provided by DAERA

### Guidance on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

4.37 DAERA published revised guidance (*A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised)*) in April 2018. Public authorities have found the revised guidance to be very useful in assisting them with implementing the Act and a definite improvement on the previous version of the guidance.

4.38 However from the review of the sample of RNIA Templates it is clear that some public authorities are still using the old RNIA Template based on the previous guidance and therefore may not be aware of the *revised* guidance. Some public authorities also reported that the level of awareness of the guidance within their organisation was low and therefore more needs to be done to increase awareness including wider circulation of hard copies of the guidance where available.

4.39 The review showed that public authorities found the *Guidance on completing the Appendix 2 Template* to be useful and helped with the completion of the annual monitoring return. DAERA has noted a marked improvement between the returns submitted by Departments and Councils in respect of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Monitoring Report in 2018 and those submitted in respect of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Monitoring Report in 2019 and has acknowledged that some of this improvement is due to the issue of the *Guidance on completing the Appendix 2 Template*.

4.40 There may be scope to review the *Guidance on completing the Appendix 2 Template* in light of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Monitoring Report with a view to identifying any changes that might be made to help further improve the quality of the returns provided.

### General Advice and Support provided by DAERA

4.41 DAERA has provided one to one support to public authorities on a range of issues including the implementation of the due regard duty, the completion of RNIA Templates, engagement with rural stakeholders and monitoring and reporting. The review showed that public authorities have found the general advice and support provided by DAERA to be very useful.

### Information provided on rural needs on the DAERA Website

4.42 DAERA provides a range of information on rural needs on the 'Rural Needs' section of its website which public authorities have found useful. However there is merit in reviewing the design and content of the website with a view to presenting the information in a more user friendly manner. There is also merit in considering what further information could be provided to assist public authorities in fulfilling their duties under the Act.

### Awareness Training

4.43 DAERA arranged for awareness training to be provided to all public authorities in preparation for the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 coming into operation. There were a variety of views on the usefulness of the awareness training with the majority of public authorities finding the awareness sessions useful or very useful. One public authority expressed the view that the awareness training wasn't comprehensive enough however it is recognised that the awareness training was designed to provide public authorities with an overview of their responsibilities under the Act and was not designed to be comprehensive.

4.44 While there is clearly a need for further awareness raising it is recognised that there is a distinction to be made between awareness raising and comprehensive training. It is recognised that for DAERA to make provision for comprehensive training to officials across all public authorities would be very resource intensive. However there is scope for DAERA to provide more comprehensive training for individuals within public authorities whose have specific or dedicated roles or responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the legislation (e.g. Rural Needs Co-ordinators) as part of DAERA's policy of 'supporting public authorities to support themselves'. There are also other options for raising awareness which, together with the provision of guidance and dedicated support for Rural Needs Co-ordinators, can ensure a more effective approach to awareness raising across public authorities.

### E-learning

4.45 The rural needs e-learning programme which was made available to departments and local councils in 2016 only provided an 'overview of rural' rather than providing detailed information on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 or on the carrying out of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment. The e-learning programme was based on DAERA's previous guidance and was not updated to reflect the revised guidance published in 2018.



- 4.46 Feedback showed that 117 people completed the e-learning programme during the period up to 2019 while feedback from public authorities indicates that it wasn't considered particularly useful nor particularly relevant.
- 4.47 E-learning does provide an effective tool for providing learning to large numbers of people and some public authorities have recognised its potential as a means of delivering training on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. However it is recognised that if a new e-learning package is to be developed it should be based on the revised guidance and provide additional value rather than repeating what is already in the guidance. The revised guidance provides detailed information on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and has proven to be an effective tool for helping public authorities to understand what the Act requires them to do.

## Review of the Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

### Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

- 4.48 Public authorities indicated that they are satisfied with the monitoring and reporting arrangements put in place by DAERA. The revised guidance provided by DAERA was generally thought to be very helpful while DAERA's early commissioning of annual monitoring returns and the deadline of September for submitting returns have both been welcomed by public authorities.
- 4.49 However a small number of public authorities reported some difficulties in relation to the monitoring and reporting arrangements. One public authority commented that monitoring and reporting can be complex and difficult to implement and is only as good as the governance systems in place in the organisation while another highlighted the risk that not all RNIA Templates may be included in the annual monitoring return.
- 4.50 One public authority indicated that the sheer volume of policies that it had to deal with meant that it was impractical to complete a RNIA template in respect of all its policies and therefore it had taken a decision not to complete RNIA Templates in respect of many of its policies that had no rural impact.
- 4.51 There is still some uncertainty among public authorities around the submission of narrative reports to DAERA as part of the monitoring and reporting arrangements

including what to include in the narrative and whether the narrative is actually published in the annual monitoring report.

4.52 The requirement to publish the same extensive information in a public authority's Annual Report and Accounts as in the annual monitoring report produced by DAERA is viewed by some public authorities as unwelcome bureaucracy. The view was expressed that a public authority's Annual Report and Accounts is generally perceived to be an overview document and may not therefore be particularly suitable for publishing details of every RNIA Template that had been completed by the public authority during the period.

4.53 In terms of how the monitoring and reporting arrangements might be improved it was suggested that the development of an on-line system would assist public authorities with compiling their information. DAERA has developed a 'Rural Needs Database' which aims to assist with the compiling and reporting of information contained in RNIA Templates and is currently piloting this within DAERA. There is therefore merit in making this database available to all public authorities following the successful completion of the pilot to assist them with compiling the information required under the Act and to help ensure more effective reporting.

4.54 Some public authorities suggested that it would also be useful for DAERA to provide feedback to public authorities on the returns they submit for inclusion in the annual monitoring report to help them understand better what information is required and to help ensure that the information submitted is relevant and meaningful to rural stakeholders and other interested parties.

### Annual Monitoring Report

4.55 Section 3(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 requires public authorities to compile information on the exercise of their functions under section 1 of the Act and to send this information to DAERA. The 'Template for Information to be Compiled' provided at Appendix 2 of the guidance requires public authorities to include information on their annual monitoring return in respect of each section 1 activity on (a) the rural needs identified (b) the issues they have considered in relation to these rural needs and (c) how the activity had been influenced by these rural needs. This information is then published by DAERA in its annual monitoring report.

- 4.56 The review found a significant increase in the number of section 1 activities reported on by Departments and Councils in respect of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Monitoring Report over the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Monitoring Report and a definitive improvement in the quality of information provided. The evidence shows that all public authorities are now well aware of the need to complete RNIA Templates and to compile information on these and send this information to DAERA.
- 4.57 However there were some issues regarding proportionality in terms of the information submitted in the annual monitoring returns with cases where a large amount of information was provided in relation to a section 1 activity which wasn't particularly relevant. In other cases the information submitted, while factually correct, was not particularly meaningful. There is therefore a need to make public authorities more aware of their audience and to ensure that the information provided is meaningful to rural stakeholders and that it is information which is relevant.
- 4.58 While the rural stakeholder survey showed that the majority of rural stakeholders are not aware of the annual monitoring report, of those that responded regarding the usefulness of the information less than two thirds found the information published in the 1<sup>st</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report useful.
- 4.59 There were also a small number of cases where annual monitoring returns were submitted late due to a lack of clarity on who in the public authority was responsible for compiling the information. One public authority suggested that all requests for monitoring information should be sent to a generic email address to help ensure it was acted upon. There is therefore merit in reviewing communication between DAERA and Rural Needs Co-ordinators to ensure that returns are submitted on time.
- 4.60 DAERA has issued *Guidance on completing the Appendix 2 Template* which aims to assist public authorities with completing their annual monitoring returns and help ensure more consistency in the information provided. While public authorities have found this guidance useful there is still some ambiguity around the specifying of the 'policy area'. It is recognised that the *Guidance on completing the Appendix 2 Template* updates the list of policy areas provided in Section 2D of the RNIA Template set out in the guidance and therefore public authorities should adhere to the *Guidance on the completing the Appendix 2 Template* when completing their annual monitoring returns.

- 4.61 There were also some concerns raised about the risk of the amount of information contained in the annual monitoring report becoming too unwieldy in the event of a significant increase in the number of public authorities being added to the schedule as a result of the review of the list of bodies and persons set out in the Schedule which DAERA is required to undertake at least every 3 years. It was also noted that in the event of a restoration of the NI Assembly and Executive there was likely to be an increase in the number of activities being reported on by Departments.
- 4.62 There were also some concerns raised about the value that DAERA adds to the process of compiling the annual monitoring report and the timeliness of the information published in the report given that the information published relates to activities which were undertaken up to 21 months prior to the report being published.
- 4.63 It is also recognised that the absence of the NI Assembly and the lack of awareness among rural stakeholders has resulted in less scrutiny of the annual monitoring report than might otherwise be the case and that the level of scrutiny is likely to increase in the future.

## Review of Co-operation

### Co-operation Events

- 4.64 The review found that the co-operation events hosted by DAERA have been useful to public authorities as they provide an opportunity for rural needs representatives to engage directly with DAERA and to share information and experiences. There is merit in reviewing both the frequency and structure of the events with a view to maximising their benefit to public authorities. There is also an opportunity for DAERA to use these events to promote best practice, to provide feedback on the monitoring and reporting process and to facilitate discussion on the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process and the completion of RNIA Templates.

## **Section 5**

Recommendations in relation to overcoming the barriers to the effective implementation of the due regard duty

## Introduction

5.1. This Section sets out the barriers and potential barriers identified together with the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of Objective 2 of its Terms of Reference.

***To identify any barriers (or potential barriers) to the effective implementation of Section 1(1) of the Act and to make recommendations on how such barriers (or potential barriers) might be overcome.***

## Identification of Barriers and Potential Barriers

5.2. The Working Group has identified the main barriers to the effective implementation of section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 as follows:

- a. A lack of awareness among some decision makers of the need to comply with the due regard duty in respect of policies, strategies, plans and public services;
- b. A lack of understanding among some decision makers of what a public authority is required to do specifically in order to fulfil the due regard duty in relation to a particular activity;
- c. A lack of access to and/or availability of the statistical and other information necessary to inform decision makers of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas;
- d. Decision makers not undertaking a Rural Needs Impact Assessment or not giving sufficient or timely consideration to the needs of people in rural areas when undertaking a Rural Needs Impact Assessment;
- e. Decision makers treating the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process and the completion of RNIA Templates as a 'tick box' exercise;
- f. 'Rural needs fatigue' due to the absence of a 'screening out' process with the result that decision makers are investing time and resources in completing RNIA Templates in respect of activities which have no impact, no likely impact and no potential to impact on people in rural areas or their social and economic needs.

- g. Insufficient resources made available by some public authorities to support rural needs co-ordinators.

## Recommendations

- 5.3. The review found that there was still a lack of awareness among decision makers of the need to comply with the due regard duty and of what was required to be done to fulfil the due regard duty. The working group recognised that awareness levels varied within public authorities and that more work needs to be done to increase awareness. It was also recognised that both DAERA and public authorities had a role to play in raising awareness and that there was a need to ensure that awareness raising was appropriately targeted within organisations.

### **Recommendation 1**

- **It is recommended that DAERA works in partnership with other public authorities to deliver a programme of 'on the ground' and corporate level promotion activities aimed at raising awareness of the due regard duty and of the support and guidance available to decision makers to help them ensure they comply with the due regard duty.**
- 5.4. The review found that in some cases decision makers did not fully understand the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process and that the completion of the RNIA Template was being treated as a 'tick box' exercise. It also found that in some cases the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process set out in the guidance wasn't being followed and that while some RNIA Templates had been completed to a high standard others were of variable quality.
  - 5.5. The working group recognised the importance of carrying out a proportionate Rural Needs Impact Assessment and recording this in a properly completed RNIA Template to help demonstrate to rural stakeholders the steps which a public authority has taken to comply with the due regard duty. It was agreed that there would be merit in providing further information on the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process and the completion of RNIA Templates on the DAERA website.

### **Recommendation 2**

- **It is recommended that DAERA develops a suite of new online material specifically on the Rural Need Impact Assessment process and the completion of the RNIA Template and makes this available to all public authorities.**
- 5.6. The working group acknowledged the barriers to the effective implementation of the due regard duty which had been identified in the review and recognised that that further training could help address some of the barriers.
- 5.7. It was recognised that it would not be practical or efficient for DAERA to provide classroom based training to all officials involved in section 1 activities but that there would be merit in targeting training at those officials within public authorities who had a promotion, supporting or monitoring role in relation to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 within their organisation. This is consistent with DAERA's policy of "supporting public authorities to support themselves".
- 5.8. It was agreed that the provision of more intensive training than that which was provided in the awareness training sessions provided to public authorities prior to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 coming into operation should be provided to Rural Needs Co-ordinators (and other officials with a supporting role) to enable them to provide effective support to officials within their organisation.

### **Recommendation 3**

- **It is recommended that DAERA develops comprehensive training on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and makes this available to those officials within public authorities with responsibility for promoting, supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 based on need.**
- 5.9. The review found that there was a risk of 'rural needs fatigue' resulting from the completion of RNIA Templates in cases where a public authority had a considerable number of internal or technical policies which had no potential to impact on people in rural areas and for which no rural needs could be identified. In such cases the completion of an RNIA Template in respect of all section 1 activities was seen as overly bureaucratic. The working group recognised that the objective of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process was not to create unnecessary bureaucracy but to help public authorities ensure that the needs of people in rural areas were given due regard to. The working group agreed that DAERA should review the guidance to try to address this.



#### **Recommendation 4**

- **It is recommended that DAERA reviews the guidance on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 with a view to clarifying that where a public authority is satisfied that a Section 1 activity in which it is engaged has no impact, no likely impact and no potential to impact on people in rural areas or their social and economic needs, that public authority may complete its own condensed version of the RNIA Template to document that information and to confirm that it is satisfied that the due regard duty has been fully considered.**

5.10. The review found that that there was some lack of understanding among decision makers on what a public authority is required to do specifically in order to fulfil the due regard duty in relation to a particular activity. There was also some uncertainty around whether a Rural Needs Impact Assessment was required to be undertaken in certain circumstances.

5.11. The working group recognised that there may therefore be merit in individual public authorities taking steps to increase awareness and understanding of what decision makers are required to do in order to comply with the legislation and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences between decision makers. It was agreed that the workshop model may be the most effective way of doing this.

#### **Recommendation 5**

- **It is recommended that public authorities host regular workshops for decision makers within their organisation (subject to need) for the purposes of increasing awareness and understanding of the duties on public authorities under the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.**

5.12. The review found that a lack of access to and/or availability of the statistical and other information necessary to inform decision makers of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas was one of the main barriers to the effective implementation of the due regard duty. The working group agreed that there would be merit in more being done to promote awareness of available statistical information and the resources available to obtain information.

5.13. DAERA's rural statistician attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the working group and delivered a presentation on the availability of rural statistics and the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) and on sources which public authorities could use to obtain statistical information. The working group agreed

that there was merit in making rural statistics more accessible to public authorities and in providing available statistical, research and other relevant information on the 'Rural Needs' section of the DAERA website.

### **Recommendation 6**

- **It is recommended that DAERA creates a dedicated 'Rural Statistics and Information' page on the 'Rural Needs' section of the DAERA website incorporating appropriate links to statistics, research and other useful information (including links to the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service) and contacts for the DAERA rural statistician and other Departmental statisticians groups.**

5.14. The review found that some Rural Needs Co-ordinators were of the opinion that the resources required to undertake their role effectively were not fully recognised by their own public authority and that there could often be competing pressures particularly as their responsibilities in relation to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 were often added on to their existing role. The working group acknowledged that each public authority operated differently and that it was important that sufficient resources were made available to ensure that the legislation was effectively implemented.

### **Recommendation 7**

- **It is recommended that public authorities review the resources allocated to supporting the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 with a view to ensuring that rural needs co-ordinators have access to the resources necessary to undertake their role effectively.**

## **Section 6**

Recommendations in relation to the measures put in place to support public authorities

## Introduction

6.1 This Section sets out the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of Objective 3 of its Terms of Reference.

*To consider the measures put in place by DAERA to support public authorities in fulfilling the duty under Section 1(1) of the Act (including advice, guidance, information provided on the DAERA website, awareness training, e-learning etc.) and to make recommendations on:*

- a. any changes which should be made to current support measures to help public authorities implement the Section 1(1) duty effectively;*
- b. any further support or other measures which should be considered to help public authorities implement the Section 1(1) duty effectively; and*
- c. any further action that public authorities should take themselves to help ensure that the Section 1(1) duty is implemented effectively.*

## Recommendations

6.2 The review found that while the information on rural needs provided on the DAERA website was useful to public authorities, there would be merit in reviewing the design and content of the website with a view to presenting the information in a more user-friendly manner. The working group agreed that the 'Rural Needs' section of the DAERA website was an important resource and it would also be useful for DAERA to consider adding further information to assist public authorities in complying with the legislation.

### **Recommendation 8**

- **It is recommended that DAERA reviews the structure and content of the 'Rural Needs' section of the DAERA website with a view to making the information more user-friendly and including more information on the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process including, for example, rural statistics, research information, case studies, further guidance and examples of good practice.**

6.3 The working group agreed that there was merit in individual public authorities holding regular workshops to increase awareness and understanding of what decision makers are required to do in order to comply with the legislation and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences between decision makers. It also agreed that there would be merit in DAERA offering to attend these workshops to provide advice and expertise on aspects of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 if requested while recognising the potential resource implications for DAERA.

### **Recommendation 9**

- **It is recommended that DAERA offers to support one half day workshop on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for each public authority annually on request.**

6.4 The working group acknowledged that some public authorities had taken steps to embed the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 within their organisation including at corporate and management level. It agreed that there would be merit in similar good practice being implemented across all public authorities.

### **Recommendation 10**

- **It is recommended that public authorities take steps to seek to embed the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 further within their organisation including, for example, by incorporating compliance with the Act in their Assurance Statements, Submission Templates and Audit and Risk Procedures.**

6.5 DAERA's rural statistician gave a presentation to the working group on the availability of rural statistics and on sources which public authorities could use to obtain statistical information. The working group recognised the valuable knowledge and expertise which the rural statistician can contribute to the process of identifying the needs of people in rural areas and agreed that there would be merit in the rural statistician participating in the proposed new Rural Needs Network (*see recommendation 22*).

### **Recommendation 11**

- **It is recommended that the DAERA rural statistician participates in the Rural Needs Network.**



## **Section 7**

Recommendations in relation to research and information gathering

## Introduction

7.1 This Section sets out the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of Objective 4 of its Terms of Reference.

***To consider DAERA's powers in respect of research on matters relating to rural needs under Section 2(b) of the Act and to make recommendations on:***

- a. anything regarding future research on matters relating to rural needs which the Working Group considers appropriate;***
- b. how public authorities might gather better information on rural needs; and***
- c. how public authorities might engage more effectively with rural stakeholders in gathering information on rural needs.***

## Recommendations

7.2 The working group recognised the value of learning from the experiences of others and agreed that there would be merit in undertaking research to identify examples of where the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 or rural proofing had made a positive difference to rural communities. It was also suggested that public authorities could benefit from examples of rural success stories in other jurisdictions where rural communities may have faced similar challenges to those in Northern Ireland. The working group recognised the importance of being open to adopting new approaches and developing new solutions to address the challenges facing rural communities and that examples of what worked and what hadn't worked in other jurisdictions could benefit public authorities here.

### **Recommendation 12**

- It is recommended that research is undertaken to identify examples of rural success stories, positive impacts and lessons learned as a result of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 or rural proofing and that DAERA makes these available on the 'Rural Needs' section of its website.**

7.3 The review found that while some public authorities engaged directly with rural stakeholders in seeking to identify the needs of people in rural areas, the results



of the stakeholder survey showed that very few rural stakeholder organisations had been engaged with public authorities in relation to the undertaking of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment. The review also found that obtaining the information on the needs of people in rural areas necessary to inform decision making was a key barrier to implementing the due regard duty effectively.

- 7.4 The working group recognised the value of public authorities engaging directly with the rural community sector in seeking to understand the needs of people in rural areas. It also recognised that positive relationships between public authorities and rural community organisations would help assist public authorities in gathering information on rural needs and help lead to better outcomes for rural dwellers

### **Recommendation 13**

- **It is recommended that public authorities seek to develop effective relationships with rural community organisations and, where appropriate, to seek to engage with the rural community sector in a meaningful and timely manner as part of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process being undertaken in respect of Section 1 activities.**

- 7.5 The working group acknowledged that the needs of people in rural areas were often different to those in urban areas and that different approaches or solutions were often required in rural areas to help ensure equitable outcomes for rural dwellers. The working group recognised that there was a need for greater innovation in seeking to address the needs of people in rural areas and that public authorities should be open to adopting new and innovative approaches to help deliver more equitable outcomes for rural dwellers. The working group also recognised the value in engaging widely with rural stakeholders and seeking to ensure that a broad range of views are heard.

### **Recommendation 14**

- **It is recommended that public authorities be open to adopting new and innovative approaches to engaging with the rural community sector when seeking to gather information on rural needs including taking measures to engage with people in rural areas who may not normally participate in public consultations or stakeholder engagement.**

7.6 The review found that a lack of access to and/or availability of statistical and other information necessary to inform decision makers was a barrier to the effective implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. It was acknowledged that there was a significant amount of rural research available through academic and other research organisations but that it was not always easily accessible by public authorities, It was agreed that DAERA could play a role in identifying available rural research and in making it more accessible to public authorities.

### **Recommendation 15**

- **It is recommended that DAERA incorporates a rural research hub webpage on the 'Rural Needs' section of its website providing a dedicated space for links to relevant research relating to the needs of people in rural areas to be shared.**

7.7 It was recognised that AFBI undertakes rural research on behalf of DAERA covering a wide range of rural policy issues and this could be of use to public authorities in seeking to understand the needs of people in rural areas relevant to their activities. The working group agreed that there would be merit in making this research more available to public authorities in a format that was suitable for policy makers.

### **Recommendation 16**

- **It is recommended that the Agri-food and Bio-Sciences Institute (AFBI) produces a short research briefing document (which provides an overview and summary of the research) as an output of all current and future rural research undertaken by it on behalf of DAERA.**

## **Section 8**

Recommendations in relation to the monitoring and reporting arrangements

## Introduction

8.1 This Section sets out the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of Objective 5 of its Terms of Reference.

***To review the monitoring and reporting arrangements established by DAERA in relation to Section 3 of the Act and to make recommendations on:***

- a. any changes which should be made to improve the effectiveness of the current monitoring and reporting arrangements;***
- b. any further support which should be provided by DAERA to assist public authorities in fulfilling their monitoring and reporting obligations; and***
- c. how the information provided in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report might be improved in terms of presentation and/or content.***

## Recommendations

8.2 The review found that some public authorities continued to face challenges compiling the information required for the annual monitoring report. The working group acknowledged that monitoring and reporting is only as effective as the governance systems in place within an organisation and that without an effective monitoring system there is a risk that not all RNIA Templates may be included in a public authority's annual monitoring return.

8.3 DAERA provided the working group with a demonstration of a model which it had developed for the purposes of improving the monitoring of information and ensuring greater accuracy in the information provided on the annual monitoring returns. The model provides for details of all RNIA Templates to be recorded on a 'live' database and therefore provides Rural Needs co-ordinators with an up to date record of all RNIA Templates produced by the public authority at any point in time. DAERA was currently piloting the database within its department with the pilot scheduled to finish in December 2019.

### **Recommendation 17**

- **It is recommended that DAERA shares its 'Rural Needs Database' model with other public authorities following the successful completion of the pilot.**
- 8.4 The review found that some public authorities had concerns about whether the information they submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the annual monitoring report was appropriate for the purpose and saw merit in DAERA providing feedback on the monitoring returns which they submitted.
- 8.5 The working group agreed that there was merit in DAERA providing feedback on the annual monitoring returns as this would help public authorities understand better what type of information is appropriate and help ensure that the information submitted in respect of the annual monitoring report is suitable in terms of quality and content and that the information contained in the annual monitoring report is meaningful.

### **Recommendation 18**

- **It is recommended that DAERA offers to provide feedback on the content of annual monitoring returns submitted by public authorities on request.**
- 8.6 The review found that there was a risk of the amount of information contained in the annual monitoring report becoming too unwieldy and that the presentation of the annual monitoring report could be improved. The working group acknowledged that there was also scope to do more to improve the presentation of the annual monitoring report and to make it more meaningful and relevant to rural stakeholders.

### **Recommendation 19**

- **It is recommended that DAERA reviews the structure and content of the annual monitoring report with a view to improving its presentation and making the information more meaningful and relevant to stakeholders including through the use of indexing, the use of narrative rather than tabular format, the use of infographics (where appropriate) and the provision of linkages to RNIA Templates on public authorities' own websites (where available).**
- 8.7 The working group recognised the value in publishing completed RNIA Templates as a means of informing stakeholders of the steps they had taken to comply with the due regard duty and as a means of ensuring greater transparency on how

rural needs were being given regard to in policy making and public service delivery. It also recognised that stakeholders can face challenges in accessing published RNIA Templates on public authorities' own websites particularly if they were unfamiliar with the layout of the website. The working group agreed that it would be helpful to rural stakeholders if all RNIA Templates published by a public authority were made available on their website in a single place.

### **Recommendation 20**

- **It is recommended that public authorities publish their RNIA Templates on their website on a single webpage and that the Annual Monitoring Report includes a link to each public authority's webpage.**

8.8 The review found that the requirement to publish the same extensive information in a public authority's Annual Report and Accounts and in the annual monitoring report produced by DAERA is viewed as unwelcome bureaucracy. The working group acknowledged a public authority's Annual Report and Accounts was generally perceived to be an overview document and may not therefore be particularly suitable for publishing details of every RNIA Template that had been completed by the public authority during the period. It also acknowledged that it may be more appropriate for the Annual Report and Accounts to contain a summary of the information published in the annual monitoring report but that the current legislation did not provide for that.

### **Recommendation 21**

- **It is recommended that, if a suitable opportunity arises, DAERA should seek to amend Section 3 of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 to remove the requirement to publish the same comprehensive information in both a public authority's Annual Report and Accounts and in the annual monitoring report which is required to be published by DAERA.**

## **Section 9**

### **Recommendations in relation to the co-operation arrangements**

## Introduction

9.1 This Section sets out the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of Objective 6 of its Terms of Reference.

*To consider the co-operation arrangements put in place by DAERA under Section 4 of the Act and to make recommendations on how co-operation and the exchange of information between public authorities might be improved.*

## Recommendations

9.2 The working group recognised the value of the co-operation that had taken place between public authorities to date and the merit in Rural Needs Co-ordinators having a network where they could continue to develop relationships and share information and experiences. It was agreed that the annual co-operation events previously hosted by DAERA had been useful but that there was merit in meeting more frequently and for Rural Needs Co-ordinators to have input into the agenda. It was also agreed that there would also be merit in making provision for Rural Needs Co-ordinators to engage informally outside of the formal network meetings on an ongoing basis. The working group agreed that there would be merit in establishing a Rural Needs Network made up of representatives of all public authorities and that this should replace the co-operation events.

### Recommendation 22

- It is recommended that DAERA establishes a Rural Needs Network open to all public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act for the purposes of facilitating co-operation and the exchange of information between public authorities (including DAERA), promoting best practice across public authorities and providing a forum for Rural Needs Co-ordinators to raise and discuss issues relating to rural needs, including engagement with the rural community sector.

### Recommendation 23

- It is recommended that the Rural Needs Network meets formally on a biannual basis and that following its establishment, the network would explore options for networking on an ongoing basis outside of the formal process, including options using technology.



## **Section 10**

Recommendations in relation to the review of the list of bodies and persons set out in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

## Introduction

10.1. This Section sets out the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of Objective 7 of its Terms of Reference.

*To consider the list of bodies and persons currently listed in the Schedule to the Act and to make recommendations in relation to any bodies or persons which the Working Group thinks should be added to, removed from or modified in the Schedule to the Act (giving reasons for the recommendations) for the purposes of informing the review of the Schedule which is required to be undertaken by DAERA under Section 3(1) of the Act.*

## Recommendations

10.2. The working group considered the bodies and persons currently listed in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and agreed that there were no public authorities that should be removed from, or modified in, the Schedule.

10.3. The working group also considered a number of bodies that were not currently listed in the Schedule and agreed only to recommend for consideration bodies where a case had been made for inclusion.

10.4. The working group also agreed that there was a need for DAERA to engage widely when undertaking its review of the list of bodies and persons in the Schedule including with the current members of the Rural Needs Working Group.

### **Recommendation 24**

- **It is recommended that DAERA should consider adding the following organisations to the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 when undertaking its review of the list of bodies and persons set out in the Schedule as required under Section 1(3) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016:**

Northern Ireland Water

Northern Ireland Water is a government owned company which provides the water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland. The working group has recommended that NI Water be considered for inclusion in the Schedule to the

Act on the basis that people who live in isolated rural areas can often face difficulties in accessing the public water mains network.

#### Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company

The Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company is responsible for the operation of its subsidiary companies, including Ulsterbus, Metro and Northern Ireland Railways, trading jointly as Translink. The working group has recommended that the NITHC be considered for inclusion in the Schedule to the Act on the basis that rural dwellers are less likely to have access to a regular public transport service and that people without access to private transport (e.g. young people, older people, people with disabilities) in rural areas are likely to be disadvantaged in terms of access to services and employment opportunities.

#### Waterways Ireland\*

Waterways Ireland is a North/South implementation body with responsibility for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of inland navigable waterways primarily for recreational purposes. The working group has recommended that Waterways Ireland be considered for inclusion in the Schedule to the Act on the basis that its remit within Northern Ireland relates primarily to rural areas and the potential impact it has on rural communities and people visiting rural areas for recreational purposes.

*\* to the extent that it exercises functions in or as regards Northern Ireland*

### **Recommendation 25**

- **It is recommended that DAERA engages with members of the Rural Needs Working Group when undertaking the review of the list of bodies and persons in the Schedule under Section 1(3) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.**



## Appendix 1 – List of Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Public Authority Recommended to Implement
1	It is recommended that DAERA works in partnership with other public authorities to deliver a programme of 'on the ground' and corporate level promotion activities aimed at raising awareness of the due regard duty and of the support and guidance available to decision makers to help them ensure they comply with the due regard duty.	DAERA
2	It is recommended that DAERA develops a suite of new online material specifically on the Rural Need Impact Assessment process and the completion of the RNIA Template and makes this available to all public authorities.	DAERA
3	It is recommended that DAERA develops comprehensive training on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 and makes this available to those officials within public authorities with responsibility for promoting, supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 based on need.	DAERA
4	It is recommended that DAERA reviews the guidance on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 with a view to clarifying that where a public authority is satisfied that a Section 1 activity in which it is engaged has no impact, no likely impact and no potential to impact on people in rural areas or their social and economic needs, that public authority may complete its own condensed version of the RNIA Template to document that information and to confirm that it is satisfied that the due regard duty has been fully considered.	DAERA
5	It is recommended that public authorities host regular workshops for decision makers within their organisation (subject to need) for the purposes of increasing awareness	All Public Authorities

	and understanding of the duties on public authorities under the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	
6	It is recommended that DAERA creates a dedicated 'Rural Statistics and Information' page on the 'Rural Needs' section of the DAERA website incorporating appropriate links to statistics, research and other useful information (including links to the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service) and contacts for the DAERA rural statistician and other Departmental statisticians groups.	DAERA
7	It is recommended that public authorities review the resources allocated to supporting the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 with a view to ensuring that rural needs co-ordinators have access to the resources necessary to undertake their role effectively.	All Public Authorities
8	It is recommended that DAERA reviews the structure and content of the 'Rural Needs' section of the DAERA website with a view to making the information more user-friendly and including more information on the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process including, for example, rural statistics, research information, case studies, further guidance and examples of good practice.	DAERA
9	It is recommended that DAERA offers to support one half day workshop on the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for each public authority annually on request.	DAERA
10	It is recommended that public authorities take steps to seek to embed the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 further within their organisation including, for example, by incorporating compliance with the Act in their Assurance Statements, Submission Templates and Audit and Risk Procedures.	All Public Authorities
11	It is recommended that the DAERA rural statistician participates in the Rural Needs Network.	DAERA

12	It is recommended that research is undertaken to identify examples of rural success stories, positive impacts and lessons learned as a result of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 or rural proofing and that DAERA makes these available on the 'Rural Needs' section of its website.	DAERA
13	It is recommended that public authorities seek to develop effective relationships with rural community organisations and, where appropriate, to seek to engage with the rural community sector in a meaningful and timely manner as part of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment process being undertaken in respect of Section 1 activities.	All Public Authorities
14	It is recommended that public authorities be open to adopting new and innovative approaches to engaging with the rural community sector when seeking to gather information on rural needs including taking measures to engage with people in rural areas who may not normally participate in public consultations or stakeholder engagement.	All Public Authorities
15	It is recommended that DAERA incorporates a rural research hub webpage on the 'Rural Needs' section of its website providing a dedicated space for links to relevant research relating to the needs of people in rural areas to be shared.	DAERA
16	It is recommended that the Agri-food and Bio-Sciences Institute (AFBI) produces a short research briefing document (which provides an overview and summary of the research) as an output of all current and future rural research undertaken by it on behalf of DAERA.	AFBI
17	It is recommended that DAERA shares its 'Rural Needs Database' model with other public authorities following the successful completion of the pilot.	DAERA



18	It is recommended that DAERA offers to provide feedback on the content of annual monitoring returns submitted by public authorities on request.	DAERA
19	It is recommended that DAERA reviews the structure and content of the annual monitoring report with a view to improving its presentation and making the information more meaningful and relevant to stakeholders including through the use of indexing, the use of narrative rather than tabular format, the use of infographics (where appropriate) and the provision of linkages to RNIA Templates on public authorities' own websites (where available).	DAERA
20	It is recommended that public authorities publish their RNIA Templates on their website on a single webpage and that the annual monitoring report includes a link to each public authority's webpage.	All Public Authorities
21	It is recommended that, if a suitable opportunity arises, DAERA should seek to amend Section 3 of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 to remove the requirement to publish the same comprehensive information in both a public authority's Annual Report and Accounts and in the annual monitoring report which is required to be published by DAERA.	DAERA
22	It is recommended that DAERA establishes a Rural Needs Network open to all public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act for the purposes of facilitating co-operation and the exchange of information between public authorities (including DAERA), promoting best practice across public authorities and providing a forum for Rural Needs Co-ordinators to raise and discuss issues relating to rural needs, including engagement with the rural community sector.	DAERA
23	It is recommended that the Rural Needs Network meets formally on a biannual basis and that following its establishment, the network would explore options for networking on an ongoing basis outside of the formal process, including options using technology.	DAERA

<p>24</p>	<p>It is recommended that DAERA should consider adding the following organisations to the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 when undertaking its review of the list of bodies and persons set out in the Schedule as required under Section 1(3) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Northern Ireland Water</li> <li>- The Northern Ireland Transport Company</li> <li>- Waterways Ireland</li> </ul>	<p>DAERA</p>
<p>25</p>	<p>It is recommended that DAERA engages with members of the Rural Needs Working Group when undertaking the review of the list of bodies and persons in the Schedule under Section 1(3) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>DAERA</p>

## Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference (Objectives)

- I. To review the implementation of Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 by departments, local councils and other public authorities to date.
- II. To identify any barriers (or potential barriers) to the effective implementation of Section 1(1) of the Act and to make recommendations on how such barriers (or potential barriers) might be overcome.
- III. To consider the measures put in place by DAERA to support public authorities in fulfilling the duty under Section 1(1) of the Act (including advice, guidance, information provided on the DAERA website, awareness training, e-learning etc.) and to make recommendations on:
  - a. any changes which should be made to current support measures to help public authorities implement the Section 1(1) duty effectively.
  - b. any further support or other measures which should be considered to help public authorities implement the Section 1(1) duty effectively.
  - c. any further action that public authorities should take themselves to help ensure that the Section 1(1) duty is implemented effectively.
- IV. To consider DAERA's powers in respect of research on matters relating to rural needs under Section 2(b) of the Act and to make recommendations on:
  - a. anything regarding future research on matters relating to rural needs which the Working Group considers appropriate;
  - b. how public authorities might gather better information on rural needs;
  - c. how public authorities might engage more effectively with rural stakeholders in gathering information on rural needs.
- V. To review the monitoring and reporting arrangements established by DAERA in relation to Section 3 of the Act and to make recommendations on:
  - a. any changes which should be made to improve the effectiveness of the current monitoring and reporting arrangements;
  - b. any further support which should be provided by DAERA to assist public authorities in fulfilling their monitoring and reporting obligations
  - c. how the information provided in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report might be improved in terms of presentation and/or content.
- VI. To consider the co-operation arrangements put in place by DAERA under Section 4 of the Act and to make recommendations on how co-operation and the exchange of information between public authorities might be improved.
- VII. To consider the list of bodies and persons currently listed in the Schedule to the Act and to make recommendations in relation to any bodies or persons which the Working Group thinks should be added to, removed from or modified in the Schedule to the Act (giving reasons for the recommendations) for the purposes of informing the review of the Schedule which is required to be undertaken by DAERA under Section 3(1) of the Act.

## Appendix 3 – Questionnaires

## REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RURAL NEEDS ACT (NI) 2016 Questionnaire for Public Authorities

**TYPE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY**

1. Please indicate the category of your organisation under the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016?

Northern Ireland Department       District Council       Other Public Authority listed in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

**AWARENESS**

2. What is your assessment of the level of awareness of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 within your organisation?

High		Medium		Low		Don't Know	
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3. Do you think that more needs to be done to increase awareness of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016?

Yes       No

4. What is your assessment of the level of awareness of the Guidance - 'A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised)' - within your organisation?

High		Medium		Low		Don't Know	
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5. Please provide any suggestions you may have for increasing awareness of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 within public authorities.

**COMPLIANCE**

6. Please provide details of any additional action taken by your organisation to help ensure that the due regard duty under section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 is fully complied with (e.g. training, awareness raising, provision of support etc.).

7. What do you see as the main barriers to public authorities complying fully with the due regard duty under Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016?

**RURAL NEEDS IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

8. Please provide details of any difficulties which officials in your organisation have encountered in undertaking a Rural Needs Impact Assessment as recommended in Chapter 5 of the Guidance - *A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised)*.

9. Please provide details of any difficulties which officials in your organisation have encountered in completing the Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template (*Appendix 1 of the Guidance*).

**MONITORING AND REPORTING**

10. How satisfied are you with the monitoring and reporting arrangements in relation to the compiling of information, the sending of that information to DAERA and the publication of that information in the Annual Monitoring Report as required under Section 3 of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016?

Very Satisfied  Satisfied  Not very satisfied  Not at all satisfied

11. Please provide details of any issues you have encountered in relation to the monitoring and reporting arrangements that have caused difficulty for you or your organisation.

12. Please provide details of any changes you would like to see made to the monitoring and reporting arrangements to help improve the effectiveness of them.

**CO-OPERATION**

13. Which of the following DAERA co-operation events have you attended?

February 2018  March 2019  Neither

14. How useful did you find the co-operation event(s)?

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful

15. Please provide any suggestions on how you think the co-operation events could be made more beneficial to you or your organisation.



**SUPPORT**

16. What is your assessment of the support provided by DAERA to date in relation to the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 in respect of the following?

*The Official Guidance (A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised))*

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful  Don't know

*The Guidance on Completing the Appendix 2 Template*

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful  Don't know

*The Awareness Training provided to your organisation by the Rural Development Council in 2017/18*

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful  Don't know

*General Advice and Support provided by DAERA in response to requests from your organisation*

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful  Don't know

*Information provided on the Rural Needs section of the DAERA website*

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful  Don't know

*The e-learning package on rural needs that was available via CAL and the Rural Development Council*

Very Useful  Useful  Not very useful  Don't know

17. Please provide any comments which you think would be helpful in relation to any of the above.

18. Please provide details of any further support which you think is necessary to help public authorities fully comply with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE RURAL NEEDS ACT (NI) 2016  
Questionnaire for Rural Stakeholders**

1. How aware are you of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

**Very Aware**

**Aware**

**Not Aware**

2. What difference do you think the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 has made in relation to how public authorities have regard to the needs of people in rural areas in respect of any policies, strategies, plans or public services that you are aware of?

**A positive difference**

**No difference**

**Don't Know**

3. How familiar are you with the Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template which public authorities are recommended to complete in respect of their policies, strategies, plans and public services

**Very Familiar**

**Familiar**

**Not Familiar**

4. How would you rate the level of information provided in completed Rural Needs Impact Assessment Templates that you have had sight of?

**Very Good**

**Good**

**Satisfactory**

**Unsatisfactory**

**Variable**

**Don't Know / Not Applicable**

5. Have you been directly engaged with any public authority in relation to the undertaking of a Rural Needs Impact Assessment in respect of any policy, strategy, plan or public service?

**Yes**

**No**

**Don't Know**

6. Are you aware of the 1<sup>st</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report which DAERA published on its website in December 2018?

**Yes**

**No**

7. How useful is the information provided in the 1<sup>st</sup> Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report which DAERA published on its website in December 2018?

**Very Useful**

**Useful**

**Not Very Useful**

**Don't Know**



## Appendix 4 – Glossary of Terms

The Act	The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
Annual Monitoring Report	The annual report required to be published by DAERA under section 3(2) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
AFBI	The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
DAERA	The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
The Guidance / The Revised Guidance	A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised)
NI	Northern Ireland
NINIS	The Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service
NITHC	The Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company
Other Public Authority	Any body or person listed in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 other than a Northern Ireland Department or District Council
Public Authority	Any body or person listed in the Schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
Rural Needs Co-ordinator	A person or persons in a public authority with responsibility for liaising with DAERA on the implementation of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
RNIA Template	Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template
Section 1 Activity	The development, adoption, implementation or revision of a policy, strategy or plan or the design or delivery of a public service
The Schedule	The schedule to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Suspended Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2020-2021
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Ursula Mhic An tSaoir, Irish Language Unit Manager Daria Ní Fhaoláin, Irish Language Officer (Development)

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p>For information the purpose of the Irish Language Bursary Scheme is to assist individuals to improve Irish Language skills through providing scholarships or bursaries for Irish Language courses, including Gaeltacht colleges, intensive courses and third level courses taking place within the Council's financial year (1 April – 31 March).</p> <p>This is a rolling scheme with successful applicants being awarded a letter of offer on a first come first served basis. Once the number of applications / amount requested exceeds monies available, applicants are placed on a waiting list.</p> <p>For the 2020/2021 financial year it was agreed the Irish Language Bursary Scheme would call for applications to Irish Language courses taking place during two six-monthly periods 1) April – September 2020 (budget allocation £45,000) and 2) October 2020 – March 2021 (budget allocation £5,000).</p>
1.2	<p>However, due to the response to COVID-19, and given the future uncertainty over accessing offices / incoming post and emails, and accurately recording when all applications were being received, Party Leaders at a meeting on 24 March 2020 agreed to suspend the Irish Language Bursary Scheme and to then reopen it at a later date with the applications currently received being deemed to be "safe".</p> <p>The temporary suspension was communicated by Council's Communications and Marketing Section through Council's social media channels. This related to the implementation of the first call of Irish Language Bursary Scheme for the 2020-2021 financial year i.e. the call for applications of financial assistance towards courses taking place in the period April – September 2020.</p> <p>As noted, the basis of this decision centred upon the fact that while applicants may post, email or hand deliver applications to the Council Office, Council was not in a position to ensure effective governance of a rolling scheme which required applications being processed on a first come first served basis i.e. successful applicants being awarded a letter of offer and</p>

	later eligible applicants being placed on a reserve list once the number of applications / amount requested exceeds monies available.
1.3	All applications received prior to the scheme's suspension have been logged and recorded as having been received. However, applicants have not been forwarded letters of offer in relation to these applications.
1.4	<p>The suspension of the Irish Language Bursary Scheme, and options set out in section 2 of this report, were considered at a meeting of the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group on 8 June 2020.</p> <p>At the meeting those present unanimously agreed to recommend Option 2 for consideration at the Strategy, Policy and Resources meeting on 11 June 2020 i.e. to Re-open the Irish Language Bursary Scheme for period 2020/2021,.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<p>Due to improved operational arrangements, wherein Officers are now in a better position to access offices, collect post and so record the dates applications are being received, Council is in a position to reconsider the decision to suspend of the 2020/2021 Irish Language Bursary Scheme.</p> <p>Additional factors for consideration as part of the decision-making process are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the scheme is to assist individuals to improve Irish Language skills through providing scholarships or bursaries for Irish Language courses, including Gaeltacht colleges, intensive courses and third level courses taking place within the Council's financial year (1 April – 31 March).</li> <li>• The Council's Irish Language Bursary Scheme is an open call for applications from individuals of all ages in relation to Irish language courses. While the majority of applications submitted for the April – September period each year relate to individuals seeking assistance towards their attendance at a Summer Gaeltacht scheme it must be noted the Council's Bursary Scheme is not specifically a 'Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme'.</li> <li>• Applicants must be registered to attend an Irish Language course and not already have a scholarship from public funds. In addition, to ensure appropriate corporate governance, applicants are required to provide Council with proof of full payment of fees and attendance at the Irish Language course before they receive their bursary payment from Council.</li> <li>• There is no closing date for applications. This is a rolling scheme and for 2020/2021 the budget is allocated across two six-monthly periods 1) April – September 2020 (budget allocation £45,000) and 2) October 2020 – March 2021 (budget allocation £5,000).</li> <li>• While all applications received by Council prior to our scheme's suspension have been logged and recorded, applicants have not been forwarded letters of offer in relation to their applications.</li> <li>• A gradual easing of the COVID-19 related lockdown may lead to Irish language courses being organised and/or organisations promoting online courses during the 2020/2021 financial year.</li> </ul>



2.2	<p>Options in relation to the suspended 2020/2021 Irish Language Bursary Scheme:</p> <p><b>Option 1: Do nothing - Maintain suspension of the 2020/2021 Irish Language Bursary Scheme</b></p> <p>Implementing this would effectively close the scheme for 2020/2021.</p> <p>Taking this approach does not acknowledge the improved operational arrangements to administer the scheme i.e. Officers are now in a better position to access offices, collect post and so record the dates applications are being received.</p> <p>In addition, should there be a gradual easing of the COVID-19 related period of lockdown, Irish language courses, including on-line courses, may begin to be organised. Maintaining suspension of the Council's Irish Language Bursary Scheme would deny individuals the opportunity to make applications and therefore inhibit the ability of Council to provide bursary assistance to individuals attending these Irish language courses during 2020/20201. This would have specific relevance to potential applications in the second period call of October 2020 – March 2021.</p> <p>Although Council would maintain the suspension, it would still have to decide how to process applications received before the scheme was suspended. In taking this decision, Council must also be mindful that as this is a rolling scheme, bar the suspension, Council would have received many more applications.</p>
	<p><b>Option 2: Re-open Irish Language Bursary Scheme for period 2020/2021</b></p> <p>The Irish Language Unit is a position to resume effective governance of a rolling scheme which requires applications to be processed on a first come first served basis i.e. successful applicants being awarded a letter of offer and later eligible applicants being placed on a reserve list once the number of applications / amount requested exceeds monies available.</p> <p>In this scenario Council would re-open the scheme and call for applications related to courses for the two periods April – September 2020 and October 2020 – March 2021. In re-opening the scheme, the agreed governance and processes will continue to be implemented.</p> <p>This approach would enable Council to offer bursary assistance to individuals attending Irish language courses during 2020-2021 which may be organised resulting from a gradual easing of the COVID-19 related lockdown period.</p> <p>As all applicants are required to confirm acceptance of Council's letter of offer of a bursary within four weeks of receipt, the level of uptake and the implementation of the re-opening of the scheme would be reviewed in October 2020 by the Irish Language Cross Party Strategy Working Group.</p>

	<b>Option 3:</b>	<p><b>To maintain suspension of April – September 2020 call and open call for applications relating to October 2020 – March 2021 period</b></p> <p>In opening a call for applications related to the October 2020 - March 2021 period Council would be acknowledging the improved operational arrangements to administer the scheme, wherein Officers are now in a better position to access offices, collect post and so record the dates applications are being received.</p> <p>However, as previously noted, should there be a gradual easing of the COVID-19 related period of lockdown, Irish language courses, including on-line courses, may begin to be organised. Maintaining suspension of applications to the April – September 2020 period would deny individuals the opportunity to make applications and mean Council would be unable to provide bursary assistance to individuals attending Irish language courses within this period.</p> <p>In addition, although Council would maintain the suspension of applications for courses taking place in the April – September 2020 period, Council has yet to process applications received before the scheme was suspended. In taking any decision on how best to process these applications, Council must also be mindful that as this is a rolling scheme, bar the suspension, Council would have received many more applications.</p>
2.3	<p>As noted, the decision to suspend the 2020/2021 Irish Language Bursary Scheme was primarily due to governance concerns regarding processing applications.</p> <p>Having given consideration to the options set out in section 2.2, the preferred option is Option 2 i.e. to re-open Irish Language Bursary Scheme for period 2020/2021.</p> <p>Option 2 provides the most effective means to forward plan and give individuals the opportunity to make applications for a bursary towards courses during 2020/2021 which may arise due to a gradual easing of the lockdown period. Re-opening the scheme would enable Council to process current and future applications.</p> <p>In addition, reviewing the implementation of the re-opened scheme in October 2020 would enable the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group to consider a 2021/2022 Irish Language Bursary Scheme.</p>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	
3.1	<p>It is proposed that the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee give consideration to the three options, noting the preferred option, agree to option 2 set out within the report and proceed to re-open the Irish Language Bursary Scheme for period 2020/2021.</p>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>	
4.1	<p>There are no additional resource implications for the 2020/2021 financial year associated with re-opening the Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2020/2021.</p>	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>	

5.1	<p>The Irish Language Bursary Scheme has previously been equality screened and the decision was that it did not require to be equality impact assessed.</p> <p>In relation to the options set out within this report, option 2 provides the most effective means to forward plan and give individuals the opportunity to make applications for a bursary towards courses during 2020/2021 which may arise due to a gradual easing of the lockdown period. Re-opening the scheme would therefore enable Council to process current and future applications.</p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>
6.1	Due regard to rural needs for people living in rural areas has been considered and a rural needs impact assessment has been completed in relation to the implementation of the Irish Language Bursary Scheme.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	None
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	None

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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

**ALBERT BASIN TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP**

**THURSDAY 21 MAY 2020 AT 4.00 PM**

**VIA SKYPE**

**In attendance:**

Michael Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities  
 Paul Tamati, Assistant Director Leisure and Sport  
 Conor Haughey, Head of Outdoor Leisure  
 Councillor R. Mulgrew (Chairperson ABWG)  
 Councillor C Casey  
 Councillor G Malone  
 Councillor M Savage  
 Councillor G Stokes  
 Councillor D Taylor  
 Mr B Clelland, Newry 2020  
 Mr M McConville, Newry 2020  
 Ms C Ruddy, Drumalane Quayside Community Association  
 Mr Jerome Mullan, Newry Chamber of Commerce  
 Mrs P Oakes, PA to the Director of Active and Healthy Communities

**Also in attendance:** Mr Tony Morrison, Consultant, Otium Leisure  
 Alison Keenan, Consultant, Otium Leisure

**Apologies:**

Mr McGauley, Newry 2020

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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

#### ACTIONS ARISING:

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<b>1. Introduction and Apologies</b>	R. Mulgrew outlined the protocol for using Skype. A request was made through Mr Clelland to invite Mr McConville, Architect to join the meeting Following discussion, it was agreed not to permit Mr McConville to join the meeting.	ML	Noted	N
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	None.	PT	Noted	N
<b>3. Review of previous action sheet 20 February 2020</b>	Actions were accepted, subject to an amendment to the attendance to include Councillor Stokes. Proposed by Cllr Casey and seconded by Cllr Malone. Replacement of Cllr Harte on the working group to be referred to the next SPRC.	PT	Noted	Y
<b>4. Public consultations and community engagement</b>	Tony Morrison, Otium Leisure Consultants outlined the proposed format of the socially distanced public consultation including:	PT		N

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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
5. AOB	<p>1. Online workshops to last approximately 40 minutes, to be limited to 8 or 10 people which will publicised in news media and Council's social media platforms. Registration will be required.</p> <p>2. On-line survey, live for 4 weeks throughout the month of June. Notification will be on line and in local papers. Hard copies of questionnaire can also be sent out for completion and return.</p> <p>3. Young persons and families consultation by way of a design competition. Details still require to be finalised but the input from local schools will be recognised.</p> <p>4. Concerns expressed that the survey included questions in relation to residential housing.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b></p> <p>A copy of the survey to be issued to all Members and a meeting of the Albert Basin Task and Finish Group be arranged next week so that feedback could be given.</p>	PT		N N

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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
6. Date of next meeting	TBC for week commencing the 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2020. Also scheduled for 20 August 2020 at 4.00 pm.		Noted	N

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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

**ALBERT BASIN TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP**

**FRIDAY 29 MAY 2020 AT 4.00 PM**

**VIA SKYPE**

**In attendance:**

Michael Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities  
 Paul Tamati, Assistant Director Leisure and Sport  
 Conor Haughey, Head of Outdoor Leisure  
 Councillor R. Mulgrew (Chairperson ABWG)  
 Councillor C. Casey  
 Councillor G. Malone  
 Councillor M. Savage  
 Councillor G. Stokes  
 Councillor D. Taylor  
 Mr B Clelland, Newry 2020  
 Mr M McConville, Newry 2020  
 Ms C Ruddy, Drumalane Quayside Community Association  
 Mr Jerome Mullan, Newry Chamber of Commerce  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance:** Mr Tony Morrison, Consultant, Otium Leisure  
 Alison Keenan, Consultant, Otium Leisure

**Apologies:** No Apologies



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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

#### ACTIONS ARISING:

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<b>1. Introduction and Apologies</b>	R. Mulgrew outlined the protocol for using Skype.	ML		
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	None.	PT		
<b>3. Review of previous action sheet 21 May 2020</b>	Actions were accepted. Proposed by Cllr Casey and seconded by Cllr Savage.	PT		
<b>4. Proposed online survey</b>	Alison Keenan provided a comprehensive overview on each survey question. Tony Morrison highlighted & discussed key changes & alterations to survey with members including: 1. All reference to Residential Accommodation had been removed from all questions. 2. Question 12 - The use of the word Commercial - Tried to make clearer to Council the understanding & context of what was meant by the use of the word 'Commercial'. 3. Question 14 – Was removed as this is a Planning consideration.	PT		N

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 item 3 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	<p><b>Agreed:</b></p> <p>Members discussed at length various issues.</p> <p>General agreement that the word blurred be rephrased in relation to the edges of the park.</p> <p>Albert Basin Shipping Canal &amp; Maritime Heritage to be referenced in the introductory text of the questionnaire.</p> <p>Cllr Mulgrew confirmed few minor tweaks to be made to questionnaire no need to send amended copy to members for approval before proceeding.</p> <p>M Lipsett requested any further responses from groups regarding tweaks to be brought back before Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June at 5pm at latest so that Consultation can proceed as planned in June.</p>			
<b>5. AOB</b>	None	PT		
<b>6. Date of next meeting</b>	TBC			

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting  
held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 11am in the Training Room,  
District Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry**

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**Chairperson:** Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services

**In Attendance:**

Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director  
Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism  
Anthony McKay, Chief Planning Officer  
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration  
Andy Patterson, Assistant Director, Tourism Culture & Events  
Damian Mulholland, Director for Regional Development Office, DFC  
Tracie McLoughlin, PA

**Apologies:**

Marie Ward, Chief Executive

D Carville advised Board Members that following Gateway Review carried out 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 it was an 'essential' recommendation that:

*"The SRO arranges for a dashboard summary and minutes to be prepared of each board meeting and distributed in a timely manner"*

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**NCCR/1:- THEATRE/CONFERENCE FACILITY**

**1.1 Land adjacent to Sean Hollywood Arts Centre (SHAC)**

Searches by legal services have confirmed that Council have title to a small rectangle of fenced land behind the SHAC and AG is liaising with Council's solicitor and the neighbouring Land Owner regarding.

**Action: Meeting to be arranged with landowners by AG.**

**1.2 Theatre/ Conference Operating Model**

The Theatre/ Conference Operational Advisor continues to work on the operational options appraisal process, and feedback is awaited from Belfast City Council to inform this. Thereafter, operational structure options to be consulted upon with elected Members and Trade Unions and shortlisted options to be further analysed for consideration and consultation.

### 1.3 Arts Programme Budget

A Patterson working with Cogent on Northern Ireland comparable facility programme budgets and a report has been drafted.

**Action: Mr Patterson to meet with Chief Executive of the Waterfront Hall to discuss their start up experience.**

### 1.4 Ross Thompson Site

Tender for geotechnical site investigation released, tender returns expected on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**Action: Tender returns to be evaluated and appointment recommendation made by AG.**

### 1.5 Town Hall

Existing/ historic record information of Town Hall façade is considered inaccurate and a remeasurement survey to clarify is recommended in sum of circa £4k.

**Action: Survey to remeasure Town Hall agreed in approximate cost of £4k subject to competitive quotation process.**

### 1.6 Communication & Engagement

The first Pre Planning Application Public Consultation for the Theatre/ Conference facility was held on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Invite was provided to local Councillors, MLAs and MPs, and notice provided to the Public via newspaper notice, social media and hand delivered notice.

**Action: Noted.**

Letter drop was carried out to properties in close proximity to the SHAC, Town Hall and Ross Thompson Site.

**Action: Noted**

Next Pre Planning Application Public Consultation for the Theatre/ Conference scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> December at SHAC.

**Action: Noted**

### 1.7 Digital Project

Meeting with Queen's University and University of Ulster held 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to discuss BRCD Innovation pillar they are leading on. Further session scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**Action: AG to consider costs for inclusion of black box with control room and classroom.**

**NCCR/2: - CIVIC HUB****2.1 Abbey Way Site Investigations**

Tender for geotechnical site investigation released, tender returns expected on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**Action: Tender returns to be evaluated and appointment recommendation made by AG.**

**2.2 Communication & Engagement**

First Pre Planning Application Public Consultation for the Civic Hub scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> December at SHAC.

**Action: AG**

**2.3 Project Board**

Update and presentation on Civic Hub design presented to Project Board meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Critical work streams for action by Project Board members include:

- Worker styles
- Integration of IT systems
- Filing
- Record management Systems

**Action: Project Board members to action required works streams and update via the next Project Board meeting.**

**NCCR/3:- PUBLIC REALM****3.1 Theatre/Conference & Civic Hub**

Consultation on the Theatre/Conference and Civic Hub Public Realm to be undertaken as part of ongoing Pre-Planning Application Consultation processes.

**Action: Consultation ongoing**

**3.2 Sugarhouse Quay**

Consultation in relation to Public Realm along Sugarhouse Quay with all stakeholders including DFI Roads and local businesses to be arranged.

**Action: Consultation to be arranged by AG.**

**NCCR/4:-            GATEWAY REVIEW**

Following Gateway Review carried out 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019, the following recommendations were made:

1. SRO to arrange for an issues management process to be established complete with an issues log – Essential by Jan 2020
2. SRO to arrange for a dashboard summary and minutes to be prepared of each board meeting and distribute in a timely manner – Essential for next board meeting.
3. SRO to arrange for the programme roles and responsibilities to be reviewed and clarified – Essential by January 2020.
4. SRO seeks clarification from DFC on the steps and approvals process for drawing down City Deal funding – Essential by January 2020
5. SRO explores the opportunity to establish a forum to oversee and coordinate all development in Newry City Centre – Recommend

**Action:**

1. **Drafted – issues to be fed into dashboard document**
2. **Complete**
3. **Under Review**
4. **Under Review**
5. **Initial session 28<sup>th</sup> Nov 2019**

**NCCR/5:-            DFI ROADS****5.1    Land Title at Abbey Way**

DFI have instructed their Legal Team to review information relating to an historic vesting order which may extend to cover currently unregistered title area, if confirmed thereafter prepare a Certificate of Declaration will be prepared by DFI Roads for Council.

**Action:**                    **Council will continue to pursue declaration and also to investigate Title Indemnity Insurance options until confirmation is received regarding Title.**

**5.2    Transportation & Carparking Strategy**

At the Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019, members were advised of the proposed Traffic & Transportation Strategy, and that DFC have commissioned a road model from DFI Roads, all of which will contribute towards a future development Plan for Newry City core.

**Action:**                    **Fee costs arising to be approved by members before appointment.**

**NCCR/6:-                    FLOOD DEFENCE PLAN**

Engagement continues with DFI Rivers with regards to working collaboratively to deliver flood defence structures along Newry River in proximity to the Theatre/Conference facility.

**Action:**                    **Discussions with DFI Rivers continue on Flood Alleviation Scheme with particular reference to the Q25 design and environmental & regularity considerations.**

Meeting ended at 12pm, followed by Presentation from Hamilton Architects.

**For consideration at the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**


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**Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting  
held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 11am in the Boardroom,  
District Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry**

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**Chairperson:** Marie Ward, Chief Executive

**In Attendance:**

Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism

Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services

Anthony McKay, Chief Planning Officer

Damian Mulholland, Director for Regional Development Office, DFC

Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director

Tracie McLoughlin, PA

**Apologies:**

Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration

Andy Patterson, Assistant Director, Tourism Culture & Events

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**NCCR/7:- Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**

**Noted:** On the proposal of C Mallon, seconded by D Mulholland it was agreed to approve the Minutes as circulated.

**NCCR/8:- THEATRE/CONFERENCE FACILITY**

**SMILE Project**

Initial discussions ongoing with Queen's University and University of Ulster on the Universities' SMILE Project with a view to future development of technical infrastructure and branding links to the Theatre/ Conference facility.

**Action:** Council consultation with QUB and UU to continue on the SMILE Project linkage.



Pre Application Discussions (PAD)

It was anticipated the PAD would be undertaken in early December however this has been scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The delay in the PAD will impact the expected completion date for the RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design.

**Action: Noted.**

Land adjacent to Sean Hollywood Arts Centre (SHAC)

A Grimshaw met with landowners on 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019 and presented options of potential public realm linkages.

**Action: Further meeting to be arranged to ascertain landowner's views.**

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Planning Legislation prevents Council s from screening their own EIA requirements. If an EIA is required following start of consultee engagement, this will increase costs and may lead to planning delays.

**Action: Potential costs to be noted in the Risk Register.**

Consultations

Consultations are ongoing with stakeholders and staff. Visit to existing local theatre/ conference facilities to be arranged for Programme Board in early Spring 2020.

**Action:**

- **Continue consultations.**
- **Arrange site visits to local theatre/conference facilities for Board attendees in early spring 2020.**

Concept Design

Concept Design continues to be developed. Current plans exceed original schedule of accommodation and reductions have been identified and will be investigated. Additional feedback from statutory consultees scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> January may impact on design and the schedule of accommodation.

**Action: Noted.**

Changing Places

As part of the Council Public Conveniences Strategy there is a commitment to the provision of three designated Changing Places throughout the District. Inclusion of a Changing Place within the Theatre/Conference facility to be considered.

**Action: Project Team to investigate inclusion of designated 'Changing Place within the Theatre/ Conference facility.**

DFI Rivers

Engagement continues with DFI Rivers on flood defence structures bordering the Theatre/ Conference site. Meeting held on 13.01.2020 to discuss maximum acceptable flood wall height. Further meeting to be arranged and guidance sought from Planning Consultants and DFI Planning Advisory with regards to environmental requirements.

**Action: Further meeting to be arranged with Planning Consultants and DFI Planning Advisory to obtain guidance on environmental requirements for flood defence structures.**

Ground Investigation

Following the quotation process completed in December 2019, a successful contractor has been identified. Two post award queries have been raised and are being considered.

**Action: Investigate post award queries.**

Contract Strategy

Partial or full design by the Client Team and the combined or separate delivery of the BRCD/DFC funded public realm elements are under consideration. An options paper to be brought to the next Programme Board for consideration which will enable completion of the analysis of the priorities with reference to the cost, programme, quality and risk.

**Action: Options paper to be produced and presented to the Programme Board.**

Conference Operating Model

The Theatre/ Conference Operational Advisor continues to work on the operational options appraisal process.

**Action: Noted.**

BREEAM Rating

BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' targeted. Noted listed Town Hall could restrict ability to achieve maximum credits. Project Team currently reviewing assessment options.

**Action: Review assessment options to achieve maximum BREEAM rating.**

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**NCCR/9**      **CIVIC HUB**Pre Application Discussion (PAD)

It was anticipated the PAD would be undertaken in early December however this has been scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The delay in the PAD will impact the expected completion date for the RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design.

**Action: Noted.**

Design Requirements

Meetings held between Architect and Assistant Directors on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to determine design requirements for each business unit. Follow up sessions to be organised with particular reference to service delivery streams as design develops.

**Action: Continue to consult as design develops.**

Design Quality Review

Design Quality Review held with Estates, Facilities Management and Maintenance Sections on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**Action: Noted.**

Civic Hub Advocacy Group

First meeting of the Advocacy Group held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and notes circulated to Programme Board. Visits to similar open plan offices and further meeting to be arranged early 2020.

**Action: Further meeting and visits to be arranged for early 2020.**

Communication & Engagement

Following meeting with Communications Officers on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 it was agreed a range of communication methods be utilised to inform of Civic Hub delivery and moving in plan, and a draft communications plan has been drafted. It includes:

- 3 monthly update to be issued internally during the pre-construction period focusing on issues such as design, governance, advocacy group etc.
- Monthly updates Post Contract

Communications Section also requested approval for a budget of £10k for the Civic Hub Communication process.

**Action:**

- **Communication Section to issue draft communication plan.**
- **Board approved request for £10k Communication budget.**

Civic Hub Car Parking

Option of basement car park retained within the Concept Design. Funding for basement car park to be determined as part of the wider Traffic, Transportation & Car Parking Strategy. Car park use profile to be determined.

**Action:**

- **Continue to develop basement car park option.**
- **Funding to be determined as part of the wider TT&CP Strategy.**
- **Car park use profile to be determined.**

Cathedral Gardens

Meeting held with representatives of the Diocese of Dromore on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to discuss Council's proposals for the Civic Hub and associated Public Realm. It was agreed that Council would revert to Diocese representatives with initial ideas on how the new public realm could incorporate the Cathedral Gardens.

**Action: Re-engage Diocese representatives with Cathedral Garden proposals.**

DFI Roads/ Abbey Way Title

DFI Roads has instructed their legal team to prepare a Certificate of Title in respect of the area of the car park covered by 1969 Vesting Order. Requirement for Title Indemnity Insurance to be reviewed.

**Action: Review requirement for Title Indemnity Insurance.**

Ground Investigation

Following the quotation process completed in December 2019, a successful contractor has been identified. Two post award queries have been raised and are being considered.

**Action: Investigate post award queries.**

BREEAM Rating

Project Team continue to aim for an 'excellent' rating.

**Action: Noted.**

Schedule of Accommodation

Following consultation and engagement through Assistant Director's and the Advocacy Group, the following requests have been identified:

- a. Management of Political Party Rooms to lessen day to day room demand;
- b. Designation of a 'Civil Contingencies' room;
- c. Addition of a dedicated Union Office.

**Action:**

- a. **Management of Political Party Rooms to be discussed with Members.**
- b. **Civil Contingencies room with simple diverse comms methods agreed.**
- c. **Union representatives not part of relocating staff, meeting rooms in Civic Hub will be accommodated through the room booking system.**

Tenants

Noted that expressions of interest in renting the additional 50+ space have been received from public and third sector organisations.

**Action: Officers to continue to engage to determine requirements.**

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**NCCR/10    PUBLIC REALM**

Consultation

Landscape Architects are working with the Theatre/ Conference and Civic Hub Architects in developing concepts for the three zones of Public Realm.

**Action: Noted**

Sugarhouse Quay

Consultation process to be arranged with stakeholders including DFI Roads and local businesses. Sugarhouse Quay will be considered as an individual planning application to focus on assessment of its particular environmental requirements.

**Action: Consultation with stakeholders to be arranged.**

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**NCCR/11    TRAFFIC, TRANSPORTATION, CAR PARKING & DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

A two-stage approach has been agreed to develop a Traffic, Transportation & Car Parking strategy. Stage 1 involves stakeholder engagement to determine survey requirement for a second data collection. This requires Programme Board approval in the sum of £1562.50.

Noted that SIB is collaborating with DFC on a future development plan for Newry City Core.

**Action:**

- **Stage 1 stakeholder engagement to continue. Programme Board approves spend in the sum of £1,562.50 for this stage.**

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**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Programme Governance**

- Title of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Project Board proposed as amended to Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board.
- Future Project Board meetings to include Councillors. Democratic Services Office are working in obtaining nominations from each Party.

**Action:**

- **Change title to Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Project Board.**
- **Democratic Services Office to obtain Councillor representation from each Political Party.**

Meeting ended at 12.30pm.

**For consideration at the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting scheduled 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

\*This Meeting has taken place during Covid-19 restrictions and may have limited content\*

## **NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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### **Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 at 1.30pm Remotely by Conference Call**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor Charlie Casey

**In Attendance:**

Councillor Roisin Mulgrew  
Councillor Pete Byrne  
Councillor Gary Stokes  
Councillor Willie Walker  
Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism  
Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director  
Anthony McKay, Chief Planning Officer  
Colin Quinn, Assistant Director, Estates and Capital Projects  
Andy Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism Culture and Events  
Tracie McLoughlin, PA

**Apologies:**

Marie Ward, Chief Executive  
Dorinnia Carville, Director, Corporate Services  
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration  
Damian Mulholland, Dept of Communities  
Cllr D Taylor  
Cllr G Malone

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**NCCR/12:- Appoint Chair and Vice Chair**

**On the proposal of Cllr Roisin Mulgrew, seconded by Cllr Pete Byrne it was agreed given current Covid-19 restrictions on conducting a full meeting of the Project Board, the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the 2020/21 year be considered when the Terms of Reference are presented to a future full board meeting and that Chairman of Council Charlie Casey Chair this meeting.**

**NCCR/13:- Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**

**Agreed: On the proposal of Cllr Pete Byrne, seconded by Cllr C Casey it was agreed to approve the Minutes as circulated via email.**

\*This Meeting has taken place during Covid-19 restrictions and may have limited content\*

174

#### **NCCR/14:- Project Director's Update Report**

**Noted: Project Director's Report on the Newry Civic Hub dated 17.04.20 and the following actions agreed:**

14.1 Civic Hub Change Request - A Grimshaw advised a request had arisen from the Advocacy Group to consider usage of Party rooms for day to day meetings when available. Cllr Mulgrew and Cllr Byrne advised they would discuss this with their respective parties and report back, but raised concerns around availability of rooms for members if they were to be shared with staff.

**Agreed: Cllr Mulgrew and Cllr Byrne discuss this with their respective parties the request for day to day meeting usage of Party Rooms when not in use and report back.**

14.2 Carparking – Following discussion, Members were in unanimous agreement that adequate car parking as part of the Civic Hub project was crucial for the scheme to develop on the preferred Abbey Way site.

Adequate carparking will be required to facilitate Members, Staff, residents who need to visit the Civic Hub for services, and to ensure the parking provision is adequate for the developing needs of Newry City now and into the future as we regenerate the City.

It was the view of all members that the location of the car parking should be either on the site at Abbey Way or in close proximity to the site.

**Agreed: On the proposal of Cllr R Mulgrew, seconded by Cllr P Byrne, Officers to prepare options and costings paper on carparking provision and report back to next Board meeting in 2 weeks time.**

Meeting ended at 2.25pm.

**For consideration at the Newry City Centre Regeneration  
Programme Board Meeting scheduled 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Statutory reporting – 1) Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2020 2) Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2019-2020
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

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

<b>For decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>For noting only</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p>In line with Council's Section 75 statutory duties and commitments within our approved Equality Scheme; policy screening reports are published quarterly; and Council will prepare an annual report on the progress made on implementing the arrangements set out in its equality scheme to discharge its Section 75 statutory duties.</p> <p>The Quarterly Report for the period January to March 2020, including screening reports, is available on Council's website <a href="http://www.newrymournedown.org">www.newrymournedown.org</a>. This information has also been forwarded to all equality consultees.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<p>As per the Council's approved Equality Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Council must publish quarterly reports on equality screening which are available on Council's website and forwarded to equality scheme consultees.</li> <li>• The Section 75 annual progress report should be sent to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.</li> <li>• The latest Section 75 annual progress report should be available on Council's website.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>I. To note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2020.</p> <p>II. To note Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report for the period 2019-2020 for submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland by 31 August 2020.</p>



<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
5.1	No equality and good relations implications are anticipated.  Preparation of an annual report on progress, publishing quarterly reports, including screening reports, making them available on Council's website <a href="http://www.newrymournedown.org">www.newrymournedown.org</a> , and forwarding this information to all equality consultees is in accordance with the commitments contained within the Council's approved Equality Scheme.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>
6.1	The Council's Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2019-2020 and Section 75 Policy Screening Report detailing policies screened within the designated period and do not fall within the scope of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2020. Appendix II: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2019-2020
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Equality Scheme (approved by ECNI 25 March 2015)

**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Section 75 Policy Screening Report**  
**Quarterly Report January – March 2020**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Details of policy</b>	<b>Screening Outcome</b>
Asbestos Management Policy	<p>The Council recognises that exposure to asbestos fibres can present a serious risk to health and are committed to protecting the health and safety of their staff, contractors, clients and visitors who may be affected by their activities, along with ensuring compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation.</p> <p>The policy applies to all Council owned and leased premises constructed prior to 2000, to any extent, under the Council's control. The Policy and associated Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) sets down the framework by which the Council, all employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to meet their legal duties.</p> <p>The AMP details the requirements and standards that must be complied with in order to prevent uncontrolled disturbance of asbestos containing materials resulting in possible exposure of employees, visitors and external contractors; to prevent the spread of any asbestos contamination and to achieve and maintain compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation.</p> <p>The AMP provides a standardised approach for all persons who are responsible for managing workplaces, premises and facilities and work activities, thus ensuring consistency across the Council.</p>	No EQ/A considered necessary
Fire Safety Management Policy	<p>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and others who may be affected by activities on its premises.</p>	No EQ/A considered necessary

	<p>The policy statement and associated Fire Safety Management Plan (Management Plan) has been developed to ensure that fire safety systems and procedures are in place to manage the risk associated with fire and to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.</p> <p>This policy applies to all premises including temporary structures such as marquees and activities falling, to any extent, under the Council's control. The Policy and associated Management Plan sets down the framework by which the Council, all employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to meet their legal duties.</p> <p>The Management Plan details the requirements and standards that must be complied with in order to reduce the risk of fire within Council premises, provide safe egress from Council property in the event of a fire and maintain compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation.</p> <p>The Management Plan provides a standardised approach for all persons who are responsible for managing workplaces, premises and facilities and work activities, thus ensuring consistency across the Council.</p>	
<p>Legionella Management Policy</p>	<p>The aim of the policy is to prevent, so as far as is reasonably practicable, the occurrence of legionella bacteria in breathable form that can be inhaled by employees and others who may be present in the workplace.</p> <p>The policy applies to all premises including temporary structures such as marquees and activities falling, to any extent, under the Council's control. The Policy and associated Control Scheme sets down the framework by which the Council, all employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to meet their legal duties.</p> <p>The Control Scheme details the requirements and standards that must be complied with in order to prevent the release of legionella bacteria in breathable form that can be inhaled by employees and others who may be</p>	<p>No EQIA considered necessary</p>

	<p>present in the workplace and maintain compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation.</p> <p>The Control Scheme provides a standardised approach for all persons who are responsible for managing workplaces, premises and facilities and work activities, thus ensuring consistency across the Council.</p>	
<p><b>Portable Safety Appliance Policy</b></p>	<p>The Council recognises that use of portable electrical appliances can present a serious risk to health and are committed to protecting the health and safety of their staff, contractors, clients and visitors who may be affected by their activities, along with ensuring compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation.</p> <p>The objectives of this policy and associated Management Plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that portable electrical appliances used within the Council estate do not present a risk to the health, safety and welfare of staff, contractors, clients and visitors to the Council estate.</li> <li>• Provide and maintain safe systems of work for the use of portable electrical appliances, that are safe and without risk to health;</li> <li>• Provide such information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure employees carry out their jobs safely.</li> </ul> <p>The policy applies to all premises including temporary structures such as marquees and activities falling, to any extent, under the Council's control.</p> <p>The policy and associated Management Plan sets down the framework by which the Council, all employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to meet their legal duties regarding the use of portable electrical appliances.</p>	<p>No EQIA considered necessary</p>

<p>Non-Current Asset Policy and Procedures</p>	<p>The aim of the Non-Current Asset Policy and Procedures is to clearly set out the Council's policy and procedures in relation to the appropriate management, recording and monitoring and accounting of Non-Current Assets and to ensure that all members and officers are aware of their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>The policy applies to all officers with responsibility for Non-Current Assets and sets out how they are identified and to ensure Council officers are aware of the financial implications of acquiring and disposing of assets, and to provide guidance on how managers should ensure the maintenance and safeguarding of the assets within their area of responsibility.</p> <p>The policy and procedures does not aim to be prescriptive with regard to providing monetary values and levels of management authorisation for aspects of asset management. These provide guidance on good practice. It is recognised that further policies and procedures may be required for 'Donated Assets', 'Inventory of Assets' and 'Disposal of Assets'</p>	<p>No EQIA considered necessary</p>
<p>Public Toilet Strategy document</p>	<p>The strategy has been developed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council providing guidance on a way forward for provision, control and management of its Public Toilet facilities within the district. The strategy provides recommendations and proposals on how the Council should provide a Public Convenience service which meets the needs for the future.</p> <p>As the strategy developed, Council has become considerably more aware of the economic and commercial values directly affected by toilet provision. Whilst Council's focus is always concentrated on our residents and local community groups, it has refocused attention to the large numbers of visitors and tourists that come through the district every day, week, month and year and that these persons bring economic opportunity and goodwill.</p> <p>The visitor experience can have a dramatic effect on our continuing drive to make Newry, Mourne and Down a cleaner/safer environment for everyone to</p>	<p>No EQIA considered necessary</p>

	<p>work in, live in and visit. We need to make our town centres, shopping areas and visitor attractions considerably more accessible to visitors of all abilities and toilets play a significantly important role in making all our visitor attractions a warm and inviting experience.</p>	
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***Newry, Mourne and Down District Council***



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties  
Annual Progress Report 2019-2020**

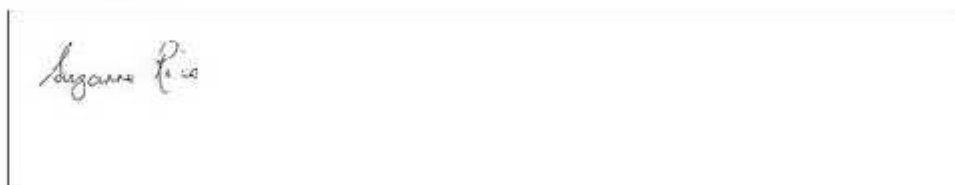
**Contact:**

➤ Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Suzanne Rice Telephone: 0330 137 4887 Email: <a href="mailto:suzanne.rice@nmandd.org">suzanne.rice@nmandd.org</a>
➤ Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (double click to open) Name: Telephone: Email:

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

[www.newrymournedown.org](http://www.newrymournedown.org)

**Signature:**



**This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.**

**It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.**

**This report reflects progress made between April 2019 and March 2020**

## PART A

**PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme****Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice**

- 1 In 2019-20, please provide examples of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

*Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.*

As a public authority, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council continues to strive to ensure that programmes, initiatives and activities undertaken by Council promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

To fulfil its Section 75 statutory duties, the Council has developed an Equality Scheme which has been approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. It outlines corporate responsibilities, legal commitments and specific actions.

Below is a summary of some of the outcomes and improvements achieved in the 2019-2020 financial year:

**Financial Assistance Programme 2019-2020**

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has a number of financial assistance programmes which promote Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations. The following outlines the specific examples of funding allocated in the 2019 -2020 financial year:

- **Good Relations Financial Assistance Scheme** - £27,722 allocated to support 38 initiatives which promoted children and young people, shared space, celebrating cultural expression and promoting Good Relations at a local level.
- **Irish Language Financial Assistance Scheme** – £50,240 allocated to 14 Initiatives aimed at promoting the Irish Language.
- **Irish Language Bursary Scheme** – With a budget allocation of £40,000 the purpose of the scheme is to assist individuals to improve Irish Language skills through bursaries for Irish Language courses, including Gaeltacht colleges, intensive courses and third level courses.
- **Minority Communities Fund** – £7,130 allocated to 15 applications applied under the two distinct themes of the funding stream:
  - **Theme 1: Cultural Expression**  
This theme is for projects/initiatives that positively promotes minority community culture, tradition and identity.
  - **Theme 2: Positively engaging minority communities**



## PART A

This theme is for projects/initiatives to build positive relations, raise awareness and understanding, address perceptions and promote respect for minority communities.

### Five Year Review of Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan 2020-2023

As required, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council undertook a Five-year review of the Council's Equality Scheme in the period December 2019-January 2020. The Review which details minor changes was approved by Council in March 2020.

The review was undertaken in line with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's "*Guidance on conducting a 5-year review of an equality scheme (July 2016)*" and evaluated the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions.

Following the review, the Council's Equality Scheme was revised as follows:

- The names of the Chief Executive and Council Chairperson have been updated in the Foreword.
- Council Officer names, job titles, email addresses and phone numbers have been updated.
- Chapter 8, regarding Council's complaints procedure has been amended to reflect advice outlined in the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Procedures for Complaints and Investigations (December 2019). Accordingly, the deadlines for responding to complaints contained within paragraph 8.5 have been amended from one (1) month and two (2) months to 20 working days and 40 working days respectively.
- Appendix 1 has been amended to reflect the current list of Councillors.
- Appendix 2 has been amended to reflect the proposed change to the Council's Management Structure.
- Appendix 5 reflects an updated list of consultees.
- The timetable for proposed measures has been updated (Appendix 6).

The Council acknowledges the continuing nature of the Section 75 statutory duties and believe the commitments set out within the revised Equality Scheme will ensure our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and assist us to monitor and review our progress.

As set out within section 2 of Council's Equality Scheme, Council is required to develop an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This will enable Council to identify potential functional areas for further or better discharge of its Section 75 duties and inform its key strategic actions.

In Autumn 2019, Council began the process to develop the Council's Equality Action Plan for the 2020-2023 period. The draft Equality Action Plan 2020-2023 was developed through consultation with internal and external stakeholders,

## PART A

and further to being approved by Council in December 2019, Council initiated a 12-week public consultation on the draft plan on 17 January 2020.

The draft Equality Action Plan 2020-2023 recommends key areas of activity and details positive actions relevant to our Council's functions. The positive action measures have been set out under the five principles of the Local Government Staff Commission's Equality and Diversity in Local Councils Framework.

#### Good Relations Programme & Council's District Electoral Area Forums

Council continues with the implementation of the Council's Good Relations Programme through the Good Relations Strategy. The Council's Good Relations Strategy complements the themes outlined in the Together Building and United Community Strategy and the policy context both locally and regionally. Many of the actions detailed with the action plan are addressed at a local level through the Council's seven DEA forums.

In the 2019-2020 financial year each DEA forum was allocated a budget of £18,000 from the action plan to deliver good relations activities within their specific area.

Examples of initiatives supported included:

- cross community school's projects,
- cultural diversity events,
- crime prevention events for older people within the community,
- youth recognition awards and
- health and well-being events.

The Good Relations action plan also supports several initiatives directly such as those related to the Traveller Community and the management of bonfires.

Support for Travelling Community programmes is delivered through the Newry, Mourne and Down District Traveller Forum. The Traveller Forum aims to promote an inclusive and civil society in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area by championing Traveller rights and addressing current provisions for the Traveller community within the district. Four meetings were held in the 2019-2020 financial year and issues discussed included Traveller accommodation provision, youth initiatives and Traveller support.

The Bonfire Management subgroup was supported through the action plan and managed by the PCSP held three meetings during this period. The group which consists of Elected Members and representatives from statutory agencies are collaborating to develop, with the assistance of the PEACE IV programme, protocol arrangements for bonfire management across the district.

#### Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group

The Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group is a facilitated discussion space. The reference group is the Council's vehicle for considering and discussing politically sensitive and contentious issues, including those

## PART A

relating to events, policy and procedure, single issues requiring specific consideration for advice, and guidance on the establishment of wider good relations fora etc with a view of reaching a common understanding, agreement and actions. Three meetings of the Equality and Good Relations Reference Group took place in the 2019-2020 period.

The Meetings were held on the 11 October 2019, 15 November 2019 and 30 January 2020. With purdah restrictions in place prior to the local Government elections in May 2019, the appointment of the newly elected representatives to Council alongside a review of the Terms of Reference for the Reference Group, the first meeting of this term of Councils meeting did not take place until the second quarter of the year.

A summary of issues discussed and addressed included:

- **Notice of Motion re Commemorating WW2 Veterans living in the district** – A notice of motion to formally acknowledge surviving World War II veterans living in the district.

Members also discussed correspondence received regarding VE Day 75 Celebrations on 8 May 2020 encouraging Council to take a lead in 'Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2' at 3.00pm on Friday 8 May 2020, and it was noted that a short ceremony scheduled to take place the top of the four highest peaks in the United Kingdom, which included Slieve Donard. Following the agreement of criteria, the type of recognition to be undertaken and a social media campaign to identify veterans, it was also agreed that Silver Poppies be presented to the four identified surviving veterans by Chairperson of Council in May 2020. *(Due to Covid 19 restrictions, the award of silver poppies was postponed)*

- **Notice of motion re Planting trees of remembrance** - *'The Council undertakes a review of the policy that refuses to allow the planting of trees in our parks to remember deceased relatives and friends. There should be a flexible policy to allow families and friends to plant a tree in council owned parks, to honour loved ones who have passed away'*

During discussion at the Reference Group meetings, Members were reminded that the Naming of Council Facilities Policy and the Guidelines and associated procedure were developed in relation to the recommendations arising from an Equality Commission investigation, and that creating more flexibility could be problematic in terms of consistency of consideration and decision-making by an assessment panel.

Following wider discussion consideration was given to a draft Policy for Memorial Trees and that Officers prepare a draft policy on memorials which would be considered at a future meeting of the Reference Group in 2020/2021.

## PART A

➤ **Council support for a National Emergency Services Memorial**

The correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council asked Council to formally place on record support for the creation of national monument to act as a symbol of eternal gratitude for all emergency service personnel who have served or been killed during their duties. At the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group meeting on 11 October 2019, members were advised that information on the National Emergency Services Memorial website advises:

*"The 999 Memorial will feature five figures to represent the emergency services (police, fire, ambulance and NHS, maritime, mountain, lowland, cave and mine rescue, and a spaniel service dog to represent all service animals). The paramedic figure will be female as an estimated 20% of the emergency services are female, and all figures will wear the uniform they would wear when responding to a 999 call."*

Further to this clarification, the correspondence was re-tabled at the November 2019 Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and Council agreed to support the initiative.

➤ **Town and Village Signage**

This has been an ongoing item of discussion. Council has also received media queries and Councillors have enquired as to if and when Council would be rolling out replacement of town and village nameplates.

However, Council has not taken a decision with regard to approaches of erecting, or financially supporting the erection / upgrading of, town and village signage. Officers undertook a review of the current signage in place and it was agreed to invite representatives from the Department for Infrastructure to a future meeting to discuss this issue.

**The Ethnic Minority Support Centre**

In acknowledgement of the ongoing growth of migrant workers and ethnic minority community within the Newry and Mourne District Council area, the Council has continued to take forward projects aimed at addressing the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic residents.

The key initiative was to maintain and further develop the Ethnic Minority Support Centre based in Newry, and advice clinics in Newry Housing Executive, Newry Citizens Advice Bureau and Downpatrick. This has encompassed a number of projects aimed at addressing the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic residents, providing advice and support, signposting of services, and examining the barriers to services and cultural awareness. Advice and information is available in English, Bulgarian, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and Romanian.

In 2019-2020 almost 2400 people availed of the service. The nationality of the clients requiring assistance were as follows:

## PART A

- 55% Roma from Romania and Bulgaria
- 25% Polish Nationals
- 15% Lithuanians, Latvians as well as Moldavian Nationals
- 5% Syrian Nationals

A number of initiatives were held in the 2019-2020. Approximately 400 people attended seven Information sessions on the EU Settlement Scheme at venues across the district in Newry, Newtownhamilton, Kilkeel and Newcastle. The purpose was to make migrant communities aware of mandatory EU Settlement Scheme registration.

The centre has opened registration clinics and more than 200 individuals availed of guidance and support to secure pre-settled or settled status during the reporting period.

With regards to work undertaken with the clients from the Roma community, language and literacy are the main issues being addressed with advice and guidance offered on support services available.

In addition, 15 -20 people attend the weekly Arabic Clinic.

#### Engagement with Disability Organisations

Officers continue to meet with representatives from the Cedar Foundation working in partnership on a number of objectives agreed through Solace. This includes the delivery of training programmes and offering opportunities for short term work placements.

Other examples of engagement include:

- The Council's Activity Officer (formerly Disability Liaison Officer) continued to work with local disability organisations to identify opportunities for people with a disability to play an active role in society be it through sporting or social activities.
- Engagement with the Department of Communities on the potential of rolling out a sign language partnership group in the Slieve Gullion DEA.
- Attendance at the Department of Communities stakeholder group meetings of the Access and Inclusion Programme 2019.
- Ongoing Member Accreditation from Employers for Disability Northern Ireland.
- 'Working with children and young people with special needs level 3 course delivered in Slieve Gullion DEA between January – March 2020.
- Continue to Implement the Shopmobility Scheme at Newcastle Centre, Newcastle. The Equality Action plan details this positive action and recommends investigating the expansion of the scheme to other towns within the district.
- The continued implementation of the Just a Minute, JAM Card initiative which includes training for all front-line services staff. JAM Card allows people with a learning difficulty, autism or communication barrier tell others

## PART A

- they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily.
- Working with organisations to deliver in house events for Council employees. Example of events include Men's Health Week events in June 2019 and World Mental Health day in October 2019.
- Council continues to implement the disability leisure membership scheme (Buddy Card Scheme and concessionary rates).
- Ongoing commitment and participation in the Local Government Staff Commission's Equality and Diversity in Local Council's initiative and appointment of Diversity Champions (3 Elected Members and 1 Officer).

### Sexual Orientation

Following the submission of a successful bid by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Newry BID and Newry Rainbow to host the 2019 UK and Ireland Pride, Council committed significant financial and logistical support to Newry Rainbow Community to assist them with the hosting of the events in August 2019. Numerous events took place including comedy nights, 'Trad in Newry' and the annual pride parade and a concert on Pride day.

### Age

The Newry, Mourne and Down Age Friendly Alliance began preparing a new draft strategy for 2020-2031 in this reporting period.

While concentrating on the development of new strategy the Age Friendly Alliance achieved their committed objectives in the 2019-2020 period. These include the Silverscreening Project which saw 272 residents in attendance. Attendees were provided with information of support services available focusing on personal safety and safety in the home. Other events included:

- **Keep Warm Packs** - 173 packs were delivered to older people in need across the legacy Newry and Mourne area.
- **Positive Ageing 2019** - Five events took place to mark the celebration of Positive Ageing Month. The showcase event took place on 2 October 2019, with 271 members of the public and approximately 60 stand holders which provided valuable information on their service attended the event. Three further events also took place across the District in October 2019. Their purpose was to identify gaps in current services, promotion of current services, reducing isolation, generating connections and building stronger working relationships and a greater sense of belonging and giving back to the community.
- **Dementia Cinema** - Council has worked in partnership with Alzheimer's Society in conducting a needs assessment, identifying the needs of people with dementia and building a programme reflective of these needs. Council teamed with Newry Arts Centre to provide a cinema experience and identified appropriate funding streams. 60 people from across the legacy district of Newry and Mourne (31 from south Armagh, 22 from the Mournes area and 7 from Newry), diagnosed with dementia and their carer attended

## PART A

190

the initiative which mirrored the experienced from an actual cinema. Participants felt at ease attending the event and have asked for the event to be available on a 6-monthly basis.

The examples detailed above provides a snapshot of examples of how Council is meeting its Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations obligations and details on the outcomes achieved.

## PART A

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2019-20 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

As noted in our response to Section 1, Council's Equality Action Plan recommends key areas of activity and details positive actions relevant to our Council's functions.

The positive action measures have been set out under the five principles of the Local Government Staff Commission's Equality and Diversity in Local Councils Framework. The following are examples of specific objectives and the impact of the Equality Action Plan measures in the 2019-2020 financial year:

**Principle 1: ensuring we work in a non – discriminatory environment, promote equality of opportunity and model of best practise in equality and good relations**

**Objective – To continue to develop an understanding of the Council's duty to promote Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations**

**Outcome and Impact**

- Council continues to deliver Equality and Good Relations Training to Staff and elected members to embed an Equality and Good Relations ethos across the organisation.
- Council continued to utilise the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group during 2019-2020 to address issues of a sensitive and contentious nature. Three meetings were held in the reporting period.
- Information on Equality and Good Relations continued to be provided to all new staff joining the organisation. Code of Conduct training is provided to Elected Members. Further training provided to all Elected Members following the May 2019 local government elections.
- The Council's Good Relations Action Plan has been implemented with the seven District Electoral Area Forums being the delivery mechanism for Council. Initiatives undertaken during the reporting period include the young people's RESPECT project in the Crotlieve DEA, cross community women's history project in the Mourne and the 'Young drivers' project in the Rowallane DEA.
- Continued the provision of a Good Relations and Minority Communities funding programmes for community groups and organisations to avail of for good relations initiatives in their local area. Over £7000 was allocated to 15 applicants under the themes of cultural expression and positively engaging with minority communities.



## PART A

- Continue to offer and expand on support services available through the Council's Ethnic Minority Support Centre. In 2019-2020 almost 2400 people availed of the service.
- Continue to utilise the Council's Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Traveller Forum whose objective is to champion the rights of the traveller community living in the district. Four meetings were held in the reporting period.

### Principle 2: Ensuring all our decisions are based on evidence to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality and good relations

#### Objective – To ensure that all policies and procedures are equality screened

##### Outcome and Impact

- 23 policies were equality screened in the reporting period.
- The quarterly policy screening reports were tabled at the Council's Strategy, Policy and Resource Committee and made available on the Council's website.
- A review of the Council's Corporate Reporting Template and the responses detailed in the Equality and Good Relations implications section of the reports provided by officers was also undertaken during the reporting period. The review highlighted that in some cases this section of the report was not completed or the wording 'non-applicable' was included.

To further improve evidence-based decision-making and monitor ongoing compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties, Council's Senior Management Team agreed that this section of the report be amended to include a number of statements for officers to select indicating the level of regard given to the proposal's equality and good relations implications.

- The Equality consultee list was reviewed and updated in this reporting period. There are now over 70 email contacts on the Council's Equality database. This consultation tool is an excellent engagement resource for Council.

### Principle 3: Providing access to services, facilities and information

#### Objective - To have relevant section 75 data

##### Outcome and Impact

- The Evidence and Research section in Council continued to provide relevant data to officers to assist them with Equality Screenings and supporting decision making.

## PART A

- Monitoring data is also compiled for all users on council facilities. This data identifies those availing of Council facilities and highlighting gaps in provision.

#### **Objective – Services and facilities are accessible to all parts of the community**

##### **Outcome and Impact**

- The Shop mobility scheme continued to be utilised in the Mournes DEA during the reporting period. Due to the success of this scheme, officers are investigating the potential of the scheme being available in other towns in the district.
- Autism Initiatives facilitated the delivery of Autism specific training programmes for 30 businesses in Newcastle and 25 businesses in Kilkeel.

#### **Principle 4: Recruiting and employing people fairly**

#### **Objective – Integration of Section 75 statutory duties within job description**

##### **Outcome and Impact**

Examples of specific relevant duties and responsibilities listed in new job descriptions include the following:

- Promote diversity across the organisation and in the Department by adhering to the Council's Equal Opportunity policies and procedures and avoiding all forms of discrimination both as an employer and a service provider.
- Promote Equality and Diversity across the organisation by demonstrating an open commitment to and actively promoting and celebrating diversity, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion.
- Work towards improving equality and diversity by ensuring that allocated targets to reduce inequalities and promote good relations are achieved.

## PART A

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2019-2020 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes       No (go to Q.4)       Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

- 3a** With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

- 3b** What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

Other *(please specify and give details):*

## PART A

**Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures****Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)**

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2018-19 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Recruitment processes continued during the 2019-2020 financial year. Examples of specifically relevant duties and responsibilities listed in new job descriptions include the following:

- Promote diversity across the organisation and in the Department by adhering to the Council's Equal Opportunity policies and procedures and avoiding all forms of discrimination both as an employer and a service provider.
- Promote Equality and Diversity across the organisation by demonstrating an open commitment to and actively promoting and celebrating diversity, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion.
- Work towards improving equality and diversity by ensuring that allocated targets to reduce inequalities and promote good relations are achieved.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2019-20 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- The **Council's Corporate Plan** outlines a commitment to core values to being citizen focused, accountable, collaborative, sustainable and fair. We are also committed to delivering on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good

## PART A

relations in accordance with our statutory duties as laid out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. In January 2019, Council appointed an independent consultant to undertake all engagement and development of the new Corporate Plan. The new objectives of the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2023 are underpinned by the principles of equality of opportunity and good relations.

- The **Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2019-2020** made direct reference to the Section 75 statutory duties and actions relating to the implementation of the Council's Equality Scheme.
- The **Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2019-2020** makes direct reference to its statutory duties and the performance improvement objectives will deliver positive outcomes for all citizens of the district in terms of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations.

In the 2019-20 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/ or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2017-18 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

During the reporting period the Council's equality and policy functions were located under the Corporate Services Directorate, within the Corporate Planning and Policy Department's Corporate Policy Section.

The Corporate Services' Directorate Business Plan 2019-2020 makes direct reference to the Section 75 statutory duties and actions relating to the implementation of the Council's Equality Scheme. This outlined key directorate actions, and a timetable / measure of success, related directly to Council's agreed Corporate Plan Objective of transformed & modernised the Council, providing accessible as well as value for money services.

In addition, as stated previously, all employees of the predecessor organisations

## PART A

have transferred to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council under TUPE arrangements. Examples of specifically relevant duties and responsibilities listed in new job descriptions include the following:

- Promote diversity across the organisation and in the Department by adhering to the Council's Equal Opportunity policies and procedures and avoiding all forms of discrimination both as an employer and a service provider.
- Promote Equality and Diversity across the organisation by demonstrating an open commitment to and actively promoting and celebrating diversity, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion.
- Work towards improving equality and diversity by ensuring that allocated targets to reduce inequalities and promote good relations are achieved.

### Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2019-20 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:  Actions ongoing:  Actions to commence:

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*)

In the final year of implementation of the Councils Equality Action Plan

Examples of actions completed to date are:

- The utilisation of the Equality and Good Relations Reference Group during 2019 -2020. Three meetings were held in this reporting period.
- Implementation of the Good Relations Action Plan which is delivered through the District Electoral Area Forum. The allocated budgets have been spent and projects detailed in the DEA action plans have been delivered.
- Induction sessions delivered to new staff.
- Council has produced a corporate consultation and engagement toolkit which aims to ensure effective consultation is undertaken.
- A corporate consultation mechanism has been put in place and this ensures that all consultation received is considered and processed to the relevant department for action.
- The Equality consultee list was reviewed and updated.
- Delivery of Equality and Good Relations Training to all new seasonal staff appointments in June 2019.
- Collaborative working with disability organisations.
- Continued the screening of all new and current policies.
- Continuing to ensure that council facilities are accessible to all.
- Continuing to facilitate reasonable for adjustments within the workplace.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2019-20 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

## PART A

There are no changes to the equality action plan in the 2019-2020 reporting period.

- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2019-20 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*
- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
  - Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
  - Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
  - Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

#### Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

All the time                       Sometimes                       Never

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2019-20 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

The Council's Head of Corporate Policy and the Corporate Policy and Equality Officer were members of a working group of designated officers responsible for the development of the Council's new Corporate Plan 2020-2023. Extensive consultation was undertaken with various groups between April and June 2019 and officers ensured that access and the availability of information was paramount for this consultation. Information was available both online and in hard copy and 'drop in clinics' were held in several locations across the district to give those who could not access the information online the opportunity to provide comments on the draft plan and in particular the proposed council objectives. Advertisements were also placed in all local newspapers which outlined the dates, times and locations of the events and how people would respond to consultation. Corporate databases were also used to promote the consultation.

- 12 In the 2019-20 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*
- Face to face meetings

PART A

- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*): DEA public engagement events.

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

As stated above, various consultation and engagement methods were used during the consultation stage of the new corporate plan developed. The majority of the respondents forwarded their comments via the online survey. A total of 82 responses were received. Approximately 20 people also attended the 'drop in clinics'.

The feedback from the 12-week consultation period for the draft Equality and draft Disability action plans will be reported upon in next year's annual report.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2019-20 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes       No       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer continued to utilise the dedicated equality database of contacts to engage with and to inform on all aspects of the Council's Equality functions throughout the reporting period.

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2019-20 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes       No       Not applicable – no commitment to review

Yes. When undertaking the five-year review of the Equality Scheme, the consultation list was again reviewed in December 2019. Those on the current list were contacted to confirm if they wished to continue to be on the listing. New contact organisations were also added to the email listing with their approval.



PART A

**Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

Equality screening templates and reports associated with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Scheme commitments can be accessed on Council's website at: <https://www.newrymouredown.org/equality>

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

23
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16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2019-20:

0	Policy consultations conducted with <b>screening</b> assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted <b>with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)</b> presented.
0	Consultations for an <b>EQIA</b> alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

Not-applicable.

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

Yes
  No concerns were raised
  No
  Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2019-



## PART A

monitoring forms which evaluates the delivery and content of the programme and helps identify potential training programmes going forward.

- All Good Relations activity is evaluated and monitored. Those participating in programmes and activities must complete information at which they outline the impact of the programme for them, their understanding of Good Relations and this data assists in identifying need and programmes going forward.
- During the reporting period the Corporate Policy and Equality Officer undertook a review of the Council's Corporate Reporting Template and monitored the responses detailed in the Equality and Good Relations implications section of the reports provided by officers. The review highlighted that in some cases this section of the report was not completed or the wording 'non-applicable' was included.
- To further improve evidence-based decision-making and monitor ongoing compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties, Council's Senior Management Team agreed that this section of the reporting template be amended to include a number of statements for officers to select to indicate the level of regard given to the proposal's equality and good relations implications. Within the template officers can also provide additional information to support their response and proposal.

#### Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2019-20, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Training	Number of sessions
Promoting Dignity at Work	13
Corporate Induction – includes presentation on anti-discrimination legislation, diversity and Council's statutory duties (Section 75, Disability Duties and Rural Needs)	15
Dealing with difficult people	3
Safeguarding training	4
Trade Unions – Performance management engagement	1
Introduction to mindfulness	1
Investigating Officer training	6

## PART A

Competency based interview skills	3
Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees	9
Personal effectiveness training	1
Professional Communication Skills	1
Workplace Health & Wellbeing	2
Procurement training	5
Recruitment and selection	8
Emotional Intelligence Training	1
E-learning roadshows	4
Active retirement workshop	1

- 25 Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

The delivery of Code of Conduct training embedded the need to ensure that Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations is at the core of local government. Following the election in May 2019, all newly elected and re-elected councillors undertook this training.

Corporate Induction training also ensures new staff are equipped with the knowledge in relation to what is required from them in their post.

#### Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2019-20, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The monitoring data from clients availing of services from the Ethnic Minority Support Centre identifies the formats of information required and the translation services being made available.

## PART A

**Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)**

- 27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2019-20?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

**Section 3: Looking Forward**

- 28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

The five-year review of the Equality Scheme was undertaken during the 2019-2020 reporting period. The revised scheme was considered approved by Council in March 2020 and has been forwarded to Kevin Oakes, Equality Officer, Advice and Compliance, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

- 29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

The relevant officers are engaging with officials from the Council's Human Resources Department to develop training modules for an E-Learning Training programme. It is envisaged that this training tool will be a useful asset considering the current social distancing arrangements which are now in place in the office and workspaces and the increase of employees working from home.

The 12- week consultation is now closed for the draft Equality and draft Disability Action Plans. All responses and comments will be considered within the next reporting period. In light of COVID-19 restrictions Officers will also review the plans and actions, in particular the time frame for a number of the actions.

In relation to screening, officers must continue to ensure that they meet section 75 obligations, including that related to changes of service delivery due to the current restrictions in place. Officers will continue to avail of advice and guidance from the Equality Commission and Section 75 guidance from the Equality Commission and a link to a webinar delivered by Paul Oakes, Manager of Advice & Compliance, ECNI has been circulated to the Council's Senior and Corporate Management Teams.

- 30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2020-21) reporting period? *(please tick any*

## PART A

*that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

To ensure that Council continues to comply with its statutory obligations, we will continue to avail of advice, guidance and expertise from the Commission in relation to the delivery of our functions.

As stated above, to assist with this process Section 75 guidance from the Equality Commission for developing Covid-19 related policies and a link to a webinar delivered by Paul Oakes, Manager of Advice & Compliance, ECNI has been circulated to the Council's Senior and Corporate Management Teams.

PART B

**PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans**

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

8

Fully achieved

Partially achieved

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
National <sup>iii</sup>			
Regional <sup>iv</sup>			
Local <sup>v</sup>	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council directly promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people through service delivery and programming which includes a disability programme under Active and Healthy Communities Sports Development. This is delivered by Council's Activity Officer (formerly Disability Liaison Officer) which	Continue the implementation of a disability leisure membership scheme (Buddy Card and concessionary rates).  As a member of Council Leisure Centres, people with	Enables those living with a disability or restricted mobility to enjoy access to swimming pools / leisure facilities.  Increased access to leisure facilities and a broad, appropriate and relevant programme of activities.

PART B

	<p>includes a disability leisure membership scheme, core classes and development of a disability sports hub.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the services and facilities for disabled people provided by the Council.</p> <p>Engage with forums in the district.</p> <p>Providing work experience and job opportunities for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>disability can enjoy all the facilities on offer as these are totally accessible and striving to achieve excellence in accessibility.</p> <p>We have core groups led by our FBA 2020 Coaches that include Sofa to Saddle, Aqua chat, Strength and Balance classes, yoga, tai chi, pilates, cycling, rugby, athletics, and danderball.</p> <p>Autism Friendly swim sessions introduced in the Council's Leisure Centre.</p> <p>The continued implementation of the 'Just a Minute', JAM Card initiative which includes training for all front-line services staff.</p> <p>In June 2019, Officers along met with representatives from Department for</p>	<p>JAM Card allows people with a learning difficulty, autism or communication barrier tell others they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily. Those with a communication barrier are often reluctant or unable to tell others about their condition, and the JAM Card allows this to happen in a simple, effective non-verbal manner.</p> <p>Improved access to facilities and services.</p> <p>Development and promotion of programmes of activity involving people with a disability.</p> <p>Awareness raising and support initiatives in the community.</p> <p>Awareness raising and support initiatives in the community.</p>
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PART B

		<p>Communities to investigate developing a pilot sign language initiative in the Slieve Gullion DEA.</p> <p>The Council's Activity Officer continued to work with local disability organisations to identify opportunities for people with a disability to play an active role in society be it through sporting or social activities.</p> <p>Officers continued to meet with representatives from the Cedar Foundation to develop training programmes for Council employees and also investigate the possibility of short-term work placements for Cedar clients. The Cedar Foundation is a support organisation that assists people with a disability, Autism or Brain Injury to live the life they choose.</p>	<p>Reduce rural isolation and increase social inclusion for both carers and people living with Alzheimers.</p> <p>Support service for young people who are 'carers' for family.</p> <p>Support services and awareness raising within the community and within Council.</p> <p>Availability of support services in the community.</p> <p>Ensuring people with disabilities have access to Council facilities and other venues.</p> <p>Ensuring people with disabilities have access to local services. Provide support services for local businesses.</p>
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PART B

		<p>People with disabilities provided with work experience and job opportunities.</p> <p>In January 2020 the delivery of Level 3 'Working with Children and young people with disabilities' course.</p> <p>Delivery of Alzheimer's support event in the Rowallane District Electoral Area (DEA).</p> <p>In November 2019, the delivery of the 'Young Carers' event in Downpatrick and Rowallane DEAs.</p> <p>Delivery of 'Dementia Cinema' community support initiative and delivery of 'Virtual Dementia Tour Bus' training programme for</p>	<p>Disabled people encouraged to directly participate in public life as valued employees.</p>
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PART B

		<p>council employees.</p> <p>Delivery of mental health and well-being events for council employees.</p> <p>Council representation of the Newry Locality Planning Group. Initiatives include the 'Supporting inclusion of children and young people with a disability' consultation report.</p> <p>Council representation on the DfC stakeholder group on Access and Inclusion programme. Assisting the refurbishment works to the St Patricks Visitor Centre in Downpatrick and the installation of an inclined platform lift in Warrenpoint Town Hall.</p> <p>Collaboration with Kilkeel Chamber of Commerce to</p>	
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PART B

		<p>deliver Autism friendly training to 25 local businesses.</p> <p>Continued collaboration with the Cedar Foundation.</p>	
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2(b) What training action measures were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Provide appropriate training to concerning the disability duties	<p>Promoting Dignity at Work – 13 training sessions for employees.</p> <p>Local Government Code of Conduct for Employees - 9 training sessions for employees.</p>	<p>Greater awareness and understanding of disability issues, the standards of behaviour required of employees and principle of equality of opportunity.</p>
2	Recruitment and selection panels to be trained in the disability duties	<p>Recruitment and Selection - 8 training sessions delivered to employees throughout the 2019-2020 financial year.</p>	<p>Interviewers participating in the Council's recruitment and selection process are aware of the Disability Duties and other employment related matters.</p>
3	Include the new disability duties in staff training.	<p>General Equality Awareness training delivered at 15 induction training sessions for new and seasonal staff.</p>	<p>This training provided participants with an overall appreciation of the employment equality legislation in Northern Ireland, raising awareness of key terms relating to equality legislation (including the disability duties), equality areas covered by</p>

PART B

			employment equality legislation in Northern Ireland, examples of how discrimination can occur in relation to equality areas, and Council responsibilities and employee responsibilities under that legislation.
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2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Engage with the disability forums in the district.	Officers continued met with representatives from the Cedar Foundation to discuss the development of training programmes for Council employees and also investigate the possibility of short term work placements for Cedar clients. The Cedar Foundation is a support organisation that assists people with a disability, Autism or Brain Injury to live the life they choose.	Development and promotion of programmes of activity involving people with a disability and reviewing and improving access to information and services.
2	Raise awareness of the services and facilities for disabled people provided by the Council	Continued the Implementation of the Disability leisure membership scheme. (eg Buddy Card and concessionary rates)	Increased awareness of accessibility and access to Council services and facilities.

PART B

		<p>Continue the implementation of the 'Just a Minute', JAM Card initiative which includes training for all front-line services staff.</p> <p>Promotion of services available on council social media platforms.</p> <p>Continued implementation of a Shopmobility Scheme from Newcastle Centre, Newcastle and also Delamont Park</p>	<p>JAM Card allows people with a learning difficulty, autism or communication barrier tell others they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily. Those with a communication barrier are often reluctant or unable to tell others about their condition, and the JAM Card allows this to happen in a simple, effective non-verbal manner.</p> <p>Positive impact and encouragement for people with mobility issues to participate in public life through increasing access to services and enhance tourism experience for people with disability.</p>
<p>Embed the disability duties into the Council's corporate consultation process.</p>		<p>Relevant employees aware of the requirement to mainstream equality and disability principles and considerations when undertaking consultation processes.</p>	<p>Arrangements for consulting reflect the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory duties.</p>

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to 'encourage others' to promote the two duties:

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<p>Council became a signatory of the Equality Commission's 'Every Customer Counts' initiative in May 2018 and is working directly with Autism Initiatives Northern Ireland in relation to designation of Newcastle as an Autism Friendly town.</p>	<p>Working with Autism Initiatives and the Equality Commission, Council has continued to recruit businesses to sign up to the 'Every Customer Counts' initiative. 40 businesses have signed up to the charter.</p> <p>To date, 30 Newcastle shop owners/ staff have attended Autism Friendly training.</p> <p>In collaboration with Kilkeel Chamber of Commerce, 25 businesses have participated in Autism Friendly training.</p>	<p>Improved access to and delivery of services.</p>

2 (e) Please outline any **additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact

PART B

	than Training and specific public life measures)		
1	Provide work experience for people with disabilities.	People with disabilities provided with work experience and Job opportunities.	Disabled people encouraged to directly participate in public life as valued employees.

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>1</sup> / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1 N/A			

4. Please outline what action measures have **not been achieved** and the reasons why.

Action Measures not met	Reasons
1 N/A	

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative



## PART B

- Evaluation / feedback from training sessions
- Discussion / consultation with disability groups and individuals

## (b) Quantitative

- Number of employees who have received training
- Number of Elected Members who have received training
- Number of documents requested in alternative formats
- Number of complaints received

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original disability action plan / any other changes?**

No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A		

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

Council has undertaken a five-year review of the Disability Action Plan and a draft Disability Action Plan 2020-2023 was prepared during the reporting period.

**PART B**

Further to consideration and comment by Council's Senior and Corporate Management Teams, the draft plan was tabled at our December 2019 Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee. Further to ratification at the Council's monthly meeting in January 2020, the draft Disability Action Plan 2020-2023 was subject to a 12-week public consultation during the period 16 January – 10 April 2020.

The finalised Disability Action Plan 2020-2023, taking into consideration consultation responses and comments, will be tabled for consideration and adoption by Council during 2020/2021.

- <sup>1</sup> **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.
- <sup>2</sup> **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.
- <sup>3</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments
- <sup>4</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level
- <sup>5</sup> **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.
- <sup>6</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Statutory reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	<b>X</b>
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>DAERA has forwarded a note commissioning the annual returns for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.</p> <p>DAERA have requested that completed returns be sent to <a href="mailto:rural.needs@daera-ni.gov.uk">rural.needs@daera-ni.gov.uk</a> by Friday 11 September 2020.</p>
1.2	The appendix accompanying this report will be submitted to DAERA to meet DAERA's return deadline i.e. Annex 1 - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
2.1	<p>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):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compile information on the exercise of its functions under section 1 of the Act,</li> <li>• include that information in the public authority's own annual report; and</li> <li>• send a copy of that information to DAERA.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
3.1	<p>To note completed annual return prepared for submission to DAERA by requested deadline of 11 September 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix 1 - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020</li> </ul>

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
5.1	This is a statutory reporting requirement and no equality of opportunity and good relations implications are anticipated.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>
6.1	The commitment to prepare an annual monitoring report falls under the scope of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016</li> </ul>

## 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 19

to March 20

20

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 <sup>1</sup> .	The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to <sup>2</sup> .	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 <sup>3</sup> .
<p><b>Disability Action Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p>The Disability Action Plan details the actions to be undertaken by Council across the district in the 2020-2023 period under the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness and Understanding</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Promotion</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Workforce.</li> </ul> <p>The Disability Discrimination Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:</p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>	<p>The actions detailed in the Council's Disability Action Plan will have positive impacts for all people of the district regardless of urban or rural areas.</p> <p>There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Disability Action Plan will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p> <p>The actions identified within the plan will be implemented across the district regardless of whether residents are based in rural or urban settlements.</p> <p>The Disability Action Plan will be subject to a twelve-week public consultation.</p>

*disabled people;*

- *Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.*

*The plan sets out how Council intends to improve the quality of life for all people with disabilities who live in, work or visit the district.*

**Christmas Illuminations Policy 2019-2020**

*The Council consulted with rural community organisations to evaluate the impact of a Christmas illuminations support package pilot available to community organisations for Christmas 2018.*

*The consultation was held in February 2019.*

*Following on from the pilot and the consultation, the Council received requests from a number of rural areas to be part of the programme in 2019 and a Christmas illuminations policy was introduced for 2019.*

Cross cutting

The Council has identified a need to support community capacity building.

Newry, Mourne and Down District has a significant rural population. The Council has identified rural isolation as a major issue to be addressed for this element of our population. Following requests from areas to be part of the Christmas Illuminations programme, a policy was developed which outlined the approach undertaken.

In its Community Plan the Council has committed to the following:

- Ensure effective community engagement in the planning and delivery of local services
- Utilise the strengths and resilience within communities
- Promote equality and tackle inequality.

This policy meets the objectives detailed in the Council's Community Plan. The criteria of the policy does not relate solely to rural areas but details the support provided in the package and how it is distributed to all groups availing of the Christmas illumination scheme.

**Asbestos Management Policy**

*This policy applies to all Council owned and leased premises constructed prior to 2000, to any extent, under the Council's control. The Policy and associated AMP sets out the framework by which the Council, all employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to meet their legal duties.*

Internal

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

<p>suggest that the implementation of the policy will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p>	
<p>When developing the Performance Improvement Plan, the data collation process revealed that the majority of the population of the District live in rural areas and may therefore experience levels of deprivation, particularly in terms of the Access to Services domain, transport connections and digital connectivity.</p> <p>The 2018-19 and 2019-20 consultation and engagement processes on the performance improvement objectives also highlighted the following issues in relation to rural areas and rural communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility to Council facilities and urban areas from rural areas</li> <li>• The need to include the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</li> <li>• Digital connectivity on rural areas</li> <li>• Proposals to invest in coastal areas and fishing villages</li> </ul> <p>The Council has considered the issues raised and included 'supporting actions' around the rural economy, rural broadband and investing in rural areas.</p> <p>The objectives of the Performance Improvement Plan seek to make a positive impact across all areas of the district.</p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Conditions of Hire for Use of Council Facilities will</p>	<p>Community engagement</p>
<p><b>Performance Improvement Plan 2019-2020</b></p> <p><i>Performance Improvement Plan 2019-20 - 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.</i></p> <p><i>The Council is required to set annual improvement objectives and to have in place arrangements to achieve these objectives.</i></p> <p><i>The Council has developed five performance improvement objectives which are directly aligned to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Outcomes Delivery Plan.</i></p>	<p><b>Draft conditions of hire for use of council facilities</b></p> <p><i>The draft Conditions of Hire for Use of Council Facilities sets out booking conditions for anyone seeking to hire Council facilities. This will apply to both groups and individuals.</i></p>



<p>have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p> <p>The criteria and principles of this document will apply to all facilities regardless of where they are located in the district.</p>	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Equality Action Plan will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas. The specific actions detailed within the plan will be implemented across the district.</p> <p>The draft Equality Action Plan will be subject to a twelve-week public consultation.</p>	<p>Community engagement</p> <p><b>Draft Equality Action Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>The draft Equality Action Plan 2020–2023 builds upon Council's action plan for the period 2018-2020. It recommends key areas of activity and details positive actions relevant to Council functions. The positive action measures have been set out under the five principles of the Equality and Diversity in Local Councils Framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Principle 1:</b> Ensuring we work in a non-discriminatory environment, promote equality, and model best practice in equality and good relations</li> <li>• <b>Principle 2:</b> Ensuring all our decisions are based on evidence to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations</li> <li>• <b>Principle 3:</b> Providing access to services, facilities and information</li> <li>• <b>Principle 4:</b> Recruiting and employing people fairly</li> <li>• <b>Principle 5:</b> Responding to and learning from complaints and incidents in a positive and pro-active way</li> </ul> <p><b>Draft Irish Language Strategy 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>The Strategy sets out a twofold mission as follows:</i></p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>

*the internal administration of Council, and in its dealings with other public bodies and the community.*

- To embed equality of opportunity standards, address barriers of access to information and services, promote the development of the Irish Language, and to give leadership in meeting the evidenced needs of existing and emerging Irish language communities within the District.*

The Strategy sets out how Council will continue to:

- increase the use of Irish language within its functions;
- facilitate the use of the Irish language when communicating with the public and relevant stakeholders; and
- promote and encourage the development of the Irish language across the Council area.

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. The specific actions detailed within the plan will be implemented across the district.

The draft Irish Language Strategy will be subject to a twelve-week public consultation.

**Financial Assistance Policy**

*overall aim of financial assistance is to enable Council to maximise the impact of its work across the Council area for the benefit of local residents.*

*The objectives of the policy are to:*

- Maximise the impact of, and outcomes from, all Council funding.*
- Seek to address needs which are clearly demonstrated and fall within, or are compatible with, Council priorities.*
- Increase community engagement and voluntary participation in addressing areas of common concern.*
- Enhance the sustainability of community-based activities and provision.*
- Support community-based work which addresses the needs of those who are most deprived.*

**Cross cutting**

This policy relates to open calls for funding and sets the basis for providing financial assistance to external organisations within the Council area. It sets out the rationale for such funding and the basis on which it should be provided, monitored and evaluated.

The financial assistance programme is available to all groups within the Council area. The Programmes Unit monitor applications and provide a breakdown of all funding allocated across the Council's seven District Electoral Areas.

Acknowledging the geographical spread of the district and its urban and rural nature, to further improve engagement and access to information on the scheme, financial assistance workshops were held in across the district.

<p><i>respect, understanding and appreciation of diversity and shared cultural experiences.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure fairness, transparency and value for money in all Council's Financial Assistance Practice.</i></li> </ul>		
<p><b>ERDF Business Support Programme 2019</b></p> <p><i>The Strategy is developed around 5 themes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Economic Development</i></li> <li>• <i>Tourism Development, Marketing, Promotion and Events</i></li> <li>• <i>Urban Development and Regeneration</i></li> <li>• <i>Rural Development and Regeneration</i></li> <li>• <i>Arts, Culture and Heritage</i></li> </ul>	Cross cutting	<p>Within the Council area, more residents of the district live in rural areas than urban areas. In particular, more young people (up to the age 15) and older people (65+) live in areas designated as rural.</p> <p>While the objectives in the programme are for all business activity across the district, it is recognised that rural accessibility to workshops and networking opportunities is important. In planning programmes consideration will be given to ensuring travel to events is minimised and that public transport links are optimised.</p>
<p><b>Non-Current Asset Policy and Procedures</b></p> <p><i>The aim of the Non-Current Asset Policy and Procedures is to clearly set out the Council's policy and procedures in relation to the appropriate management, recording and monitoring and accounting of Non-Current Assets and to ensure that all members and officers are aware of their roles and responsibilities.</i></p>	Internal	<p>In terms of social and economic needs, Council's Evidence and Research Section has prepared information related to population, multiple deprivation, access to services (broadband provision and transport), economy, income and employment, housing, crime and health and wellbeing which can be taken into consideration.</p> <p>However, having given due regard to rural needs Council has not identified specific social and economic needs directly related to this policy and procedures.</p> <p>The policy and procedures set out inward-facing internal requirements and no specific direct or indirect impact upon people living in rural or urban areas has been identified or established.</p>
<p><b>Legionella Management Policy</b></p> <p><i>The policy and procedure sets out how Council will prevent, so as far as is reasonably</i></p>	Internal	<p>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</p>

<p><i>in prearranged form that can be initiated by employees and others who may be present in the workplace.</i></p>		<p>services, economy, income and transport, housing, crime, and health and wellbeing.</p> <p>There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the policy will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p> <p>The policy and procedures set out inward-facing internal requirements and no specific direct or indirect impact upon people living in rural or urban areas has been identified or established.</p>
<p><b>Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2020-2021</b></p> <p><i>The purpose of the Bursary Scheme is to assist individuals to improve Irish Language skills through providing scholarships or bursaries for Irish Language courses, including Gaeltacht colleges, intensive courses and third level courses taking place within the Council's financial year (1 April – 31 March).</i></p>	<p>Education and training in rural areas</p>	<p>As noted, 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.</p> <p>The bursary scheme is delivered by way of an open call for applications through Council's social media, website and an advert in local media, and there is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Irish Language Bursary Scheme will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p> <p>Applicants may submit their application by post, hand-delivery or email. Acknowledging that access to Broadband may be limited in some rural areas within the district, the application form is available for collection from council offices or by contacting the Council's Irish Language Unit.</p>
<p><b>Review of Development naming, Postal Numbering and Erection of Nameplates Policy</b></p> <p><i>The policy provides a consistent approach to the naming/re-naming of streets and dual language</i></p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>	<p>While this is a policy for all areas of the district, issues of cultural identity have also been considered in the development of the policy in relation to the erection of dual language nameplates.</p> <p>Rural communities have an identity with 'place' and the locality or townland within which they live. The council</p>

<p>have recognised this and sought to promote this identity through the use of the townlands in their road naming and postal numbering administration. This is reflected in the current policy.</p>		
<p>The development and implementation of the Council's International Relations Strategy Council takes account of, and acknowledges urban and rural differentials between business bands, type and location. Consideration will be given to this when addressing the objectives and related actions in the strategy.</p> <p>In addition, the strategy sets out an assessment framework that will evaluate existing and proposed new international relations partnerships / activities and makes a commitment to measuring and reporting outcomes.</p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>	<p><b>International Relations Strategy</b></p> <p><i>The strategy sets out Council's approach to developing international relations in terms of our role, and the context of strengthening relationships, demonstrating civic leadership, maximising business and cultural opportunities associated with our diaspora, and identifying new market opportunities, promote trade and investment, and attract visitors and tourism.</i></p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Having considered this information, there is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the policy will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p>	<p>Internal</p>	<p><b>Portable Safety Appliance Policy</b></p> <p><i>The objectives of this policy and associated Management Plan are to A) Ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that portable electrical appliances used within the Council estate do not present a risk to the health, safety and welfare of staff, contractors, clients and visitors to the Council estate. B) Provide and maintain safe systems of work for the use of portable electrical appliances, that are safe and without risk to health. C) Provide such information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure employees carry out their jobs safely.</i></p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>	<p><b>Public Toilet Strategy</b></p> <p><i>The strategy has been developed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council providing guidance on a way forward for provision, control and management of its Public Toilet facilities within the district. The strategy provides recommendations and proposals on how the</i></p>

<p><b>Sports Facility Strategy</b></p> <p><i>The Strategy aim is to develop a strategic framework for the future provision of sports facilities in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. This identifies the need for provision and the priorities for investment into sports facilities, informed by evidence of need, consultation with key stakeholders and a supply and demand analysis.</i></p>	<p>Community engagement</p>	<p>While this is a strategy for the entire district and as noted within 2B, people living in specific rural areas which may be positively impacted by improvement works recommendations include those living within the areas of Spelga, Cranfield and Dundrum (Murlough).</p>
		<p>Consideration was given to rural needs for people living in rural areas, with specific reference to 20-minute and 15- minute drive times for residents. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in relation to sports hall provision, page 9 of the report identified the district has three or four court sports hall provision within a 20-minute drive time of its residents.</li> <li>• Map 3.2 (page 46), Map (4.3) and Section 4.34 (page 62) illustrates the locations of existing swimming pools and shows where the gaps are in provision for residents within a 20-minute drive time catchment area of a community accessible swimming pool.</li> <li>• Map 4.7 (page 80) illustrates existing Artificial Grass Pitches in the Council area with a 20-minute drive time catchment area.</li> <li>• Map 4.5 (page 69) illustrates existing fitness suites in the Council area with a 15-minute drive time catchment area.</li> </ul> <p>The strategy, priorities and recommendations detailed within the Strategy have been developed through an evidence-based approach, including community consultation.</p> <p>The assessment and analysis undertaken to develop the Sports Facility Strategy has identified a need for some additional provision, across a range of facility types, as well as more generic needs in terms of improvement to</p>

<p>the quality of existing facilities and the accessibility of provision. All new and improved facility provision should be fully inclusive to optimise participation opportunities across communities, including people living in rural areas.</p>	
<p>The social and economic needs of people in rural areas are not an underpinning factor in the implementation of the Records Management Policy and Procedure.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the policy is likely to impact people in rural areas.</p>	<p>Internal</p>
<p><b>Records Management Policy and Procedures</b></p> <p><i>The aim of the Records Management Policy and Procedure is to ensure NMDDC's compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements affecting the use and retention of records in accordance with The Public Records Act (NI) 1923, The Disposal of Documents Order (No. 167) 1925, The Data Protection Act 2018, The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</i></p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>
<p><b>Review of Operations at Household Recycling Centres</b></p> <p><i>The aim and objective is to establish guiding principles in relation to Council's Household Recycling Centres. The primary rationale is to secure standardisation across all HRCs, as well as to reduce the amount of (non-recyclable) residual waste currently being received and processed through these facilities. The principles address the following: General access &amp; usage; Construction / DIY materials; Commercial waste; and Re-Use.</i></p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>
<p><b>Rules and Regulations re Council Owned Cemeteries</b></p> <p><i>The aim of the document is to provide residents and non-residents of the district with guidance on</i></p>	<p>Social and economic needs of people in the rural areas includes access, and distance, to the council owned cemeteries and associated costs.</p> <p>In terms of people living in rural areas, it is acknowledged that within the Slieve Gullion District</p>

<p><i>The objective is to ensure that Council undertakes it legal obligations and ensures that a consistent high level of service is provided.</i></p>		<p>Electoral Area, people living west of Newtownhamilton and Silverbridge may be outside the 30-minute drive time of a Council owned cemetery (Monkshill Cemetery, Newry).</p> <p>However, there is nothing to suggest that the rules and regulations for the control of public cemeteries within the district will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas. This is an operational policy which details how burials are arranged in council owned cemeteries.</p>
<p><b>Single Use Plastics Policy</b></p> <p><i>The Policy aims to phase out all use of single use plastics (plastic cutlery, cups, plates, bottles, packaging, etc.) across the council. It also aims to influence other stakeholders including businesses, schools, statutory bodies and members of the public to move away from using single use plastics. This will reduce our impacts on the environment in particular with respect to waste and litter.</i></p>	<p>Cross cutting</p>	<p>The actions detailed in the Council's Single Use Plastics Policy and Strategy will have positive impacts on all people of the district regardless of urban or rural areas.</p> <p>There is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the Council's Single Use Plastics Policy and Strategy will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p>
<p><b>Policy and Procedure for the Personal Safety of Employees Exposed to Workplace Violence</b></p> <p><i>The policy and procedure sets out how Council will deal with the act or threat of physical violence or verbal abuse from a member, or members, of the public to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council employees.</i></p>	<p>Internal</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The policy and procedure will be applied irrespective of the rural or urban background of the person or persons undertaking acts or threats of physical violence or verbal abuse to a Council employee or employees.</p>



<p><b>Fire Safety Management Policy</b></p> <p><i>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and others who may be affected by activities on its premises. The policy statement and associated Fire Safety Management Plan (Management Plan) has been developed to ensure that fire safety systems and procedures are in place to manage the risk associated with fire and to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.</i></p>	<p>Internal</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Having considered this information, there is nothing to suggest that the implementation of the policy will have an adverse impact upon people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.</p> <p>This is an internal policy and its procedures will be implemented across all Council facilities in the district.</p>
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## NOTES

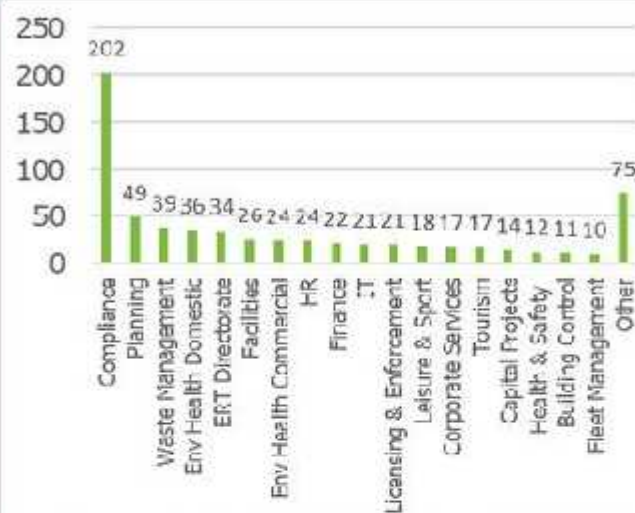
1. This information should normally be contained in section 1B of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
2. This information should normally be contained in section 2D of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
3. The information contained in sections 3D, 4A & 5B of the RNIA Template should be considered when completing this section.

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	FOI/EIR/DP monitoring statistics
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Alison Robb Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Edel Cosgrove Head of Compliance

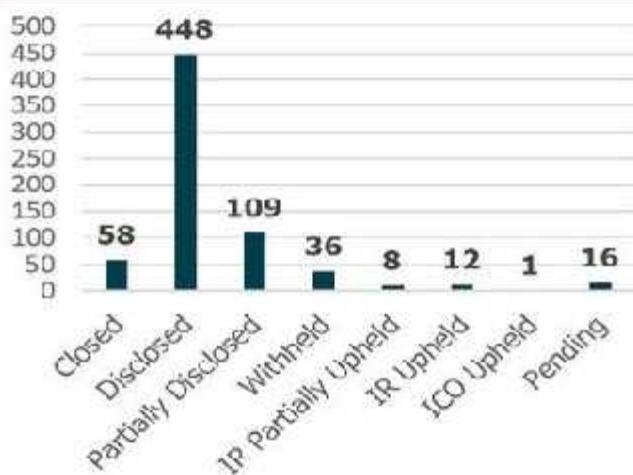
<b>For decision</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background</b>	
1.1	The purpose of this paper is to present the monitoring statistics for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 in relation to the 688 requests for information (RFI) received to Council and processed under 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.	
1.2	17 Breach Reviews are also included within the 688 count. 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. Details of each individual breach are reported in the Corporate Services Quarterly Assurance Statement under the section risks realised.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>	
2.1	The collection and reporting of this information will enable Council to establish trends in requests for information, allocate resource and determine staff training needs.	
2.2	Analysis commenced in the 2018/19 financial year. A copy of the 2018/19 statistics was presented to the Committee on 13 June 2019 ( <a href="#">page 219</a> ).	
2.3	The first chart attached provides comparative figures for 2018/19 and 2019/20.	
2.4	Most notable is the reduction in RFI, from 870 (2018/19) to 688 (2019/20). Nevertheless, this has likely resulted in a 10% increase in responses being achieved within the deadline from 85% (2018/19) to 95% (2019/20).	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	
3.1	Councillors are asked to note the monitoring statistics.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>	
4.1	None.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>	
5.1	None identified.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Rural Proofing implications</b>	
6.1	None identified.	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	
	FOI/EIR/DP monitoring statistics.	
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>	
8.1	Access to Information Policy and Procedure (presented to the Committee on 13 June 2019, <a href="#">pages 220 – 252</a> ).	



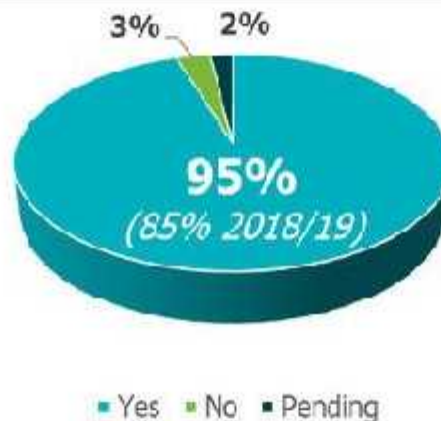
Number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2020 per quarter.



Number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2020 per lead Department.



Decisions on the number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2020.



Percentage of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2020 responded within the deadline.

423  
FOI

176  
EIR

67  
DP

Number of requests for information from 1 April – 31 March 2020 per regime.

From 1 April – 31 March 2020

Number of ICO complaints:

5



ICO decisions:

- 1 Council decision Upheld
- 4 Pending

Number of Data Breach reviews 1 April – 31 March 2020.

17

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 June 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return; 2 January 2019 – 1 January 2020
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Catrina Miskelly (Assistant Director Corporate Services: (HR & Safeguarding)
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Anne Jennings (HR Business Support Manager)

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	<b>x</b>
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<b>1.0 Purpose and Background</b>																																																																											
1.1	The Council is required under Article 52 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 and Regulations 17 and 18 of the Fair Employment (Monitoring) Regulations (NI) 1999 (as amended) to annually prepare and submit a monitoring return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI).																																																																										
1.2	The Council's Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return for year ended 1 January 2020, was submitted to the ECNI on 1 May 2020 (a copy is enclosed with this report).																																																																										
<b>2.0 Key issues</b>																																																																											
2.1	A comparison of this year's Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return vs last year's is provided at 2.3 of this report and provides comparative information at 1 January 2020 vs 1 January 2019 on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Numbers of employees</li> <li>b. Community background of employees</li> <li>c. Numbers of applicants, appointees and leavers; including community background</li> </ul>																																																																										
2.2	For purposes of the Return: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) an <b>applicant</b> is defined as a person who has applied to fill a vacancy during the 12-month period. Where they have applied to fill a vacancy on more than one occasion during the 12-month period, only their first application is included in the return.</li> <li>(ii) an <b>appointee</b> is a person who filled a vacancy during the 12-month period and are still in employment on the end date of return. Where they have been appointed more than once during the period, their first appointment is included in the return.</li> <li>(iii) a <b>leaver</b> is a former employee who ceased to be employed during the 12-month period. Where a former employee has left more than once during the 12-month period, the first occasion is included in the return.</li> </ul>																																																																										
2.3	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="3">2019 Totals</th> <th colspan="3">2020 Totals</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>P</th> <th>RC</th> <th>ND</th> <th>P</th> <th>RC</th> <th>ND</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>EMPLOYEES</b></td> <td>1007</td> <td>17.18%</td> <td>78.75%</td> <td>4.07%</td> <td><b>EMPLOYEES</b></td> <td>1031</td> <td>16.97%</td> <td>79.24%</td> <td>3.78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Male</b></td> <td>57.60%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td><b>Male</b></td> <td>57.23%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Female</b></td> <td>42.40%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td><b>Female</b></td> <td>42.77%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>APPLICANTS</b></td> <td>1636</td> <td>18.46%</td> <td>79.52%</td> <td>2.02%</td> <td><b>APPLICANTS</b></td> <td>1082</td> <td>20.15%</td> <td>77.82%</td> <td>2.03%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>APPOINTEES</b></td> <td>202</td> <td>14.85%</td> <td>83.17%</td> <td>1.98%</td> <td><b>APPOINTEES</b></td> <td>171</td> <td>14.62%</td> <td>81.29%</td> <td>4.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>LEAVERS</b></td> <td>69</td> <td>23.19%</td> <td>73.91%</td> <td>2.90%</td> <td><b>LEAVERS</b></td> <td>105</td> <td>19.05%</td> <td>76.19%</td> <td>4.76%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2019 Totals			2020 Totals				P	RC	ND	P	RC	ND	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	1007	17.18%	78.75%	4.07%	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	1031	16.97%	79.24%	3.78%	<b>Male</b>	57.60%				<b>Male</b>	57.23%				<b>Female</b>	42.40%				<b>Female</b>	42.77%				<b>APPLICANTS</b>	1636	18.46%	79.52%	2.02%	<b>APPLICANTS</b>	1082	20.15%	77.82%	2.03%	<b>APPOINTEES</b>	202	14.85%	83.17%	1.98%	<b>APPOINTEES</b>	171	14.62%	81.29%	4.09%	<b>LEAVERS</b>	69	23.19%	73.91%	2.90%	<b>LEAVERS</b>	105	19.05%	76.19%	4.76%
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<b>Female</b>	42.40%				<b>Female</b>	42.77%																																																																					
<b>APPLICANTS</b>	1636	18.46%	79.52%	2.02%	<b>APPLICANTS</b>	1082	20.15%	77.82%	2.03%																																																																		
<b>APPOINTEES</b>	202	14.85%	83.17%	1.98%	<b>APPOINTEES</b>	171	14.62%	81.29%	4.09%																																																																		
<b>LEAVERS</b>	69	23.19%	73.91%	2.90%	<b>LEAVERS</b>	105	19.05%	76.19%	4.76%																																																																		



## FAIR EMPLOYMENT MONITORING RETURN

237

## FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND TREATMENT (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1998

**FAIR EMPLOYMENT (MONITORING) REGULATIONS  
(NORTHERN IRELAND) 1999  
(AS AMENDED)**

The monitoring form is in five parts.

- Parts A, B, and E must be completed by ALL registered employers and Public Authorities.
- Part C to be completed ONLY by registered employers and Public Authorities who have employed apprentices i.e. employees employed under a contract of apprenticeship during the twelve month period ending on the date at A2.
- Part D must be completed ONLY by employers with more than 250 employees and Public Authorities.

**Guidance notes to assist you in completing your monitoring return are enclosed with this form.**

**The Step by Step Guide to Completing a monitoring return is available online.**

■ PART A

A1. Registration No. 38163 Date Format DD/MM/YYYY

A2. Date to which the information should relate 01/01/2020

A3. Deadline for return 01/05/2020

see note  
page 3

***Failure to complete and return this monitoring return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland by the date at A3 is a criminal offence and carries on conviction a fine of up to £5,000***



**■ PART A** *To be completed by all Registered Employers and Public Authorities.*

- A2** The date to which this return relates is your date (or anniversary) of registration with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.
- A6** List those premises, other than the address at A5, at which employees worked. It is not necessary for the employer to own or occupy the premises. If there is insufficient space in the form, continue on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the form.

**■ PART A** *To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.*

A4 Name of employer

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

A5 Address

Monaghan Row \_\_\_\_\_  
 Newry \_\_\_\_\_  
 BT35 8DJ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

A6 List other locations

see note  
page 3 above

See attached list \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



■ **PART B** *To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.*

- B7(a) &** To complete the columns in these tables, you will require a copy of the Jan 2013 edition of the "**Index for Classifying Job Titles**", which is available free of charge from the Equality Commission. The Index for Classifying Job Titles ascribes job titles to a major group of Standard Occupational Classification (SOC groups).
- B7(b)**

Apprentices (employees who are employed under contracts of apprenticeship) should also be included in the appropriate SOC group (i.e. the occupation for which they are being trained) within the tables. Information on apprentices should also be given in Part C.

You should include in columns (4) and (7) only those of your employees whom you have been unable to identify as Protestant or Roman Catholic having used the "**Principal**" method or "**Residuary**" method of monitoring.

The **principal** method and **residuary** method of monitoring are described in an explanatory "Step by Step Guide to Monitoring" which is available from the Equality Commission.

Include all persons who were employees on the date at A2.

In the **FT** (Full Time) columns include those employees who **normally work 16 hours or more each week**.

In the **PT** (Part Time) columns include those employees who **normally work less than 16 hours each week**.

Also ensure that you include any individual who on the date at A2 was under a contract personally to execute any work or labour, for example, a self-employed person.

- B9(a) &** Where you are unable by means of the "**principal method**" to determine the community background of an employee, you are permitted to use the "**residuary method**" to establish the community background. The method is described in the Commission's "Step by Step Guide to Monitoring" available from the Equality Commission.
- B9(b)**

Include the number of employees whose religion you have been unable to identify using the principal method of monitoring but for whom you were able to ascribe a community background using the "**residuary method**". These employees will also have been included in tables B7(a) and B7(b).

■ **PART B** *To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.*

If this is your first monitoring return you are not required to complete questions B10 to B15.

**However** it is important that you begin collecting the information in respect of applicants and appointees required in questions B10 to B15 as you will be required to complete these questions in your second and subsequent annual monitoring returns.

If this is your second or subsequent return you are required to complete questions B10 to B15.

**B10 to B12** For the purposes of these questions, an applicant is a person who applied to fill a vacancy for employment whether Full Time (FT) or Part Time (PT) regardless of whether or not they are already in your employment.

Where an applicant has applied to fill a vacancy on more than one occasion during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2, only include the first application in this return.

**B13 to B15** For the purposes of these questions appointees are those persons who filled a vacancy for employment in the 12 month period ending on the date at A2 and are still in employment in your concern on the date at A2.

Where a person has been appointed more than once during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2 only include the first appointment in this return.

**MALE EMPLOYEES** To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.

242

**PART B**

The information in this part of the form relates to your monitoring date. 01/01/2020

see note  
page 4

Full Time = 16 hours or more

**B7(a)** Enter in the appropriate box the number of male employees on your monitoring date as described in columns (2) to (4) who are employed in each of the Standard Occupational Classifications as described in column (1).

(1) Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups	(2) No. of Protestant Male employees			(3) No. of Roman Catholic Male employees			(4) No. of Male employees whose community cannot be determined		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
1 Managers and senior officials	18	0	18	27	0	27	4	0	4
2 Professional occupations	8	0	8	22	1	23	1	0	1
3 Associate professional & technical occupations	13	2	15	60	3	63	4	0	4
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	1	1	2	15	0	15	1	0	1
5 Skilled trades occupations	14	1	15	62	1	63	1	0	1
6 Personal service occupations	9	2	11	73	18	91	3	0	3
7 Sales and customer service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Process, plant and machine operatives	9	0	9	101	1	102	1	0	1
9 Elementary occupations	13	0	13	97	0	97	3	0	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>

**B8 (a) TOTAL NO. OF MALE EMPLOYEES ON YOUR MONITORING DATE.**

590

**B9(a)** Enter in the appropriate box below the number of male employees whose community was determined using the residuary method of monitoring.

	No. of Protestant Male employees			No. of Roman Catholic Male employees		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Male employees whose community has been determined under the <b>residuary method</b> of monitoring	1	0	1	11	1	12

**FEMALE EMPLOYEES** To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.

**PART B**

The information in this part of the form relates to your monitoring date. **01/01/2020**

see note page 4

**Full Time = 16 hours or more**

**B7(b)** Enter in the appropriate box the number of female employees on your monitoring date as described in columns (5) to (7) who are employed in each of the Standard Occupational Classifications as described in column (1).

(1) Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups	(5) No. of Protestant Female employees			(6) No. of Roman Catholic Female employees			(7) No. of Female employees whose community cannot be determined		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
1 Managers and senior officials	5	1	6	35	0	35	1	0	1
2 Professional occupations	5	0	5	23	0	23	0	0	0
3 Associate professional & technical occupations	24	2	26	85	11	96	10	2	12
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	32	4	36	124	14	138	6	0	6
5 Skilled trades occupations	1	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0
6 Personal service occupations	6	1	7	26	4	30	0	2	2
7 Sales and customer service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Process, plant and machine operatives	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
9 Elementary occupations	3	0	3	8	2	10	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>21</b>

**B8(b) TOTAL NO. OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES ON YOUR MONITORING DATE.**

**441**

**B9(b)** Enter in the appropriate box below the number of female employees whose community was determined using the residuary method of monitoring.

	No. of Protestant Female employees			No. of Roman Catholic Female employees		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Female employees whose community has been determined under the <b>residuary method</b> of monitoring	2	0	2	8	0	8

**APPLICANTS** To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.

244

**PART B**

The information in this part of the form relates to the 12 month monitoring period.

see note  
page 5

**B10** Enter the number of applicants for employment in each of the Standard Occupational Classifications as described in column (1)

(1) Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups	(2) No. of Protestant Male applicants	(3) No. of Roman Catholic Male applicants	(4) No. of Male applicants whose community cannot be determined	(5) No. of Protestant Female applicants	(6) No. of Roman Catholic Female applicants	(7) No. of Female applicants whose community cannot be determined
1 Managers and senior officials	22	36	2	15	23	0
2 Professional occupations	5	12	2	2	13	0
3 Associate professional & technical occupations	31	113	3	36	116	2
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	4	30	1	32	111	2
5 Skilled trades occupations	9	48	1	4	41	0
6 Personal service occupations	21	95	2	10	84	2
7 Sales and customer service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Process, plant and machine operatives	15	46	1	0	1	0
9 Elementary occupations	9	70	2	3	3	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>8</b>

**B11** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of applicants above who are male, the number who are female and the total number of applicants.

	Male	Female	Total
Applicants	<b>580</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>1,082</b>

**B12** Enter in the appropriate box below the number of applicants whose community was determined using the residuary method of monitoring.

	No. of Protestant Male applicants	No. of Roman Catholic Male applicants	No. of Protestant Female applicants	No. of Roman Catholic Female applicants
Applicants whose community has been determined under the <b>residuary method</b> of monitoring	13	32	11	15

**APPOINTEES** To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities.

245

**PART B**

The information in this part of the form relates to the 12 month monitoring period.

see note  
page 5

**B13** Enter the number of appointees who are **STILL** employees in each of the Standard Occupational Classifications as described in column (1).

(1) Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups	(2) No. of Protestant Male appointees	(3) No. of Roman Catholic Male appointees	(4) No. of Male appointees whose community cannot be determined	(5) No. of Protestant Female appointees	(6) No. of Roman Catholic Female appointees	(7) No. of Female appointees whose community cannot be determined
1 Managers and senior officials	2	1	1	1	5	0
2 Professional occupations	2	5	1	1	7	0
3 Associate professional & technical occupations	5	15	1	4	25	2
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	0	4	0	5	23	1
5 Skilled trades occupations	0	6	0	0	0	0
6 Personal service occupations	3	25	1	0	7	0
7 Sales and customer service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Process, plant and machine operatives	1	11	0	0	0	0
9 Elementary occupations	0	4	0	1	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>3</b>

**B14** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of appointees above who are male, the number who are female and the total number of appointees.

	Male	Female	Total
Appointees	<b>88</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>171</b>

**B15** Enter in the appropriate box below the number of appointees whose community was determined using the residuary method of monitoring.

	No. of Protestant Male appointees	No. of Roman Catholic Male appointees	No. of Protestant Female appointees	No. of Roman Catholic Female appointees
Appointees whose community has been determined under the <b>residuary method</b> of monitoring	1	3	1	2

**APPRENTICES**

**PART C** TO BE COMPLETED ONLY BY REGISTERED EMPLOYERS AND PUBLIC AUTHORITIES WHO EMPLOYED APPRENTICES DURING THE 12 MONTH PERIOD ENDING ON THE DATE AT A2.

**C16(a)** For the purposes of these questions an apprentice is an employee employed under a & contract of apprenticeship.

**C16(b)**

Apprentices should have already been included in B7(a) and B7(b).

**APPRENTICE EMPLOYEES**

**C16(a)** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of FT (Full Time - 16 hours or more), PT (Part Time - less than 16 hours) and Total male apprentices on the date at A2, who are included in columns (2) to (4), B7(a).

	No. of Protestant Male apprentices			No. of Roman Catholic Male apprentices			No. of Male apprentices whose community cannot be determined		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Apprentices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**C16(b)** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of FT (Full Time - 16 hours or more), PT (Part Time - less than 16 hours) and Total female apprentices on the date at A2, who are included in columns (5) to (7), B7(b).

	No. of Protestant Female apprentices			No. of Roman Catholic Female apprentices			No. of Female apprentices whose community cannot be determined		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Apprentices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## PROMOTEES AND LEAVERS

247

**PART D** To be completed by Registered Employers with more than 250 employees at any time during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2 and by all Public Authorities.

If this is your first monitoring return you are not required to complete questions D17 to D20.

However it is important that you begin collecting the information in respect of promotees and leavers in questions D17 to D20 as you will be required to complete these questions in your second and subsequent annual monitoring return.

If this is your second or subsequent monitoring return you are required to complete questions D17 to D20.

**D17 to D20** If at the start of the 12 month period ending at the date at A2 you employ more than 250 employees (including both part time and full time employees) irrespective of whether the number of employees falls below that number during the 12 month period you must complete questions D17 to D20.

If at any time during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2 you employed more than 250 employees you must complete D17 to D20 including the relevant information **from the date at which your workforce exceeded 250** until the date at A2.

**D17** For the purposes of this question a promotee is a person who fills all 4 of the following conditions:

- (i) the employee has moved from one job to another within the concern; and
- (ii) in doing so the employee fills a job which was restricted to persons already employed in the concern; and
- (iii) the employee remained in the new job or was notified in writing that he would so remain, for a continuous period of not less than 6 months; and
- (iv) as a direct result of the move the employee received an increase in pay (excluding expenses).

The SOC information in relation to promotees should relate to the position into which the person has been promoted.

Where an employee has been promoted more than once during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2 only the first promotion should be included in the monitoring return.

The information in the return relating to promotees should only relate to persons who are still in employment on the date at A2. The information should be included even if the person is no longer in the promoted post.

**D19 & D20** For the purposes of these questions a leaver is a former employee who ceased to be employed in your concern during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2.

Where a former employee has left more than once during the 12 month period ending on the date at A2 only the first occasion should be recorded on the monitoring return.



**PROMOTEES**

248

**PART D** To be completed *ONLY* by Registered Employers who employ more than 250 employees and ALL Public Authorities.

The information in this part of the form relates to the 12 month period ending on the date at A2.

see note  
page 11

**D17** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of promotees (who are employees at A2) in the major groups of the **Standard Occupational Classification** as described in column (1).

(1) Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups	(2) No. of Protestant Male promotees	(3) No. of Roman Catholic Male promotees	(4) No. of Male promotees whose community cannot be determined	(5) No. of Protestant Female promotees	(6) No. of Roman Catholic Female promotees	(7) No. of Female promotees whose community cannot be determined
1 Managers and senior officials	0	1	0	0	0	0
2 Professional occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
3 Associate professional & technical occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	0	0	0	0	1	0
5 Skilled trades occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
6 Personal service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Sales and customer service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Process, plant and machine operatives	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Elementary occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

**D18** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of promotees above who are male, the number who are female and the total number of promotees.

	Male	Female	Total
Promotees	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

## LEAVERS

249

**PART D** To be completed ONLY by Registered Employers who employ more than 250 employees and ALL P Authorities.

The information in this part of the form relates to the 12 month period ending on the date at A2.

see note  
page 11

**D19** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of leavers in the major groups of the Standard Occupational Classification as described in column (1).

(1) Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups	(2) No. of Protestant Male leavers	(3) No. of Roman Catholic Male leavers	(4) No. of Male leavers whose community cannot be determined	(5) No. of Protestant Female leavers	(6) No. of Roman Catholic Female leavers	(7) No. of Female leavers whose community cannot be determined
1 Managers and senior officials	1	4	0	1	1	0
2 Professional occupations	0	2	0	0	0	0
3 Associate professional & technical occupations	1	0	1	5	8	0
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	0	4	1	1	14	1
5 Skilled trades occupations	4	12	0	3	10	0
6 Personal service occupations	1	7	0	1	8	1
7 Sales and customer service occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Process, plant and machine operatives	1	3	1	0	0	0
9 Elementary occupations	1	6	0	0	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>2</b>

**D20** Enter into the appropriate box below the number of leavers above who are male, the number who are female and the total number of leavers.

	Male	Female	Total
Leavers	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>105</b>

**PART E To be completed by ALL Registered Employers and Public Authorities**

250

<b>E21</b>	Signed	<input type="text"/>
<b>E22</b>	Print name	<input type="text" value="Anne Jennings"/>
<b>E23</b>	Position in concern	<input type="text" value="HR Business Support Manager"/>
<b>E24</b>	Date	<input type="text" value="30 April 2020"/>

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION****E25** Please give a contact for any queries arising from this return:

Name	<input type="text" value="Anne Jennings"/>
Telephone No	<input type="text" value="03301374287"/>
Fax No	<input type="text" value="N/A"/>
Email Address:	<input type="text" value="anne.jennings@rmandd.org"/>

**THIS FORM SHOULD BE PRINTED, SIGNED AND SENT TO:**


**Equality Commission for Northern Ireland  
 Equality House  
 7-9 Shaftesbury Square  
 BELFAST BT2 7DP**

**BEFORE THE DEADLINE AT A3 01/05/2020**

**YOU ARE ADVISED TO KEEP A COPY OF YOUR COMPLETED  
 MONITORING RETURN FORM FOR YOUR OWN INFORMATION**

*If you require any advice or assistance in completing this return contact the  
 Equality Commission at the above address or telephone 028 90 500600*







Locations
All Council Facilities
All Leisure Facilities
Amenity Skip Site (Camlough)
Amenity Skip Site (Hilltown)
Amenity Skip Site (Kilkeel)
Amenity Skip Site (Newry)
Amenity Skip Site (N'Hamilton)
Amenity Skip Site (Warrenpoint)
Bagenal's Castle
Ballykine HRC
Ballymote
Ballynahinch Centre
Bann Rd CC
Bann Road HRC
Barcroft Community Centre
Bessbrook Community Centre
Castlewellan (Bann Road)
Cloonagh Road
Cloughreagh Community Centre
Crossmaglen Community Centre
Crossmaglen General
Crossmaglen HRC
Dan Rice Hall
Delamont Country Park
Delamont Park
Down Arts Centre and Down Coun
Down Civic Arts Centre
Down County Museum
Down Leisure Centre
Downpatrick TIC
Downshire Civic Centre
Drumanakelly Landfill Site
Dundrum
Dunleath DLC
Forkhill & Meigh CC
Greenbank Council Offices
Household Recycling Centres wi
Kilbroney Park
Kilkeel Bowling Green
Kilkeel General
Kilkeel Harbour
Kilkeel Leisure Centre
Killough DLC
Killyleagh Community Centre
Kilmore
Market House

McGrath Centre
Meadow/High Street
Monaghan Court
Monaghan Row Council Offices
Newcastle Centre
Newcastle TIC
Newry Arts Centre
Newry Leisure Centre
Newry Town Hall
Newry Variety Market
O Flaich House
Rostrevor General
Sieve Gullion
St Colman's Sport & Community
Strangford DLC
Strangford Road Depot
Warrenpoint General
Warrenpoint Park
Warrenpoint Town Hall