



June 17th, 2021

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 17th June 2021 at 6:00 pm** in **Microsoft Teams**.

Chairperson - Councillor O Hanlon

Deputy Chairperson - Councillor P Brown

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor S Doran

Councillor H Gallagher

Councillor R Howell

Councillor O Magennis

Councillor D Murphy

Councillor B O'Muirí

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Savage

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor J Tinnelly

Councillor W Walker

Agenda

1.0 Introduction and Apologies

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 To agree start times for SP&R Committee Meeting from June 2021 to April 2022. (Attached)

 *SPR Schedule of Meetings.pdf*

Page 1

4.0 Action Sheet arising from SPR Committee Meeting held on Thursday 13 May 2021 (Attached)

 *SPR-Action Sheet arising from 13 May 2021.pdf*

Page 2

Corporate Planning and Policy

5.0 Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure (Attached)

 *Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.pdf*

Page 8

 *22 SOCIAL MEDIA AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.PDF*

Page 10

 *22 SOCIAL MEDIA AND ACCEPTABLE USE PROCEDURE.PDF*

Page 19

For Discussion/Decision - Open Session

6.0 Directorate Business Plans. (Attached)

 *SPR Cover Report Directorate Business Plans.pdf*

Page 37

 *Appendix 1 Assessment of the CX Emergency Business Plan.pdf*

Page 40

 *Appendix 2 - Assessment of Corporate Service's Emergency Plan Oct 2020-March 2021..pdf*

Page 50

 *Appendix 3 CX Business Plan 2021-22.pdf*

Page 73


 *Appendix 4 - Corporate Services Business Plan 2021-22.pdf*

Page 86

7.0 Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 (Attached)

 *SPR Cover Report Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22.pdf*


Page 104

 **Appendix 1 Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 SPR.pdf** **Page 108**

 **Appendix 2 Consultation and Engagement Report.pdf** **Page 145**

 **Appendix 3 Objective Delivery Plans.pdf** **Page 160**

8.0 Report re: the creation of a Northern Mutual Bank (Attached)

 **Mutual Bank.pdf** **Page 172**

 **Northern Mutual Business Case Feb 2021 (003).pdf** **Page 175**

9.0 Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower – 20 November 2021 (Attached)

 **Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower - November 2021.pdf** **Page 245**

 **Appendix I - Ulster Tower centenary commemoration leaflet.pdf** **Page 248**

10.0 Request for names to be added to Killyleagh War Memorial. (Attached)

 **Killyleagh War Memorial.pdf** **Page 250**

Democratic Services

11.0 National Association of Councillors General Management Meeting (Attached)

Request from Councillor Casey to attend as Vice-Chair of NAC

Flights from Belfast-Leeds Bradford approx. £165.00

Accommodation @ conference hotel approx. £90 1 night B&B


 **05 07 2021Delegates Copy.pdf** **Page 254**

For Noting

12.0 Sickness Absence (Attached)

 **Sickness Absence Report June 2021.pdf** **Page 256**

13.0 Friends of the Somme - Yearly Subscription 2021/2022 (Attached)

 *AR-M700U_20210609_102628.pdf*

Page 258

14.0 Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board

a) Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 13 April 2021 (Attached)

b) Notes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Workshop held on 4 May 2021 (Attached)

 *Minutes of Newry City Centre Programme Board Mtg 13.04.2021.pdf*

Page 260

 *NCCR Workshop Notes 04.05.2021.pdf*

Page 266


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

15.0 Forkhill Former Barrack Site – Report of Slieve Gullion (Attached)

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 2021_Report of Slieve Gullion Cllrs held on 1st June 2021 in regards Forkill Former Barrack Site.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix - Slieve Gullion Cllrs Meeting on Forkhill Former Barracks Site_01 06 2021.pdf*

Not included

16.0 Bann Road, Castlewellan - Storm Attenuation Project. (Attached)

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.


 *Bann Road Storm Attenuation.pdf*

Not included

17.0 Request from PHA for National Testing Partnership Venue in Downpatrick (walk-in testing facility)

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.

 *Request from PHA - Covid-19 Testing Facility Downpatrick.pdf*

Not included

18.0 Regularisation of IDOX procurement and contractual arrangements (Attached)

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.

 *IDOX Regularisation report.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix - IDOX Regularisation Business Case.pdf*

Not included

19.0 Rates Support Grant 2021/2022 - verbal report at meeting - information attached

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.

 *RSG 2021-22 Instalment Letter.pdf*

Not included

 *RSG 2021-22 - Allocation and Instalment Table.pdf*

Not included

20.0 Siting of bee-hives on former Council landfill site at Aughnagun. (Attached)

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.

 *Siting of Bee-Hives at Aughnagun.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix 1 - Aughnagun Bees NS Committee Report.pdf*

Not included

 *Appendix 2 - Hive location map Aughnagun .pdf*

Not included

21.0 Licence agreement with Drumaness Snooker Club. (Attached)

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.

 ***Licence Agreement with Drumaness Snooker Club .pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Rental Valuation - Dan Rice Memorial Building, Drumaness.pdf*** ***Not included***

22.0 Licence of strip of land at Down Leisure Centre. (Attached)

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.

 ***Cycling hub at Down Leisure Centre.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Map showing location of Cycling Hub.pdf*** ***Not included***

23.0 Proposed lease of lands at Ameracam Lane, Cranfield, Kilkeel to NI Electricity Networks. (Attached)

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.

 ***Lease of lands at Ameracam Lane Cranfield.pdf*** ***Not included***


 ***Proposed Lease Map - NIE - Ameracam lane - Cranfield.pdf*** ***Not included***

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

24.0 Management Accounts March 2021. (Attached)

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



 ***Management Accounts March 2021.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 1.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 2.pdf*** ***Not included***

25.0 Communications and Marketing Activities in Response to Covid-19 (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021) (Attached)

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>Communications and Marketing Activity in Response to Covid.19.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>23 17.06.21 Communications and Marketing Annual Digital Report in Response to Covid 19.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |

26.0 Drumee Road, Castlewellan (Attached)

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.

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|--|----------------------------|
|  <i>12.5.21 Letter to DfI re Drumee Road Castlewellan.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>MT121468-21 - Lanes and Roads - Unadopted Roads - NMD Council.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |

27.0 Construction Industry: Material Shortages and price increased - potential impact to Council's Capital Programme. (Attached)

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.

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|--|----------------------------|
|  <i>Construction Industry Material Shortages & Price Increases.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
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Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Ms Kate Bingham

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

Mr Eoin Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Sean Doran

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Cllr Hugh Gallagher

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Roisin Howell

Mr Colum Jackson

Mrs Sheila Kieran

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 McKevitt

Cllr Andrew McMurray

Catrina Miskelly

Mr Colin Moffett
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Mr Ken Montgomery
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Cllr Roisin Mulgrew
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Cllr Declan Murphy
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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 Kathryn Owen
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Colin Quinn
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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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Paul Tamati
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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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Cllr William Walker
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Mrs Marie Ward
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STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date	Time	Location
17 June 2021	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
12 August 2021	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
16 September 2021	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
14 October 2021	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
11 November 2021	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
16 December 2021	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
20 January 2022	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
17 February 2022	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
Wednesday 16 March 2022	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
14 April 2022	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre
12 May 2022	6.00 pm	Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – T H U R S D A Y 15 OCTOBER 2020

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SPR/160/2020	Request to use Monaghan Row	It was agreed to proceed with reviewing the accommodation at Monaghan Row to determine if there is any current/future office space that could be used by the Trust and for officers to continue to liaise with the Trust on the assumption of receiving a commercial rent for the letting of office space	C Quinn	Southern Trust have confirmed no immediate request.	Y

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – T H U R S D A Y 11 FEBRUARY 2021

SPR/019/2021	(SPR/003/2021- Letter to Health Minister Mr Swann and contact with PHA)	Further that previous request for a drive-in and walkthrough facility in Newry to remain on Action Sheet and update provided to members as situation evolves.	D Carville	To update members	N
SPR/022/2021	Report on Notice of Motion – Northern Mutual	It was agreed to allow officers time to consider the matter. Review the resource implications and the legalities of the Northern Mutual Bank and bring back to SPR for further discussion.	D Carville/K Montgomery	Agenda item	Y

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 13 MAY 2021

SPR/068/2021	Action Sheets of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 15 April 2021.	It was agreed that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 15 April 2021, be approved.	D Carville	Agreed	Y
SPR/069/2021	Irish Street Regeneration Project – Expression of Interest in adjacent land	It was agreed to approve Officers to explore the temporary letting of the site via an expression of interest. A market valuation of the site for letting purposes will be undertaken.	J McGilly	Approved	Y
SPR/070/2021	Local Government Staff Commission – Dissolution Funding & Continuing Operations 2021/22	It was agreed to note the contents of the correspondence.	D Carville	Noted	Y
SPR/071/2021	Statutory Reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring report for period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	R Mackin	Noted	Y
SPR/072/2021	FOI/EIR/DP & Records Management Monitoring Statistics	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	R Mackin	Noted	Y
SPR/073/2021	Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return; 2 January 2020 – 1 January 2021	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	C Miskelly	Noted	Y

SPR/074/2021	Sickness Absence	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	L Fitzsimons	Noted	Y
ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014					
SPR/075/2021	2021/22 Insurance Premiums.	It was agreed that Elected Members review and approve the payment of the insurance premiums for 2021/22.	K McNiff	Approved	Y
SPR/076/2021	Tender for Postal Services	It was agreed that Elected Members approve the Full Business Case for the Tender of Postal Services as attached at Appendix 1 and tender for Council's main collection and sorting mail service using a Postal Services Framework Agreement available to public sector bodies. It is further recommended that the contract award be for a period of 3 years.	A Robb	Approved	Y
SPR/077/2021	Down Railway	<p>It was agreed that Elected Members agree to approve the recommendations set below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To progress a review of the sub lease and Partnership agreement and seek to set out a new legal agreement which confirms DCDR are responsible for all operational matters, including ongoing maintenance associated with the railway and buildings. 2. A one-off payment is made to DCDR to assist with maintenance costs associated with the Engine Shed Roof and Bridge 163. 3. The Council remains committed to the land acquisition which will be subject to Planning approval and confirmation of funding from DCDR. The Council will continue engagement with Belfast legal service to establish a timetable for land acquisition via vesting. 	F O'Connor	Approved	Y

SPR/078/2021

Surplus Asset update

It was agreed that Elected Members note the content of the report and attached Appendix A and approve the following recommendations:

- Former Play Area at Crown Villas, Crieve, Newry. Accept the final bid as detailed in the officers report and move to 'sale agreed.'
- Newry Canal - Lock Keepers Cottage. Council's legal department to open communication with the previous owner's legal representative to explore if they wish to exercise their rights to reserve their right to purchase this property, before proceeding with the current 'sale agreed.'
- Play Area at Rear of Bleary Bungalows. Council officers to continue to liaise with the property owners who have declared an interest in purchasing this asset.
- Lands at 15 The Square Ballynahinch. As no firm commitment has been received from NIHE/Habinteg Housing Association, to accept the final bid as detailed in the officer's report and move to 'sale agreed.'
- The former Kearns & Murtagh Yard, Cecil St, Newry. As no firm commitment has been received from NIHE/Clanmill Housing Association to accept the final bid as detailed in the officer's report and move to 'sale agreed.'
- 5 Ballynoe Road, Downpatrick (former site of Killough Road Community Centre). As no firm commitment has been received from NIHE in acquiring this asset for social housing any sale is deferred until the interest from a local community group in acquiring the asset is explored further.
- Lands at Mourne Esplanade, Kilkeel. As no interested has been generated via the D1 disposal process, officers to appoint selling agent to place this surplus asset on the open market for sale.

C Quinn

Noted

Y

5

SPR/079/2021	Proposed Lateral Flow testing facility at Ballymote	<p>The following recommendations were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members approve to proceed with the setting up of a lateral flow test facility at Ballymote Sports Centre and to complete negotiations with the Dept of Health regarding the registration process, the formal agreement including the associated recovery of costs. That the lateral flow test facility would be offered in the first instance to council staff and subject to associated satisfactory amendments to the formal agreement, that the testing facility would be offered to the small business sector and the wider community at later stages. Approval for Council to absorb the costs of the infrastructure noted in the officer's report on the understanding that Council will benefit from this infrastructure after the test facility is stood down. Subject to satisfactory completion of the formal agreement with the Dept of Health, that officers proceed with setting up and operating the test facility prior to the full Council approval. That officers continue discussions with the Dept of Health on the possibility of offering our facilities for collection points for test kits. 	C Quinn	Approved – In progress	Y
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SPR/080/2021	PHA Covid-19 Testing Facility at Albert Basin Newry	<p>The following was approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected Members approve to enter into a new 6-month lease agreement with the PHA/DHSC for the Covid 'walk-in' test facility at Albert Basin from 1st July 2021. The terms of the lease would be similar to the current lease i.e. include a break clause which would allow NMDDC to terminate the lease after 3 months, with 20 days' notice to be given to the tenant. Therefore, the earliest termination date would be 30th September 2021. A further report to SP&R Committee prior to the end of the initial 3-months of lease period, to gauge if the testing facility is likely to remain in place thereafter and how this would impact on future Council events at Albert Basin. 	C Quinn	Approved	Y
SPR/081/2021	Pavement Café Licenses	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	C Mallon	Noted	Y
SPR/082/2021	Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 10 May 2021	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	D Carville	Noted	Y
SPR/083/2021	Newry Mourne and Down District Payroll policy.	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	K Montgomery	Noted	Y

END

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021
Subject:	Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Regina Mackin Assistant Director of Corporate Planning and Policy
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Veronica Keegan Head of Communications and Marketing

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

	For decision	X	For noting only
1.0	Purpose and Background		
1.1	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee is asked to consider the contents of the draft Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure.		
2.0	Key Issues		
2.1	The Council's Social Media Policy and Procedure were drafted a number of years ago and a review is now required.		
2.2	The use of corporate social media is now well established within the Council, with over 22.5K followers on Facebook and 8.3K followers on Twitter.		
2.3	This policy and procedure sets out acceptable use guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, and the use of social media by employees and elected members in both a professional and personal capacity.		
2.4	To date, the documents have been considered by SMT, CMT, Party Leaders and LJCC as part of the Policy Approval Process.		
3.0	Recommendations		
3.1	To consider the draft Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure and recommend for approval.		
4.0	Resource Implications		
4.1	Staff time to implement Policy. Appropriate and reasonable training opportunities for elected members and staff working in this area should be provided to fulfil the implementation of the Policy and associated Procedure.		
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)		
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>		

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rationale:</i>	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7.0	Appendices	
	Appendix I: Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy Appendix II: Social Media and Acceptable Use Procedure	
8.0	Background Documents	
	N/A	

Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**

District Council

Policy Control

11

Policy reference:	CS36
Title of Policy:	Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy
Version:	April 2021 v0.2
Directorate / Departmental ownership:	Corporate Services / Corporate Planning & Policy
Officer responsible:	Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy, Regina Mackin
Date of ratification:	
Review date:	The Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy will be reviewed every four years in accordance with the above Policy Approval Process or as stated in Section 9.0 if required.
Equality screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed by:	Head of Corporate Policy, Colin Moffett
Equality screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment date:	3 November 2020
Location where document is held and referenced:	Responsible Department <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporate Policy repository <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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1.0 Title of Policy

1.1 Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy.

2.0 Statement

2.1 Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

2.2 This policy gives guidance on how to use social media, sets out how we can effectively manage social media usage and indicates how any risks can be minimised or mitigated.

2.3 The following risks have been identified with social media use (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Damage to the Council's reputation.
- Disclosure of confidential information.
- Breach of safeguarding using images or personal details leading to the exploitation of vulnerable individuals.
- Bullying, harassment or harm.
- Civil or criminal action relating to breaches of legislation.

3.0 Aim of Policy

3.1 This policy aims to ensure:

- The Council's reputation and its employees and elected members are protected.
- Employees and elected members operate within existing policies, procedures, guidelines and relevant legislation.
- Clear guidance on acceptable behaviour in the use of social media both professionally and personally is provided to employees and elected members.
- Council information remains secure and is not compromised through the use of social media.

3.2 Nothing in this policy should be read as restricting the proper use of social media for business or personal use.

3.3 Any personal information published on social media is covered by the Data Protection Act 2018. All employees and elected members are required to handle personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 including the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

4.0 Scope of Policy

4.1 This Policy applies to all elected members and employees of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, including casual workers, agency workers, volunteers and contracted services (*from here they will be collectively referred to as 'employees' throughout the rest of the procedure*) who use both work and/or personal social media.

- 4.2 For the purposes of this procedure, social media is any type of online media that allows discussion and interaction. There are several types of social media the Council uses now, or may use in the future, and these procedures covers all types, for example:

- Social networking (Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Microblogging (Twitter)
- Photo sharing (Instagram, Snapchat)
- Video sharing (YouTube, Facebook Live, Vimeo)

5.0 Legislation, Related Policies and Procedures

- 5.1 This procedure has been developed to support employees and elected members by providing information and guidance to maintain the good reputation of the Council when using social media.
- 5.2 The following, which is not an exhaustive list, are the related legislative provisions and measures requiring legal and regulatory compliance:

Legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Defamation Act 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Intellectual Property Act 2014
- Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75)
- Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003
- Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Public Records (NI) Act 1923
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- Safeguarding Board (NI) Act 2011
- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976
- The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP)
- UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018

The procedure is supported by the following Council policies and procedures*:

- Access to Information Policy and Procedure
- Bilingualism Policy and Procedure
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees
- Corporate Privacy Notice
- Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure
- Equality Scheme
- Grievance Procedure
- Information Security Policy Statement
- IT Policies and Procedures
- Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol
- Media Policy and Procedure
- NI Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors

- Records Management Policy and Procedure
- Retention and Disposal Schedule
- Safeguarding Policy Children and Adults at Risk
- The Personal Safety of Employees Exposed to Workplace Violence and Abuse From The Public Policy and Procedure
- Whistle Blowing Policy

** File path: R:\Equality and Policy\Adopted Council Policies*

6.0 Definitions

6.1 Social media

Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging and social networking are among the different types of social media.

6.2 Social media platform

Platforms are the foundation on which you can build your brand presence, such as the web, phone apps and social media.

6.3 Social media channel

Channels serve as a more direct means of communication and include Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Instagram and more.

6.4 Social media account

Social Media Accounts means any websites, applications and similar electronic means by which authorised users are able to create and share information and other content (including, without limitation, text, photos and videos).

6.5 Social networking

The use of dedicated websites and applications to interact with other users, or to find people with similar interests to one's own.

6.6 Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether an employee is posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring the Council into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

6.7 Defamation

The action of damaging the good reputation of a person or organisation through libel or slander.

6.8 Copyright law

It is critical that all employees abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

6.9 Intellectual Property

Refers to the ownership of an idea or design by the person who came up with it. It is a term used in Property Law. It gives a person certain exclusive rights to a distinct type of creative design, meaning that nobody else can copy or reuse that creation without the owner's permission.

6.10 Discrimination and harassment

Employees and elected members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Council social media channel or a personal account. For example: making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief using social media to bully another individual posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content. For further information visit R:\Equality and Policy\Adopted Council Policies\Revised Equality Scheme April 2020.

6.11 Safeguarding

Safeguarding encompasses both activity which prevents harm from occurring in the first place and activity which protects children and adults at risk where harm has occurred or is likely to occur.

Child/young person refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Adult at risk - it is not possible to definitively state when an adult is at risk as this will change on a case by case basis. The following definition is intended to provide guidance, as to when an adult may be at risk of harm: *An 'adult at risk' is a person aged 18 or over where there is an exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect.*

For further information visit R:\Equality and Policy\Adopted Council Policies\Safeguarding Policy V2 Feb 2020.

6.12 Acceptable Use

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, and the use of social media by employees and elected members in both a professional and personal capacity.

It sets out what employees and elected members need to be aware of when interacting on social media channels and is designed to provide employee and elected member support, whilst protecting the Council and its reputation, and preventing any legal issues.

This policy should be read together with Council related policies (listed above) and the duty and obligations they impose.

Any activity using social media, which could be deemed a breach of policy will be subject to investigation in the same way that similar action would be in other circumstances, for example, verbally in the work-place, on the phone or in public.

7.0 Department and Officer Responsible

Directorate / Department	Corporate Services / Corporate Planning & Policy
Officer (s) responsible for developing the Policy	Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy, Regina Mackin / Head of Communications and Marketing, Veronica Keegan

8.0 Policy Approval Process

Meeting	Date
SMT	1 April 2021
CMT	13 April 2021
Party Leaders	6 May 2021
Local Joint Consultative Committee	6 May 2021
Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee	17 June 2021
Monthly Council Meeting	<i>Date of ratification</i>

9.0 Review Date

The Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy will be reviewed every four years in accordance with the above Policy Approval Process to ensure that it meets the legal requirements and reflects best practice. However, the procedure will be reviewed in the event of any one or more of the following:

- Failure or weakness in the procedure is highlighted
- Changes in legislative requirements
- Changes in Government/Council or other directives and requirements.

10.0 Procedures and Arrangements for Monitoring the Implementation and Impact of the Policy

The Social Media and Acceptable Use Procedure accompanies this Policy.

11.0 Equality Screening

The Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy has been equality screened and it is recommended it not be subject to an equality impact assessment (with no mitigating measures required).

12.0 Rural Needs Impact Assessment

Due regards to rural needs has been considered and the policy has been subject to a rural needs impact assessment.

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

DRAFT

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Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

Social Media and Acceptable Use Procedure



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

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. There are many more examples of social media that can be listed, which is a constantly changing area. This procedure refers to all social media, including the examples listed, and any new social media which is developed in the future.

1.2 Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating the work of the Council. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience(s), participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of the Council's work.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council acknowledges social media as a useful tool however, clear guidelines are needed for the use of social media to ensure it is used effectively as part of a wider communications mix and that its use does not expose the Council to security risks, reputational damage or breach the Data Protection Act and UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to all elected members and employees of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, including casual workers, agency workers, volunteers and contracted services (*from here they will be collectively referred to as 'employees' throughout the rest of the procedure*) who use both work and/or personal social media.

2.2 For the purposes of this procedure, social media is any type of online media that allows discussion and interaction. There are several types of social media the Council uses now, or may use in the future, and these procedures covers all types, for example:

- Social networking (Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Microblogging (Twitter)
- Photo sharing (Instagram, Snapchat)
- Video sharing (YouTube, Facebook Live, Vimeo)

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

3.2 This procedure gives guidance on how to use social media, sets out how we can effectively manage social media usage and indicates how any risks can be minimised or mitigated.

3.3 The following risks have been identified with social media use (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Damage to the Council's reputation.
- Disclosure of confidential information.
- Breach of safeguarding using images or personal details leading to the exploitation of vulnerable individuals.
- Bullying, harassment or harm.
- Civil or criminal action relating to breaches of legislation.

3.4 **As such this procedure aims to ensure:**

- The Council's reputation, its employees and elected members are protected.
- Employees and elected members operate within existing policies, procedures, guidelines and relevant legislation.
- Clear guidance on acceptable behaviour in the use of social media both professionally and personally is provided to employees and elected members.
- Council information remains secure and is not compromised through the use of social media.

3.5 Nothing in this procedure should be read as restricting the proper use of social media for business or personal use.

3.6 Any personal information published on social media is covered by the Data Protection Act 2018. All employees and elected members are required to handle personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 including the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 Social media

Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different types of social media.

4.2 Social media platform

Platforms are the foundation on which you can build your brand presence, such as the web, phone apps and social media.

4.3 Social media channel

Channels serve as a more direct means of communication and include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram and more.

4.4 Social media account

Social Media Accounts means any websites, applications and similar electronic means by which authorised users are able to create and share information and other content (including, without limitation, text, photos and videos).

4.5 Social networking

The use of dedicated websites and applications to interact with other users, or to find people with similar interests to one's own.

4.6 Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether an employee or elected member is posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring the Council into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

4.7 Defamation

The action of damaging the good reputation of a person or organisation through libel or slander.

4.8 Copyright law

It is critical that all employees and elected members abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

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Refers to the ownership of an idea or design by the person who came up with it. It is a term used in Property Law. It gives a person certain exclusive rights to a distinct type of creative design, meaning that nobody else can copy or reuse that creation without the owner's permission.

4.10 Discrimination and harassment

Employees and elected members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Council social media channel or a personal account. For example: making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief using social media to bully another individual posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content. For further information visit R:\Equality and Policy\Adopted Council Policies\Revised Equality Scheme April 2020.

4.11 Safeguarding

Safeguarding encompasses both activity which prevents harm from occurring in the first place (Council Safeguarding Procedures) and activity which protects children and adults at risk where harm has occurred or is likely to occur (Council Reporting Procedures).

Child/young person refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Adult at risk - it is not possible to definitively state when an adult is at risk as this will change on a case by case basis. The following definition is intended to provide guidance, as to when an adult may be at risk of harm: An 'adult at risk' is a person aged 18 or over where there is an exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect.

For further information visit R:\Equality and Policy\Adopted Council Policies\Safeguarding Policy V2 Feb 2020.

4.12 Acceptable Use

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, and the use of social media by employees and elected members in both a professional and personal capacity.

It sets out what employees and elected members need to be aware of when interacting on social media channels and is designed to provide employee and elected member support, whilst protecting the Council and its reputation, and preventing any legal issues.

This policy should be read together with Council related policies (listed above) and the duty and obligations they impose.

Any activity using social media, which could be deemed a breach of policy will be subject to investigation in the same way that similar action would be in other circumstances, for example, verbally in the work-place, on the phone or in public.

5.0 Legislation, Related Policies and Procedures

- 5.1 This procedure has been developed to support employees and elected members by providing information and guidance to maintain the good reputation of the Council when using social media.
- 5.2 The following, which is not an exhaustive list, are the related legislative provisions and measures requiring legal and regulatory compliance:

Legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Defamation Act 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Intellectual Property Act 2014
- Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75)
- Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003
- Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Public Records (NI) Act 1923
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- Safeguarding Board (NI) Act 2011
- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976
- The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP)
- UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018

The procedure is supported by the following Council policies and procedures*:

- Access to Information Policy and Procedure
- Bilingualism Policy and Procedure
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees
- Corporate Privacy Notice
- Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure
- Equality Scheme
- Grievance Procedure
- Information Security Policy Statement
- IT Policies and Procedures
- Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol
- Media Policy and Procedure
- NI Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors
- Records Management Policy and Procedure
- Retention and Disposal Schedule
- Safeguarding Policy Children and Adults at Risk
- The Personal Safety of Employees Exposed to Workplace Violence and Abuse from the Public Policy and Procedure
- Whistle Blowing Policy

* File path: R:\Equality and Policy\Adopted Council Policies

6.0 Acceptable Use

- 6.1 This procedure sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, and the use of social media by employees and elected members in both a professional and personal capacity.
- 6.2 It sets out what an employee or elected member needs to be aware of when interacting on social media channels and is designed to provide employee and elected member support, whilst protecting the Council and its reputation, and preventing any legal issues.
- 6.3 This procedure should be read together with Council related policies (section 5.0) and the duty and obligations they impose.
- 6.4 Any activity using social media, which could be deemed a breach of policy will be subject to investigation in the same way that similar action would be in other circumstances, for example, verbally in the work-place, on the phone or in public.

7.0 Acceptable Use of Social Media for Business Purposes

- 7.1 The Council uses social media for business purposes as one element of its communications strategy. Social media will continue to grow and will form a key part in communicating with local residents and other stakeholders and will provide positive opportunities for the Council to engage directly with the public. Whilst the Council may increasingly use social media channels, there will still be need to accommodate those residents who continue to want information through traditional communication methods.
- 7.2 The Communications and Marketing team has overall responsibility for the day to day management of the Council's corporate social media channels:
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - YouTube
- 7.3 The following social media platforms are also used to interact and engage with targeted audiences, and to promote wider sharing of information for specified messaging/advertising campaigns:
 - Instagram
 - Snapchat
- 7.4 Examples of how the Council uses social media for business purposes are listed below (this is not an exhaustive list):
 - to promote and publicise activities that will enhance the reputation of the Council, the services it provides, and the wider community of organisations with which it works in partnership
 - to respond to specific questions from the public, businesses and partners
 - to initiate and participate in dialogue with the public relating to council services
 - to provide information, advice and guidance (particularly in emergency situations)
 - to clarify or correct any unclear or incorrect statements or views
 - to promote the image of a human and approachable Council.
- 7.5 Should a Service Area wish to have a message posted on the Council's corporate social media channel/s, please refer to Appendix I: Social Media Operating Procedure.
- 7.6 If other Service Areas wish to set up new social media for a particular Council service or project, please refer to Appendix II: Setting up new social media. Permission must be obtained from the Service Area Assistant Director/Director.
- 7.7 The social media account will be the responsibility of the Service Area in terms of content management and must be updated regularly to ensure content is fresh and relevant.
- 7.8 Sufficient resources must be considered and committed for on-going content management of your channel/account. Social media administrators must be assigned with overall responsibility for maintaining the channel.

8.0 Acceptable Use of Social Media in a Personal Capacity

- 8.1 The scope of this procedure applies to employees and elected members who use social media in a personal capacity.
- 8.2 The Council does not prevent or restrict the use of social media for any employee or elected member. However, employees and elected members must be aware that if personal use of social media conflicts with employee/elected member duties for the Council, or obligations as an employee/elected member, then action may be taken. Please refer to the Policy Statement contained within this procedure (para 3.3).
- 8.3 Employees and elected members must be aware that, where they are identified directly or indirectly as a Council employee or elected member, when using social media in a personal capacity it is expected they behave appropriately and in line with legislation and related Council policies (section 5.0).
- 8.4 Employees and elected members must be aware that the Council may be liable for the actions of employees and elected members who post comments or content on social media in a personal capacity which are closely connected to the work environment.
- 8.5 Below are some practical tips for employees when using social media in a personal capacity:
- Employees need to be aware that the information they post on their personal social media profile can make them identifiable to service users, as well as people they know in a private capacity.
 - Employees should therefore consider this when setting up their online profile particularly in relation to use of a photograph, providing details of their occupation, employer, and work location.
 - An employee's personal social media account should not, directly or by implication, give the impression that they are endorsed by, or speaking on behalf of the Council. Add a disclaimer to your social media profile to make it clearer that your personal account/s are personal – for example: 'The views and opinions expressed are my own'.
 - A work email address must not be used when registering on social media sites for personal use.
 - Protect your own privacy. To ensure that your social media does not compromise your professional position, ensure that your privacy settings are set correctly.
 - Employees who have set their privacy level to the maximum can have their privacy compromised by 'friends' who may not have set their security to the same standard. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed making it easy to lose control of. Presume everything you post online will be permanent and can be shared.
 - Do not discuss work-related issues online, including conversations about service users, complaints, management or disparaging remarks about colleagues or the Council. These are likely to be inappropriate and doing this in the presence of others may be deemed as bullying and/or harassment.
 - If you are very concerned about someone else's behaviour online, you should take steps to raise your concerns. If these are work related you should inform your manager.
- 8.6 The Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards – Guidance for Councillors on Social Media and the Code of Conduct is available at:
<https://nipso.org.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/NILGCS-Social-Media-guide-for-web-soft-copy.pdf>

9.0 Acceptable Use of Social Media by Public

- 9.1 The Council recognises that social media has an important role to play in how it communicates with, engages and promotes dialogue with residents. For some people, social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook are preferred methods of interacting with the Council.
- 9.2 Whilst everyone has a right to free speech, this must be balanced not only with legislation (section 5.0) and what is generally acceptable, but as a Council, a duty of care towards employees and elected members also applies.
- 9.3 The vast majority of people who use social media do so with respect and tolerance. However, in the event of unacceptable use of social media by customers and residents the Council reserves the right to take action in relation to social media posts or messages.
- 9.4 Unacceptable behaviour includes (but is not limited to) social media posts or messages which breach the following rules (referred to as House Rules):
 - Use any abusive, offensive, defamatory, discriminatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, racist, sexist or other inappropriate comments which are perceived or intended to cause concern, upset or harm to others.
 - Incite hatred on the basis of race, religion, gender, nationality or sexuality or any other personal characteristic.
 - Incite someone/people to break the law.
 - Contain inappropriate material (photographs or video)
 - Target named members of staff with direct, unacceptable, criticism.
 - Breach confidentiality, share personal details, such as private addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other online contact details.
 - High volumes of overly long messages which could constitute as spamming.
 - Repetitive negative messages which aim to provoke a response or do not constructively add to the conversation.
 - Comments that impersonate or falsely claim to represent a person or organisation.
 - Comments that are off-topic, promote services or product
 - Breach of any of the terms of any of the social media platforms themselves.
- 9.5 The Council reserves the right to amend these House Rules at any time.

10.0 How We Will Deal with Unacceptable Behaviour

- 10.1 The Council moderates messages on its corporate social media channels and will remove those which breach the above House Rules and moderation guidelines.
- 10.2 **In the event of unacceptable behavior, the following steps will be taken:**
 - In the first instance, we will hide or delete any posts which we view to be offensive.
 - A written statement to the author will be issued via a private direct social media message with a link to the Council's Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure.
 - If unacceptable behaviour continues the Council will consider blocking users from interacting with the Council's social media channels.

- A decision to block a user will be reported to the Council's Audit Committee.
- The matter may also be reported to the social media platform and police where behaviour amounts to abuse or harassment or a criminal offence is suspected.
- The Council reserves the right to take whatever legal action that may be necessary in the case of libellous or defamatory posts/messages.

11.0 Dealing with Misinformation or Harmful Content

- 11.1 The Council aims to share information on its social media channels that is accurate and useful.
- 11.2 However, it will be alert to the possibility that social media may be used as a means of spreading misinformation to residents. For example, this might include posting false information or links to conspiracy theories in comments on our posts about topics such as the coronavirus pandemic or vaccinations. This could indirectly cause harm to others by discouraging people from taking vaccines.
- 11.3 Comments, links or other content posted on any of our channels with the intent of spreading misleading or false information will be removed.

12.0 Access to Social Media for Work Purposes

- 12.1 Employees and elected members who use social media as part of their job must adhere to the Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure. Employees and elected members must be aware that they are representing the Council when they are contributing to the Council's social media activities. Employees and elected members should use the same principles as they would with any other form of communication about the Council in the public domain. For further information see Appendix III: Principles of Communication.

13.0 Access to Social Media at Work for Personal Use

- 13.1 Employees' and elected members' use of social media in both a personal and business capacity can present risks to the Council's information and reputation and can jeopardise our compliance with legal and statutory obligations. To minimise these risks, and to ensure that our ICT resources and communications systems are used appropriately, employees and elected members must comply with this procedure and adhere to the Council's IT Policies and Procedures (section 5.0).

14.0 Social Media in an Emergency

- 14.1 In the event of a major incident, emergency or break in business continuity, the Communications and Marketing team will liaise with the Senior Management Team, the Emergency Planning Group and other agencies regarding the release of information via social media.
- 14.2 Normal social media operating procedures may be suspended for the duration of the emergency/incident.

15.0 Social Media in the run up to the Election Period – Purdah

- 15.1 The period in question relates to the day when formal notice of an election is given, up to and including the day of the election. Local authorities are prohibited from publishing any material that appears to be designed to affect support, positively or negatively, for a political party/independent candidate.
- 15.2 All these restrictions apply to other organisations that receive local authority funding and Officers should check with community groups they fund that may be planning publicity around election time. Officers should ensure groups which receive funding from Council are reminded of this.
- 15.3 Prohibition of publicity on the Council's social media channels is when:
- it refers to a political party or a person identified with a political party/ independent candidate
 - it promotes or opposes a point of view on a question of political debate or controversy
 - it supports a view or issue identifiable as the view of one political party and not of another
 - it identifies with individual members or groups of members
 - it is part of a campaign associated with a political view
 - it contains quotes from politicians outside of the Council, such as members of parliament, who are clearly identified as part of a political party. This also applies to proactive events, which should not involve members during this period.
- 15.4 However, even during the run up to an election, communications and marketing can continue as follows:
- it is admissible for members holding key positions to comment in an emergency or where there is a genuine need for a member level response to an important event outside the authority's control.

16.0 Breach of Policy

- 16.1 Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with the Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure. Participation in social media on behalf of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council must be treated seriously and with respect.
- 16.2 All employees and elected members identified in the scope of this policy are required to adhere to the Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure. There are formal sanctions available to the Council for those who are in breach. Any action taken will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. Employees can be subject to the disciplinary procedure, and elected members can be referred to the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards or the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

17.0 Monitoring and Review of Policy and Procedure

17.1 The Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure will be reviewed every four years in consultation with the Senior Management Team and Trade Unions to ensure that it meets the legal requirements and reflects best practice. However, the procedure will be reviewed in the event of any one or more of the following:

- Failure or weakness in the procedure is highlighted
- Changes in legislative requirements
- Changes in Government/Council or other directives and requirements.

18.0 Further Information on Social Media and Acceptable Use

18.1 Further advice and support in relation to anything contained within this procedure can be obtained from the Communications and Marketing team, email: marketing@nmandd.org

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Social Media – Operational Procedure

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has a number of corporate social media sites which we invite the public to follow us on:

- www.facebook.com/nmdcouncil
- www.twitter.com/nmdcouncil
- YouTube
- Instagram

More and more citizens are engaging with the Council online and it is an instant and cost-effective way to get information out into the public domain. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council would encourage its employees to submit engaging content to the Communications and Marketing team to be posted online.

SOCIAL MEDIA REFERS TO:

Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

Co-ordination and Approval Procedure for Using the Corporate Social Media Channels:

The Communications and Marketing team has responsibility for creating, editing and publishing content to the corporate social media sites in line with the Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure.

The following guidelines must be adhered to:

- For Council activities (PR, events, public notices, statements etc) requiring a post on social media, you will be required to draft wording (which may be accompanied by contact details, images, maps, video, links etc) and email your 'social media request' to the Communications and Marketing team at marketing@nmandd.org for approval and upload.
- Please review your draft wording before submitting for spelling mistakes, incorrect contact details, broken links etc.
- Please specify in the request email if you would like the post to go on Facebook, Twitter or both and a suggested time for it to be uploaded. If this information is not included a member of the Communications and Marketing team will determine when it is posted.
- A member of the Communications and Marketing team may contact you for further information before the job can commence.
- Visual posts (posts which include images, videos, maps etc) get significantly higher traffic than those that don't include visuals so please try and include one with your request. If you need help with sourcing or developing a visual/graphic, please contact the Communications and Marketing team.
- Please give at least 48 hours' notice for your request to be actioned as the Communications and Marketing team are servicing a much larger number of requests.
- If you are promoting an event, please give your audience plenty of notice (7-10 days) with a reminder post in between.
- A maximum of four-six posts will go on the Corporate Facebook and Twitter page per day as not to bombard our audience with messages which in turn could result in unlikes or unfollows. This does not apply in the case of an emergency.
- The Communications and Marketing team will work on a first-come-first-served basis so get your requests in early.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Communications and Marketing team if you have any questions.

Procedure for Dealing with Enquiries, Comments, Complaints on Facebook

The Council's reaction to replies, comments and direct messages depend on the nature of the individual message and will be treated in line with the Council's Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure.

General Enquiry / Conversation Published Publicly on Facebook

- If a member of the public contacts the Council publicly via social media regarding a general enquiry such as Council opening hours, then a member of the Communications and Marketing team will endeavour to reply within the same working day. Our corporate social media channels are monitored from 9am - 5pm. If an enquiry is posted after 5pm then user will receive an automated message and the team will provide a reply the next working day.

Service Enquiry or Complaint Posted Privately on Facebook

- The service enquiry/complaint will be forwarded to the Customer Service department, who will ensure the enquiry/complaint is dealt with in accordance with their normal procedures by the relevant department.
- The member of the public will receive one of the following holding statements:

Instant Message via auto-responder:

Thank you for taking the time to contact us.

If you have a request, concern or comment regarding one of our services please email info@nmandd.org or contact our Customer Services Department on 0330 137 4000

Thanks

NMDDC

In the event Customer Services have not responded within 1-5 working days, follow up action to be taken by Communications and Marketing team:

Hi xxx

We are sorry to hear that you haven't yet received a response from us.

A reminder has been sent to the Council department concerned asking them to respond to you directly.

Thanks

NMDDC

If someone reverts back with a direct message who has already raised the issue with Customer Services and is unsatisfied, follow up action to be taken by Communications and Marketing team:

We are sorry to hear that you are unhappy with the response provided by the Council department responsible for the service. If you wish to make a complaint details of the procedure to be followed can be found at:

www.newrymournedown.org/complaints-to-the-council

Thanks

NMDDC

Setting Up New Social Media

It is important to think about your business case for setting up social media.

The following checklist sets out the steps to be considered before progressing.

Please answer the following questions before considering your request to set up new social media on behalf of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

If you answer 'No' to any of the questions, you should seek to address this area before progressing?

- 1 Have you completed any training on social media marketing?
- 2 Do you have resources to create engaging and innovative content?
- 3 Do you have resources to monitor and moderate user posts on your social media channel?
- 4 Have you secured budget to run your social media channel?
- 5 Will you have regular content ie a minimum of one post daily, to publish on your social media channel?
- 6 Is your target audience different from the Council's audience group who are already established users of the council's corporate channels (circa. +20K Facebook)
- 7 Do you have a social media plan which is aligned to your Service Business Plan?
- 8 Have you discussed setting up new social media with your Assistant Director/Director?

Yes	No
(please tick box below)	

Principles of Communication

- **Honesty** – we will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on any issue or news story.
- **Transparency and openness** – we promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
- **Balance** – information provided to the media will be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.
- **Clear and consistent** - we will use plain language that people understand and take account of special communications needs. We will avoid jargon and use words that people identify with. Clarity of communication will be reinforced by consistent messages, consistent tone and consistent use of our corporate branding.
- **Accessible and approachable** - we will make sure people know how to get in touch with us, in ways that suit them and that they feel comfortable with. We will make it easier for people to tell us what they think.
- **Inclusive, involving, engaging** – we will make efforts to ensure that every member of society has an opportunity to find out about and comment on the work of the Council, and issues which affect them. This includes those individuals or groups who may be less easy to reach by usual means.
- **Impartiality** - all our communication will be free of political bias.
- **Efficiency** – we will deal with all media activity in an efficient and effective manner.

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

DRAFT

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

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021
Subject:	Directorate Business Plans
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Marie Ward – Chief Executive Dorinnia Carville – Director: Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	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	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			Directorate Business Plans provide an overview of planned activity for the year ahead, and contribute to the delivery of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and other key plans and strategies. They form an essential part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, which demonstrates how corporate objectives are cascaded across the organisation and provides assurance that they are being delivered.
2.0			Key issues
2.1			<p>Assessment of the Emergency Business Plans</p> <p>In order to improve transparency and accountability, and facilitate a performance led approach to business planning, each Directorate has undertaken an assessment of their Emergency Business Plan October 2020-March 2021. These assessments provide an overview of the performance of each Directorate and have been used to influence the development of the 2021-22 Business Plans. This exercise is an important part of the Council's statutory responsibility to strengthen the way performance is monitored, reviewed and reported across the organisation.</p> <p>The assessments of the Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Emergency Business Plans October 2020-March 2021 are attached at Appendices 1 and 2.</p>
2.2			<p>Directorate Business Plans 2021-22</p> <p>The Business Plan 2021-22 outlines the key actions and measures each Directorate will work towards and are aligned to the objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23.</p> <p>The Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plans 2021-22 are attached at Appendices 3 and 4.</p>
2.3			It should be noted that further improvements to the business planning process are underway across the Council, particularly in relation to cascading corporate objectives in a meaningful way to employees through the introduction and roll-out of Service Plans and People Perform Grow. This process seeks to improve the use of performance measures at all levels of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and create a

	clear 'line of sight' between the work of individuals and teams, and how they contribute to the achievement of the Corporate Plan.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>To consider and agree the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Emergency Business Plans (October 2020-March 2021) Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plans 2021-22
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no financial resources implications within this report.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Consultation not required.</p>

6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 – Assessment of the Chief Executive’s Emergency Business Plan 2020-21 • Appendix 2 - Assessment of the Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan 2020-21 • Appendix 3 – Chief Executive’s Departmental Business Plan 2021-22 • Appendix 4 - Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2021-22
8.0	Background Documents
	<p>Chief Executive’s Emergency Business Plan October 2020-March 2021</p> <p>Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan October 2020-March 2021</p>

Chief Executive's Department

**Six Month Assessment
Emergency Business Plan
October 2020 – March 2021**




1.0 Introduction

This report provides an overview of progress in delivering the Chief Executive's Emergency Business Plan between October 2020-March 2021, across the following service areas, using the legend below.








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






Progress against the 'measures of success' has been monitored and reported for the 2020-21 financial year.

Legend

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

2.0 Chief Executive's Department Emergency Business Plan October 2020-March 2021

Community Planning			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
On behalf of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board, host a workshop to agree roles and revised actions addressing shared priorities in context of COVID-19 and planning for recovery	Q3		A series of unilateral meetings with community planning partners is ongoing and revised actions have been agreed. This will inform the review of the Community Plan in 2021 and create a revised action plan to support COVID-19 recovery.
Facilitate a review of the focus, methods of working and schedule for Thematic Priority Sub-groups and identify actions which can be implemented during 2020/21, including new opportunities arising from COVID-19	Q3/4		As above. The Council continued to engage with community planning partners to identify and agree key priorities and actions. The review of Community Plan is currently ongoing and will include a review of the thematic priorities and delivery structures.
Present a 'Lessons Learned' paper to the CPP Board based on the experience of the NMD Community Coordination Hub	Q3		A report has been developed and findings are still to be disseminated amongst CPP board representatives. This will form part of the evidence base for the review process, as well as the Statement of Progress.
With NIHE, organise a conference / event to report on Housing Needs Action plan progress and future objectives	Q4		Working Groups have been established and the conference is scheduled to take place in Autumn 2021.
Develop scorecards for planned key projects and new initiatives of Priority sub-groups	Q3/4		The development of scorecards has been delayed and will be progressed in line with COVID-19 recovery projects.
Agree / finalise an approach to progress the 2021 Review of the Community Plan	Q3		A report outlining the approach to the review of the Community Plan was presented and agreed by the Community Planning Partnership in March 2021.
Review success to date of Participatory Budgeting pilots in the Downpatrick and Newry DEAs	Q3		This project has been extended until June 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Explore opportunities with CPP partners for DEA PB pilots to continue	Q3/4		The activity of the PB working group is ongoing and includes identifying post COVID-19 priorities, with a view to hosting PB events in Q4 2021-22.
Collaborate with Community Planning Partners to pilot Participatory Budgeting 'at scale', addressing needs arising from COVID-19 pandemic	Q3/4		The PB works group is developing a PB post COVID-19 recovery and renewal demonstration project. The Community Planning team is participating in the regional steering group.
Lead the Community Foundation NI supported Citizens' Panel initiative (prototyping phase Sep-Dec 2020)	Q3/4		The pilot has concluded and the bid by the Strategic Stakeholder Forum for an online Citizens Panel for the District has been successful.
Through the 'PB for Youth' European project, develop a best practice toolkit for Youth Participatory Budgeting	Q3/4		Work on the development of the best practice toolkit is ongoing, and the pilot is planned for 2022.
Appoint the new Chair for 2021 from the Sustainable Development grouping	Q4		Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the incumbent chair has agreed to remain in place for 2021.

Areas of Good Practice/Improvement

Areas of good practice








- COVID-19 and responding to the pandemic, both on an individual and collective basis, has had a substantial impact on the workings and priorities of the CPP.
- There has been a substantial positive step change in the speed of decision making and collaborative working between partners and across agencies and sectors. Those involved have commonly suggested this has been 'community planning in action' in comparison to their experience of many previous meetings.
- Activity has been documented and welcomed by many, including the Carnegie UK Trust, working to support wellbeing through effective community planning in NI.


Areas for Business Transformation

- The experience of developing a coordinated response across sectors and partners to support vulnerable individuals and groups has demonstrated that collaboration does not need to be constrained by bureaucracy. The need to act with greater agility to achieve early positive outcomes was well demonstrated, with protocols to ensure appropriate procedures and governance designed effectively at speed.
- Recognition of roles for complementary capabilities were heightened in planning a coordinated response. The importance of these relationships should not be overlooked in driving forward business transformation.




Evidence and Research







Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Business Support			
Provide ongoing GIS and statistics helpdesks to enable and facilitate	Ongoing		Data requests: 21 GIS interactions: 281

remote working for employees			
Data Analysis			
Provide a robust and reliable evidence base to support internal and external stakeholders, including Policy and Equality and Performance and Improvement	Q3/Q4		Data has been provided to support the Performance Improvement Plan and Assessment of Performance. A range of internal and external stakeholders have been supported through the provision of an evidence base including Economic Development focusing on Labour Market Partnerships, APSE analysis and PCSP through the creation of a quarterly updated crime dashboard.
Audit the Community Planning indicators and measures to assess their reliability, accuracy, appropriateness and timeliness in preparation for the 2021 Community Plan review	Q3/Q4		This action is ongoing and the Council currently awaits the publication of the Programme for Government indicators by the Executive Office, in July 2021.
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	Q1 onwards		A citizen engagement site was successfully piloted and enabled the organisation to apply for and receive funding from the Community Foundation NI to progress the development of a Citizens Panel for Newry, Mourne and Down.
			The Council's 365 software for customer engagement has been utilised to facilitate consultation on public toilets, car parking, museum events, PCSP and the performance improvement objectives 2021-22.
			The preparation of a business case for the next Residents Survey will be developed in 2021/22.
GIS			
Work with internal departments to develop service specific GIS applications to support service delivery	Q1 onwards		A suite of GIS applications are available across Council departments including an invasive species mapping app, waste officers field app, rest centres app, radon map app, PSNI road collision data map and a flooding map.
Develop and deploy a GIS training programme to raise awareness of new and existing GIS facilities	Q1 onwards		One to one training, remote training and help desk support are ongoing. Presentations were given to the climate change working group and PCSP officers. Formal training will








			resume when the Council returns to normal working practices.
Data Cleanse			
Review file structures and data storage protocols to ensure compliance with corporate data management policy.	Q3		Ongoing.
Areas of Good Practice/Improvement			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling timely data sharing between departments and externally throughout emergency response phase. Launching a secure website for the Community and Voluntary sector, utilising ERSI's COVID response package. Development of good data capture processes and a weekly scorecard to report relevant data to key stakeholders. Deployment of a series of remote GIS solutions to enable officers to access relevant information whilst working from home. 			
Areas for Business Transformation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsement and funding for the NMD Citizens Panel and ongoing collaboration with the voluntary sector. 			


Performance and Improvement

Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Performance Management			
Facilitate the Performance Audit and Assessment 2020-21 and continue to implement the NI Audit Office 'Proposals for Improvement'	Q3/Q4		The NI Audit Office (NIAO) carried out the Performance Audit and Assessment during Q4. NIAO is currently awaiting guidance from the Department for Communities in relation to the content of the 2020-21 S95 report. Progress in fully implementing some 'proposals for improvement' has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and will be reported to the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in Q2 2021-22.
Complete and publish 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward', incorporating the strategic objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23	Q3/Q4		'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward' was prepared and published on the corporate website in January 2021. The document provides an overview of the eight strategic objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23.
Co-ordinate APSE Performance Networks, submit Performance Indicator Templates 2019-20 and analyse results	Q3/Q4		13 services completed and submitted templates to APSE. The results have been analysed and reports have been circulated to Directors and Assistant Directors to support the business and service planning process 2021-22.

Develop performance management training and capacity building for Elected Members and Officers	Q4		Performance management training for Elected Members is currently being developed and will be delivered to the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee, as part of a broader capacity building programme, during Q1/Q2 2021-22.
Commence the development of the Performance Improvement Plan / Performance Recovery Plan 2021-22, in line with the guidance issued by the Department for Communities and aligned to the Corporate Plan 2021-23	Q3/Q4		The draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22 have been developed within the context of the legislation and are directly aligned to specific objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23. The draft performance improvement objectives were considered and approved by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in March and have been subject to an eight week consultation process, in order to ensure the Performance Improvement Plan is published by 30 June 2021.
Support the Strategic Finance Working Group	Q3/Q4		Ongoing support has been provided to the Strategic Finance Working Group to support the delivery of the agreed programme of work, particularly in relation to securing greater alignment between financial and performance management.
Business Planning			
Continue to strengthen the alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework	Q3/Q4		Progress has been made in relation to all aspects of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. The Corporate Plan 2021-23 has been published, the draft performance improvement objectives have been agreed, Directorates and departments are preparing Business and Service Plans 2021-22 and People Perform Grow is scheduled to be launched on a phased basis in June 2021.
Through the Emergency Business Plans, identify opportunities to drive forward organisational transformation and continuous improvement	Q4		As part of the Assessment of Emergency Business Plans, areas for improvement and transformation have been identified and reported to the SMT for consideration.
Co-ordinate and support the development of Directorate Business Plans and Service Plans 2021-22	Q4		Ongoing support has been provided to all Directors and Assistant Directors to assist with the development of the Business Plans and Service Plans 2021-22.

Areas of Good Practice/Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress made across all aspects of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, particulate Service Plans and People Perform Grow. Development of Emergency Business Plans to plan ahead, manage the Council's response to COVID-19 and focus on business recovery. Ongoing delivery of key responsibilities in relation to the statutory Duty of Improvement. Development and circulation of Directorate Performance Profiles and APSE Performance Reports to inform the business and service planning process.
Areas for Business Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to strengthen the Council's approach to business planning and performance management, to be mainstreamed through a sustainable online platform.

Democratic Services			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Provision of a full complement of Council and Committee Meetings	Q1 onwards		Meetings have continued remotely without a break in service. Hybrid meeting protocols were drawn up and circulated to all meeting attendees.
Carry out risk assessments for physical attendance at meetings	Q3		Risk assessments have been completed and are on hold due to PHA guidance.
Provision of training, capacity building and ongoing support for Elected Members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities	Q1 onwards		Training has been provided to Elected Members on Social Media, Code of Conduct, Suicide Prevention and Dementia Training.
Routinely review and update the Council's Constitution	Q1 onwards		The constitution is reviewed on an annual basis.
Provision of Planning Committee Meetings, giving due regard to social distancing	Q1 onwards		In line with PHA guidance, Planning Committee meetings are continuing remotely with applicants, agents and members of the public attending through Microsoft Teams.
Provision of administrative and governance support to the Council's decision-making structures	Q1 onwards		With the Committee structure being operational since June 2020, the administrative and governance support has continued on a virtual basis.
Support the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson in carrying out their role(s) as First Citizen taking into account the restrictions	Q1 onwards		The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson have continued to carry out their roles and have been supported by Democratic Services. The Chairperson's end of year event is currently being organised within PHA guidelines.

Provision of induction, training and capacity building programme to support Elected Members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities	Q1 onwards		<p>Training for Elected Members is ongoing and has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Members being trained in the usage of Microsoft Teams for meetings. • 10 Members attended Social Media and Code of Conduct Training in December 2020. • 12 Members attended Suicide Prevention Training in March 2021. • 4 Members attended Dementia Training in April 2021.
Areas of Good Practice/Improvement			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced IT capability has improved connectivity between Democratic Services and Elected Members. • 41 Members are operating remotely which may lead to efficiencies in the future. • A protocol has been developed for operating Council and Committee Meetings through a hybrid model using Microsoft Teams. • Democratic Services Officers operate the Text Anywhere system by collating the mobile numbers of all staff across the organisation to ensure they were kept informed at all times by the Chief Executive. 			
Areas for Business Transformation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for remote meetings in the future which would encourage efficiencies in terms of travel and catering costs. • Remote training could be offered in future to enable greater attendance at meetings. • Books of Condolence can be opened online to ensure a speedier process particularly over weekends and holiday periods when traditionally it has been difficult to access the buildings required. • The Chairperson has access to weekly remote meetings with the Democratic Services Officer, which provides efficiencies in terms of time and travel costs. 			

3.0 Performance Measures

The following 'measures of success' have been monitored and reported for the 2020-21 financial year:

Measures of Success				
Measure	Target	Actual	Status	Explanation
Compliance with the statutory Duty of Improvement for 2020-21	Compliance achieved	TBC by NIAO		The Council has complied with the guidance issued by the Department for Communities for 2020-21. The Performance Audit and Assessment is complete and the Council is currently awaiting feedback on the outcome of the audit from NIAO.

Compliance with the statutory Duty of Community Planning	Compliance achieved	Compliance achieved		Ongoing compliance with the Duty of Community Planning.
The number of Chairperson engagements (in person and virtual)	No target set	66		The Chairperson held 66 'in person' and virtual engagements during 2020-21, including the opening of the PIPS wellbeing café, International Womens Day event and launch of Downpatrick Regeneration Outdoor Campaign.

Corporate Services

Six Month Assessment Emergency Business Plan October 2020-March 2021



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

Introduction

This report provides an overview of progress in delivering the Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan between October 2020-March 2021, across the following service areas, using the legend below.










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

Progress against the 'measures of success' has been monitored and reported for the 2020-21 financial year.

Legend

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

2.0 Corporate Services Emergency Business Plan October 2020-March 2021

Administration			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Provide a Registration Service in line with Government COVID-19 regulations and guidance	Q3, Q4		Achieved
Provide a Corporate Business Support Service (telephony/mail/filing/Property Certificates)	Q3, Q4		Achieved
Provide a Complaints Support Service	Q3, Q4		Achieved
Provide a Compliance Service	Q3, Q4		Achieved
Provide a Legal Support Service	Q3, Q4		Achieved
Provide Assurance Statements	Q3, Q4		Achieved
Conflicts of Interest Project	Q4		Not achieved by 31 March 2021. The project is well advanced and requires a short further period to secure returns from Employees who have been requested to make a mandatory declaration of interest. A revised target date of 30 th June 2021 is sought to complete this outstanding work.
Review Complaints Process and training for staff	Q4		This target was not met by 31 March 2021. Work has commenced. However, NIPSO is proposing to introduce a Standard Complaints Management framework later this year. This will include associated training materials. A revised target of 30 December 2021 is proposed
Review and update Retention and Disposal Schedule	Q4		The target 'Review and Update Retention & Disposal Schedule' was not achieved by 31 March 2021. Whilst the Compliance Team have partially completed the target by 'reviewing' the R&D Schedule, a new target date of 30 September 2021 is anticipated which will encompass the 'update' element of the target.
Areas of Good Practice/Improvement			
All services have continued to work flexibly to ensure their work is delivered in line with current Government Regulations and restrictions. Staff are working			

in a mix of office based, remote working and hybrid working with teams collaborating to ensure social distancing can be maintained in the workplace.

Corporate Compliance Service

The team continued to deliver its service throughout the pandemic by supporting Council in responding to FOI/EIR/DP requests for information. This included implementing a corporate wide "data cleanse" project and review of the current "Retention and Disposal Schedule". We also supported our partners in Health by producing Data Sharing Agreements and privacy notices to assist with the regional delivery of emergency services including food parcels to residents in our community, in addition to creating e-learning content and guidance for staff working remotely.

Corporate Business Support Service

Business services including telephone, reception, post, stationery, general administration and support for other services have continued during the COVID period. Staff have supported colleagues across Council including Insurance, Health and Safety, Planning and Neighbourhood Services. The Service has used the new telephony system to enable calls handling to be undertaken remotely during periods of lockdown.

Registration

The two Registration offices in Newry and Downpatrick have remained open during the pandemic to provide as full a range of services to the public as possible in line with Covid restrictions and GRO guidance. Staff have worked continuously with colleagues in Marketing/Communications to ensure messaging to the public is continuously reviewed and updated.

Corporate Legal Support Service

Significant progress has been made on the specific project of registration of car-park title. Greater use of the legal department resource is evident, in areas including Democratic Services; Planning; drafting of legal agreements regarding use of land and Council facilities.

Areas for Business Transformation

Corporate Compliance Service

On 7 April 2021 Council adopted the 'digital first' approach to Council records. In 2021/22 the Compliance Team will focus efforts in supporting Council develop an Electronic Documents Records Management System (EDRMS) to assist with the delivery of Council services, in compliance with data protection obligations.

Corporate Business Support Service








From 8 April 2021 the Service introduced on-line property certificates. Solicitors can now apply for property certificates electronically which will reduce the administration timeline to obtain these. In line with Council's "Digital First" policy the Service will continue to market this service and encourage as many Solicitors to use the on-line option as possible reducing the paper trail in this area.










Registration








During the pandemic GRO permitted the registration of deaths with the Registration Service to be undertaken by telephone. In line with Council's "Digital First" policy the Service has requested and is working with GRO to encourage greater choice in and use of on-line services going forward.

Corporate Legal Support Service

The Service will be working with colleagues in the Compliance Team to develop an improved file management system espousing the corporate focus on a "Digital First" approach. It also plans to work with colleagues in Procurement and Belfast Legal Services to review the Standard Terms and Conditions of Council Contracts with a view to achieving consistency in approach and common standards across all Services.

Corporate Planning and Policy			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Corporate Plan 2020-23			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Corporate Plan 2020-23 	Q4		Completed and adopted by Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement COVID-19 Communications 	Q3 – Q4		Actioned
Mainstream Corporate Policy Framework			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain corporate policy list and repository 	Q3 – Q4		Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate NMDDC Policy Development Framework - A Corporate Guide to Policy Development including 	Q3		Actioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate revised Corporate Policy Proforma 	Q3		Actioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence process to migrate policies to intranet 	Q4		To review activity as Corporate policy list and policies currently available to access from Equality and Policy folder on R Drive.
Embed Consultation / Engagement Framework			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Consultation / Engagement Framework Process 	Q3		Rescheduled to Q2 in 2021-22




Implement Irish Language Strategy 2020-2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irish Language Bursary Scheme Review Bilingualism Policy Report on Progress six monthly to Irish Language Strategy Working Group 	<p>Q3 – Q4</p> <p>Q3</p> <p>Q3</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Actioned</p> <p>Undertaken January 2021</p> <p>Reported at Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group meeting October 2020</p>
Corporate Communications and Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to accelerate the digital offering by adding new online platforms to the corporate digital channels where necessary Issue press releases to local, regional and national media Respond to local, regional and national media enquiries Manage the corporate graphic design contract Manage the corporate advertising contract Assist with the development and distribution of internal 	<p>Q3 – Q4</p> <p>Q3– Q4</p> <p>Q3 – Q4</p> <p>Q3 – Q4</p> <p>Q3 – Q4</p> <p>Q3 - Q4</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube – digital communications developed to allow us to engage with our residents and communities in an effective and efficient way. 3 targeted (advertising) online campaigns developed and delivered = £12,250; 667 Facebook posts; 518 tweets.</p> <p>80 press releases distributed delivering proactive and positive messages through all media – printed, broadcast and online.</p> <p>297 media enquiries were responded to providing accurate and up to date information.</p> <p>60 new graphic design requests managed during this period. Contract terminated as per contract period and new tender process completed to award a new four-year contract.</p> <p>104 advertising requests completed; £82,558.59 expenditure on corporate advertising requirements.</p> <p>40 internal communications issued to staff.</p>





<p>communications to all staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the new Strategic Approach to Communications & Marketing Appoint Corporate Graphic Design Agency Undertake the Council's Statutory Advertising Tender. 	<p>Q3 - Q4</p> <p>Q3 - Q4</p> <p>Q3</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Briefings completed with SMT, CMT and HoS, and new approach implemented.</p> <p>Tender process completed, and new contract awarded.</p> <p>A review of the Council's Statutory Advertising was completed, and recommendations implemented.</p>
<p>Ensure Statutory Duties Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Equality Action Plan 2020-2023 Quarterly Policy Equality Screening Reports Implementation of Disability Action Plan 2020-2023 Maintain corporate inventory of Rural Needs Impact Assessments for 2020-2021 	<p>Q3 - Q4</p> <p>Q3 - Q4</p> <p>Q3 - Q4</p> <p>Q3 - Q4</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Actioned</p> <p>Reports tabled at Strategy, Policy and Resources committee. Reports and policy equality screenings available for download from Council's website.</p> <p>Actioned</p> <p>Actioned</p>
<p>Areas of Good Practice/Improvement</p> <p>Continue to identify ways to support corporate priorities and concentrate resources on doing so cost effectively.</p> <p>Use, develop and explore all forms of communications, with particular focus on digital communications, to enhance the Council's reputation and enable the Council to get closer to its audiences.</p> <p>The new staff area on the website has enabled communication with employees working remotely and provides accessible communications with employees not on the Council IT system.</p>			

Areas for Business Transformation

Communications and Marketing team has adapted to home working and is continuing to support other service areas in becoming more effective and efficient in communicating and marketing via modern communication methods.

Continue to develop digital communications and upskill team members to deliver communications and marketing via modern methods to meet the needs of customers and other stakeholders.

Estates and Asset Management			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Covid-19 Emergency Planning	Q3 & Q4		Extensive Covid-19 emergency planning undertaken during this period, reacting to the changing Covid regulations and advising SMT, EPIG and departments how to deliver their services during the pandemic (reviewing protocols, risk assessments, training etc.). Also, liaising with and reporting to LG groups and central government bodies (PHA, Dept of Health etc.).
Covid-19. Impact on Construction Industry	Q3 & Q4		Continual monitoring of the Covid Regulations and associated best practice guidance by the construction industry of how the construction industry undertake work operations during the pandemic. Ensured that any live construction projects being undertaken by Council are adhering to the Regulations and best practice. Contract conditions amended for future contracts not yet procured to reflect Covid-19 restrictions. Potential increase in costs on existing and new projects.
Delivery of construction related projects within the capital programme.	Q3 & Q4		A number of projects within the capital programme delivered during this period. Some project slippages, due to delays associated with material delivery (Brexit), bad weather and Covid (isolation of workforce). Generally, the construction projects were able to be advanced despite the pandemic.

			Capital programme reviewed and discussed at SFWG and SP&R meetings during this period.
Estate Assets Strategy	Q3 & Q4		Further works to take place, as officers have been focusing on disposal of surplus assets and advancing associated planning applications.
Surplus Assets	Q3		Continual focus on the disposal of surplus assets during this period, with update reports presented to SFWG (Oct 20, Nov 20 and Jan 21) and SP&R (Nov 20, Dec 20 and Feb 21). Milestones achieved: completion of sales – 1No; sale agreed – 5No; commencement of D1 process
Review Council Health & Safety policy	Q4		Review completed and new policy in place from April 2021.
Emergency Planning (training for Elected Members)	Q3		Target not achieved due to workload commitments of emergency planning team on other matters (Covid-19 and Brexit, Health & Safety, Insurance). Planned to take place after the Emergency Plan is updated (scheduled for 2021/22).
Emergency Planning (Brexit preparations)	Q3 & Q4		Emergency planning staff involved in internal discussions and preparations prior to and after withdrawal from the EU. Representative also participated in the LG EU Exit Task & Finish Group.
Emergency Planning (review of COVID-19 response)	Q3 & Q4		This is an ongoing requirement, with service delivery across Council being monitored in light of the ongoing pandemic.

Areas of Good Practice/Improvement











Further work required to take place on the Estate Management strategy, so there is a clear way forward to managing and maintaining the estate portfolio.

Staff continue to adopt to new ways of working to deliver our business objectives. This includes: remote working and attending associated meetings via online platforms (Microsoft Teams, Skype for Business).





Further improvements or additional resources needed to ensure adequate services are provided by SHEP, as this business area is undertaking areas of responsibilities. The continued focus on the pandemic could impact on other work areas within SHEP.



Areas for Business Transformation




Further work on the Estate Management strategy, so there is a clear way forward to managing and maintaining the estate portfolio taking into account new models of working in wake of COVID 19.






Finance			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Continue to review and update the Corporate Risk Register, taking into account the impact of COVID-19	Q3/Q4		Corporate Risk Register reviewed quarterly by SMT and Audit Committee. Most recent version communicated to the Audit Committee in April 2021 with a new Cybersecurity Corporate Risk.
Provide up to date Governance Training through the e-learning Platform	Q4		Audit Services Manager was on secondment. This is now scheduled for Q3/Q4 2021/22. Whistleblowing Policy and Risk Strategy to be revised first.
Complete contracts mapping process	Q4		Process extended to include annual expenditure under £30k
Complete the Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21	Q4		2020/21 Internal Audit plan completed, and the Annual Internal Audit opinion gave a satisfactory assurance, however did highlight significant control failings within the NS Directorate.
Develop Raising Concerns Policy when the NIAO best practice guide released	Q4		Audit Services Manager was on secondment. This is now scheduled for Q2 2021/22. Will be presented to the July 2021 Audit Committee.
Update employees on the new Procurement Policy and continue to monitor performance and adherence to same.	Q3/q4		Completed
Develop a Contracts Management Procedure	Q4		Will form part of the implementation of the new Source to Pay
Ensure CRM looks at ways to integrate risks/H & S/insurance and audit tracking	Q4		Audit Services Manager was on secondment. Structures have since changed and insurance now sits within the SHEP team.
Move towards alignment of payroll practices across the Council and review of underlying process	Q4		Policy going to SP&R May 2021. Procedures to follow.
Review existing coding structures	Q4		Completed




aligned to the new organisational structure, to improve management reporting			
Through the Strategic Finance Working Group, secure a more strategic focus on long-term rates planning	Q3/Q4		Good progress with all Directorates updating SFWG on long term strategies
Areas of Good Practice/Improvement			
Staff continue to adopt to new ways of working to deliver our business objectives. This includes: remote working and attending associated meetings via online platforms (Microsoft Teams, Skype for Business).			
Areas for Business Transformation			
Progress made in improving procurement practices and procedures with further work to continue into next financial year.			





Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Identification of available resources to support redeployment of employees to support Covid-19 key frontline activities.	For the duration of the emergency		<p>Vacancies (including seasonal and Covid-19 related requirements) offered as redeployment opportunities to via 'Expressions of Interest' and by targeting suitable individuals.</p> <p>Reopening of facilities e.g. Leisure, has impacted on ability to redeploy staff from some departments. Work will continue in line with requirements.</p> <p>Work is ongoing and support varies in accordance with organisational demands</p>
Introduce additional processes for notification, recording and reporting of Covid-19 related absences; in line with PHA guidance.	Implemented May 2020		Employee tracker developed to record status of employees, i.e., Furloughed, Not Working, Working from Home, etc. and updated based on information received.
Develop and implement cross- departmental Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP): Trauma Informed Practice Workforce Development	Q4 2020 - 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position paper on the implementation & development through the support of the Trauma Informed Practice Project across NMD completed and submitted to SBNI for presentation to SOLACE. Briefings provided for both Senior & Corporate Management Teams Engagement with Health and Wellbeing Team to support the roll out of the Thrive APP and build on existing mental health support programmes for staff Worked with Learning & Development to integrate trauma informed practice within People, Perform, Grow Collaborated with Health Shield Partner to support the provision of physical & mental health support
Continue work on the next phase of T&Cs; developing proposals & options for MS decision making and negotiation towards securing agreed pay related provisions	Ongoing H1 & H2 2020-2021		Proposals agreed through SPRC and Council in Q4 2020-2021.



Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
<p>Maximise use of eLearning as an alternative method for employee communication, training and learning.</p> <p>Adapt and tailor eLearning modules for the Council's LMS as an alternative to 'traditional' training methods.</p>	Ongoing H1 & H2 2020-2021	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Learning & Development Programme developed and adapted to provide e-learning content and virtual courses accessible to all employees via the staff area of the Council website and the eLearning portal. Revised communication strategy to include quarterly L&D newsletters to maximise use of eLearning. Text alert and L&D Newsletters issued to all staff with details on how to access eLearning and available courses. Worked with Subject Matter Experts (SME) to design a number of e-Learning courses, 11 were mandatory for all employees, 3 additional courses specifically for Line Managers/Supervisors, along with a range of highly recommended courses. In addition to producing eLearning reports as requested, created a reporting system for line managers to directly access completion records for their own staff. Produced a new FAQ Guide for eLearning Created video content to demonstrate the usage of the eLearning system. Designed, organized and delivered an eLearning week in December 2020 which achieved a combined total of 500 views of the SME videos and completion of 368 mandatory e-Learning courses. Developed and launched 'Learning and Development Hub' Button to maximise use of eLearning. This included an online booking system, access to Departmental / EQA application Forms etc.

Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Support the reduction of Sickness Absence	2020-2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of 12.74% on days lost year on year at February 2021. Regular reporting to CMT, SMT, Corporate H&S Committee, SP&R Committee and Council. Individual support and coaching provided to line managers Managing Attendance eLearning module (mandatory for line managers) Internal Audit of application of Managing Attendance Procedure and processes conducted February 2021.
Update Safeguarding training to meet both user and organisational needs; taking account of social distancing restrictions etc. 'Implement improvements to mitigate risk through improved learning outcomes – including:	Ongoing H1 & H2 2020-2021		<p>Updated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Safeguarding Awareness ➢ Domestic Abuse Awareness <p>Development of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Human Trafficking ➢ ACE Awareness Programme ➢ Leisurewatch Safeguarding ➢ • Trauma Sensitive Approaches Practice Training
Mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks (linked to lock down and changes in working practices), for both Council and citizens	H2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic Abuse Policy and procedures developed (approved SPRC August 2020) to support and protect staff from harm who are subject to abuse & sexual violence and signpost staff to support services. COVID Safeguarding Advice and Support folder created and shared with staff on 'R' drive <p><i>Whilst initially delayed due to lockdown and impact of Covid-19 restrictions the following has also been completed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Pathway developed in collaboration with ONUS to enable staff to provide support & signpost anyone experiencing DA. • Safe Place initiative (approved @ SPRC in August 2020) to support, protect and signpost citizens and staff who are subject to Domestic abuse & sexual violence.















Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Maintain Time & Attendance Systems in line with the interim suspension of Flexi Scheme.	H1		HR maintained T&A records and worked with System developers to improve the respective systems in order that Flexi scheme could be reinstated in December 2020; incorporating the agreed changes to terms and conditions.
Update with the agreed changes from Phase 1 negotiations	Q3		
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)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed feedback and revisited focus group surveys to make PPG process fit for purpose for remote and hybrid working. Engagement with key stakeholders in February/March which will continue into Q1 2021-2022.
Implement a process which recognises 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		On target to launch as per agreed timetable. Phased introduction planned, supported by newly created eLearning content and branded document templates tailored to NMDDC.
2020-2021 Corporate Training Programme & Departmental Training	2020-2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Learning & Development Programme developed and adapted to provide e-learning content and virtual courses accessible to all employees. Evaluation of the Corporate L&D programme resulted in adapting the design and delivery of training to increase flexibility and accessibility of learning opportunities for all employees i.e. short bite size workshops, SME videos etc. Quarterly Corporate L&D Programmes and L&D newsletters emailed to all staff in relation to the eLearning platform, corporate training programmes and forthcoming L&D activities.












Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Increase Safeguarding awareness with stakeholder groups through communication & marketing to increase staff and citizen knowledge & understanding of safeguarding	H2 2020-2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update completed of NMD website Public facing Safeguarding Page Domestic Abuse Social Media Campaigns produced and posted in collaboration with Health & Social Care Dissemination of Safeguarding information specific to Council risk exchanged with external partner agencies including the NSPCC, HSC Trusts & PCSP
Identify safeguarding risks in existing arrangements, emerging issues and future practice for both Council and citizens. Develop and implement solutions/arrangements which improves practice, procedure and reduces the risk of harm/abuse; thereby mitigating organisational risk and staff	2020-2021 Ongoing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaps identified in procurement of contracted services and 3rd party provision Legal advice and procedural guidance with supporting documentation provided to Procurement team for compliance & inclusion by the Procurement Department within relevant procurement process (23/04/2020 & 29/04/2020), to close the gaps and reduce the risks in ensuring compliance with relevant safeguarding provisions. Procurement Department to take forward. To ensure compliance with relevant safeguarding provisions, collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NILGA Dept. of Justice Modern Slavery Unit Local Adult Safeguarding Partnership
Employee Qualification Assistance Scheme (EQA)	2020-2021		Financial assistance for EQA not available for 2020-2021. 23 applications processed and approved on the basis of 'time off'.

Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
2020-2021 Corporate Training Programme & Departmental Training	2020-2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed an on-line booking system for Corporate L&D virtual courses. Liaised with ADs to collate essential and urgent Departmental L&D activities that needed to take place prior to March 2021 whilst also taking account of remote learning options. Organised the delivery of departmental virtual and face to face training for all Sections in line with the essential training needs that were identified. Secured LGTG contribution for Corporate & Departmental training courses. Designed and delivered training related to leadership/ management development.
New			
Participate in the Belfast Region City Deal skills and employability working group to identify areas for collaborative working with the partner organisations and develop same.	Ongoing		Involvement in working group and HR contribution to scoping continues.
Furlough – in accordance with government guidelines, furlough identified employees and casual workers.	Q1 and ongoing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation received NMDDC could avail of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) mid-May 2020. Templates developed, telephone calls made, written agreements sought and required records maintained and updated throughout. Flexible furlough scheme implemented. Close working with Payroll enabled Council to submit eligible claims for HMRC financial support.
Travel passes	Q1 and ongoing		Travel passes for identified Essential workers created in conjunction with Acting Head of Legal Department and issued

Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
New			
Commission the Council's Insurance Broker to undertake a market review to identify alternative Cash Health Plan provision	Q2 & Q3		Completed. New provider introduced on 1 November 2020
Engagement with and development of existing and potential Safeguarding partnership working with internal external stakeholder groups	Impacted upon by lockdown & social distancing		<p>Whilst initially delayed due to lockdown and impact of Covid-19 restrictions the following outcomes have been achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of learning and awareness through collaboration with SBNI, LASP, NSPCC & SCSSG to mitigate risk in Council Service Provision through improved learning for staff from practice reviews within other agencies • Delivered neglect workshops in collaboration with SBNI partnership to upskill staff • Developed and delivered support materials and key note speakers for the Southern Trust Adult Safeguarding Regional Conference. • Provided safeguarding advice and material to NI Ambulance Service, for their development and implementation of a Safeguarding policy and procedures • Provided guidance and direction to Local Government Safeguarding Network (LGSN) to ensure consistency of safeguarding practice across all local Councils (including AccessNI, information sharing and policy develop*ment). • Initiated & coordinated LGSN response to the Solace Support Hub – Collectively Preventing Harm Group for emerging COVID related Safeguarding issues • Collaborated with Leisurewatch, to enhance Council specific considerations with Leisurewatch service provision.




Human Resources and Safeguarding			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Delayed			
Planning for The Future	By Q4	🙄	No requirement on HR to progress due to Covid
Pursue options relating to joint working with (a) Cluster Council on new Job Evaluation Procedures	Delayed	😊	Agreement reached between Management and Joint Trade Union Sides on 8 January 2021 for a review of the job evaluation process at a regional level to be escalated through SOLACE, which incorporates the full guidelines of the GLPC Job Evaluation Scheme.
Suspended			
In conjunction with Community Planning & Community Engagement, examine opportunities to create/extend Volunteering Opportunities within and external to the Council	Suspended	🙄	Not progressed due to lockdown and impact of Covid-19 restrictions
Further Develop Work Experience/Work Placement Programmes across the Council	Suspended	🙄	Not progressed due to lockdown and impact of Covid-19 restrictions however, requests have been considered on an individual basis
Areas of Good Practice/Improvement			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of eLearning platform very successful and will carry out further work to increase use of eLearning. Communication with employees through the Staff Intranet and Text Everywhere facility Use of electronic communications via email with furloughed workers and not on the Council email system has facilitated greater outreach engagement with employees in a shorter timeframe Ongoing development and refining of protocols to facilitate remote/virtual recruitment processes and formal employee relations meetings 			
Areas for Business Transformation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The launch of PPG creates opportunities for organisational and cultural transformation Mainstream electronic filing in place of printing and physically filing documents, which will align more closely to an Electronic Document Management System. Further IT developments will be needed for this to be simpler and more robust. Increased use of social media to increase Safeguarding awareness and extend messages beyond employees and service users of Council facilities. Explore opportunities for blended and extended agile working 			


Information Technology			
Objective / Activity	Timescale	Status	Progress
Support Mobilisation of Staff	Q1		All approved requests to support home working have been facilitated.
Support Return to Office	Q1-Q4		Continuing to support RTO requests as the come in.
Support Hybrid Meetings	Q2-Q4		New audio-visual equipment implemented in larger meeting rooms to support in-person (socially distanced) attendance at virtual meetings.
Develop and Support Business Process Changes	Q2-Q4		Continuing to support business process changes and adapt underlying platforms to optimise engagement channels.
Microsoft Enterprise Arrangement	Q1		Complete.
WAN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Implementation Dismantle Legacy Arrangements 	Q3		Complete.
Ways of Working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worker Style Identification Hardware Procurement, Build and Deploy 	Q4		Worker Style identification complete. Bill of Materials for Flexible and Field Workers compiled and procurement underway.
Fixed Telephony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismantle Legacy Arrangements Integrate with eMail Service Automate Reporting to Service Managers 	Q3		Dismantling of Legacy Arrangements complete.
Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery	Q4		Slipped by 2 months, but now in final phases of testing.
Managed Print	Q3		Delayed, but Procurement Pack now complete and awaiting Tender release.
System Administration	On-going		
Service Desk (User and Device Support)	On-going		
Moves/Adds/Changes	On-going		
Third Party Support Facilitation	On-going		

Contract Management	On-going		
Tenant Support	On-going		
Procurement	On-going		
Business Engagement	On-going		
Resolve Legacy Contractual Issues	Q3		Continuing
Chamber Delegate System	Q3		Future requirement to be determined
Merchant Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Merchant Services provision 	Q3		Continuing
WiFi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismantle Legacy Arrangements Continue Phase 2 Implementation 	Q2		Complete
Planning ePIC Replacement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute as required 	Ongoing		
Continue Implementation of IT Transformation Programme	Ongoing		
Most projects will have slipped due to priority refocusing and supplier availability, but we still aim to complete as originally planned.	Ongoing		
Areas of Good Practice/Improvement			
All IT Staff have adapted to home working and are continuing to support other parts of the business in becoming more productive under home working conditions.			
Areas for Business Transformation			
Continual testing of solutions to support a blended approach to working, incorporating remote and office-based attendees on the collaboration platform.			

3.0 Measures of Success

The following 'measures of success' have been monitored and reported for the 2020-21 financial year:

Measures of Success					
Dept	Measures	Target	Actual	Status	Explanation
Administration	% of responses to requests for information provided within the statutory timeframe	80%	90%		<p>573 requests for information (RFI) were 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.</p> <p>19 Breach Reviews are also included within the 573 count for FOI/EIR/DP RFI.</p> <p>Most notable is the reduction in RFI, from 870 (2018/19), 688 (2019/20) to 573 (2020/21). Whilst the reduction in RFI during 2020/21 could be attributed to the Covid 19 pandemic, this has resulted in a percentage increase in responses being achieved within the deadline from 85% (2018/19), 95% (2019/20) to 97% (2020/21). Furthermore, the additional time provided the team with the ability to create Council's own bespoke e-learning module to support training in this area.</p>
Finance	% invoices paid within 30 days	90%	86%		<p>During 2020-21, the Council processed 86% of invoices within 30 calendar days. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic had a clear impact on the payment of invoices, performance improved from 82% in Q1 to 88% in Q4.</p>
IT	Number of IT critical failures and down days	-	0		There were no IT critical failures and down days during 2020-21.
HR	Average number of	-	-	-	N/A

	days lost per FTE				
Corporate Planning and Policy	Facebook and Twitter engagement rates through planned interest based scheduled posts	5%	See explanation details		<p>Facebook - Increase 14% Likes 18% Followers 47% Posts 4% Private Messages</p> <p>Twitter – Increase 53% Tweets 75% Profile Visits 633% Mentions* 8% Follows</p> <p><i>*The significant % increase is attributed to the amount of organic posts shared in relation to Covid-19 messaging from NMDDC and other NI agencies.</i></p>

Chief Executive's Department

Annual Business Plan 2021-22



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

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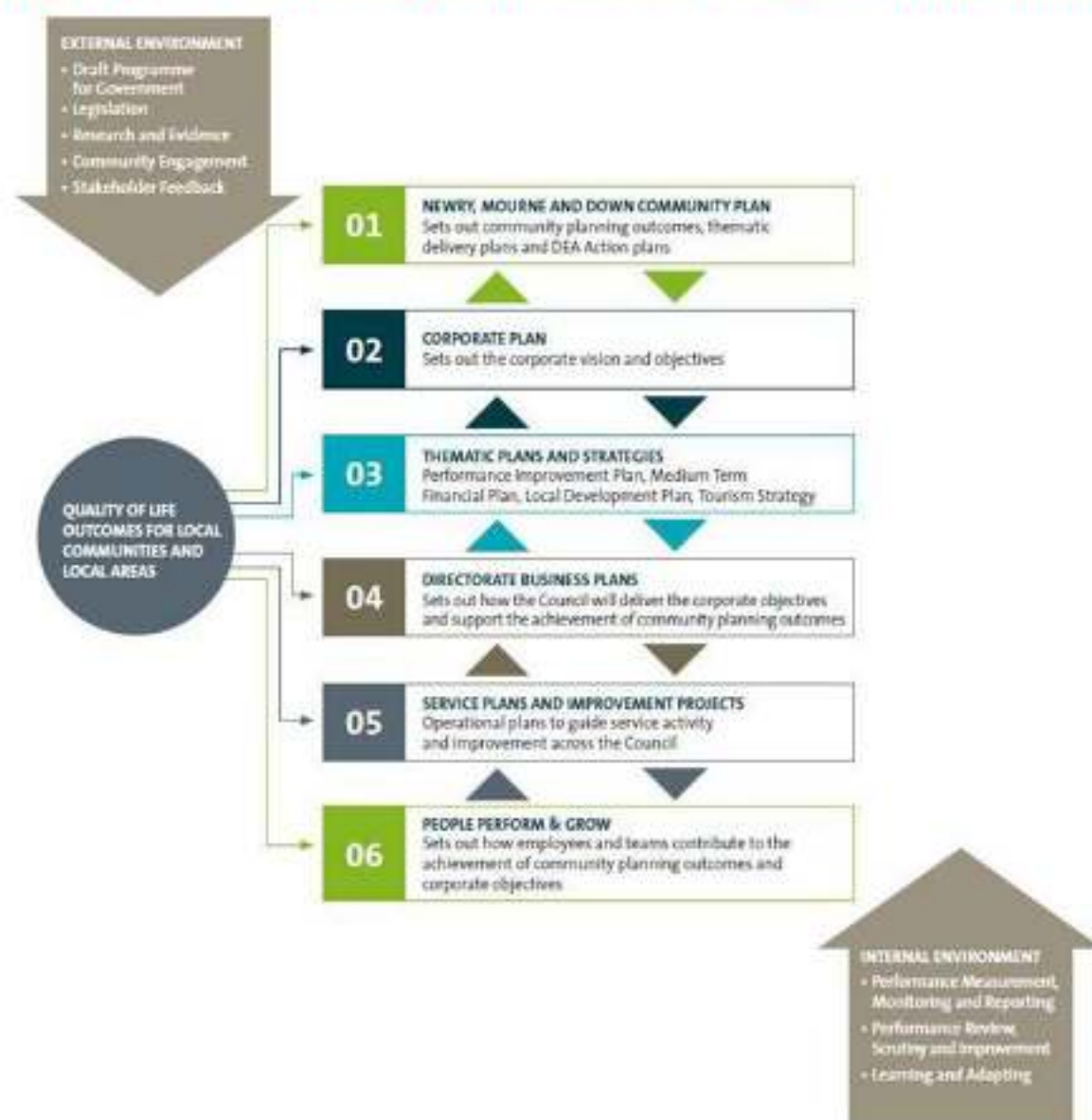
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Chief Executive's Department is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation, supporting the delivery of all corporate objectives and ensuring legislative compliance with the Duty of Community Planning and Duty of Improvement, as outlined in The Local Government (NI) Act 2014. The Department also plays a key role in supporting open and transparent decision-making processes and assisting Elected Members in carrying out their roles as civic and community leaders.
- 1.2 The core responsibilities of the Department are:
- **Community Planning**
 - **Evidence and Research**
 - **Performance and Improvement**
 - **Business Transformation**
 - **Democratic Services**

2.0 Background and Context

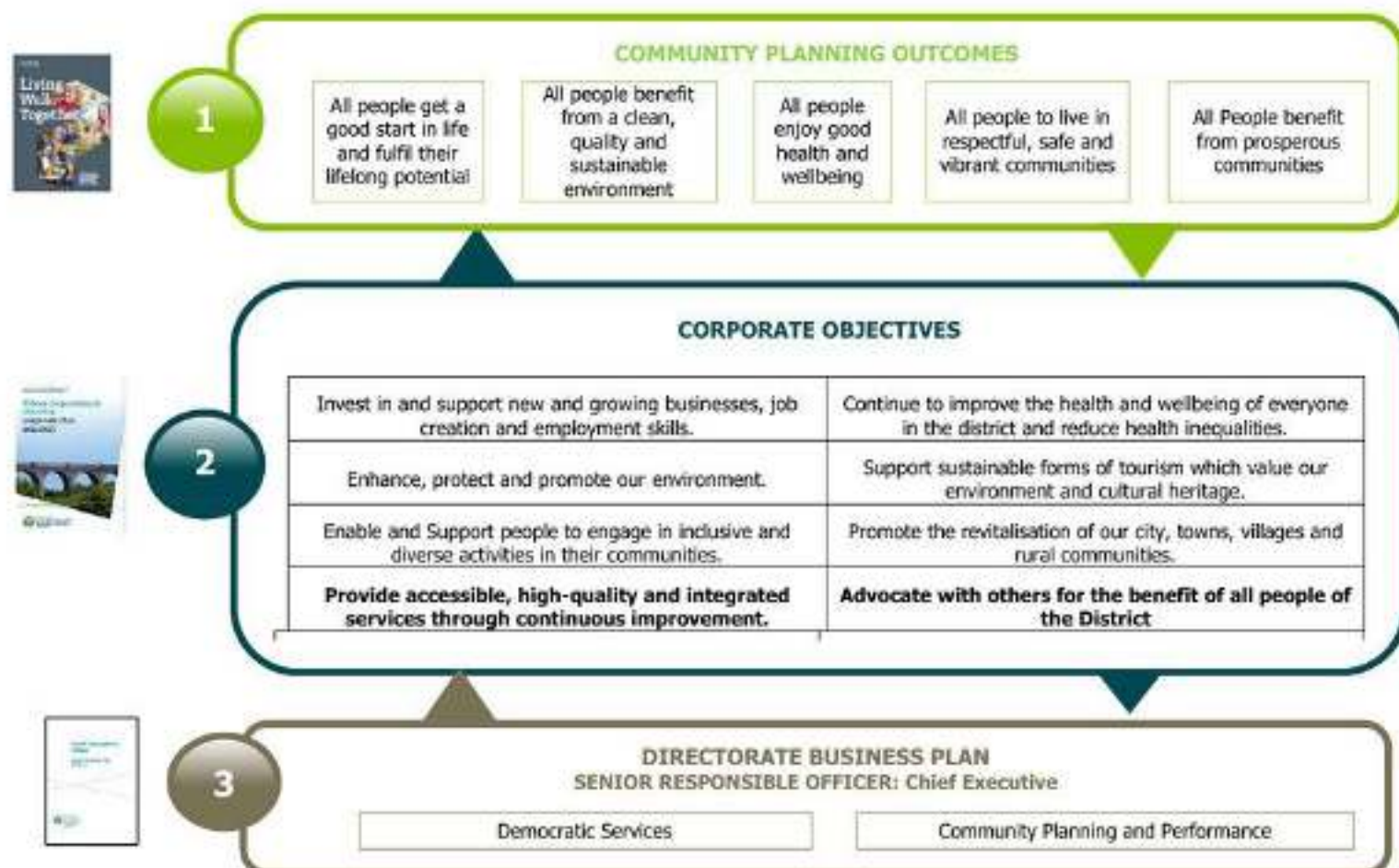
- 2.1 The Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan is developed within the context of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Performance Improvement Plan. The Community Plan sets out the long term outcomes for the District, based on the needs and aspirations of local people. The Corporate Plan sets out the key objectives for the Council between 2021-23, and how it will contribute to achieving the community planning outcomes. The Performance Improvement Plan highlights the improvements stakeholders can expect to see through the annual performance improvement objectives, which are clearly aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives.
- 2.2 The Community Plan and Corporate Plan are cross cutting and strategic in nature. They guide all activity within the organisation, as well as the subsequent allocation of resources, and sit within a hierarchy of plans, as outlined in the 'Business Planning and Performance Management Framework' (Figure 1).
- 2.3 The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that the Council is delivering its corporate vision and objectives, whilst securing continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. It provides a mechanism to join up and cascade the various plans and strategies across the organisation, demonstrating how employees contribute to achieving community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, for the ultimate benefit of the citizens we serve.

Figure 1: Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



- 2.4 Whilst the Corporate Plan focuses on issues which cut across the organisation and are strategic in nature, the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan provides an overview of the key operational activities for the coming year. These activities are explicitly linked to corporate objectives and coupled with 'business as usual' service delivery, provide clear direction for all employees within the Department (Figure 2).
- 2.5 The Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan is published annually and is the basis upon which performance is managed and reviewed by the full Council, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Senior Management Team.

Figure 2: Alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



3.0 Purpose and Values

3.1 Purpose

3.1.1 The Chief Executive's Department provides strategic direction and leadership to the organisation by developing, implementing and monitoring key frameworks, internally and externally, to support the achievement of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives. Whilst the department supports the achievement of all community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, the bulk of activity is aligned to the following corporate objectives:

- Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
- Advocate for others for the benefit of all people of the District

3.1.2 The Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan also supports and underpins the delivery of all corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives, through the:

- Process of community planning
- Provision of evidence and research
- Arrangements for performance and improvement
- Provision of democratic services

3.2 Values

3.2.1 The Department adheres to the Council's values which are outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23:

We Will Be	What This Means
Accountable	We will be accountable for how we plan for and use resources sustainably
Collaborative	We will work in partnership with others
Transparent	We will be transparent in how we make decisions

3.2.2 In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), the Chief Executive's Department is committed to carrying out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations. All new and revised policies, procedures and programmes of work will be subject to an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment (where appropriate).

4.0 Challenges and Opportunities

4.1 The Department was re-organised in 2017 following the reorganisation of the former Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate. The Department continues to evolve in line with organisational change and remains committed to developing and embedding the necessary plans, policies and processes to deliver improvement across the organisation.

4.2 Influences within the external and internal environment continuously present challenges and opportunities, which have an impact on the overall management and operation of the Chief Executive's Department. These influences can be summarised as follows:

External Environment

- **Legislation:** Ensuring legislative compliance with The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and subsequent Orders, specifically in relation to the Duty of Community Planning, Duty of Improvement and Political Governance.
- **Strategic Alliances:** Collaborating with a range of stakeholders to address the impact of COVID-19, Brexit and other emerging issues.
- **Community Planning:** Strengthening existing partnerships and progressing the implementation of the Community Plan.
- **Evidence Based Decision-Making:** Ongoing collation of national, regional and local datasets to inform and influence local decision-making, policy development and service provision.
- **Global trends:** Impact of COVID-19 on the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the District, shifts in citizen expectations, behaviour and demand for services, deeper social inequalities, complex social issues and the needs of a growing and ageing population on public service provision.

Internal Environment

- **Resources:** Identifying potential areas for innovation, resilience and efficiency amidst potential budgetary constraints.
- **Employees:** New ways of working and shifts in employee working patterns, expectations, aspirations and behaviour.
- **Democracy:** Ensuring Elected Members and the Council's decision-making structures/committees are provided with appropriate levels of support, to facilitate the effective and efficient discharge of their responsibilities.
- **Transformation:** Leading the development and implementation of a transformational programme of change at both strategic and operational levels, enabling employees and Elected Members to drive forward improvements that meet the needs and aspirations of citizens.
- **Performance and Improvement:** Managing Council performance, highlighting areas of high-performance, identifying areas for intervention, developing a performance led approach to business and service planning and facilitating the development of a performance improvement culture.
- **Risk Management:** Managing potential risks and opportunities in achieving the key objectives and actions outlined in the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan.

5.0 Chief Executive's Department

Key Office Objectives

Community Planning – Work with partners to lead the implementation of the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes for local people.

Evidence and Research – Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to underpin and inform future decision-making and policy development processes.

Performance and Improvement – Support the development of a performance improvement culture by embedding effective performance management arrangements.

Democratic Services – Support the decision making and political governance structures of the Council.

Community Planning

OBJECTIVE

Work with partners to lead the implementation of the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes for local people

ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN

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

Action

Timescale

Facilitate the development and publication of the 'Recovery and Renewal Plan' for the Strategic Stakeholder Forum

Q1

Review the planned activity and structures of the Priority Sub-groups to secure alignment with the post COVID-19 priorities identified by the Community Planning Partnership

Q2

Prepare and publish the Community Planning Statement of Progress

Q3

Work in partnership with the NI Housing Executive to organise a conference to outline progress against the Housing Needs Action Plan and identify future objectives for the District

Q3

Prepare and publish the Community Planning review

Q4

Work with Community Planning partners to progress the development and implementation of further Participatory Budgeting projects across the District

Q4

In collaboration with the Strategic Stakeholder Forum, lead the Community Foundation NI supported Citizens' Panel for the District

Q4

Evidence and Research

OBJECTIVE

Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to underpin and inform future decision-making and policy development processes

ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN

Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Action		Timescale
Provide Geographic Information System (GIS) and data analytics support across the organisation		Q1 onwards
Work with internal departments to develop service specific GIS applications to support service delivery		Q1 onwards
Facilitate effective stakeholder consultation and engagement through online surveys and the NMD Citizens Panel		Q1 onwards
Review the indicators within the Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down, ensuring alignment with the indicators outlined in the Programme for Government and current proposals to the Community Planning Partnership		Q2
Prepare the business case for the Residents Survey, to be conducted in August 2022		Q3
In partnership with IT, conduct a review of existing GIS provision, assessing the requirement for an organisational upgrade and completing the upgrade of enterprise GIS		Q4
Performance and Improvement		
OBJECTIVE Support the development of a performance improvement culture by embedding effective performance management arrangements	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Prepare and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22		Q1
Prepare and publish the Assessment of Performance 2020-21		Q2
Facilitate the Performance Audit and Assessment and implement the 'proposals for improvement' put forward by the Local Government Auditor		Q2/Q3
Develop the 2022-23 performance improvement objectives, in line with the Corporate Plan		Q3/Q4
Strengthen the alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and co-ordinate the business and service planning process		Q1 onwards
Explore options to procure an electronic Performance Management System		Q1 onwards
Provide performance management training and capacity building for Elected Members and designated officers		Q1 onwards
Democratic Services		
OBJECTIVE Support the decision making and political governance structures of the Council	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district	
Action		Timescale

Provide administrative and governance support to the Council, Standing Committees, PCSP/Policing Committee and ad-hoc Working Groups	Q1 onwards
Organise the annual meeting of the Council and manage the appointment to positions of responsibility for the Council and Committees	Q1
Organise and publish the programme of Council and Committee meetings	Q1
Organise an induction, training and capacity building programme to support Elected Members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, including e-learning, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Decision Time, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Performance Management	Q1 onwards
Commence preparations to re-attain the Elected Development Charter for NMDDC	Q1/Q2
Support the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson in carrying out their role(s) as First Citizen(s)	Q1 onwards

6.0 Performance

- 6.1 The Chief Executive's Department performs a key role in leading the development of robust and meaningful performance measures at all levels across the organisation.
- 6.2 In addition to managing and monitoring financial and human resources, the following performance measures will be monitored during 2021-22:

Measures of Success
Compliance with the statutory Duty of Improvement
Compliance with the statutory Duty of Community Planning
The number of events hosted on behalf of the Chairperson / Vice Chairperson
The number of official events attended by the Chairperson / Vice Chairperson

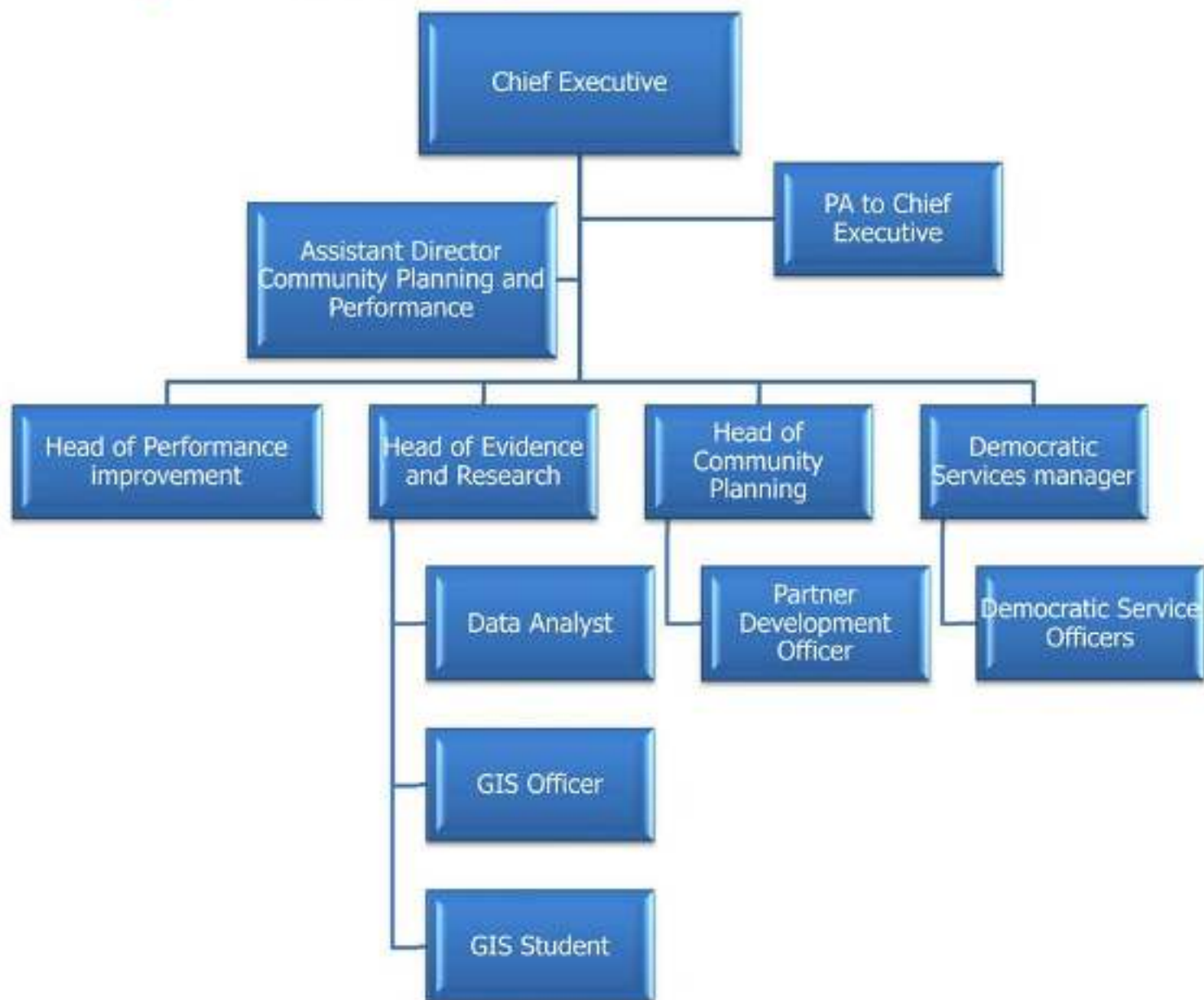
Chief Executive's Department: Plans and Strategies

- 6.3 The Chief Executive's Department is responsible for leading the development, implementation and review of the following plans and strategies, which influence the work of the Department and Council:
- Community Plan
 - Performance Improvement Plan
 - Business Planning and Performance Management Framework
 - Performance Improvement Policy
 - Constitution

7.0 Office Structure

- 7.1 The Chief Executive's Department is one of five Departments, which together, comprise the management structure of the Council. The structure of the Chief Executive's Department is set out in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Chief Executive's Department



8.0 Financial Information

Net estimated expenditure 2021-22	
Community Planning and Performance	£121,333
Corporate Management and Democratic Services	£1,297,840
TOTAL: Chief Executive's Department	£1,419,173

9.0 Governance Arrangements

Reviewing performance and reporting progress to Elected Members and other key stakeholders facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The organisational and political governance arrangements to develop, monitor and report the Council's progress in implementing the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan are set out in Figure 5.

These arrangements are supplemented by the Council's service planning process and regular reviews by the Chief Executive and her team. The governance arrangements the Council has put in place to deliver continuous improvement are also subject an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Figure 5: Governance Arrangements

Full Council

- Ratification of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan
- Ratification of annual review of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee / Audit Committee

- Scrutiny and challenge around the Duty of Improvement
- Provide assurance that performance management arrangements are robust and effective

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee

- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan
- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan

Senior Management Team

- Development, consideration and approval of Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan
- Development, consideration and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan

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Corporate Services Directorate

Annual Business Plan 2021-22

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1.0 Introduction

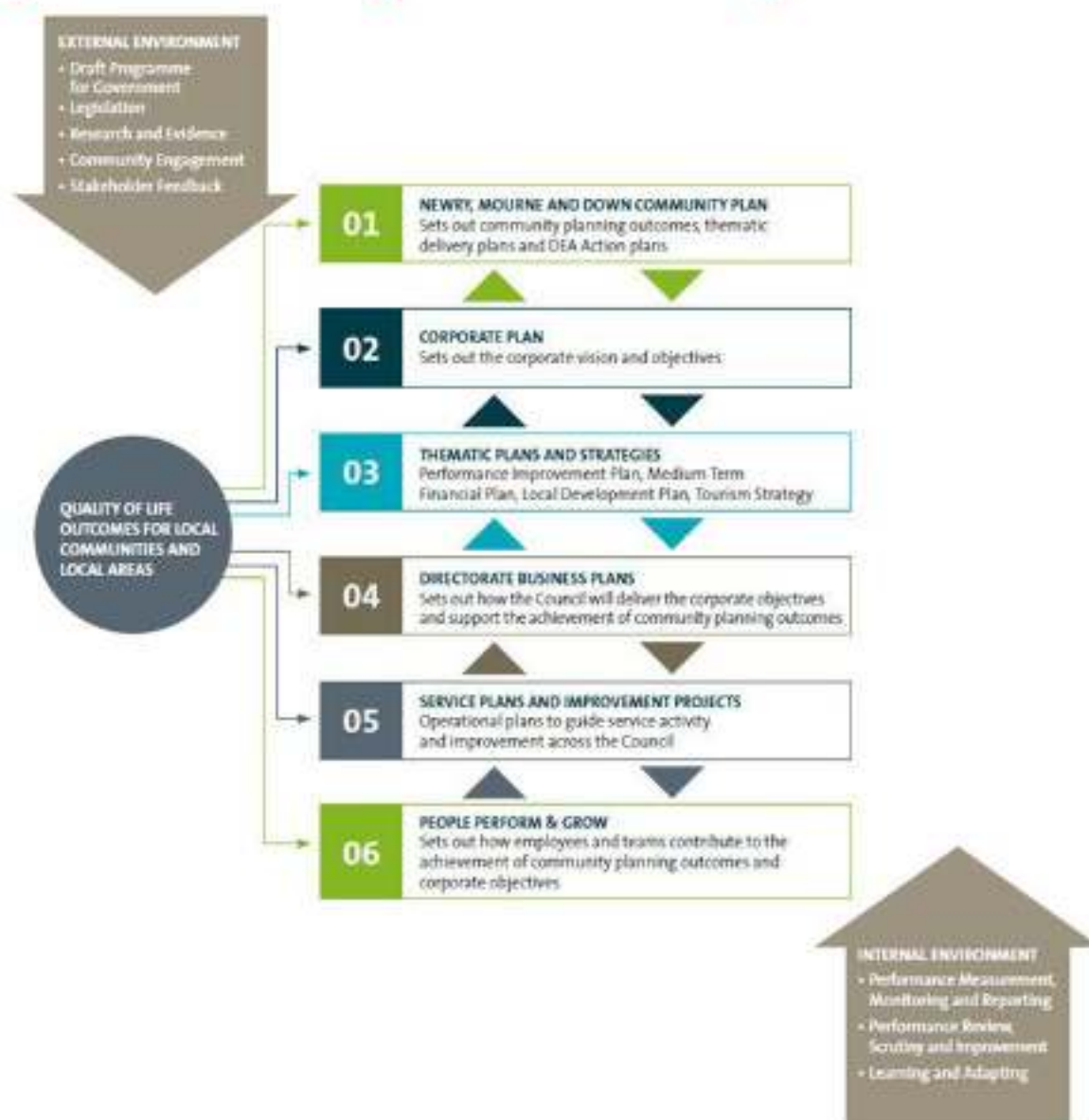
- 1.1 The Corporate Services Directorate is responsible for supporting the organisation to achieve the strategic objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2021-23. The Directorate is responsible for the overall management of the Council's staff and finances and plays a key role in providing professional advice and guidance to support and improve the services provided. The Directorate provides services directly to the public through corporate communications and marketing, as well as providing registration, digital and telephony, emergency advice and customer services.
- 1.2 The core responsibilities of the Department are:
- **Finance, including Procurement**
 - **Human Resources, including Safeguarding**
 - **Corporate Planning and Policy, including Communications and Marketing**
 - **Administration, including Legal Services, Compliance and Registration Services**
 - **Information Technology**
 - **Estates and Capital projects, including Health and Safety and Emergency Planning**
- 1.3 The Corporate Services Business Plan 2021-22 is also focused on identifying opportunities for business recovery and transformation, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.0 Background and Context

- 2.1 The Corporate Services Business Plan is developed within the context of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2021-23. The Community Plan sets out the long-term outcomes for the District, based on the needs and aspirations of local people. The Corporate Plan sets out the key strategic objectives for the Council between 2021-23, and how it will contribute to achieving the community planning outcomes.
- 2.2 The Community Plan and Corporate Plan are cross cutting and strategic in nature. They guide all activity within the organisation, as well as the subsequent allocation of resources, and sit within a hierarchy of plans, as outlined in the 'Business Planning and Performance Management Framework' (Figure 1).
- 2.3 The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that the Council is delivering its corporate vision and priorities, whilst securing continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. It provides a mechanism to join up and cascade the various plans and strategies across the organisation, demonstrating how employees

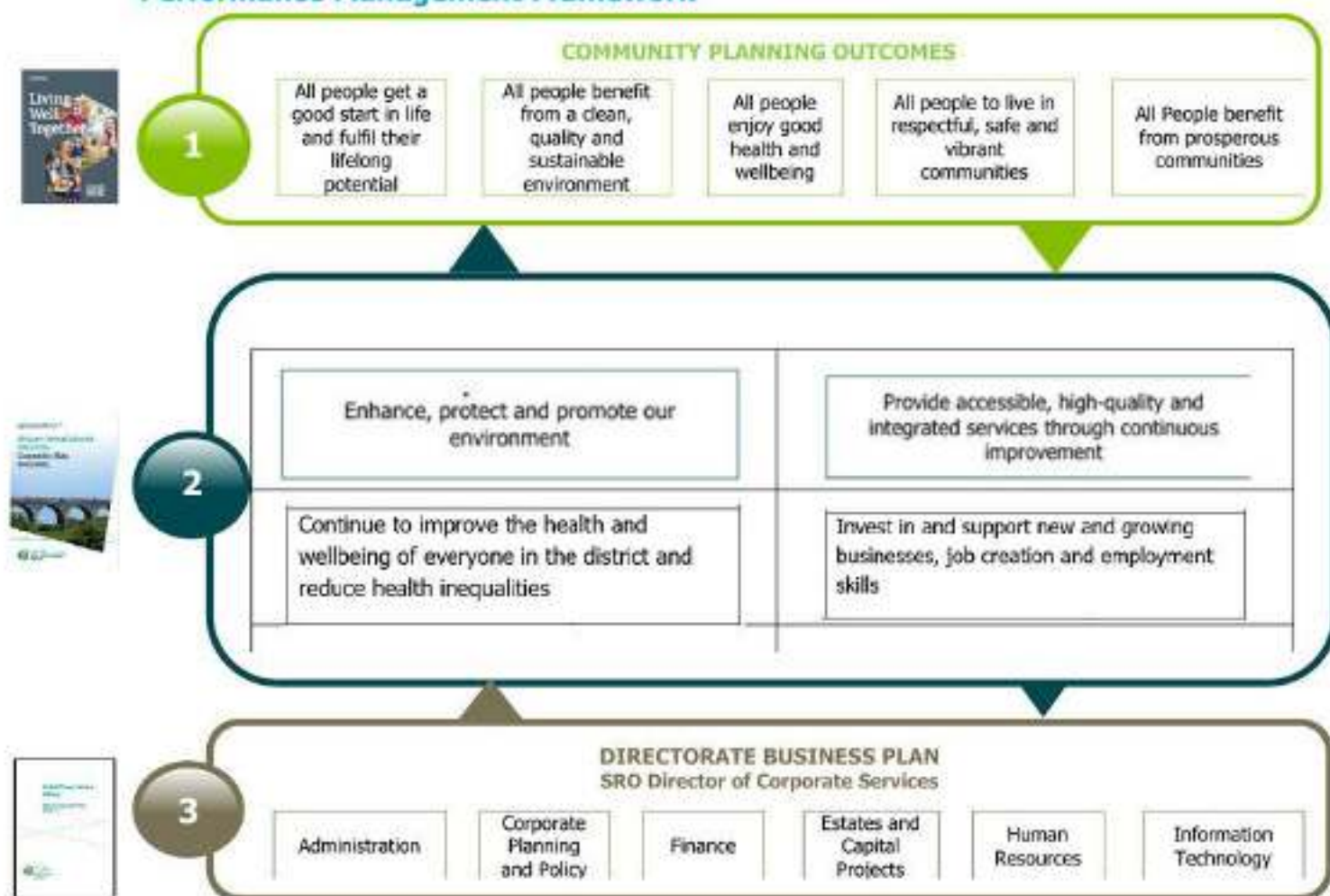
contribute to achieving community planning outcomes and corporate priorities, for the ultimate benefit of the citizens we serve.

Figure 1: Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



- 2.4 The Corporate Services Business Plan provides an overview of the key operational activities for the coming year. These activities are explicitly linked to corporate objectives and coupled with 'business as usual' service delivery, provide clear direction for all employees within the Directorate (Figure 2). Directorate Business Plans are supported by Service Plans and the 'People Perform and Grow' initiative.
- 2.5 The Corporate Services Business Plan is published annually and is the basis upon which performance is managed and reviewed by full Council, the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Senior Management Team.

Figure 2: Corporate Services Alignment across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework



3.0 Purpose and Values

3.1 Purpose

3.1.1 The Corporate Service Directorate's primary purpose is to provide the resources and support required to the organisation to enable delivery of the strategic (corporate) outcomes for the Council. As a result, the bulk of Directorate activity is aligned with the Council's strategic objective:

- Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

3.1.2 However, there are other important Council strategic objectives where the Directorate makes a significant contribution in supporting the achievements of the objectives. Further, more detailed information is provided in Sections 5.0 (Corporate Services Supporting Actions 2021-22) and 6.0 (Performance) of this Plan.

3.1 Values

3.1.1 The Department adheres to the Council's values which are outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23:

We Will Be	What This Means
Accountable	We will be accountable for how we plan for and use resources sustainably
Collaborative	We will work in partnership with others
Transparent	We will be transparent in how we make decisions

3.2.2 In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), the Chief Executive's Department is committed to carrying out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations. All new and revised policies, procedures and programmes of work will be subject to an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment (where appropriate).

4.0 Challenges and Opportunities

- 4.1 The Corporate Services Directorate was established in December 2014, as part of the organisational design of the new Council, to centralise the management of a number of existing Council functions as well as support new powers which were transferred to the Council on the 1 April 2015. From 1 April 2017, the functional areas of Corporate Planning and Policy, and Estates and Capital Projects have become part of the Corporate Services Directorate.
- 4.2 The Directorate continues to develop in line with organisational change. Over the course of this financial year, the Directorate will continue to develop and embed the necessary corporate frameworks, policies, processes and systems to deliver strategic improvement across the organisation, specifically in the areas of human resources, finance, administration and information technology.
- 4.3 The various (internal and external) challenges and opportunities for the Directorate are summarised as follows:

External Environment

- **Financial Planning:** Establishing the necessary financial plans within which Members' priorities for the District will be delivered.

- **Legislation and Regulations:** Ensuring legislative compliance with a range of legislation including S75 NI Act, Rural Needs Act, Health & Safety, Procurement regulations.
- **Corporate Planning and Policy:** Establishing the necessary corporate planning and policy frameworks within which Members priorities for the District will be delivered and statutory obligations met, and we communicate effectively.

Internal Environment

- **Management:** Successfully establishing the Directorate in terms of its structure, governance and internal processes and increased responsibilities.
- **Resources:** Identifying and securing the financial and non-financial resources needed for the Directorate to successfully develop.
- **Estate Planning and Asset Management:** Successfully developing and implementing the necessary frameworks, policies and processes to support the effective and efficient management of the Council's Estate.
- **Transformation & Efficiencies:** Successfully developing and implementing transformational change that drives out the efficiencies and improvements that both Members and the public demand.
- **Information Management:** Ensuring adequate policies and procedures are in place to effectively manage our information in accordance with legislative requirements.
- **Information Technology:** Establishing robust information technology infrastructure to support business transformation.
- **Compliance:** Establishing the necessary policies and procedures and monitoring arrangements to ensure corporate legislative compliance in respect of key statutory obligations, including Equality, Disability, Rural Needs, Health & Safety, Employment and Procurement legislation.
- **Risk Management:** Managing potential risks and opportunities in achieving the key actions outlined in the CS Business Plan by adhering to the Corporate Risk Management Policy and reviewing the CS Risk Register on a quarterly basis.
- **Performance Management:** Monitoring and reviewing Directorate performance, highlighting areas of high-performance, identifying areas for intervention or culture.
- **Corporate Communications and Marketing:** Developing and delivering relevant communications activities, aligned to the corporate strategic priorities and agreed approach, ensuring staff, members, residents and other stakeholders are kept well informed about the work of the Council and other relevant activities in the district, in an appropriate, accessible and engaging manner.

5.0 Directorate Objectives and Supporting Actions

Key Office Objectives / Actions
<p>Administration – Provide a Corporate Compliance Service Deliver a Corporate Business Support Service and Registration Service Provide a Corporate Legal Support Service</p> <p>Corporate Planning and Policy – Provide a Corporate Planning and Corporate Policy function, including delivery of the Irish Language Strategy Provide a corporate Communications and Marketing service</p> <p>Estates and Capital – Provide adequate Emergency Planning and response Provide appropriate Health and Safety and Insurance provision Provide strategic asset strategy for Council</p> <p>Finance – Provide an efficient finance function Ensure appropriate risk management arrangements in place Provide an effective procurement service</p> <p>HR & Safeguarding – Continue to mitigate existing and emerging safeguarding risks, for both Council & Citizens Provide a professional HR service all employment matters, including employee relations, resourcing and development Contribute to the further development of future workforce skills</p> <p>IT – Provide secure IT network. Provide appropriate IT provision to support transformational change</p>

Administration		
Provide a Corporate Compliance Service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action	Timescale	
Develop a Functional Classification System and draft a new Corporate File Plan	Q4	
Introduce a new Corporate Retention and Disposal Schedule,	Q3	

providing training to staff and elected members		Q4
Update Publication Scheme		Q4
Update Records Management Policy and Procedures		Q4
Deliver a Corporate Business Support Service and Registration Services	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Develop and lead on the implementation of a new corporate administration model		Q4
Develop a policy framework and complaints handling procedures to implement the proposed new NIPSO Complaints Management Model for the Local Government sector		Q3
Provide training for staff and elected members on the proposed new NIPSO Complaints Management Model		Q3
Provide a Corporate Legal Support Service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Review and update Council's Standing Orders for consultation and agreement of elected members, providing training to staff and elected members		Q2
Review and amend Council's Standard Terms and Conditions of Contracts to ensure consistency in approach and common standards across all Services		Q4
Review of legal title documents to ensure Council ownership of assets held and advise on updates to relevant database.		Q4

Corporate Planning and Policy		
Provide a corporate planning and policy service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Commence the development of the Corporate Plan 2023-27, by Developing a Terms of Reference and engagement workplan		Q3
Development of Social Values Strategy		Q4
Monitor compliance with Council's statutory duties of compliance with Equality, Disability & Rural Needs		Q1 – Q4
Implement Irish Language Strategy, including effective distribution of the bursary schemes		Q1-Q3
Provide a corporate Communications and Marketing service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Implement a new Social Media and Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure, providing training to staff and elected members		Q2
Review and update Corporate Communications Strategy, with a focus on further development of the digital offering		Q3
Review and update Media Policy and Procedure		Q4
Develop Communications and Marketing Toolkit for Employees		Q4
Begin development of new corporate website		Q4
Estates and Capital		
Provide adequate Emergency Planning and Response	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Action		Timescale
Update of the Council Emergency Plan following review of JESIP Doctrine, including training of staff and elected members.		Q4

Lead on the development of a suitable corporate cyber security business response plan.		Q2
Lead on the development of procedures and working protocols to ensure safe response to ongoing changes resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic, providing advice and guidance to staff and elected members as necessary.		Q1- Q4
Provide adequate Health & Safety and Insurance provision	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Action		Timescale
Implementation of the new Health & Safety Policy to include training for staff and elected members		Q3
Review of corporate H&S training requirements and implementation of a new framework of H&S training providers.		Q4
Lead on in depth review of all Council insurances to ensure adequate insurance of Council assets in place		Q1
Provide strategic asset strategy for Council	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Action		Timescale
Advise and assist departments in the identification and delivery of projects in the capital programme, including advising on projected costs, programme, risks and procurement strategy.		Q1- Q4
Finalise identification and agree future use for all surplus assets.		Q1 – Q4
Human Resources		
Provide a professional HR service on all employment matters, including employee relations, resourcing and development and safeguarding.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Phased introduction of 'People Perform Grow' to engage with employees and set out how employees and teams contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes and corporate objectives.		Q1

In conjunction with Subject Matter Experts, further develop eLearning provision which supports Council goals and objectives.		Q2-Q4
Digitisation of annual leave records for those on manual recording systems		Q4
Update, develop and implement HR & Safeguarding policies/procedures as identified in the HR & Safeguarding Service Business Plan		Q2-Q4
Contribute to the further development of future workforce skills	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	
Action		Timescale
Develop an apprenticeship programme in preparation for 2022-23 academic year, working with partner organisations within the Belfast Region City Deal to develop skills & employability within the region		Q4
Develop and create publication pack which provides potential candidates, work experience students, teachers, schools etc. with information on working with NMDDC.		Q1
Information Technology		
INSERT DIRECTORATE OBJECTIVE Provide a secure IT network for Council services	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Improve cyber security posture by establishing a new cyber incident response plan and testing disaster recovery capabilities, in accordance with guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).		Q3
Implement and roll out additional security tools to staff and elected members, providing advice and training as required		Q3 and ongoing
Continue to increase User awareness and resilience through provision of training, advice and testing		Q4 and ongoing

INSERT DIRECTORATE OBJECTIVE Provide appropriate IT to support transformational change	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Lead on the procurement and deployment of IT provision to support new Ways of Working project, ensuring the in-building IT provision is sufficient to support the estate		Q1 – Q4
Finance		
Provide an efficient finance function	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Introduce a new payroll Policy and develop efficient corporate payroll procedures		Q1 - 2
Develop a business case for new Finance System, identifying and progressing areas for procedural efficiency		Q4
Ensure appropriate risk management arrangements are in place	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	
Action		Timescale
Revise Risk Strategy to comply with Orange book and develop Risk Appetite for NMDDC, and providing training to staff and elected members		Q3
Provide an effective procurement service	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PLAN	
	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	

Action	Timescale
Implement new procure to pay system, providing training to staff and external users	Q3
Lead on the completion of a Contracts Register	Q4

6.0 Performance

- 6.1 Corporate Services performs a key role in leading the development of robust and meaningful performance measures at all levels across the organisation. This exercise will also identify additional, suitable performance measures for the Corporate Services Directorate.
- 6.2 In addition to managing and monitoring financial and human resources, the following performance measures will be monitored during 2021-22:

Measures of Success	
Administration	90% of responses to requests for information provided within statutory timeframes
Finance	Pay 90% of invoices to suppliers within 30 days
IT	90% System "UP" Time
HR & Safeguarding	Increased completion rate of eLearning modules by a minimum of 10%
Estates and Capital Projects	90% of staff to receive training on the new Health & Safety Policy within the first 12 months
Corporate Planning and Policy	90% of media requests for information responded to within agreed timeframes

Corporate Services Plans and Strategies

- 6.3 The Corporate Services Directorate is responsible for leading the development, implementation and review of the following plans and strategies, which influence the work of the Office and Council:
- Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Treasury Management Strategy
 - Equality Action Plan
 - Disability Action Plan
 - Irish Language Strategy
 - Corporate Communications Strategy
 - Information Technology Strategy
 - Estates and Asset Management Strategy

7.0 Organisation and Office Structure

- 7.1 Corporate Services is one of five Directorates, which together, comprise the Management structure of the Council.

8.0 Financial Information

Net estimated expenditure (2021-22)	
Corporate Planning and Policy	£245,145
HR	£395,307
IT	£1,401,528
Finance	£1,475,500
Administration	£266,430
Estates and Capital Projects	£52,870
TOTAL: Corporate Services	£3,836,780

9.0 Governance Arrangements

- 9.1 Reviewing performance and reporting progress to Elected Members and other key stakeholders facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The political and organisational governance arrangements to develop, monitor and report the Council's progress in implementing the Corporate Services Business Plan are outlined below, and are supplemented by regular reviews by the Director of Corporate Services and her team. The governance arrangements the Council has put in place to deliver continuous improvement are also subject an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Figure 4: Governance Arrangements

Full Council

- Ratification of Corporate Services Business Plan
- Ratification of annual and bi-annual reviews of Corporate Services Business Plan

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee / Audit Committee

- Scrutiny and challenge around the Duty of Improvement
- Provide assurance that performance management arrangements are robust and effective

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee

- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of Corporate Services Business Plan
- Consideration, scrutiny and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of Corporate Services Business Plan

Senior Management Team

- Development, consideration and approval of Corporate Services Business Plan
- Development, consideration and approval of the annual and bi-annual reviews of Corporate Services Business Plan

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Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021
Subject:	Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Dorinnia Carville – Director: Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Kate Bingham – Head of Performance and Improvement

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

	For decision	X	For noting only	
1.0	Purpose and Background			
1.1	The purpose of this report is to recommend the final version of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22. This plan is supported by the Consultation and Engagement Report 2021-22 and Delivery Plans which have been developed for each Performance Improvement Objective 2021-22.			
1.2	Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Each financial year, Councils are required to set performance improvement objectives for the services they provide. The guidance states that performance improvement is more than quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or in the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement should focus on activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for communities.			
1.3	The Performance Improvement Plan is a key strategic document which drives all improvement activity across the organisation. It features within the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and is directly aligned to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans.			
2.0	Key issues			
2.1	In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council is required to publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2021. The Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 is attached at Appendix 1 , and includes the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance improvement objectives 2021-22 • Statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management • Self imposed performance indicators, as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23 			
	Public Consultation and Engagement 2021-22			
2.2	The development of the performance improvement objectives 2021-22 was based on a robust and reliable evidence base which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 764 responses to the Residents Survey (September 2018) 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 581 individuals engaged in the consultation on COVID-19 and draft Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020) <p>This was supplemented by an eight week public consultation and engagement process around the proposed draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22, which took place between 15 March – 10 May 2021 and consisted of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 responses to the survey on the draft performance improvement objectives • Engagement with 100 stakeholders through the DEA Forums, Youth Council, Older Persons Forums and Cedar Foundation <p>Overall feedback from the consultation and engagement process revealed widespread support for the proposed performance improvement objectives.</p>
2.3	<p>As part of the consultation process, Cllr Enright has proposed that Performance Improvement Objective 2 is replaced with the following objective:</p> <p>'Put in place a plan to ensure that Newry, Mourne and Down maximises the benefit of the New Green Economy to ratepayers in our District and maximises employment from these areas'.</p> <p>One further respondent included the following suggestion:</p> <p>'Carbon neutral towns. charging points, wildflower meadows and kerbside, easing traffic congestion, solar panels'.</p> <p>Following discussions with representatives from the Economic Development and Sustainability Departments, the general consensus is that progressing the Green Economy is a long-term goal, based on the cross cutting, fundamental principles of economic, environmental and social well-being. In terms of economic development activity around the Green Economy, the theme of sustainability runs through all programmes. Going forward, the Council will identify key initiatives to progress the Green Economy through the Sustainability and Climate Change Working Group.</p> <p>Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework The Green Economy has also been identified as a key priority area within the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework:</p> <p>Outcome: We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment Key Priority Area: Green Economy – Creating economic opportunity through tackling climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (including energy de-carbonisation - DAERA)</p> <p>Outcome: Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral Key Priority Area: Green Economy – Developing our economy and energy supply in an environmentally friendly way, recognising the impacts industry has on climate change and striving for low carbon/zero carbon alternatives – DAERA)</p> <p>The Programme for Government consultation closed on 22 March 2021 and the feedback is currently being analysed. Further engagement with stakeholders and delivery partners is planned and detailed action plans will be developed, to support the final Programme for Government.</p>

	<p>Proposed next steps</p> <p>As a regional priority area which is likely to require expertise and involvement at a local level, progressing the Green Economy may benefit from a multi-agency approach to determine what it means for Newry, Mourne and Down, in relation to local actions and indicators. As the positive outcomes from the Green Economy are also likely to go beyond employment opportunities, the Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Working Group will identify key cross cutting short, medium and long term initiatives to progress and maximise the benefit of the Green Economy.</p>
	Objective Delivery Plans 2021-22
2.4	Delivery plans for each performance improvement objective have been developed, as outlined in Appendix 3 . They seek to demonstrate how the Council will manage the effective delivery of each objective, in terms of resources, risk management and governance arrangements. These plans are a 'work in progress' and will be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis to support the delivery of each performance improvement objective.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>To consider and agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 (including the five performance improvement objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2021-22 and Objective Delivery Plans 2021-22. The publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 by 25 June 2021, before full Council ratification, in order to meet the statutory deadline.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no financial resource implications within this report.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

	<p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> At the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 11 March 2021, it was agreed to implement an eight week consultation and engagement process, in order to meet the statutory deadline of 30 June 2021 for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan.</p>
6.0	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p>
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 – Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 • Appendix 2 – Consultation and Engagement Report 2021-22 • Appendix 3 – Objective Delivery Plans 2021-22
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p> <p>Performance Improvement Plans 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20</p>

Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22



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

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Cathaoirleach
Chairperson
Councillor Cathy Mason



Príomhfheidhmeannach
Chief Executive
Marie Ward

Réamhrá

Seo chugat Plean Feabhsúcháin Feidhmíochta Chomhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin 2021-22. Bhí an bhliain seo caite neamhchosúil le bliain ar bith roimhe seo, tháinig ár gcathair, mbailte agus sráidbhailte chuig lánstad agus muid ag dul i ngleic le paindéim Covid-19 le chéile. Bhí impleachtaí na paindéime le braith ag gach duine, gnólachtaí áitiúla, grúpaí pobail agus clubanna spóirt san áireamh. Thug sé dúshlán dúinn athmhachnamh a dhéanamh ar an bhealach a oibríonn muid, na seirbhísí a sholáthraíonn muid agus an bealach a sholáthraíonn muid iad. Mar Chomhairle, nuair a amharcann muid siar le machnamh a dhéanamh ar an bhliain seo a chuaigh thart, is féidir linn a bheith bródúil as an mhéid a bhfuil bainte amach againn.

Lean muid ag soláthar seirbhísí riachtanacha, bailiúcháin bhruscair, glanadh sráideanna, sláinte comhshaoil agus ár gcóras clárúcháin san áireamh. D'oibrigh muid in éineacht lenár gcomhpháirtithe phleanáil phobail chun 18,407 dáileacht bhia a chur ar fáil dár dteaghlaigh is leochailí. Thacaigh muid le 367 gnó áitiúil agus fiontar sóisialta, chuidigh muid le 60 post nua a chruthú agus bhronn muid thart ar £1.1m chun tacú le gnóthaí áitiúla dul i ngleic leis an

phaindéim. Nasc muid le níos mó daoine ná riamh trínár n-ardáin mheán sóisialta agus rinne cuid mhór dár gcónaitheoirí athcheangal le háilleacht nádúrtha ár gCeantar trí chuairt a thabhairt ar ár bpáirceanna foraoise, trána agus sléibhte iontacha.

Agus muid ag teacht amach ó bhuaic na paindéime, baineann 2021-22 le téarnamh COVID-19. Trí chuspóirí feabhsúcháin feidhmíochta na bliana seo, tá pleananna curtha i bhfeidhm againn chun díriú ar na rudaí is tábhachtaí duit - caighdeán ár bpáirceanna agus ár spásanna oscailte a fheabhsú, an geilleagar áitiúil a fhás, glaineacht ár gCeantar a fheabhsú, acmhainn na bpobal áitiúil a chothú, chomh maith le feidhmíocht ár Seirbhís Pleanála a fheabhsú. Tá muid muiníneach go leanfaidh an Chomhairle ar aghaidh ag feabhsú caighdeán marachtála don phobal áitiúil, agus ag tógáil Cheantair gur féidir linn uilig a bheith bródúil as.

Foreword

Welcome to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22. The past year has been a year like no other when our city, towns and villages came to a standstill as we collectively

responded to the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has been tough on everyone, including local businesses, community groups and sports clubs, and has challenged us to re-think the way we work, the services we provide and the way we provide them. As a Council, when we look back and reflect on the past year, we can be proud of our achievements.

We continued to provide essential services, including refuse collection, street cleansing, Environmental Health and Registration. We worked alongside our community planning partners to deliver 18,407 food parcels to our most vulnerable households. We supported 367 local businesses and social enterprises, helped create 60 new jobs and awarded approximately £1.1m to assist local businesses in responding to the pandemic. We engaged more people than ever through our social media platforms and many of our residents re-connected with the natural beauty of our District by visiting our wonderful forest parks, beaches and mountains.

As we emerge from the peak of the pandemic, 2021-22 is all about COVID-19 recovery. Through this year's performance improvement objectives, we have put in place plans to focus on what matters most to you - improving the

quality of our parks and open spaces, growing the local economy, improving the cleanliness of our District, building the capacity of local communities and improving the performance of our Planning Service.

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

Introduction

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

The performance improvement objectives do not describe every improvement the Council plans to make during 2021-22. Alternatively, they provide an overview of how the Council will address the issues which matter most to local communities. The Performance Improvement Plan outlines the Council's objectives for improvement, how performance will be measured and what positive outcomes stakeholders can expect as a result of improvement activity. It represents the Council's commitment to achieving continuous improvement in the delivery of key services.

Performance Improvement Objectives 2021-22

1. **We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces**
2. **We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs**
3. **We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents**
4. **We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme**
5. **We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme**

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

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

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces

Why this matters

You told us that:

- The impact of COVID-19 on mental health and well-being is one of your top concerns
- To alleviate the impact of COVID-19, the Council should provide well maintained parks and green spaces
- 'Improving people's health and wellbeing (and reducing health inequalities)' is your second highest priority for improvement
- Over the past two years, investment in local community projects, such as parks, has become more important to you
- 100% of respondents to our survey agreed with this objective

The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the strong correlation between healthy lifestyles and outdoor recreation. Since the lockdown restrictions eased in May 2020, the Council's greenways and blueways have become increasingly popular, providing excellent opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to lead healthy and active lives whilst enjoying the natural beauty of our District.

However, high visitor numbers can put pressure on parks and open spaces, particularly in relation to car park congestion, littering, irresponsible behaviour and general wear and tear on the environment. Promoting good visitor management will enhance the quality of the Council's parks and open spaces, ensuring they are welcoming, safe and well maintained places to encourage local people to be active and healthy.

Looking Back: What we did in 2020-21



New counter systems installed at Kilbroney and Slieve Gullion Forest Parks



3 'blue flag' beaches and 4 'green flag' parks



84% of visitors are satisfied with Warrenpoint Park and 89% agree the park enhances their local quality of life



87,854 recorded visits at four community trails

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2021-22

- Continue to develop the district's bid to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark designation
- Invest in new facilities at Kilbroney Park and Rostrevor Forest, Tyrella beach, Slieve Gullion Forest Park and Delamont Country Park
- Retain green flag accreditation for Kilbroney Park, Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Warrenpoint Municipal Park and Newry Canal and heritage accreditation for Warrenpoint Municipal Park
- Apply for green flag accreditation for Delamont Country Park and heritage accreditation for Newry Canal
- Retain blue flag accreditation for Cranfield, Murlough and Tyrella beaches
- Build three new play parks and upgrade two existing play parks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete three new community trailsPromote good visitor management across all Council parks and open spaces					
How we will measure success	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	2021-22 Target
Number of recorded visits at:						
Kilbroney Park*	447,616	453,704	454,848	584,148	-	No targets
Slieve Gullion Forest Park*	341,888	253,376	366,444	183,712		
Carlingford Lough Greenway**	-	40,219	73,138	47,005		
Warrenpoint Municipal Park	-	-	205,126	119,600	▽	143,500
Community trails	48,844	43,305	47,669	87,854	△	No target
Number of parks with green flag accreditation	2	3	3	4	△	5
Number of parks with green flag heritage accreditation	-	-	-	1	△	2
Number of beaches with blue flag accreditation***	3	3	3	2	▷	3
Level of satisfaction with the Council's forest parks	Baseline to be established					
Number of new/upgraded play parks****	-	17	9	0	▽	5
What you will see by March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improvements to the Council's parks, beaches and open spaces including effective visitor management arrangementsUNESCO Global Geopark status achieved for the Mourne, Gullion, StrangfordFive green flag awards and two green flag heritage awards for the Council's parksThree blue flag awards for the Council's beachesFive new/upgraded play parks and three new community trails					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalitiesSupport sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeingAll people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We all enjoy long, healthy, active livesPeople want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Fairness	Innovation		
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism					

*Number of recorded visits at Kilbroney Park and Slieve Gullion Forest Park are for the calendar years of 2017/2018/2019. 2020-21 visitor data is incomplete as new counter systems were installed and the annual datasets cannot be compared. The recorded number of visits at Warrenpoint Park reduced due to the closure of the park and reduced number of events/activities.

**2018-19 visitor numbers for the Carlingford Lough Greenway covers September 2018- March 2019.

***Whilst blue flag accreditation was awarded for the Council's three beaches in 2020-21, lifeguard services are not being offered at Murlough beach due to COVID-19 restrictions.

****There were no new or upgraded play parks in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

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

Why this matters

You told us that:

- The impact of COVID-19 on businesses and employment is your top concern
- To alleviate the impact of COVID-19, the Council should support local businesses, especially those which have been impacted most by lockdown restrictions
- 'Supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' is your top priority for improvement
- Investment to grow the economy, create jobs and attract tourists is the most important form of investment
- 93% of respondents to our survey agreed with this objective

The economic impact of COVID-19 is unparalleled and forecasters predict that economic output is unlikely to recover to pre-pandemic levels until 2022 at the earliest. The local sectoral concentrations of construction, manufacturing and retail suggests that Newry, Mourne and Down is likely to experience the fourth worst decline in terms of GVA and employment across Northern Ireland. Furthermore, across the District, many employees have been furloughed, there have been 500 confirmed redundancies and the claimant count for unemployment benefit has increased by 103% when compared to 2019.

To support the economic recovery of the District, the Council has issued approximately 807 letters of offer, with a combined value of approximately £1.1m to assist local businesses as they navigate the impact of COVID-19. Through the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25, the Council will also work with partner organisations to unlock the rich potential of the District. Programmes such as 'Go For It', 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'SEAFLAG 2' will help new and established businesses to innovate, grow and expand, supporting the local economy to recover, reboot and rebuild in the years ahead.

Looking Back:

What we did in 2020-21



181 new business starts supported and 164 new jobs promoted through business start activity



40 social enterprise businesses supported and 13 new social enterprise jobs created



327 businesses supported and 47.5 jobs created through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth' and 'Tender for Growth'











5,004 mentoring hours, 22 workshops and 8 thematic programmes delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth' and 'Tender for Growth'



Up to 1,000 businesses engaged in the #re:Launch Leadership Summit and 400 participants took part in NMD Enterprise Week

Looking Forward:

- Implement a District wide marketing campaign to revitalise our local economy and safely stimulate footfall across our District

What we will do in 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support the creation of new businesses and promote new jobs through the NI 'Go for It' programmeInvest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programmeSupport local businesses and create new jobs through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales and Trade'Support the creation of new jobs and businesses in coastal areas through SEAFLAG 2					
How we will measure success	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	2021-22 Target
Number of business plans approved through NI 'Go For It'	245	300	298	266		312
Number of new business starts created through NI 'Go For It'	167	204	203	181		187
Number of new jobs promoted through NI 'Go For It'	168	184	183	164	 	>155
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	12	9	10	40		12
Number of social enterprise jobs created	16	15	12	13		12
Number of businesses supported through 'NMD Growth'	New	79	198	198		128
Number of jobs created through 'NMD Growth'		11	24	36		64
Number of businesses supported through 'Digital Growth'	New programmes			90	-	90
Number of jobs created through 'Digital Growth'				5.5	-	50
Number of businesses supported through 'Tender for Growth'				39	-	81
Number of jobs created through 'Tender for Growth'				6	-	40
Number of businesses supported through 'Sales and Trade'				-	-	80
Number of jobs created through 'Sales and Trade'				-	-	40
Number of new jobs created in coastal areas (SEAFLAG 2)**	New programme	7		7	-	Mar 2023: 5.5
Number of new businesses created in coastal areas (SEAFLAG 2)		1		1	-	Mar 2023: 2
What you will see by March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">312 entrepreneurs supported with an approved Business Plan and >155 new jobs promoted through the NI 'Go For It' programme12 social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 social enterprise jobs created379 businesses supported and 194 jobs created through the 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth' and 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales and Trade' programmesThe social economy and fishing dependent communities benefit from inward investment and growth					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support for new and established local businesses and more employment opportunities across the District • The economic recovery of Newry, Mourne and Down is underway, as the District becomes more economically active and prosperous 			
Alignment				
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills 			
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities 			
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone can reach their potential • Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral • People want to live, work and visit here 			
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service availability	Innovation
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism			

*There was a dip in performance during Q1 2020-21 which is attributed directly to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**SEAFLAG 2 includes year on year cumulative results for each performance indicator.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents		
Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog mess and dog fouling is your top perceived problem • Rubbish or litter lying around is a problem for many of you, particularly those living in urban areas • To alleviate the impact of COVID-19, the Council should continue to keep the local environment clean, ensure dog fouling is kept to a minimum and reduce the perceived increase in littering • 98% of respondents to our survey agreed with this objective <p>Between 2018-19 and 2019-20, the LEAMS* score for the District reduced from 72 to 64, which was partially attributed to higher levels of littering and dog fouling. Issues around street cleanliness continue to escalate, largely as a result of the increased number of fly tipping incidents reported to the Council and the prioritisation of the refuse collection service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>This approach has often resulted in the provision of a reduced street cleansing service. However, the Council remains committed to collaborating with partner organisations and local communities to address ongoing issues around littering and fly tipping and promote responsible dog ownership. Illicit dumping is a crime and the continued implementation of the Dog Fouling Strategy and Enforcement Improvement Plan will help generate local pride in having a cleaner, greener District for everyone to enjoy.</p>	
Looking Back: What we did in 2020-21		Continued to issue fixed penalty notices and support community clean ups
		Achieved an average recycling rate of 53.3%
		60 schools participated in the calendar poster competition and 6,000 copies of the calendar were printed
		15 schools attended the virtual teachers Eco-Schools Information event in December
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address issues around littering, fly tipping and dog fouling by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementing the Dog Fouling Strategy and Enforcement Improvement Plan - Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity campaigns and dog licenses - Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of fly tipping along the border area - Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres • Launch the 'mobile app' to enable officers to record incidents of environmental crime across the District • Support local community clean ups, in line with COVID-19 guidance 	





	• Participate in the Keep NI Beautiful 'Live Here Love Here' campaign					
How we will measure success	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	2021-22 Target
LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index)	72	72	64	-	▽	68
Number of fixed penalty notices issued (littering and dog fouling)	72	54	83	31	▽	90
Number of fixed penalty notices paid (littering and dog fouling)	58	50	72	21	▽	90
Number of community clean ups supported**	100	100	94	33	▽	60
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	16	27	34	24	▽	No target
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	46.1%	51.4%	53.7%	(Q1-Q3) 53.3%	😊 ⚠️	50% by 2020
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	2,612t	1,846t	2,131t	(Q1-Q3) 1,777t	😊 ▽	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20)
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	81,483t	82,136t	84,610t	(Q1-Q3) 65,583t	⚠️	No target
What you will see by March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and paid• Responsible dog ownership and reduced levels of dog fouling, fly tipping and littering• Improved opportunities to report littering, fly tipping and dog fouling• Opportunities to engage in community clean ups and participate in the 'Live Here Love Here' campaign• The Council achieves landfill and recycling targets• A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance, protect and promote our environment					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Innovation		Sustainability	
Responsible Officer	Director: Neighbourhood Services					



*Local Environmental Auditing Management System which is carried out by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

**There has been a reduction in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and community clean ups supported due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social restrictions.

***The Q1-Q3 2020-21 data for the statutory waste management performance indicators remains provisional and will be finalised when the year-end data is validated and published by DAERA.









Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme		
Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of COVID-19 on 'mental health and well-being' and 'vulnerable, isolated and lonely' residents are amongst your top concerns To alleviate the impact of COVID-19, the Council should support community groups and charities 'Improving community relations and safety, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour' is the third highest priority for improvement for residents 95% of respondents to our survey agreed with this objective <p>The Council remains committed to building the capacity of local communities, enabling them to have a voice in shaping the future of their District. Through the Financial Assistance Scheme, local communities are empowered to address local issues using public funds. Since 2015-16, the Council has awarded £6.5m to 2,277 applications across a range of thematic areas including community engagement, summer schemes and festivals.</p> <p>In recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and well being, the Council supplemented the 2020-21 Financial Assistance Scheme with the thematic areas of 'suicide prevention', 'COVID-19' and 'COVID response and recovery'. Over £10,000 was awarded to 11 applications to support suicide prevention and a further £76,630 was awarded to 58 applications to assist local communities in recovering from the impact of COVID-19. Each of the projects funded, which included 'holiday hunger support', 'community kitchen', 'feeding families' and 'friendship café', have been instrumental in building local capacity and generating a sense of pride across Newry, Mourne and Down.</p> <p>Going forward, the number of projects funded may reduce as applications are now scored and ranked, in line with the new Financial Assistance Policy, and demand for funding generally exceeds the level of funding available.</p>	
	Looking Back:	
What we did in 2020-21		£731k awarded to 377 projects across 16 thematic areas
		Electronic Grant Management System launched and online training module developed
		Newry, Down and Kilkeel Leisure Centres temporarily converted to food distribution hubs between March-August 2020
		18,407 food parcels delivered to vulnerable households and 144 community organisations enlisted as volunteers
Looking Forward:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch 3 financial assistance calls across 19 thematic areas to support the delivery of community led projects

What we will do in 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote and roll out the Electronic Grant Management System Deliver online training and capacity building to support local voluntary and community groups in applying for financial assistance 					
How we will measure success	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Trend	2021-22 Target
% of successful financial assistance applications*	68%	71%	71%	72%		74%
% of financial assistance applications funded*	68%	71%	71%	64%		No target
Number of views of the online training module	New performance measure					100
Number of online capacity building sessions delivered	New performance measure					2
Number of participants/beneficiaries of the Financial Assistance Scheme	New performance measure (baseline to be established)					
What you will see by March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circa £1.2m awarded to local voluntary and community groups through the Financial Assistance Scheme Improved and accessible training and support when applying for financial assistance Voluntary and community groups are supported in meeting their objectives and delivering projects across a range of themes Representatives from the community and voluntary sector are empowered to have a voice and shape the future of their area Improved community capacity and cohesion across Newry, Mourne and Down 					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities 					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities 					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives 					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability		Fairness		Innovation
Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities					

*The methodology for scoring specific themes within the Financial Assistance Scheme was reviewed in 2020-21 and the success rate of the applications funded reduced as some themes were scored and ranked, based on the funding available.

Performance Improvement Objective 5

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme						
Why this matters	Delivering a more efficient and effective Planning Service for customers is a key priority for improvement for the Council. Planning plays a significant role in promoting sustainable development, regeneration, economic prosperity, investment and job creation for present and future generations of our District. 98% of respondents to our survey also agreed with this objective.					
	The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is well underway. Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, significant progress is being made in establishing and embedding modern, agile and responsive ways of working. However, as the number of planning applications received by the Council continues to rise, we remain committed to improving the processing times of local and major planning applications and enforcement cases, and providing a high quality service to all customers.					
Looking Back: What we did between April-December 2020		Processed 39.2% of planning enforcement cases within 39 weeks, which is below the regional average of 69.2%				
		Average processing time of 19.6 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 17.8 weeks				
		Average processing time of 64.6 weeks for major planning applications, which is above the regional average of 61.8 weeks				
		Received 1,177 planning applications and decided on 1,038, which is the highest across Northern Ireland				
		Reduced the number of live enforcement cases, particularly those in the system for more than 12 months				
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months• Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted• Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'					
How we will measure success	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Q1/Q2/Q3 Actual	Status Trend	2021-22 Target
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	17	18	20.6	19.6	 	<15 weeks
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	127.6	76.6	94	64.6	 	<30 weeks
Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks	59.9%	52.9%	36.2%	39.2%	 	70%
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more	197	224	183	187		150

Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less	675	800	685	788		700
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more	571	734	620	551		450
What you will see by March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A more efficient and effective planning service• Improved processing times for local and major planning applications• Improved processing times for planning enforcement cases• Reduction in the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system• An empowered and motivated workforce• Increased confidence in the Planning system• Sustainable development and regeneration of the District					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Sustainability	Efficiency		
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism					

*Annual planning figures will be validated by the Department for Infrastructure and published through the Annual Report 2021-22.

Strategic Alignment

Performance Improvement Objective	Corporate Objective(s)	Community Planning Outcome(s)	Duty of Improvement
We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces	Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Fairness Sustainability
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Service availability Innovation
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Innovation Sustainability
We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme	Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Fairness Innovation
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Service quality Efficiency

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

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

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

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

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

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

Self Imposed Performance Indicators

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

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

Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District	Compliance with the Duty of Community Planning / monitor delivery of outcomes with partners Percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live
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The Council has put in place the following arrangements to monitor progress against the self imposed performance indicators:

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

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

Identifying the Performance Improvement Objectives 2021-22

The performance improvement objectives 2021-22 have been developed in close liaison with elected members, Senior Management Team, Corporate Management Team and employees across the organisation. Each objective is underpinned by a suite of 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success'. They are clearly aligned to the Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2021-23, as well as other regional and local plans, particularly the Council's Business Plans which have been developed by each Directorate. These plans influence and guide the overall direction of travel for the organisation.

- Draft Programme for Government
- Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down 2017-2030, Priority Actions Areas and District Electoral Area (DEA) Action Plans
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-23
- Thematic plans and strategies, including the IT Strategy and Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy
- Annual Directorate Business Plans 2021-22

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

- The Northern Ireland Audit Office Audit and Assessment Reports and the 'proposals for improvement', which are currently being progressed
- The Assessment of Performance 2019-20, including progress against corporate priorities, performance improvement objectives and statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management

Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down

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

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

The Community Plan sets out the following five positive outcomes:

Our Outcomes

These are the positive outcomes we all wish to see in our community:



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

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

Council Mission Statement

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

Council Strategic Objectives

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



Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

We will build a high performing Council, fit for the future, that delivers efficient and effective services for the benefit of all



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

We will lobby and campaign with government and others to attract investment, develop modern infrastructure across the District, address needs and improve the quality of life for all.

Alignment with the Strategic Aspects of Improvement

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

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

The table below outlines how Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's performance improvement objectives 2021-22 are aligned with the seven specified aspects of improvement:

Performance Improvement Objective	Seven Aspects of Improvement						
	Strategic Effectiveness	Service Quality	Service Availability	Fairness	Sustainability	Efficiency	Innovation
We will promote healthier lifestyles by increasing participation in physical activity	✓	✓		✓			✓
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	✓	✓	✓				✓
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by reducing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling	✓		✓		✓		✓
We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme and DEA Forum initiatives	✓		✓	✓			✓
We will improve the average processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the recommendations from the Planning Service Review	✓		✓		✓	✓	

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

- Legitimate
- Clear
- Robust
- Deliverable
- Demonstrable

Equality Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment

In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), whereby the Council must carry out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations, the Performance Improvement Plan has been subject to an equality screening. The outcome of the equality screening process determined that the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 is not subject to an equality impact assessment, with no mitigating measures required.

In accordance with the Rural Needs Act Northern Ireland (2016), the Council has given due regard to rural needs by carrying out a Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22.

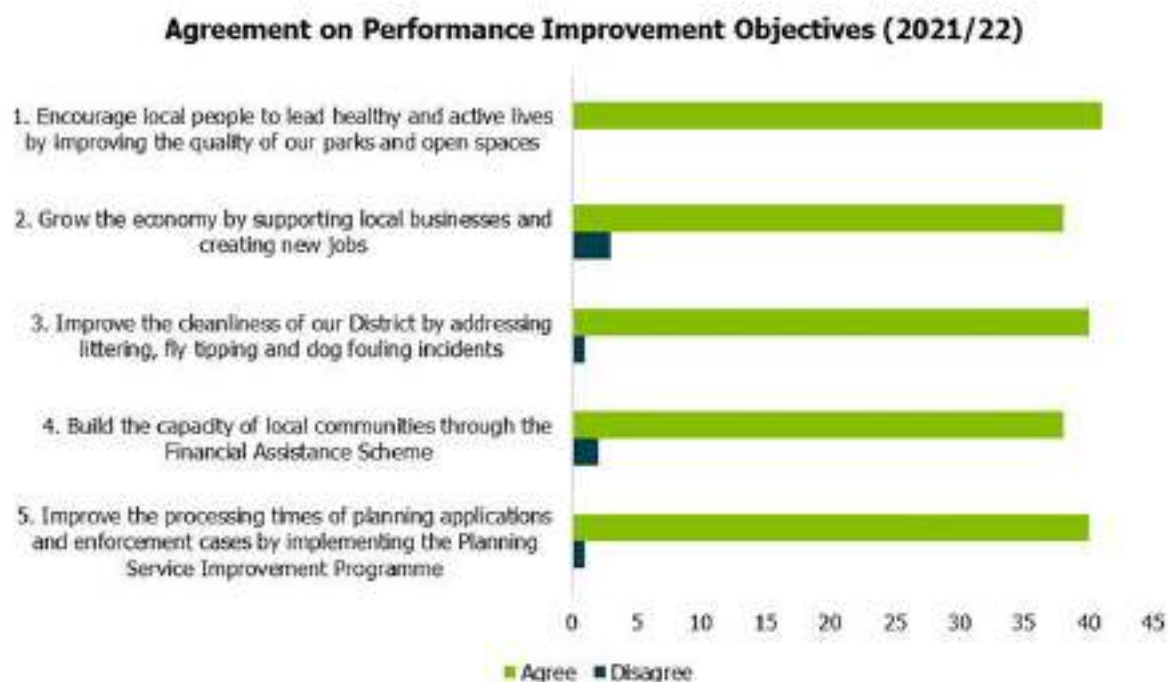
Consultation and Engagement

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The Council is committed to listening to local people and taking on board their views. Since 2017, the Council has carried out extensive consultation and engagement, inviting key stakeholders, including elected members, residents, local businesses and community planning partners to put forward their views on the proposed performance improvement objectives. This year, the consultation and engagement process resulted in 41 completed surveys and engagement with 100 stakeholders. This response has been supplemented by the input of 1,345 respondents to the consultation on COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan in 2020 and Residents Survey in 2018.

Electronic documentation and survey on the draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22 on the Council's website and social media platforms	41 respondents
Engagement with the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven District Electoral Area Forums which are made up of Elected Members and independent members representing the voluntary, community and business sectors Section 75 groups, including the Older Persons Forums in Newry and Downpatrick, Newry and Mourne Youth Council and Cedar Foundation 	100 consultees
Electronic survey and focus groups on the impact of COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020)	560 respondents to survey 21 participants in focus groups
Residents Survey (September 2018)	764 respondents

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



The areas for improvement and issues raised through the overall consultation and engagement processes are clearly aligned to the five performance improvement objectives 2021-22, and will be addressed through the Performance Improvement Plan, and as part of the Council's business planning process.

Achieving Continuous Improvement

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

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

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

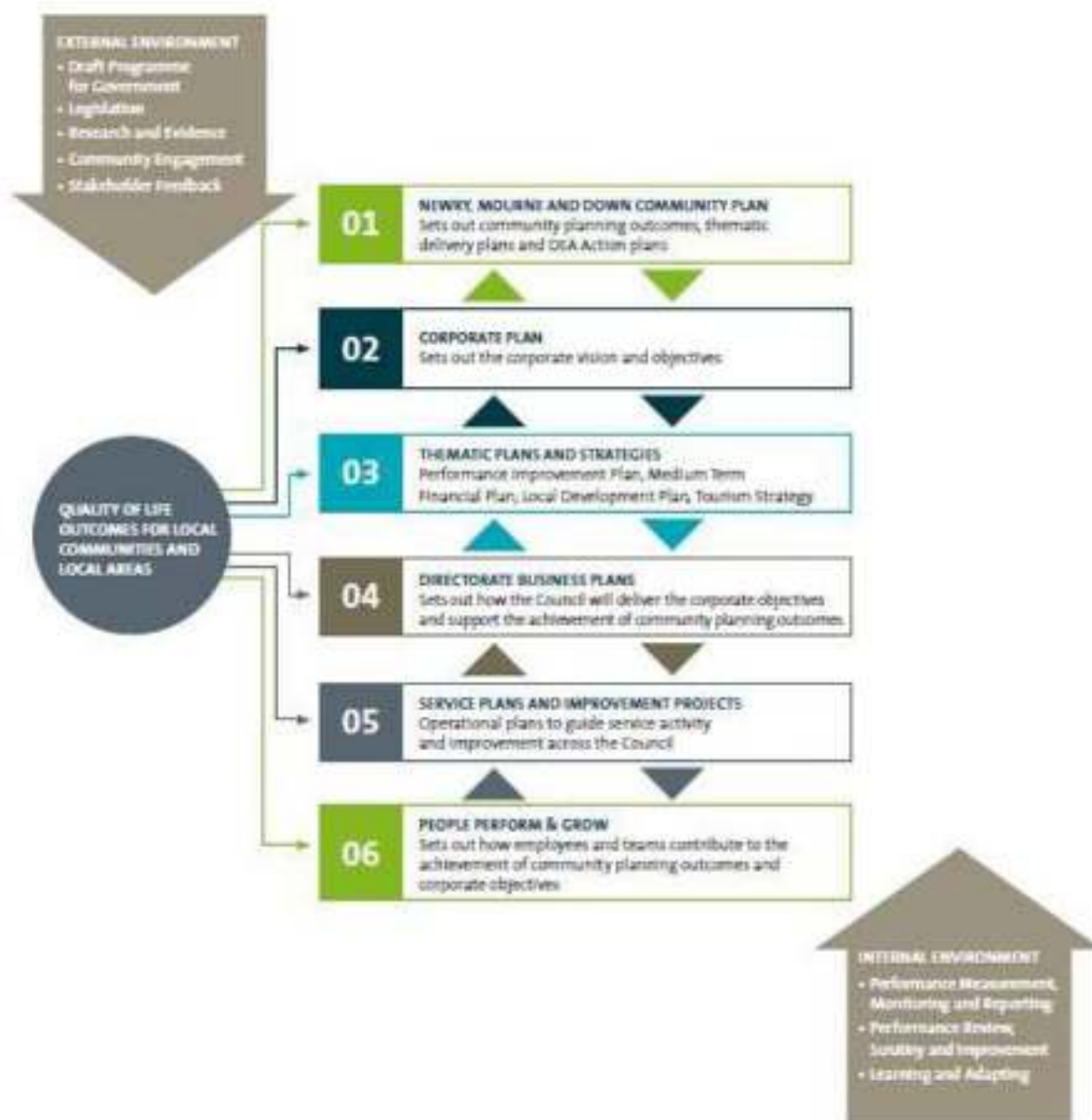
The Council also assesses how performance compares with other Councils. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is working with the Association of Public Service Excellence to benchmark performance against the performance of Councils across Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions. This information is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

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

Business Planning and Performance Management Framework

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



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

During 2021-22, the Council will progress the development of Service Plans and roll out of Individual Performance (People Perform Grow), both of which seek to demonstrate the 'line of sight' between the work of employees and how they contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes and corporate objectives.

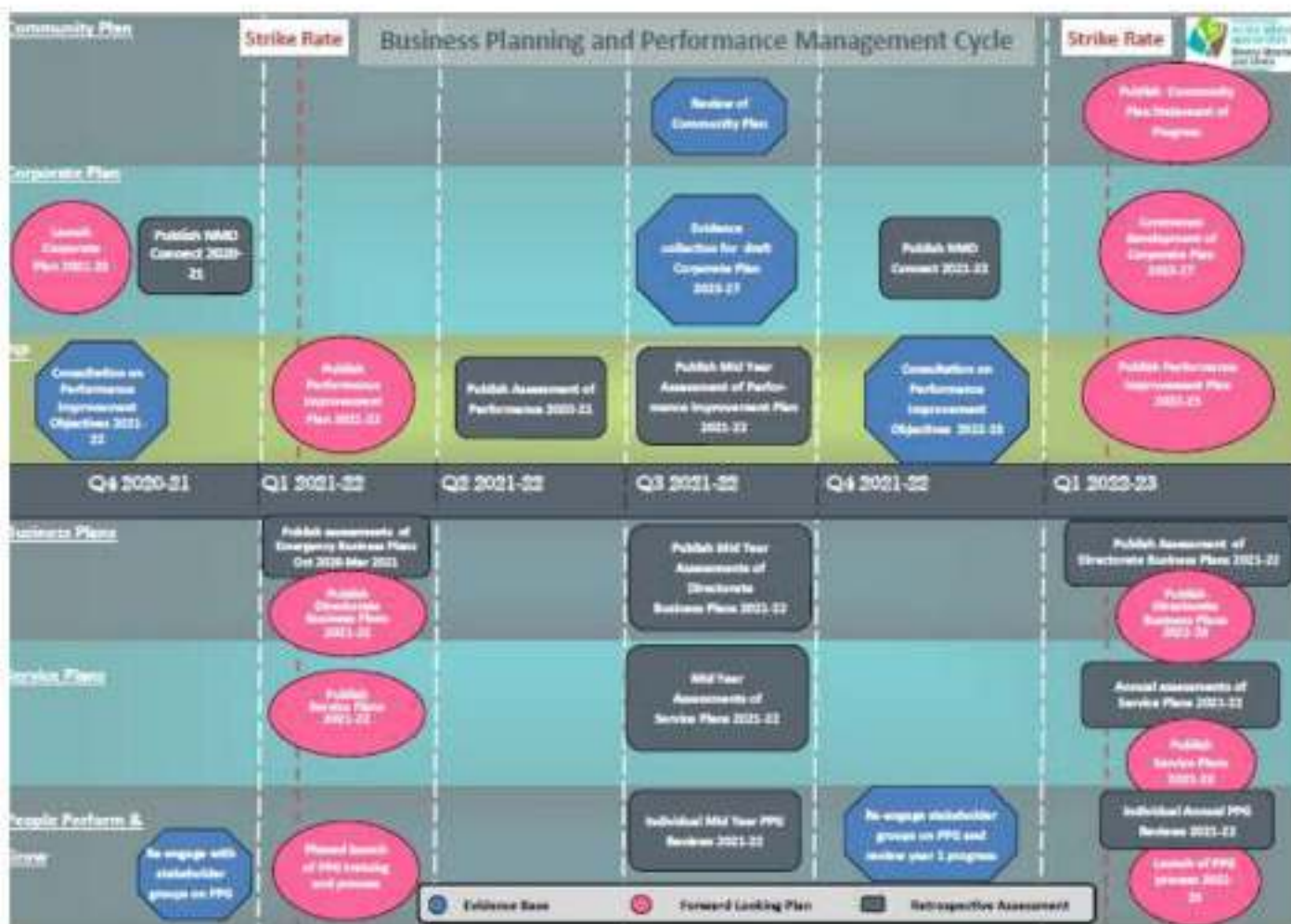
Through the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, the Council will manage performance at all levels across the organisation, in order to ensure the necessary steps are taken to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. Each level of the Business Planning and Performance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

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

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

People Perform Grow	The Council recognises the significant role employees play in contributing to the achievement of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Thematic Plans and Strategies, Directorate Business Plans and Service Plans. People Perform Grow will demonstrate the link between the work of employees and how they contribute to the achievement of key plans and strategies, as well as the outcomes experienced by local communities.
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The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework is complemented by the integrated cycle of activity outlined in the diagram below.



Governance Arrangements

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Reviewing performance and reporting progress to elected members and other key stakeholders is very important, as it facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The governance arrangements to develop, monitor, report and review the Council's progress in implementing the Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21 are outlined below:



The Council must publish an Assessment of Performance by 30 September 2021 which will provide an overview of how the Council has performed during 2020-21. The Assessment of Performance will be published on the Council's website and is supplemented by the Mid Year Progress Report for the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22.



















The arrangements the Council has put in place to secure continuous improvement are subject to an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. The outcome of the Performance Audit and Assessment is expected in November 2020. Subject to the General Duty of Improvement being met, the Northern Ireland Audit Office will issue a Letter of Assurance to both the Council and Department for Communities.

Performance Improvement Objectives 2017-20




A snapshot of the past three years

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In 2017-18, the Council set performance improvement objectives which were medium term and carried forward to 2018-19 and 2019-20. Many of the supporting actions and targets which underpin these objectives, have now been achieved, and all performance improvement objectives have therefore been reviewed and updated for 2021-22.

Performance Improvement Objective	Key achievements 2017-20	Status Trend
Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities	Newry and Down Leisure Centres open and operational	
	12.7% increase in attendances at indoor leisure facilities / Target exceeded	
	73.5% customer satisfaction rating with indoor leisure facilities	
	3,516 children and young people took part in Community Play and other leisure initiatives	
	25,761 enrollments on Everybody Active 2020	
	Implementation of Play Strategy and Sports Facility Strategy well underway	
	Plans to develop the Albert Basin Park, Newry are progressing	
	The majority of residents are physically active for 30 minutes per week and are in good health	
Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination	574 new businesses and 535 jobs promoted through the NI Business Start Programme	
	31 social enterprise start ups created and 43 social enterprise jobs created	
	198 business supported through 'NMD Growth'	
	Employment rate increased from 65.6% to 73.6%	
	29 businesses supported and 133 jobs created through the Rural Business Investment Scheme	
	£2.3m secured to invest in the fishing dependent communities of Kilkeel, Annalong and Ardglass	
	Newry, Mourne and Down Economic Development Strategy 2020-25 adopted	
	Planning application for phase 2 of the Carlingford Lough Greenway submitted	
	113,357 pedestrians and cyclists used the Greenway since September 2018	
	The Giant Adventure Festivals attracted over 360,000 visitors with an average satisfaction rating of 96%	

	Decrease in tourist visitor numbers and spend	▽
Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in	Warrenpoint Municipal Park restored and re-opened, attracting 205,126 visitors in 2019-20	😊
	Newry/Warrenpoint Revitalisation Schemes and Downpatrick/Newry Hill Street Environmental Improvement Schemes complete	😊
	Forkhill Greenspace Project and Derrynore Demesne complete	😊
	45 Village Plans updated/created and 7 environmental improvement schemes complete	😊
	£15m awarded to FFNI Consortium to improve digital infrastructure*	😊
	Increased processing times for planning applications and enforcement cases	▽
Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District	LEAMS score of 64, which is below the regional average of 68	😞
	16 community groups participated in the Cleaner, Greener Communities initiative	😊
	294 community clean ups supported	😊
	347 visits to schools and community groups to deliver environmental awareness sessions	😊
	Arrangements to monitor the refuse collection completion rate delayed	😞
	Glass collection standardised across the District	😊
	Downpatrick Household Recycling Centre open	😊
	Increase in blue and brown bin recyclable waste	△
	7.6% increase in the rate of recycling, to 53.7%	😊
	86% of residents state that recycling is important to them	😊
	18.3% increase in the amount of waste going to landfill	△
Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures and initiatives	Significant representation from the community, voluntary and business sectors on Council engagement structures	😊
	1,310 meetings, events and programmes took place through Community Engagement Structures	😊
	Reduction in the number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, from 177 to 95	▽
	94% of residents feel safe during the day and 87% feel safe after dark	😊
	1,838 homes secured and 15,573 devices fitted through the Home Secure Scheme	😊
	277 service users received 45,391 calls through the 'Good Morning Good Neighbour Scheme' in 2019-20	😊

	£4.2m awarded to 1,385 applications through the Financial Assistance Scheme	
	47 community projects funded through four participatory budgeting schemes	
	4,924 recorded visits to the Ethnic Minority Support Centre	

*FFNI: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council hosts the Full Fibre Northern Ireland Consortium.

How to Propose New Performance Improvement Objectives

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council welcomes your ongoing feedback on the performance improvement objectives 2021-22, as well as any suggestions you may have on how services can be improved in the future.

The Council can be contacted in the following ways:

In writing: Kate Bingham
Head of Performance and Improvement
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry
Co Down
BT35 8DJ

Telephone: 0300 013 2233

Email: kate.bingham@nmandd.org

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

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

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

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

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation and Engagement Report on the Performance Improvement Objectives 2021-22



Introduction

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

Through the consultation and engagement process, five performance improvement objectives were considered and approved by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in March 2021. This was followed by extensive consultation and engagement activity which encouraged key stakeholders, including residents and Elected Members to have their say on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

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

Consultation and Engagement Activity

Between 15 March–10 May 2021, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council carried out an eight week consultation and engagement process with key stakeholders on the draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22, through the following mechanisms:

- Electronic documentation and survey on the Council's website and social media channels
- Public Notices in local newspapers
- Engagement sessions with the following stakeholders:
 - Seven District Electoral Area Forums
 - Older Persons Forums in Newry and Downpatrick
 - Newry and Mourne Youth Council
 - Cedar Foundation

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

- Residents Survey (September 2018)
- Consultation and engagement on the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and impact of COVID-19 (September 2020)

Analysis Methodology

A total of 41 completed surveys were received in response to the consultation and engagement on the Council's draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the draft

performance improvement objectives, if they had any comments to make regarding each objective and to put forward their suggested priorities for future improvement.

In carrying out the quantitative and qualitative consultation and engagement, a structured process was used to capture responses around each of the five draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22. This was supplemented by the consultation and engagement process outlined below, which:

- Provided 100 stakeholders with the opportunity to have their say on the proposed performance improvement objectives 2021-22.
- Engaged 1,345 stakeholders through the Residents Survey and consultation on COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23

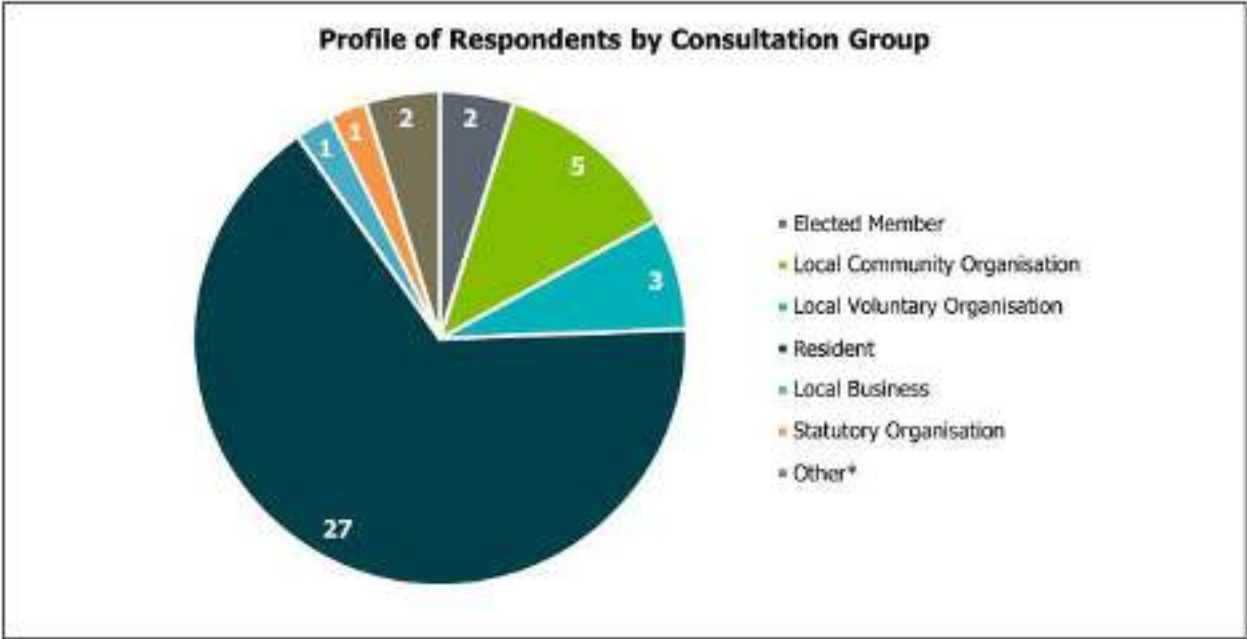
Consultation and Engagement	Details
Newry and Mourne Older Person's Forum	30 March 2021
Mournes DEA Forum	31 March 2021
Slieve Gullion DEA Forum	13 April 2021
Downpatrick DEA Forum	13 April 2021
Cedar Foundation User Forum	13 April 2021
Newry DEA Forum	15 April 2021
Crotlieve DEA Forum	20 April 2021
Slieve Croob DEA Forum	20 April 2021
Down Senior Forum	22 April 2021
Newry and Mourne Youth Council	11 May 2021
Residents Survey (September 2018)	764 residents aged 16+ with quotas applied for age, gender, social class and District Electoral Area
Consultation on COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020)	560 individuals completed the online survey / 21 residents participated in three focus groups

Consultation and Engagement Findings

Performance Improvement Objectives 2021-22

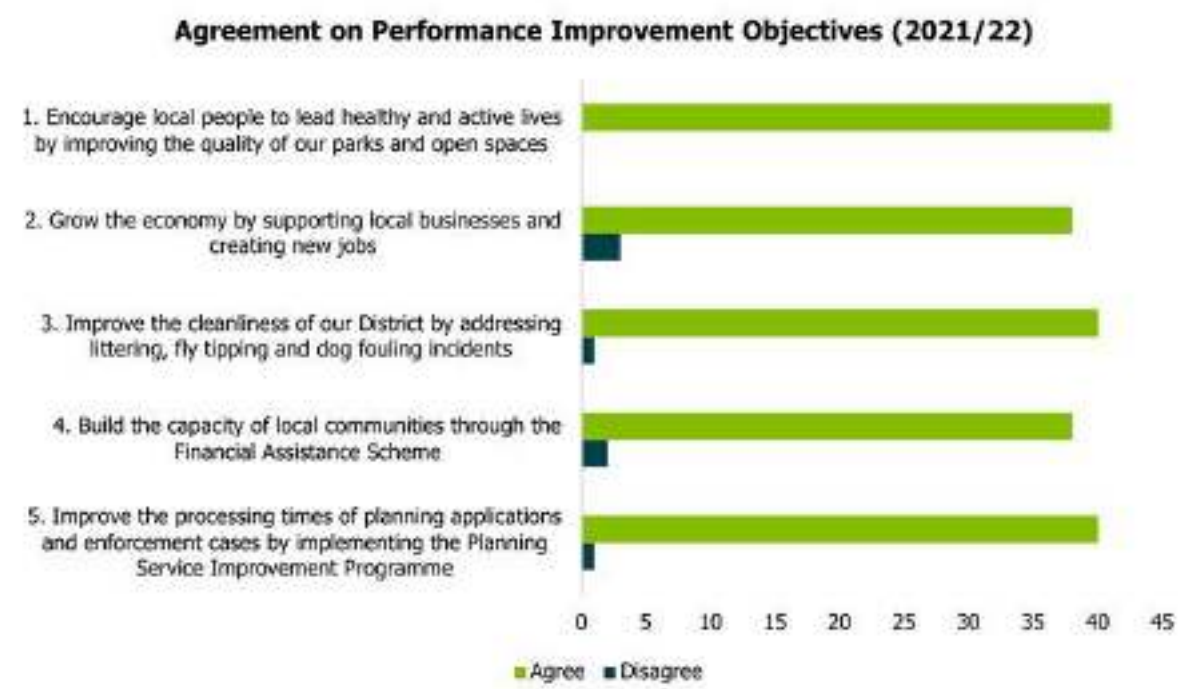
Profile of Respondents

Responses to the draft performance improvement objectives have been received from a range of key stakeholders, with the highest number of responses submitted by residents and local community organisations, as outlined in the following chart.



Analysis of Findings

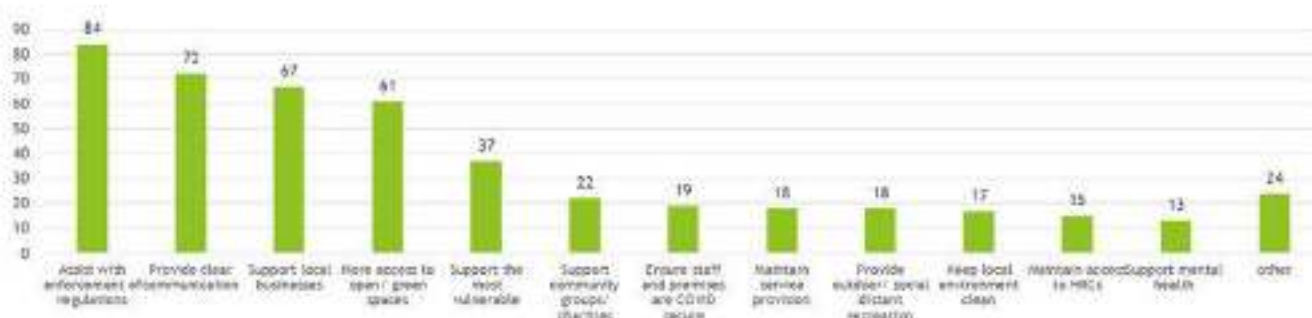
There has been a positive response to the five proposed performance improvement objectives, with almost all respondents agreeing with each objective.



Consultation on COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23 (2020)

These findings are endorsed by the results of the consultation and engagement on the impact of COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23, which reinforces the alignment between the performance improvement objectives 2021-22 and the top concerns identified by residents.

Specific things which the Council can do to help alleviate the impact of COVID-19 locally



- The top concerns for residents include the impact of the pandemic on local businesses and employment, mental health and wellbeing, economy, lack of enforcement of COVID-19 regulations and the spread of the Coronavirus.
- To alleviate the impact of COVID-19, the Council can continue to support local businesses, provide access to open/green spaces and support local community groups.

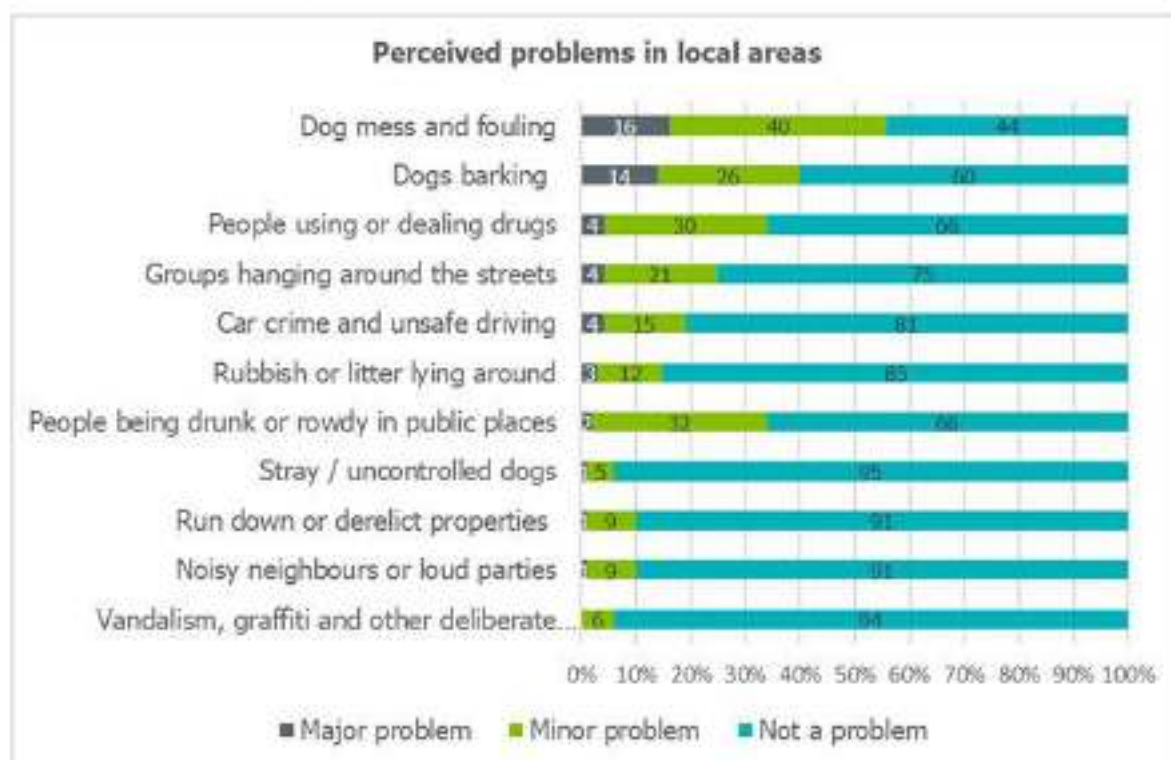
Residents Survey (2018)

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



- The local economy, health and wellbeing, community relations, good relations, community safety, protecting the environment and managing waste are amongst the top 10 priorities for improvement.
- A cleaner, more attractive area, regeneration, accessible leisure centres, tourism and participating in cultural activities are amongst the lesser priorities for improvement.

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



You Said, We Did - Overview of Consultation Feedback

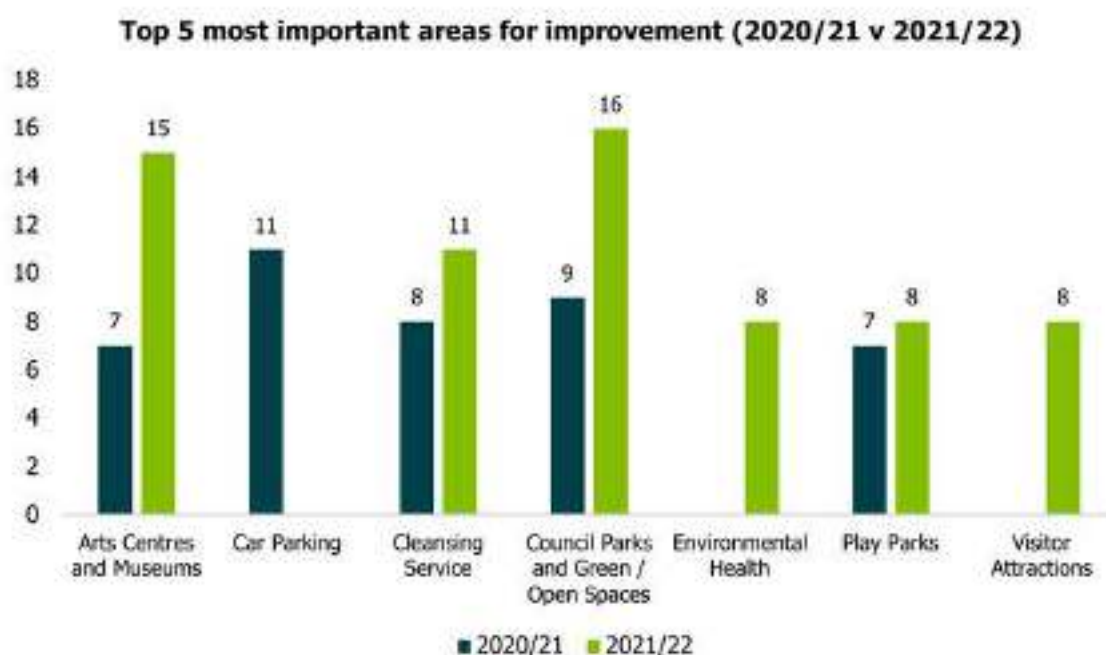
Performance Improvement Objectives

An analysis of the results of all consultation and engagement processes indicates that many of the issues raised will be addressed through the proposed 2021-22 performance improvement objectives, 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success', or as part of the Council's business planning process. An additional action and measure in relation to community trails has been proposed as part of performance improvement objective 1.

	You Said	We Did
Performance Improvement Objective 1: We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces	Community trails should be referenced and incorporated	Action: Complete and launch 5 community trails Measure: Number of recorded visits at community trails

Suggested Areas for Improvement

As part of the survey, respondents were asked to put forward their suggested areas for improvement for 2021-22.



- 'Parks and green spaces' and 'arts centres and museums' are the top priorities for improvement in 2021-22.
- Car parking was only identified as a priority for improvement in 2020-21.
- Environmental Health and Visitor Attractions have been identified as new priorities for improvement in 2021-22.

Next Steps

Based on the feedback obtained through the consultation and engagement process, as well as the ongoing developmental work around each performance improvement objective 2021-22, this report includes one recommendation to update the actions and measures within the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22.

The Consultation and Engagement report will be published on the Council's website by 30 June 2021, alongside the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22. It will also be circulated to key stakeholders to support the business planning process.

Summary of Consultation and Engagement Feedback

Performance Improvement Objective 1

Older Peoples Forums

- Why does Warrenpoint beach not have a blue flag?
- Does the Council plan to introduce car parking charges at forest parks and Warrenpoint Car Park? If so, this may have a negative impact on tourism.
- There is an entrance charge for Delamont Country Park and access to other forest parks is free.
- Derrymore Woods is an excellent regeneration project. However, it has attracted more visitors and there is an issue with car parking along the Derrymore Road.
- The Council should be congratulated on the Greenway which is an excellent asset with plenty of litter bins for visitors.
- Clonallon Park in Warrenpoint is not referenced within this objective. Additional seating and an outdoor gym should be considered.
- Additional seating and litter bins are required on the Towpath.
- The play park at Bessbrook Pond should be upgraded.
- The temperature in Newry swimming pool at Newry Leisure Centre is too low, especially for those with mobility issues.

Mournes DEA

- There has been an issue with overcrowding in parks and open spaces during the pandemic which needs to be managed in the future.

Slieve Gullion DEA

- The issue with car parking at Derrymore Woods needs to be resolved, as visitors are parking on the road.

Cedar

- Slieve Gullion Forest Park and access to the play park is very steep and challenging for those who are less abled and those with mobility issues. Car parking at Slieve Gullion is very good.
- There are not many parks in Newry City. When the Council consults on the Albert Basin Park in Newry, disability groups should be engaged to ensure the new park is accessible to all. Accessibility to parks and open spaces is also dependent on transport and the transport connections from rural areas are not frequent enough. Accessibility and affordability may therefore become key issues in the future.
- Issues were raised in relation to the accessibility of Ulsterbus buses and the need to book wheelchair access in advance, which is dependent on the spaces available.

Downpatrick DEA

- This is a good, relevant objective. However, some villages do not have parks and Downpatrick has no park, which raises questions around the equal distribution of investment across the District.

- There is an opportunity to reference community trails and links to long distance parks, as many villages or towns in our area do not have safe circular walking routes. As most settlements in East Down in particular have either the Ulster Way or the Saint Patrick/Saints Way running through them in a linear manner, it would be fairly easy to liaise with DfI to ensure that roads and pavements were configured to 'loop back' to create a circular walk. However, the emphasis needs to be ease of application. Once community groups have applied, the system should automatically remember items such as constitutions, health and safety and child protection and not require these documents to be uploaded anew every time, unless they have changed.

Newry DEA

- There should be more reference to the footfall and improvement works underway at the Towpath and Greenway.
- The Council is committed to working with community groups to provide community gardens, allotments and green spaces, as a way to support local people throughout the pandemic.
- The Council is supporting 'no mow May' to help facilitate bee pollination.

Slieve Croon DEA

- Forest parks have been an excellent lifeline to local communities during the pandemic and require effective management going forward.
- Emphasis on mental health and wellbeing as this will be a key issue for the District in the future and the Council need to plan ahead accordingly.

Rowallane DEA

- This objective should make reference to Delamont Country Park as it is one of the main forest parts across the District. Consultation was recently carried out at Delamont and work is underway to upgrade the park, in a three staged approach. Delamont has been a lifeline for many residents during the pandemic and the Council should recognise the role that nature can play in promoting wellbeing. There is also an issue with charging at Delamont and a District wide approach to charging for entry at forest parks is required. The Council needs to ensure that all parks remain accessible.

Newry and Mourne Youth Council

- Parks should remain accessible and free of charge for all visitors, in order to help ensure residents lead health and active lifestyles.
- There should be a focus on maintaining, and where required, upgrading the smaller parks, such as Clonallon Park.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

Older Peoples Forums

- Free wifi in Newry and Warrenpoint is working.
- Do the new jobs created include positions with zero hours contracts?

- The lockdown restrictions have had a huge impact on local coffee shops as office workers are generally working from home. Are there any plans to get workers back to the office?

Mournes DEA

- Can we encourage residents to shop local online? Is there support available to do this?
- Are the economic development programmes open to all businesses across the District and all industry sectors?

Slieve Gullion DEA

- Essential skills are lacking for some residents, in relation to maths and English. Can the Council work with SRC to make courses more accessible for residents?
- Is the Council delivering any programmes with DKIT?

Cedar

- Small businesses are dependent on the local economy – will they survive?
- There is a lack of diversity in businesses across Newry, Mourne and Down.
- The Council should continue to liaise with the business community to maintain and retain local jobs.
- Any potential loss of income will have a negative impact on accessibility to facilities and increased community isolation.
- The Council supported a local business to offer 'Al Fresco' dining in the market in Newry. This was an excellent, innovative initiative and experience for customers, helping the local economy.
- 'Neighbourhood Food Newry' is an excellent concept to support local businesses and encourage people to shop local.

Downpatrick DEA

- This objective should focus on the 'Green Economy' and jobs for the future, similar to the progress neighbouring Councils have made in this area, which may lead to an increase in the rates base. Suggest: 'Put a plan in place to ensure NM&D maximises the benefit of the New Green Economy to ratepayers in our District and maximises employment from these areas'.
- Newry should capitalise on its geographic location and Downpatrick should focus on increasing public sector employment.
- The support to businesses should be more than the distribution of COVID-19 grant aid.

Newry DEA

- This objective should focus on the support provided for social enterprises in the District, beyond the Social Enterprise Programme.

Crotlieve DEA

- There is a need to ensure that small businesses that wish to diversify can access the COVID-19 Revitalisation Grant Scheme to get support.

- It is unclear how the NI 'Go For It' programme supports the creation of business starts and jobs as it only provides advice.

Newry and Mourne Youth Council

- This is a very relevant objective and the Council has been successful in supporting local businesses during the pandemic.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

Older Peoples Forum

- Bins should be extended to rural areas, all litter bins should be emptied regularly and bags should be placed on top of dog fouling bins.
- Additional education, marketing and publicity around responsible dog ownership is required.
- A toilet and additional litter bins are required at Monks Hill Cemetery.
- The Belfast Road in Downpatrick does not have enough litter bins and more bins should be provided. Does the Council have a Litter Bin Strategy and a Dog Fouling Strategy?

Mournes DEA

- The Council should make it clear that it can only support community groups with the necessary public liability insurance to carry out community clean ups.
- The Mourne Esplanade has numerous dog fouling incidents. Can we target hot spots?
- Can we educate people on environmental crime?

Slieve Gullion DEA

- Is there an option to provide walkers with litter picking equipment on their walks? This equipment could be stored in community buildings.

Cedar

- There are not enough litter and dog bins at Derrymore Woods and the bins are over flowing.
- Can dog fouling bags be left at dog bins in the future? Can compost bags be left by brown bins to encourage food recycling in parks?
- Newry City is fairly clean and doesn't seem to have much dog fouling.
- Dog fouling can be off putting for those in wheelchairs and those with children.
- It is positive that the Council will include information on responsible dog ownership in dog licenses.
- Children are influential in reinforcing the requirement to recycle and not litter.
- There should be an onus on local businesses to provide bins and clear waste in relation to their trading and takeaway's. Can the Council have a recognition scheme for those businesses which help clean up the local area responsibly?

- Can the Council help promote the use of reusable cups as opposed to disposable cups?

Downpatrick DEA

- This is a good objective and performance should be compared with neighbouring Councils where possible, particularly Ards and North Down, Lisburn and Castlereagh and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon. In particular the statistics from Ards and North Down as they have a similar area and population to ourselves but have always performed far better than our Council in this area.

Slieve Croob DEA

- Dog fouling and fly tipping are key issues for the District. Community clean ups are an excellent initiative and have been a good support in helping to keep the District clean. The Council should consider allocating more resources to street cleansing.

Crotlieve DEA

- Littering is a crime and the Council can be more proactive in monitoring and addressing litter hotspots.

Rowallane DEA

- It is positive that the Council is recognising that improvements are required regarding littering, dog fouling and fly tipping as this is a key issue for constituents. The Council should consider developing policies which target offenders through fines and signage, to reduce incidents of littering and dog fouling.

Newry and Mourne Youth Council

- There is an issue with dogs being off lead in rural areas and attacking sheep, lambs and other livestock, which needs to be addressed.
- Fly tipping is a growing issue across the District and the Council needs to come up with innovative ways to deter people from fly tipping and dumping their excess waste.
- Is there an opportunity for young people to get involved in community clean ups and record the voluntary hours accrued for their CV's or get a certificate/recognition for their participation?

Performance Improvement Objective 4

Mournes DEA

- The Electronic Grants Management System is very good and useful, and the team has been very flexible with applicants.

Slieve Gullion DEA

- The objective should reflect the ethos of the Council supporting local community groups, as an enabler, not just a funder.

- The Council should also provide support for those groups who may lack the necessary skills to submit online applications.

Cedar

- Past summer schemes in Newry were very good and accessible.
- Smaller and new community groups may need more support in completing the Financial Assistance application forms.
- The local community has become increasingly diverse and there is a need to develop projects which enable people to integrate and learn from each other, which could focus on community background, disability and age. Is there an opportunity for Newry to have a MELA festival to showcase and celebrate local diversity?

Downpatrick DEA

- There have been improvements to the Financial Assistance Scheme, and it is questionable whether this should be an objective. However, it was noted that further improvements are required to support community groups in applying for funding through the Financial Assistance Scheme.
- The Council should promote the distribution of funding through the Financial Assistance Scheme by District Electoral Area.

Newry DEA

- It is positive that more training and capacity building will be provided to community groups to help them apply for funding using the Electronic Grants Management System.

Slieve Croob DEA

- The number of applicants from rural areas to the Financial Assistance Scheme may reduce as many groups didn't apply for funding due to the uncertainty associated with COVID-19. However, the Financial Assistance Scheme is a lifeline for many community groups.

Crotlieve DEA

- There have been positive developments with the application process which should be sustained going forward.

Newry and Mourne Youth Council

- This is a good objective which supports local community groups. However, as the Financial Assistance Scheme is so popular, the Council sometimes allocates smaller amounts of funding towards projects which does not cover all the required costs and good projects may therefore not be delivered.

Performance Improvement Objective 5

Cedar

- It is positive to provide staff with the opportunity to be creative to identify areas for improvement.

- It would be useful to understand what the Planning Department is responsible for. There may be difficulties for the less abled in navigating the planning process and it may be useful for Planning staff to participate in disability awareness training to understand and anticipate potential issues.

Downpatrick DEA

- This is a relevant objective as the performance of the Planning Department needs to improve.

Slieve Croob DEA

- This is a very relevant objective as the performance of the Planning Department needs to improve.

Rowallane DEA

- There is a clear need to reduce the processing times of planning applications, as there are often delays to the process which could be avoided. Consideration should be given to support the diversification of local SME's, potentially zoning industrial land for this purpose.

Other

- There is no reference to Age Friendly in the objectives.
- Mental health is an issue for young people. Access to Council Community Facilities to deliver youth activities/engagement is an issue, particularly in rural areas, as the facilities remain closed.

Objective Delivery Plans 2021-22

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

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

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

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces					
Responsible Officers	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Assistant Directors: Tourism, Culture and Events / Leisure and Sport / Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration				
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing	Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23	Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities		
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.				
Meeting the legislative criteria	<p>Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, achieving this objective will deliver real benefits and outcomes for local communities and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>Service Quality: The quality of services will continue to improve through the planned upgrades to existing parks and open spaces, new capital projects which are scheduled to be delivered and UNESCO Global Geopark status.</p> <p>Fairness: Includes opportunities for people across all Section 75 categories to access the Council's parks and open spaces, with specific references to play parks for children.</p> <p>Innovation: Innovative ways to invest in and upgrade parks and open spaces in order to improve the visitor experience and encourage local people to live healthy and active lives.</p>				
What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	Link to existing Plan/Strategy	Measures of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Continue to develop the district's bid to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark designation	Corporate Plan 2021-23 ERT Business Plan 2021-22	UNESCO Global Geopark status achieved	£20k towards Global Geopark designation Within the existing resources of the AONB and Geopark Team	Annual Assessment of Performance 2020-21 Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Assistant Director Tourism, Culture and Events Head of Product Development and Visitor Experience AONB and Geopark Manager

Invest in new facilities at Kilbroney Park and Rostrevor Forest, Tyrella beach, Slieve Gullion Forest Park and Delamont Country Park	ERT Business Plan 2021-22 Capital Plan	New walking trail at Kilbroney Forest Park / new visitor facilities at Tyrella Beach / outdoor performance and interpretive improvements at Slieve Gullion Forest Park / consultation on proposals for a viewpoint upgrade, walking trails and visitor information centre at Delamont Country Park complete Number of recorded visits at Forest Parks	Kilbroney Forest Park Fallows Community Trail: £450k in total. £250k from DAERA Tyrella Beach: £330k in total Slieve Gullion: £900k in total. £500k from DAERA Delamont: £60k in total towards the design phase	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2021-22 Ongoing monitoring of projects within the Capital Plan	Assistant Director Tourism, Culture and Events Head of Product Development and Visitor Experience
Retain green flag accreditation for Kilbroney Park, Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Warrenpoint Municipal Park and Newry Canal and heritage accreditation for Warrenpoint Municipal Park	ERT Business Plan 2021-22 NS Business Plan 2021-22	Five green flag awards and two green flag heritage awards for the Council's parks	Application fee: Circa £500 per application	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT/NS Business Plans 2021-22	Head of Product Development and Visitor Experience Grounds Maintenance Manager Project Development Officer National Lottery Heritage Fund
Apply for green flag accreditation for Delamont Country Park and heritage accreditation for Newry Canal					
Retain blue flag accreditation for					

Cranfield, Murlough and Tyrella beaches	AHC Business Plan 2021-22	Three new parks in Ballymartin / Newcastle / Newry	£2.5m over 5 years allocated through the Play Strategy	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2021-22	Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport Head of Outdoor Leisure
Build three new play parks and upgrade two existing play parks	Play Strategy 2017-22	Two upgraded parks in Kilkeel (Kitty's Road and Mourne Esplanade)		Ongoing assessment of the Play Strategy	
Complete three new community trails	AHC Business Plan 2021-22 Service Level Agreement with Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI)	Three new Community Trails at: Aughrim Hill / Daisy Hill / Glendesha Forest Extensions to the Tievenadarragh Forest Car Park / Drumkeeragh Forest Car Park Number of recorded visits at Community Trails	2021-22 SLA with ORNI: £75,410	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plans 2021-22	Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport Head of Outdoor Leisure
Promote good visitor management across all Council parks and open spaces	ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Level of footfall at: Kilbroney Park / Slieve Gullion Forest Park / Carlingford Lough Greenway / Warrenpoint Municipal Park Level of satisfaction with the Council's forest parks	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plans 2021-22	Assistant Director: Tourism, Culture and Events Head of Product Development and Visitor Experience
Risks		Risk Management		Actions to Mitigate Risks	

UNESCO Global Geopark designation and green/blue flag accreditation is not achieved	UNESCO Global Geopark Management Plan developed and implemented. Ongoing work underway across the Council's parks and beaches to achieve green/blue flag accreditation.
Delays in delivering the capital works to the forest park upgrades, community trails and play parks	Project management arrangements are in place for upgrades to forest parks and beaches. SLA with ORNI for Community Trails in place and implementation of Play Strategy underway.
Low level of usage and satisfaction with Forest Parks	Work is underway to promote good visitor management across the Council's parks and open spaces.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs				
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration			
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23	Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.			
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, and will deliver tangible benefits to citizens, local businesses and social enterprises. Service Quality: The quality of services available to businesses and stakeholders will improve through the various programmes, including the NI Go For It, Social Economy Programme, SEAFILAG 2 and NMD Growth. Service Availability: The continued roll-out of programmes to businesses, social enterprises and fishing dependent communities will improve access to and availability of key services, as well as the overall quality of life in the District. Innovation: Implicit within this objective are innovative ways to promote / create new jobs and support businesses / social enterprises across the District.			
What we are going to do				
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measures of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements
Implement a District wide marketing campaign to revitalise our local economy and safely stimulate footfall across our District	Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25	Communication and Engagement Implementation Plan delivered	£70k	Communication and Engagement Implementation Plan in place with external delivery agent and monitored regularly
				Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration

Support the creation of new businesses and promote new jobs through the NI 'Go for It' programme		Number of business plans approved through NI 'Go For It' Number of new business starts created through NI 'Go For It' Number of new jobs promoted through NI 'Go For It'	NMDDC contribution: 2021-22: £80k Regional programme led by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	Monthly meetings of the regional Management Team Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Head of Regeneration and Business Development Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme	Corporate Plan 2021-23 Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25 ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Number of social enterprise start ups created Number of social enterprise jobs created	Social Enterprise Programme: £51k	Quarterly meetings with Newry Enterprise Agency Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration Head of Regeneration and Business Development Enterprise Development Officers Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Support local businesses and create new jobs through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and the 'Sales and Trade programme'		Number of businesses supported through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth' and 'Tender for Growth' Number of jobs created through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth' and 'Tender for Growth'	Total funding: £338k / NMDDC contribution: £73k	Monthly meetings with the Delivery Agents Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Support the creation of new jobs and businesses in coastal	NI FLAG Strategy 2018-22	Number of new jobs created in coastal areas	£2.3m investment between 2018-22	Ongoing monitoring to ensure that Priority 4 of the SEA-EMFF are	Assistant Director: Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration

areas through SEAFLAG 2	ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Number of new businesses created in coastal areas	invested fairly, sustainably and successfully	SEAFLAG Development Manager
Risk Management				
Actions and Controls to Mitigate Against Risks				
Failure to deliver the economic development programmes to support the economic recovery of the District	All programmes are in place with robust management and governance arrangements.			
The impact of COVID-19 and Brexit on delivering the various economic development programmes and achieving targets	Ongoing monitoring of key influences and economic development support adjusted to meet local demand.			
Lack of interest in and applications made to participate in programmes	Publicity campaigns delivered through online and social media platforms. Signposting service in place.			

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by reducing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling				
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Neighbourhood Services Assistant Directors: Waste Management / Health and Wellbeing			
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee• Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee			
Meeting the legislative criteria	<p>Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits and outcomes to local citizens.</p> <p>Service Availability: The availability of key services will improve, through support for community led initiatives and access to funding through the 'Live Here Love Here' initiative.</p> <p>Innovation: The Council has introduced innovative ways to improve civic and community pride across the District, as evidenced through support for Community Clean ups, Dog Fouling Strategy and Enforcement Action Plan and inclusion of information on responsible dog ownership in dog licenses.</p> <p>Sustainability: Initiatives to encourage public participation in key campaigns, promote responsible dog ownership and reduce levels of littering, fly tipping and dog fouling will empower residents and support the delivery of a more sustainable service and cleaner District in the future.</p>			
What we are going to do				

Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Address issues around littering, fly tipping and dog fouling by:		LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index)	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate Business Plan 2021-22	Assistant Director: Waste Management
Implementing the Dog Fouling Strategy and Enforcement Improvement Plan		Number of fixed penalty notices issued (littering and dog fouling)		Ongoing assessments of the Dog Fouling Strategy and Enforcement Improvement Plan	Head of Waste Processing Head of Waste Management
Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity campaigns and dog licenses	Corporate Plan 2021-23 Enforcement Improvement Plan	Number of fixed penalty notices paid (littering and dog fouling)			
Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of fly tipping along the border area	Neighbourhood Services Directorate Business Plan 2021-22 Dog Fouling Strategy	The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling			
Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres		The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings			
Launch the 'mobile app' to enable officers to record incidents of environmental crime across the District	Chief Executives Departmental Business Plan 2021-22	Mobile app launched	Within existing resources / existing ESRI software	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the Chief Executive Departmental Business Plan 2021-22	Head of Waste Processing Head of Evidence and Research

Support local community clean ups, in line with COVID-19 guidance	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plan 2021-22	Number of community clean ups supported	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2021-22	Assistant Director: Health and Wellbeing Head of Sustainability
Participate in the Keep NI Beautiful 'Live Here Love Here' campaign		Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	£13k allocated towards the media campaign / £13k to fund projects		
Risk Management					
Risks		Actions to Mitigate Against Risks			
Stakeholders do not get involved in community clean ups and 'Live Here Love Here'		All initiatives are promoted and publicised across the District, through social media, website, liaison with Council employees and word of mouth.			
Failure to improve the level of street cleanliness and reduce the level of littering, dog fouling and fly tipping		The Council has a number of initiatives in place to encourage civic pride in the local area, promote responsible dog ownership, report littering and use enforcement action.			
Failure to achieve the statutory targets for waste management		Programmes are in place to increase the rate of recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.			

Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme				
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities Assistant Director: Community Engagement			
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities	Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23	Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities	
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee• Annual Assessment of Performance 2020-21 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee			
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits and outcomes to citizens. Service Availability: The availability of and accessibility to key services will improve through the continued roll-out of projects and initiatives funded through the Financial Assistance Scheme.			

<p>Fairness: This objective provides opportunities to improve societal wellbeing by engaging all sections of the local community, including older people, young people, children and people from BME communities, whilst supporting the community and voluntary sector through Council allocated funding.</p> <p>Innovation: Innovative mechanisms to effectively engage and work in partnership with the community and voluntary sector, ensuring that all sections of the local community have the opportunity to benefit from the Financial Assistance Scheme.</p>				
What we are going to do				
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements
Launch 3 financial assistance calls across 19 thematic areas to support the delivery of community led projects	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plans 2021-22	% of successful financial assistance applications	£1.2m within the Financial Assistance Scheme	Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2021-22
Continue to promote and roll out the Electronic Grant Management System	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plans 2021-22	% of financial assistance applications funded		
Deliver online training and capacity building to support local voluntary and community groups in applying for financial assistance	Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plans 2021-22	Number of participants/beneficiaries of the Financial Assistance Scheme		
		Number of online capacity building sessions delivered	Electronic Grant Management System	Reports considered and approved by the AHC Committee
		Number of views of the online training module		Assistant Director: Community Engagement Head of Programmes
Risk Management				
Risks		Actions to Mitigate Against Risks		
Reduction in the number/percentage of successful applications		Ongoing training and capacity building programme in place.		
Poor uptake and capacity to use the Electronic Grants Management System		Ongoing promotion of the system and training and capacity building programme in place.		

Performance Improvement Objective 5

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

Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Chief Planner			
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities		Link to Corporate Plan 2021-23	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit CommitteeAnnual Assessment of Performance 2020-21 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee			
Meeting the legislative criteria	<p>Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits to citizens.</p> <p>Service Quality: The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Plan has, and will continue to improve, the quality of the service provided by reducing the processing times and the number of applications/cases in the system.</p> <p>Sustainability: An improved Planning Service will contribute to the sustainable development of Newry, Mourne and Down.</p> <p>Efficiency: The purpose of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the service, by making better use of the resources available.</p>			
What we are going to do				
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements
Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months	ERT Business Plan 2021-22	Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2021-22
		Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)		
Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted		Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks		Chief Planner

Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'		<p>Number of planning applications in the system for 12-18 months</p> <p>Number of planning applications in the system for less than 12 months</p> <p>Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more</p>			
Risks		Risks Management		Actions to Mitigate the Risks	
Failure to meet the statutory performance standards for processing planning applications, enforcement cases.				The Planning Service Improvement Programme outlines the key areas for improvement, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis.	
The Council does not reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system				The Planning Service Improvement Programme outlines the key areas for improvement, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis.	

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee	
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021	
Subject:	The creation of a Northern Mutual Bank	
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services	
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Ken Montgomery, Assistant Director of Finance	

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

For decision x	For noting only
-----------------------	------------------------

1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	Following Councillor Brown's Notice of Motion on the 11 February 2021 it was agreed to allow officers time to consider the matter, review the resource implications and the legalities of the Northern Mutual Bank and bring back to this Committee for further discussion.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>The original Notice of Motion was as follows:-</p> <p><i>'That this Council recognises the need for greater resilience and community wealth building in the council region in light of the coronavirus pandemic and future crises that will inevitably arise due to global warming; and looks to solutions beyond business-as-usual which can help build this necessary resilience and community wealth. In seeking such solutions, this council agrees to assess the financial and practical viability of the Northern Mutual bank—a bank that will be regional, ethical, complementary to our Credit Unions, and not driven by profit but by the needs of the region. This should be done as part of a wider commitment to developing a District-wide Community Wealth Building strategy. A business case will be provided to council to help carry out this assessment and if it can be demonstrated that the Northern Mutual is indeed financially and practically viable, this council will commit to some or all of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• To join the Advisory Group of the Northern Mutual.</i> <i>• To publicly support the campaign for the Northern Mutual.</i> <i>• To lobby government departments and anchor institutions as a way to garner further support for the campaign.</i> <i>• To invest money to help raise the bank's £20m start-up capital on the understanding that council will receive a return on this investment; the business case will give an indication of the rate of return.'</i>

2.2	<p>A Business Case prepared by Dr G Bone Dodds for the Community Savings Bank Association dated November 2020 has been forwarded to Council for consideration by Members and is attached to this report at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Officers have met with two of the campaigners for the Northern Mutual Bank, Ms Bridget Meehan and Ms Tiziana O'Hara who clarified their specific requests of Council.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They were not asking Council to make an investment of money. 2. They were asking Council to give public support for the campaign and to join the Advisory Committee. 3. Giving support in this way does not commit Council to making any investment in the project now or at any point in the future. If Council were to make an investment at a point in the future, it would be at entirely at Councils discretion and any investment made would give Council a rate of return.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	That the Committee consider the report and agree to support the campaign for the implementation of a Northern Mutual Bank and join the Advisory Committee.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	As reported above in section 2.2
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p>
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Business Case for a new regional bank for Northern Ireland based on the Community Savings Bank Association Model.</p>
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p>
	<p>None</p>

Northern Mutual

Dr G. Bone Dodds | November 2020

This report takes the current (November 2020) business model of the Community Savings Bank Association and applies data on Northern Ireland to inform a likely scenario for a Northern Mutual Bank. It gives suggestions of potential directions for such a bank in order to inform the steering group and to build awareness and feasibility on the model for the region.

It sets out that:

1. There is a need for a locally owned and controlled bank in Northern Ireland that recycles the wealth of the region in order to better support people and businesses and to contribute to sustainable economic development.
2. It is believed that such a bank could get a banking licence, following the progress of other mutual banks in the UK.
3. There is a realistic chance that the bank would be profitable and sustainable having looked at early data on the demographics and markets of Northern Ireland.
4. The purpose of the bank will be developed explicitly to meet the needs of the region, taking into account the existing banking and finance infrastructure.

This document is intended for the purposes of discussion and further investigation. The author believes that further research and resource is needed to fully investigate the viability and potential of a Northern Mutual but that this report takes the first step to show that it is both possible and desirable to explore.

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1. Introduction

Purpose of document

This document sets out a business case for a new regional bank for Northern Ireland based on the Community Savings Bank Association (CSBA) model.

A steering group has been set up to explore the feasibility of developing a regional bank for Northern Ireland. The goal is to develop a trustworthy banking institution to support sustainable economic development in the region by improving access to financial services, retain banking profits, and recycle the collective savings of the region into regionally based business loans and mortgages.

South West Mutual, Avon Mutual, Banc Cambria (Wales), North West Mutual and North East Mutual are currently in different stages of development across the UK.

Summary of proposition

Northern Mutual seeks to provide a customer-owned high street full-service bank to retail customers and enterprises (i.e. SMEs co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, farmers) living in or with a connection to Northern Ireland.

The bank will offer interest-bearing current accounts, overdrafts, unsecured and secured term loans and mortgages. In some locations the bank will offer safe deposit boxes.

The bank will be accessible and transparent combining a mix of physical and digital channels with a branch network comprising staffed and automated branches alongside internet banking and a mobile banking app.

2. Why do we need a new bank in Northern Ireland?

The current banking system is not working for many of us, it does not serve the needs of ordinary people or the productive economy in Northern Ireland. The current banking system does not offer

- a) an adequate money supply infrastructure to serve certain segments of the market that are not currently well served, nor
- b) appeals to customers seeking a bank that aligns with their values and guarantees ownership and control within the region.

An alternative form of banking is necessary, one that will ensure capital gets to the places where it is needed.

2.1 We lack adequate financial infrastructure in Northern Ireland

Identified under-provisions

These are the gaps in the provision currently experienced in Northern Ireland.

Under-provision 1: finance for businesses

Businesses need a good supply of finance and a high-quality banking service. Data for the region suggests that the business market is not currently being well served. Between 2013 and 2019, businesses in Northern Ireland grew by around 10% however SME loans fell by just over 28% (£2 billion). Additionally, a bi-annual survey of business banking quality found that on average just under half of SME customers in Northern Ireland would not recommend their bank to other SMEs¹. Enterprise NI's recent Barometer survey also found that around half of businesses find it difficult to access working capital/cashflow with 21% finding it very challenging to access². Only 25% of businesses looking for support found it from their bank.

SMEs, co-operatives, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, and farmers need access to bank current accounts and the payments system in all of its forms, for example flexible overdraft financing and cashflow financing. Northern Mutual will be part of a supportive ecosystem for co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders and farmers, and will link in with other forms of business support – if it doesn't have a product, service or facility for you, it will introduce you to someone who does.

Under-provision 2: branch users

The region has lost over 30% of its branches since 2015 however many customers continue to value branches. This is particularly detrimental in a region that is largely rural. There is a market gap for a low-cost branch offer that can meet evolving customer needs. Northern Mutual aims to fulfil all of its communities needs by combining physical infrastructure with the best modern technology to provide a great service whilst reducing costs and making branches viable for the modern age.

Under-provision 3: underbanked

Many people still lack a current account, incurring a 'Poverty Premium'. The poverty premium is the additional costs that people on low incomes pay for essential products and services. Research by the University of Bristol found that in 2019 people on low incomes in the UK paid an average of £478 more for essential goods and services³. This figure includes a poverty premium of £107 for higher cost credit and £10 for accessing money through ATMs and pre-paid cards. Northern Mutual has a duty to help people access banking with support and guidance. It recognises the important role of the credit union sector and desires to work with credit unions to create a stronger ecosystem that serves the financially excluded and support the existing good work in that sector.

¹ Business Banking service quality Northern Ireland (August 2020) [Available at: <https://www.bva-bdrc.com/products/business-banking-service-quality-northern-ireland/>]

² Enterprise Barometer 2019, *Enterprise Northern Ireland* (2019) [Available at: <https://www.enterpriseni.com/storage/eni-barometer-findings.pdf>]

³ <https://fairbydesign.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-poverty-premium-A-Customer-Perspective-Report.pdf>

Whilst Credit Union lending accounts for a third of personal lending, the Consumer Council's Lending, Savings and Debt research for Northern Ireland showed that there are still barriers to accessing banking services for some. For full service current accounts, which credit unions do not offer, only 82% of those on a low income or those in a household with a disabled person, and 82% social housing tenants or 77% for those in areas susceptible to paramilitary activity have access to a current account. Everyone living in the region will be eligible for a current account with Northern Mutual⁴. It is worth noting too, that the Department of Communities Post Office Card Account is coming to an end in November 2021. Many people use this facility to have their benefits paid to them rather than using a bank account. Once this facility is gone, it is uncertain what will replace it.

Overall, only 44% of people have a savings account, this drops to 30% for those living in areas susceptible to paramilitary activity. In the CSBA model, because interest is paid on current accounts in a positive balance, they are also effectively savings accounts. The simplicity of this model should make it easier (and fairer) for people to save.

Under-provision 4: access to cash

In Northern Ireland, two thirds of the population use cash regularly as their main form of payment. This rises to 77% of people in areas susceptible to paramilitary activity and to 79% for those with low income⁵. There is a risk that access to cash may get even worse, as ATM providers consolidate the number of cash machines and start charging for their services. In 2018 free-to-use ATMs in the Link Network declined by 5% or 2,600 machines. The UK's cash infrastructure has become increasingly reliant on the commercial agreement between banks and the Post Office. This creates a vulnerability which was seen in October 2019 when Barclays tried to cancel their agreement with the post office, which would have left thousands in rural areas without easy access to their banking services. Thankfully, they reversed their decision after a public outcry, but it does highlight the need for longer-term banking change that creates more resilience. The Northern Mutual therefore will expand access to cash and will take into account rurality and local population vulnerability in branch placement decisions. The Mutual will have greater capacity for doing this as it will not have the pressure of generating shareholder return, the key driver for the leading commercial banks.

⁴ 'Lending, Savings and Debt Research: Northern Ireland Consumers, *The Consumer Council*, (2019) [Available at: <https://www.consumercouncil.org.uk/policy-research/publications/lending-savings-debt-research-northern-ireland-consumers>]

⁵ 'Lending, Savings and Debt Research: Northern Ireland Consumers, *The Consumer Council*, (2019) [Available at: <https://www.consumercouncil.org.uk/policy-research/publications/lending-savings-debt-research-northern-ireland-consumers>]

2.2 We need a purpose driven financial system

The Northern Mutual also propose to address an increasing demand for purpose driven banking services. Financial services continue to be poorly rated for consumer trust. People believe that the motivations or values of banks do not align with their own - a 2018 survey showed that two thirds of British people do not trust banks to work in the best interests of UK society⁶. And high street banks are accountable to their shareholders and CEOs who are mostly based outside of NI. The banks must answer to them and their primary goal is to make profit for them. This conflicts with the interests of customers who will always come second to shareholders. It is clear that the system is not working for many.

Emerging demands

At present, customers' demands for a trustworthy financial institution that prioritizes purpose rather than maximising profit for its shareholders, are emerging. Northern Mutual addresses those demands by proposing an alternative model of ownership, embedding values that support the just transition to a low carbon economy and implementing a decentralised operational model.

An alternative ownership model

Northern Mutual Limited have met the requirements of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act (NI) 1969 and the FCA have now registered **Northern Mutual Limited** with CSBA model rules. This a mutual society that abide by the seven co-operative principles recognised by the International Co-operative Alliance.

The society has share capital comprising one class of non-voting ordinary shares and is controlled by its members on the principle of "one member one vote". Members may be individuals or incorporated bodies such as charities, public authorities, or businesses, where businesses can be co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, or farmers.

There will be no person, organisation, or consortium of members with a controlling interest defined as an entitlement to control or exercise control of 10% or more of the voting rights. This structure is considered to be a source of competitive advantage.

The individuals taking up the key roles as set out in governance section will be subject to approval by the PRA and the FCA. Finding the right people with the skills and the ambition to create a bank with social, environmental and economic purpose is key to the success of the mutual banks.

Values that support low carbon and just transition

Consumers are placing more emphasis on social and environmental factors in their purchasing decisions. 73% agree that a company can both increase profits and improve the economic and social conditions in the communities where it operates—a nine-point

⁶ Palfreman, M. (2018) 'Ten years after the financial crisis-two thirds of British people don't trust banks', YouGov, (Available at: <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/finance/articles-reports/2018/08/29/ten-years-after-financial-crisis-two-thirds-britis>)

increase on 2018⁷. Northern Mutual will ensure that our operations do not negatively impact the environment, and will seek investments that actively improve the social and environmental landscape. It will prioritise and encourage indigenous enterprises that can demonstrate social or environmental value and that contribute to the circular economy. This will become ever more relevant as we move deeper into the climate crisis.

We are entering a climate crisis where it is essential that we transition to a post-carbon society while ensuring the transition is just. It has never been more important to build regional resilience and self-reliance so that a just transition can happen and to harness regional wealth in order to finance the transition. Northern Mutual, with its ESG strategy, is perfectly placed to be the vehicle to drive the transition and section 4.2 sets out how Northern Mutual's values, structure and products can be designed to meet these needs.

A decentralised operational model

How close decision-makers are physically and operationally to the people affected by those decisions has an impact on outcomes. A 2018 study showed that decentralised banking with shorter distances allows credit decisions to be made which take into account soft and local decisions, which enhances the profitability of regional banks⁸. So, rather than having a central credit decision agency making decisions through a centralised model, local branches make such decisions based on local knowledge. In this way, the Northern Mutual will always be local.

⁷ Edelman Trust Barometer (2019) (Available at: <https://www.edelman.co.uk/research/edelman-trust-barometer-2019-uk-headlines-communicators>)

⁸ Flögel, F. and Gärtner, S. (2018) 'The banking systems of Germany, the UK and Spain from a spatial perspective: lessons learned and what is to be done?', *Institute for Work and Technology Westphalian University of Applied Sciences*, (Available at: https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/173345/1/IAT_Discussion_Paper_16_01.pdf)

3. Vision, Purpose and Values

Northern Mutual is a co-operative business that seeks to generate long-term sustainable financial returns and have a positive impact on its members and in the communities that it operates in.

Whilst the bank would be relatively small in terms of banks, it would be relatively large in terms of the impact that it will have in the region, reaching £541 million of assets by year 9. The bank's focus will be serving the needs of Northern Ireland, providing a safe, ethical and supportive bank which will lend to businesses that are creating jobs and invest in high quality sustainable homes by driving improvement in housing and home ownership.

Its vision is of democratised banking in which Northern Ireland will own and control the money supply structure in order to retain the money and wealth belonging to this region, circulating it to create an inclusive, sustainable and resilient economy in which individuals, businesses, communities and our environment can thrive.

Its purpose is to exclusively support the region and its regional economy. As a locally owned and controlled bank, it will aim to work for current and future generations through the provision of honest, accessible, ethical and locally-rooted banking services. It will be a purpose-driven bank and not a profit-driven one, supporting the priorities of Northern Ireland, understanding the needs of the region and creating jobs by investing in indigenous businesses. Northern Mutual will ensure that the money generated in the region stays in the region for the good of the region. The Mutual will help individual members achieve their realistic home ownership plans and save well for the future and for retirement. It will always have their back.

Its values will make it stand out from the crowd and make its members proud. The bank is a mutual, which means that it exists to serve its members be a bank that people can trust. It will be a different kind of bank, built on a clear set of values and every element of the bank, including its governance, strategy, products, policies, recruitment, training and remuneration will be built upon these values.

1. The **financial wellbeing of its members** and their communities is at the heart of what it will do.
2. It will build trust through simplicity, honesty and transparency in all its conversations.
3. It will be **fair and inclusive** in all its actions and relationships.
4. It seeks to improve the **financial capability** of its members and employees and support them to achieve their aims.
5. It will leave future generations with a **healthier natural environment** than the one it has inherited.
6. It will deliver **reliability and peace of mind** for members and employees.

At all times, employees can sense-check whether what they are about to do aligns with the Bank's vision, purpose and values by asking themselves two questions:

- Is it safe? (could this action cause harm to the Bank, its members, the community or the environment?)

- Is it fair? (would I be content to see a loved one treated in this way?)

4. Market Opportunity and Rationale

Capital is not getting to the places where it is needed most: indigenous businesses; socially useful ventures based on non-traditional ownership models, with social goals as well as business ones, that need capital can't get access to it; mainstream banking and investment strips out and sucks too much wealth and return away from NI, in relationships that have too much of an extractive character. There is way to organise the flows of finance in NI society, so that more wealth is retained and gets to fund the locally owned business activities. It is this gap that the Northern Mutual will fill.

The Northern Mutual gives us an opportunity to create a new bank which is democratic, trustworthy, ethical and deeply rooted in Northern Ireland. Because it will operate with a different set of values and on a different scale to the current banking offer, it will be able to provide a more bespoke service tailored to the needs of individuals, businesses and communities in the region. It can act as a trusted intermediary institution, harnessing the under-utilised capital in the region for wider social and economic benefit, while at the same time ensuring local control and accountability.

The UK domestic banking market is unusual in lacking regional stakeholder banks (banks that have a purpose beyond maximising returns to shareholders).

Such banks exist in various forms from North America, through Europe to South West Asia. They occupy a tier in between large shareholder banks (assets of £100bn-£1000bn) and small specialist credit institutions (assets of £1m-£100m). Their regional focus, smaller scale and values-led approach give them a competitive advantage in serving some market segments such as small and micro businesses, co-operatives and social enterprises.

A similar opportunity exists in Northern Ireland.

Why regional?

The key advantage of the regional model is that everything about the bank, including the business plan, product and services, and customer acquisition strategies will be tailored to the needs of the region.

The embeddedness of the bank in the region is one of its unique selling points for a number of reasons:

1. It will build social capital, local knowledge and relationships to inform investing and lending decisions, getting capital and investment to where it is needed and to where it can be most effective and beneficial for local people and communities.
2. It will meet the specific needs and opportunities of the region through a process of user-centred design, focusing on potential members, including individuals, businesses, communities and stakeholders, while pursuing socially and environmentally-valuable opportunities such as those in the circular economy.
3. It will enable the region's wealth to be better circulated and distributed for the benefit of the people, enterprises and communities so that investments, profits and other benefits are retained locally.

4. It will exclusively operate for the benefit of Northern Ireland, with all branches and the headquarters located there, enabling detailed local and regional knowledge.
5. It will be accountable to its members and will always seek to listen closely to its customers and stakeholders as it grows. This will enable it to adapt and be dynamic to continue to serve the changing needs of the region over time. This is the method by which the Mutual will build its social capital and local knowledge and relationships.

Evidence supports the superior ability of local and regional banks to undertake high quality lending where it is necessary to gather contextual information, such as knowledge of local markets and businesses, that go beyond basic financial and credit file data. It will work with local and central government to align the banks SME strategies to local development plans and other opportunities (such as local wealth building).

The geographical scale of the Region balances the following three factors:

- sufficient market size to achieve viable financial scale.
- reduced concentration risk. The broad range of products offered to both individual and business customers provides diversification of risk to counter geographical concentration.
- market proximity and accountability. Local knowledge and short distances between customers and decision makers is a key competitive advantage for regional banks.

Why mutual?

In Northern Ireland, mutuals are regulated by the CO-OPERATIVE AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1969.

The Financial Services Compensation Scheme suggest 'alignment' is one of three factors influencing trust – "Is it in the bank's interest to provide the things I want or need?". Mutual ownership aligns interests in this way⁹.


This is important for three crucial reasons. First, the bank will bring some much-needed trust into the banking system by putting customers at the heart of the organisation. Being owned by, and therefore in service to its members creates the right incentives for the bank to do what is right for the communities of which it is part and, if something was to go wrong, its members have real power to hold the bank to account.

Second, because it is member owned, this enables the bank to operate with a more sustainable and just idea of value - it would be a stakeholder bank able to account for social and environmental, as well as economic goods. Research shows that stakeholder (as opposed to shareholder) banks can create sustainable returns whilst also serving social needs¹⁰. This approach would also mean the Mutual to use green cost accounting in addition to more conventional methods.

⁹ Chater, N. (2015) 'Mind the Gap: Restoring Trust in Customer Services', FSCS, (Available at: <https://www.fscs.org.uk/globalassets/press-releases/20151111-fscs-trust-white-paper-final.pdf>)

¹⁰ See Prieg, L. and Greenham, T. 'Stakeholder banks: Benefits of banking diversity', *The New Economics Foundation* (2013) [Available at: https://b3cdn.net/nefoundation/141039750996d1298f_5km6y1sip.pdf] and Bone, G. 'Banking for the Common Good' p28-32.

Table 1 – Northern Ireland Local Government District

	Local Government District	Code
	Antrim and Newtownabbey	UKN06
	Ards and North Down	UKN09
	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	UKN14
	Belfast	UKN06
	Causeway Coast and Glens	UKN12
	Derry City and Strabane	UKN10
	Fermanagh and Omagh	UKN16
	Lisburn and Castlereagh	UKN14
	Mid and East Antrim	UKN15
	Mid Ulster	UKN11
	Newry, Mourne and Down	UKN08

Finally, the Northern Mutual will be a bank with a purpose, it will make money, but it's purpose will be guided by its members. Purpose-driven banking recognises that finance is not neutral and that banks should pay attention to the drivers of purpose through their ownership, governance and culture and leadership¹¹.

Why a bank?

Responding to the market opportunities set out in Section 4 requires a combination of current accounts, deposit accounts and loans and a full range of distribution channels including branches as well as online and mobile banking.

This combination of products and services is only possible with a deposit-taking license, thereby ruling out e-money institution, community development finance institutions or other non-deposit-taking consumer credit structures.

¹¹ See Bone Dodds, G. 'Barriers to growing the purpose-driven banking system in the UK', *The Finance Innovation Lab* (2020) [Available at: <https://financeinnovationlab.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Purpose-Driven-Finance-Finance-Innovation-Lab.pdf>]

Credit unions are a very important part of Northern Ireland's financial ecosystem, providing one third of personal loans through the 92 Credit Unions affiliated to the Irish League of Credit Unions¹² and the 38 Credit Unions affiliated to the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions¹³.

Credit unions have some limitations and cannot play the same role as a deposit-taking licenced bank. Credit unions can accept deposits and offer branch facilities, however, most do not offer full current accounts and:

- Businesses are limited to 10% of members, 10% of total loans and 25% of deposits which would prevent us from achieving our aims to serve the underserved businesses of Northern Ireland such as co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, and farmers, as per the Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2016¹⁴.
- Credit unions lend mainly to lower income or sub-prime customers, whereas whilst Northern Mutual will be inclusive, its intention is not to focus on these groups but rather a wide range of target customers across socio-economic groups.
- Our target operating model is to achieve total assets of £500m, one to two orders of magnitude larger than UK credit unions.

Further it is noted that, although technically possible, few credit unions have achieved a commercially viable model for the provision of current accounts or residential mortgages, which are both integral to this business model. In the Republic of Ireland, 115 Credit Unions¹⁵ have begun to offer a form of current account functionality in the case of prepaid debit cards, and some of the Credit Unions in Northern Ireland have begun to offer the same. However, that is not the equivalent of a full service bank account.

According to the latest statistics¹⁶, credit unions in Northern Ireland are only currently lending out around one third of their assets, with around another third of their liquid assets sitting in bank accounts. The result of this is that these savings are effectively taken out of circulation in the local economy. If credit unions were to bank with Northern Mutual, it would be a win-win scenario where credit unions would have a safe place to store their members' money and earn interest, and the Northern Mutual would have a source of deposits it can lend out to local businesses such as co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, and farmers.

Building Societies provide a useful savings and mortgage range locally but they are restricted from the wider product ranges needed to provide banking to individuals and businesses.

A better regulatory structure for meeting the market opportunity is a bank with the permissions set out in section 4.6 on page 36.

¹² See Irish League of Credit Unions [Available at: <https://www.creditunion.ie/ilcu/about/>]

¹³ www.ufcu.co.uk/about-us.html

¹⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/16/crossheading/credit-unions/data.pdf>

¹⁵ See <https://currentaccount.ie/>

¹⁶ 'Credit union quarterly statistics – 2020 Q2' Bank of England (30 October 2020) [Available at: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/credit-union/2020/2020-q2>]

It is worth noting however that Northern Mutual strongly supports the Credit Unions of Northern Ireland. If designed with the participation of the credit union ecosystem, we can ensure that this new mutual bank can amplify and support credit unions at the same time as strengthening and contributing to SME growth and regional economic development, keeping and circulating money in the area. Northern Mutual should be seen as competitive to the banks of Northern Ireland, not its credit unions. After all, credit unions themselves need a bank account to provide their services and deposit their members' money, and we think this should be Northern Mutual and not a mainstream bank that does not act in the best interests of the region, and that has pressures from and is accountable to outside actors.

Coronavirus Recovery

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed vulnerabilities in our economic and financial systems and institutions and highlighted the weaknesses brought about by a decade of austerity. People should have systems and institutions that work with them, not dysfunctional ones that work against them or fall apart when they are most needed. And as we go deeper into the climate crisis, we should probably expect more emergency situations like COVID-19, not fewer. All the more reason, therefore, to have systems and institutions, such as Northern Mutual, that put people first.

During the pandemic, where was our money and what was it doing for us? The millions that sit in our current and savings accounts were in private banks, working hard to earn profits for shareholders. Had the Mutual been operating, with its focus only on investing in the region, there would be an important piece of infrastructure that could be used to support people and businesses throughout the crisis and into the recovery.

There is a need for alternatives and greater local autonomy and decision making in allocating capital for community and economic development and resilience, rather than relying on outside institutions whose priorities and focus lay elsewhere, that are unable to get local capital to where it is needed and that extract too much from local wealth and local NI capital. The Mutual is one such alternative. The Mutual could also be linked to the goals of the circular economy and environmental protection.

4.1 High Level Strategy, Unique Value Proposition & Proposed Target Customers

High-level strategy

The Bank's strategy is to gain competitive advantage through:

- Superior knowledge of local markets and customers by being based in the region with local branch managers
- Building and maintaining trust with members through the Bank's ownership, governance, values and policies
- Reducing costs and risks by using proven technology
- Applying technology and a lower cost branch model to maintain branch access in places that have lost bank branches
- Lower supply costs through collective bargaining with other mutual banks
- Seeking commercial partnerships with organisations that share our mission and can enhance our member offer

Unique value proposition

Northern Mutual will have a unique value proposition being the only bank in the Region with all the following characteristics:

- 1) Mission-driven, not solely driven by short-term profits (**purpose**)
- 2) Wholly committed to Northern Ireland (**place**)
- 3) Member owned and controlled – one member, one vote (**participation**)
- 4) Close to its members by being smaller scale with short reporting lines from branch to Board, and by ensuring that help from a human assistant is accessible when needed by the member (**human-scale**)
- 5) Taking a long-term view of profitability over the whole asset portfolio as well as per individual transaction (**relational**)
- 6) Having a vested interest in wider economic development in the region, able to work with the current local ecosystem, especially credit unions, local CDFIs and building societies (**collaborative**)
- 7) Rebalancing money supply and demand by ensuring that the money belonging to member is recycled back into the local economy, rather than being extracted for investment purposes outside the region (**wealth retention**)
- 8) Lending and investment decisions made in the economic, social and environmental interests of the local region, helping us make a just transition to a post-carbon society and promote the circular economy (**just transition**).

The combination of these six qualities gives Northern Mutual a competitive advantage over other banks and will appeal to a wide range of different potential customers in the Region.

4.2 The Community Savings Bank Association

The CSBA is a co-operative society that has been established to help create and sustain a network of independent, sustainable, regional, mutually owned banks.

For this purpose, the CSBA has made available to the author and will make available to the Northern Mutual certain intellectual property including model rules, template documents, business plans, testing and training facilities, certain software and equipment interfaces and key supplier relationships.

Northern Mutual will need to agree to only use this intellectual property for the purpose of establishing a mutual bank in the Region and for no other purpose. On entering mobilisation, CSBA will grant Northern Mutual a perpetual, non-exclusive right to use the intellectual property. Where the CSBA provides advice on procurement, contracts will always be directly between Northern Mutual and its suppliers. The CSBA is not a member of Northern Mutual.

Viability of model without other banks

It is prudent to ask whether the viability of a regional bank in Northern Ireland depends on the successful development of similar banks elsewhere?

The answer is that the CSBA model is set up to ensure that each regional bank is fully and completely autonomous to take account of appropriate levels of risk. The CSBA, itself a mutual has undertaken all of its research and development with this aim in mind. If the Northern Mutual ends up being the only CSBA bank in the country, then the only impact on its viability is whether its business plan is viable. Each bank must develop and stand on its own. The IT infrastructure and all agreements with suppliers have been designed so that each individual regional bank enter into them at an agreed price.

The banks currently under development are working collaboratively together and are keen to share research and business plans with each other as they go through the regulatory process. There are discussions on-going as to the future development of this collaborative network whilst assuring regulators that this co-operation will not threaten competition. It is expected that the co-design of this will progress as each regional bank progresses through the licencing application process.

Already efficiencies are being seen, with agreements with companies for commissioned work are enabling reduced prices for work that all banks will have to buy in (such as Due Diligence).

So, to clarify, the viability of a Northern Mutual does not depend on efficiencies with other mutual banks, but there are possibilities for further efficiencies and collaborative working with them as their development progresses, which could further benefit the financial models.

5. Target Customers and Products

5.1. Total Market Size

Membership is a pre-requisite for the Bank providing its services and is open only to residents of Northern Ireland and the 11 local government areas.

A resident is defined as a person or organisation which can be one or more of the following:

- Owns a home or has an address in Northern Ireland
- Is on the electoral register/has a registered office
- Has a significant financial interest
- Has a significant commercial interest
- Has a meaningful community involvement within Northern Ireland

Membership criteria are yet to be finalised but they will be decided based on the objective of retaining profit within the region, and of managing risk in order to protect the bank, for example, to avoid becoming a potential vehicle for money laundering.

The adult population and outstanding balances of SME loans, mortgages and personal loans are shown in the tables below. Our medium term (5 year) target is to capture shares of these overall markets ranging between 5.3% personal current accounts, 10.8% of SME current accounts¹⁷, 0.5% (mortgages), 1.9% personal unsecured loans and 1.4% business unsecured loans.

The Bank will offer a range of products in response to a number of market opportunities where it can gain a competitive advantage. These are summarised on the following page.

Further research is needed, including customer focus groups, direct consultation with potential institutional and business customer groups, and further survey questionnaires.

This research should focus on:

- Defining customer needs
- Testing appetite for the Bank's proposition and
- Understanding what drives switching

¹⁷ Whilst the share of SME current accounts is significant, the financial model is cautiously assuming zero business growth. Over the past 3 years businesses in the region have grown by nearly 5%.

Table 2 – Population statistics by local authority		
	Adult Population	SME Businesses
Antrim and Newtownabbey	113,583	7,062
Ards and North Down	131,544	8,260
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	167,448	14,948
Belfast	275,075	17,535
Causeway Coast and Glens	116,427	10,577
Derry City and Strabane	118,473	9,126
Fermanagh and Omagh	91,965	14,318
Lisburn and Castlereagh	116,414	8,348
Mid and East Antrim	112,537	8,584
Mid Ulster	113,899	15,962
Newry, Mourne and Down	140,377	15,245
Totals	1,497,742	129,965

2019 NISRA Mid-Year Population Estimates (age 16+) and own analysis of ONS Business Population 2019 Estimates of both registered and unregistered businesses.

Table 3 - Lending statistics by postcode			
	SME Loans	Mortgages	Personal Loans
	£bn	£bn	£bn
County Antrim BT1, BT2, BT3, BT4, BT5, BT6, BT7, BT8, BT9 BT10, BT11, BT12, BT13, BT14, BT15, BT16, BT17, BT27, BT28, BT29, BT36, BT37, BT38, BT39, BT40, BT41, BT42, BT43, BT44, BT53, BT54, BT56, BT57, BT58	1.69	9.997	0.415
County Armagh BT60, BT61, BT62, BT63, BT64, BT65, BT66, BT67	0.396	1.979	0.093
County Down BT18, BT19, BT20, BT21, BT22, BT23, BT24, BT25, BT26, BT30, BT31, BT32, BT33, BT34, BT35	0.777	5.129	0.224
County Fermanagh BT74, BT92, BT93, BT94	0.182	0.493	0.033
County Londonderry	0.508	2.224	0.109

BT45, BT46, BT47, BT48, BT49, BT51, BT55			
County Tyrone BT68, BT69, BT70, BT71, BT74, BT75, BT76, BT77, BT78, BT79, BT80, BT81, BT82	0.796	1.887	0.108
Credit Union Lending (Whole of NI)			0.629
Northern Ireland	4.322	21.709	1.611

Source: Post code lending data from UK Finance, Q4 2019 and Bank of England Credit Union Statistics

Although Northern Ireland has a smaller population than other areas looking at mutual banking, it has a higher lending market. NI has half of the population and half the SMEs of the North West of England – both the SME and personal lending market is higher. In SME lending this is £500 million more, and around £150 million more in personal lending. Mortgage lending is about 6 billion lower.

5.2. Target Customers

The Bank's structure, operations and governance enable the Bank to act differently and target the customer with a service that will be unique in the region. Although the exact proposition to the customer will depend on further research and engagement with potential customers and stakeholders, some examples of what this may look like include:

Businesses:

- The Northern Mutual will aim to serve the businesses that currently exist in the region as well as aligning itself to potential growth sectors.
- Currently, Northern Ireland 7 largest SME sectors are shown in Table 4.
- The unregistered business sectors show that there may be key markets for first time business accounts, as unregistered businesses are more likely to use their personal current accounts, which is not ideal. Support and marketing could be tailored to those sectors including construction, social work and service-based freelancers.

Table 4 – Northern Ireland Key SME Sectors	All businesses	Unregistered
A - Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	15.51%	1.48%
C - Manufacturing	6.89%	7.91%
F - Construction	20%	27%
G - Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	10.3%	2.21%
H - Transportation and Storage	3.76%	4.29%
M - Professional, Scientific and Technical	9.65%	11.44%
N - Administrative and Support Service Activities	5.14%	7.14%
Q - Human Health and Social Work Activities	4.66%	7.40%
R - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2.85%	5.24%
S - Other Service Activities	7.81%	13.84%
Totals	86.57%	87.95%

Source: Authors analysis of ONS UK Business: Activity, Size and Location (Start 2019)

- As a general rule, the bank will seek to target its lending and support beyond micro-businesses to those that are ready to grow, but with turnovers under £1 million.
- It will also aim to be the bank of choice for the majority of indigenous enterprises in Northern Ireland such as micro businesses, SMEs, co-operatives, social enterprises, farmers and sole traders.

- Northern Mutual will focus on lending to businesses that are creating jobs and adding social and environmental value. In this way, the Mutual will become an important part of the business support ecosystem in the region, and will form strategic partnerships with key stakeholders such as Invest Northern Ireland, local enterprise agencies, co-operative and social enterprise development agencies, farmers' unions, trade unions, Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, Manufacturing NI, Retail NI, Hospitality Ulster, and others, in order to maximise the support for enterprises in the area and provide added value to its business members.
- Additionally, Northern Mutual's purpose will guide it to align with the economic development of our region and with business sectors mentioned in regional plans such as the Belfast Region City Deal, Department of Economy's 'Rebuilding a stronger economy', the local economy development plans in the councils and plans for the circular economy, with particular emphasis those sectors that have social and environmental value.

Individuals:

- The Northern Mutual will target customers who will appreciate the values of the bank, and will see that banking can be more than just a personal financial investment with excellent service, but also an investment in their communities and region.
- Meaningful stakeholder and community engagement should lead into the design of the bank, from the very beginning the Northern Mutual should show that it is different. It can do this by using service design and user centred design principles to ensure that the feedback given about banking and business needs will directly feed into the design of the bank. For example, if a community thinks that a branch in their local library, post office or community centre will be the best location, then that should influence the decisions about the branch network.
- The interest paid on balances will attract those with savings and ensure Northern Mutual will have a robust balance sheet, enabling its investments in regional businesses and ethical mortgage products and ensuring that money raised in the region will stay in the region.
- There is scope to design smart banking products to support people on lower or more precarious incomes (for example through Jam Jar functionality) which encourage saving and take the customer on a journey to better finances. Having an offer of support, education and coaching would be attractive to members.
- The Mutual will help address financial exclusion since no one living here can be refused a bank account on the basis of low income or poor credit history.

Mortgages:

- One in three households in Northern Ireland spend 25 per cent or more of their household income on housing costs, while one in 10 households spend more than 40 per cent. The percentage of income spent on housing costs is strongly influenced by tenure with those in the private rented sector being most likely to spend more than 40 per cent of their household income on housing costs, with close to one in six in the private rented sector doing so. This contrasts with just over one in 10 of those in

the social rented sector and one in 20 of those who own their house with a mortgage¹⁸.

- Northern Mutual can focus on lending that will drive an improvement in homes and in home ownership. It will help people to buy their own home, either directly, through first-time buyer mortgages, re-mortgages, shared ownership or other equitable and (ethical) innovative models. It can also offer mortgage coaching to customers, going on a journey with them to home ownership if that is what they want.
- In the first instance Northern Mutual would aim to support organisations in the region, such as housing associations, co-housing projects and community-led housing projects.
- It will also focus on finance that can drive an improvement in housing, looking at driving improvements in energy efficiency and self-sufficiency, looking at more bespoke products such as self-builds, renovations, housing co-operatives, community building initiatives and more. It could link up with the sustainable construction sector in the region to support better housing and increase climate change resilience¹⁹. This sector is very underdeveloped in Northern Ireland but the Belfast Climate Action plan has highlighted the urgent need for insulating the existing housing stock and the Mutual could actively target those seeking to establish businesses in this area.
- There is a need across the UK for products that encourage housing suited to the needs of those nearing or in retirement²⁰.
- Northern Mutual should not lend to bigger housing developments unless they are part of a mass regeneration that is important to local communities, and are committed to building stock with the highest energy efficiency standards. In housing, as with all Northern Mutual's investments, it will be led by the communities we serve, complimented with the knowledge of the local branch managers and staff. The Mutual will consider a maximum loan as a means of managing risk.

The market research carried out for this report has been desk-based, and at this point no specific market research has been carried out in Northern Ireland, however if one looks at the research that South West Mutual commissioned with Opinium Research, in Table 5 below, to get an indication of some of the addressable markets that they found, many of which one would expect to be similar in Northern Ireland.

This research cannot of course drive an understanding of market demand in Northern Ireland, so further research is needed, but it gives a suggestion of areas, in addition to the business, individuals and mortgage customer opportunities outlined above.

¹⁸ Wilson, L. 'Housing Affordability Crisis', *AgendaNI* (2019) [Available at: <https://www.agendani.com/housing-affordability-crisis/>]

¹⁹ Johnson, J. (2017) 'LEPs and Local Energy', *Liverpool City Region Combined Authority*, [Available at: https://www.liverpoollep.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/LEPs-and-local-energy_FINAL.pdf]

²⁰ Copeman, I. & Porteous, J. (2017) 'Housing our Ageing Population', *The Local Government Association*, [Available at: https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5.17%20-%20Housing%20our%20ageing%20population_07_0.pdf]

Table 5 – South West Mutual’s analysis of market gaps (based on commissioned Opinionum market research)

Market/economic/ social trends	SWM response	Illustrative indicators of addressable market	Competitive intensity
Loss of trust	Mutual structure	31% more customers express trust in mutuals than PLCs	Medium – no regional building societies, but Nationwide has strong presence
	Simple, honest and transparent products and communication	65% of customers say this would make a bank more trustworthy	Low/Medium – new challengers such as Monzo have clear and simple communications. Current accounts and overdraft charging structures are often complex.
	Remuneration policy (maximum ratio, real living wage and bonus ban)	54% more likely to choose bank with moderate executive pay, and no sales incentives (50%). 50% say fair pay would improve trust	Low – no other banks combine pay ratio, no sales incentives and real living wage
	FSCS protected deposits	We are regularly asked whether deposits will be covered by FSCS	High – this is a hygiene factor but still provides a competitive edge over non-bank EMI competitors
Consumer values – ethics, social and environmental impact	Values-led, reinforced by purpose-with-profits corporate structure	The proportion of the public that are concerned about climate change has reached 80%	Low but increasing – Triodos and Ecology Building Society. Other banks will incorporate in branding but will be unable to deliver on brand promise due to legacy involvement with
	Measurement of and reporting on environmental and social impacts	Over 25% have avoided buying a product or service due to its negative environmental impact in 2017 – up 65% since 2016	sectors causing negative impacts
Consumer values – regional impact	Strong regional identity	In our Opinionum survey over half of respondents said they would be more likely to choose a regional bank. Between 6% and 9% are ‘much more willing’ to pay for PCA if the bank explicitly supports the region’s SMEs and communities (150,000 – 225,000 potential customers)	None
Under-provision: branch users	Low cost automated branch solution	Certain SME sectors, e.g. retail, leisure and tourism, still rely on cash and require branch banking, and account for a higher proportion of SMEs in the region than nationally	Low – increasing numbers of market towns in the region are becoming branchless
Under-provision: SME finance	Local branch managers designed to gather soft information to augment hard data	Extensive studies demonstrate that smaller locally rooted banks outperform on SME credit	Medium – Handelsbanken serves larger SMEs. One CDFI in the region – South West Investment Group – cannot meet demand. Peer-to-peer and challenger banks aim at secured and easy to assess credit

	Focus on unregistered businesses and SMEs and regional/sector specialisms	9% of personal accounts used for business transactions against T&Cs. We will aim a PCA product specifically at sole traders	Medium – Nationwide entering SME market and challengers targeting SME BCA and deposits
Under-provision: unbanked	Use of full range of KYC verification in accordance with JMLSG	Refusal of ID is the most often cited reason (40%) for customers who want an account failing to get one	Low – Few credit unions offer PCAs and banks have bureaucratic systems inflexible on ID verification
Low carbon transition	Incorporate ESG into risk framework	Transition in business models is likely to require capital investment and working capital across a range of sectors	Low – PRA cites only 10% of banks integrating climate risk in their governance and risk strategy

Source: South West Mutual 's Business Plan – Initial Submission (2019)

5.3 Product Summary

Northern Mutual will be a full-service retail bank. It will offer individual and business current accounts, savings, overdrafts, term loans, overdrafts and residential mortgages. The Bank will always seek to implement simple and transparent charging structures.

Pricing

The Bank has a £15 membership fee which buys a share in the Mutual and a £5 per month account fee for individuals and for businesses it is £30 for two shares and £10 per month account fee. The Bank pays interest of 1% on all balances for all members. Dividends are expected to be paid once the Bank reaches profitability²¹.

Overdrafts

The Bank will always seek to implement market-leading simple and transparent charging structures. In the case of overdrafts this will be through charging a competitive interest rate (APR) for authorised facilities, no further fees, and providing a small emergency facility for unauthorised overdrafts with no penalty charges.

The CSBA has reviewed PS19/16: High-Cost Credit Review: Overdraft policy statement and CP19/18: Overdraft Pricing and Competition Remedies published on 7 June 2019 and believes that the intended approach to overdrafts will be, at a minimum, fully compliant with them.

Business term loans, secured and unsecured

Aimed at co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, or farmers and particularly where local and sector specialist knowledge can give the Bank a competitive edge.

Excluded Products

The Bank will not offer credit cards, and in general will not offer loans to the commercial property sector, unless there is a strong community or environmental benefit to doing so (for example as part of mass regeneration of an area through zero-carbon housing). The Bank will take a flexible approach to buy-to-let and holiday-let mortgages and be guided by further research, as in some areas across the region offering these may be detrimental to the community, whilst in others they may be welcomed. The expertise and decision-making powers of local branch managers will enable the Bank to have area-based policies on this if appropriate. The Mutual will also consider a maximum loan something to consider to help guard against higher doubtful or bad debt, particularly in the early days of operating.

Product Phasing

The detailed product offer will be guided by further market research, but it should expect to offer the products detailed in Table 6 below phased over the first few years in order to manage risk.

²¹ The assumptions made here are based on expectation

Table 6 – Phasing of Product Launches				
	Launch	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Current accounts	Personal	Sponsored	Children's	
	Business		Sole trader	
	Non-profit	Tailored*		
Savings	Instant (with CA)	Notice	Fixed term	ISAs
Overdrafts	Personal			
	Business			
Term loans	Personal unsecured	Business unsecured	Tailored*	
		Business secured	Personal secured	
Residential mortgages	Remortgage	Purchase	Tailored*	Fixed rate
Other	Safe deposit box			

Product Development

The Bank is currently researching a number of niche markets and tailored products where it can gain a competitive advantage from small scale and close market proximity. Some examples are shown in Table 7 below:

Table 7 – Examples of tailored products		
Category	Description	Rationale
Current accounts	Co-operatives	Banks do not recognise co-operatives as legal forms. Requires appropriate member onboarding and understanding of ownership and control.
	Local councils	Jam jar function may be useful for restricted reserves. Useful source of stable deposits. Better service on mandate changes will win customers.
	Charities	Many new charities in Northern Ireland are finding it difficult to open a bank account with the high street banks. Northern Mutual will be able to provide them with bank accounts.
Term loans – personal	Retrofit	Can be secured on property as 2 nd charge. Might be underwritten by councils or govt to speed low carbon transition.
Term loans – business	Low-carbon conversion	For any change in business model that is aimed to reduce environmental footprint, e.g. conversion to electric vehicles or organic conversion.

Mortgages	Self-build	Growing market with few competitors and good margins. Self-build homes account for 60%-80% of new build in Europe but only 6% here. Homes generally built to higher standard than developers.
	Furnished holiday lettings	Important to regional economy and where local geographical knowledge will give a competitive edge. Few competitors and good margins.
	Community led housing	Often bring empty homes back into use. Market too small for mainstream lenders. Examples include co-operative housing, co-housing, community land trusts, self-help groups, mortgages/lending for new mutual/s created out of the Housing Executive.

5.4. Distribution Strategy

A multi-channel distribution strategy will be attractive for significant numbers of members in the Region whilst not leaving anybody behind. The Bank aims to be accessible and transparent, through a mix of physical and digital assets which will give maximum value to the customer. It will take the best of traditional banking models with close operational and functional distance and the best of innovation and technology with a strong digital offer.

Online and Mobile

The core banking system allows members secure online and mobile access to their accounts with the same functionality (excluding cash) that they would have in branch, including to make transactions, obtain information and apply for products. Financial management tools will include analysis of transactions by category and jam jar accounting. This system is now running and figure 1 below illustrates what the online and mobile banking look like.

Figure 1. Mobile Banking Illustration

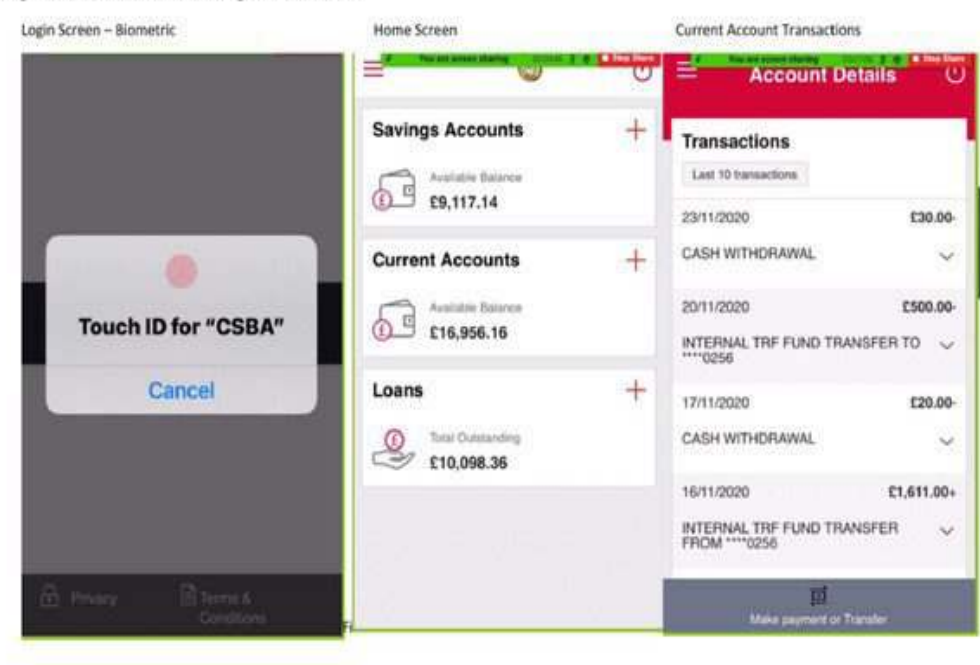
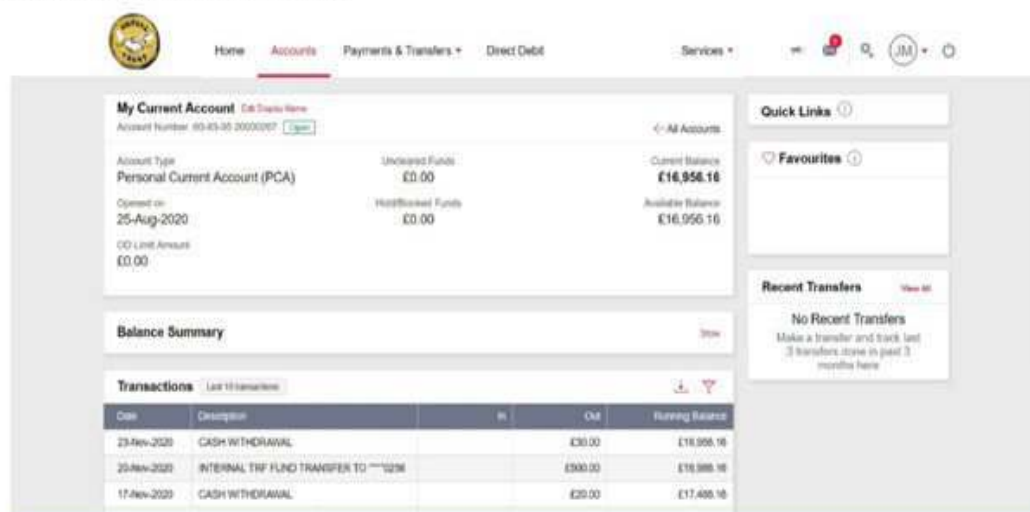


Figure 2. Online Banking Illustration



QR code sales for customers and businesses

One objective of the mutual bank is to increase the amount of money circulating within its region and reduce the money leaking out of it. Another is to provide real benefits and value to its members.

Typically, money leaks out of the region as soon as an external payment system (VISA, MASTERCARD, PAYPAL, etc.) is used. They all take a small part of the payment. In many instances it is the recipient that pays the charge. For low value payments this can be a remarkably high percentage. For Example, PayPal charges between 2.9% +£0.30 to 1.5% + £0.10 (e.g. for a £5 spend minimum charge £0.175 charge)

All Android and Apple phones can read QR Codes. If both the customer and the seller were members of the bank, it is possible to use QR codes to make that payment simply and securely and at no transaction cost to the neither customer nor recipient.

The Bank simply moves the money internally between the accounts and in this way no money leaves the region. Infrastructure needed is simply a QR code displayed in the premises or on a bill. The customer scans the code using the banks online banking app, enters the amount and pays.

This could provide a significant saving to businesses and be a big driver of SME business account take up.

Branches

FCA research indicates that particularly in rural areas there are customer groups who resist moving to digital banking when branches close. The sharp reduction in branches offers a market opportunity for a low-cost branch service through the BankPod® concept (see figure 3 below).

The key to maintaining a lower cost branch network is the TellerInfinity terminal, which allows members to:

- withdraw cash and coins,
- deposit cheques, notes and coins,

- print statements,
- set up bill payments and transfers.

It has a video link which enables the customer to speak face-to-face with bank staff while they are at the terminal. The combination of smart ATM, customer privacy and video enabled customer assistance will provide a competitive edge. Examples of branch options are in figures 4 and 5 below. It is even possible for BankPods® to be placed in shipping containers. And have the same functionality of a full branch, but without staff on site.

Figure 3. Automated Branch Tellers



Figure 4. Principle Branch example layout (122 sq. metres)

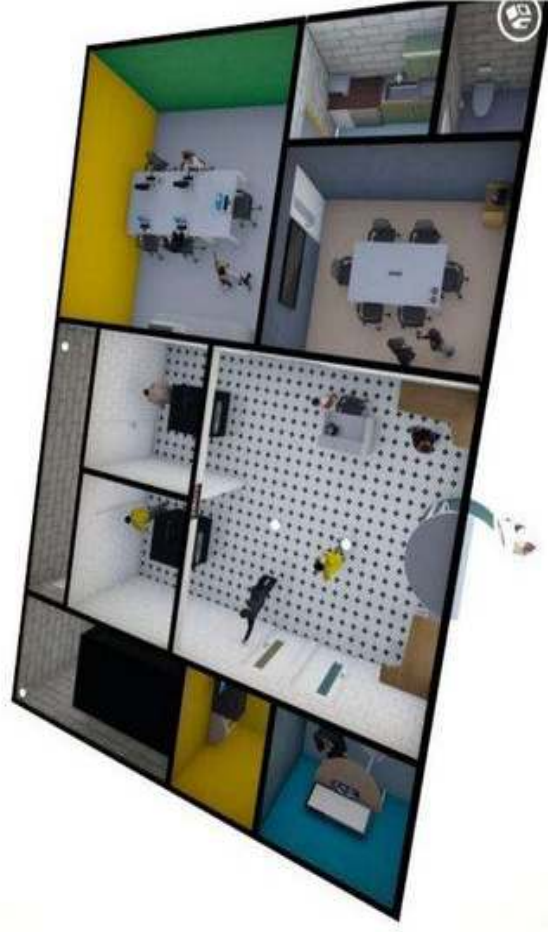


Figure 5. Satellite Branch example layout (42 sq. metres)



Principal branch

The principal branch acts as a local headquarters with staff that serve the area including the Branch Director who has devolved decision-making authority. It is the centre of local knowledge and customer service and carries out account openings, loan origination and collection.

Satellite branch

A satellite branch is a smaller self-service facility without permanent staff or back-room offices and facilities. The basic configuration includes two video-enabled TellerInfinity terminals and a meeting room with video conference facilities. Depending on local demand, it will have staff on hand at certain times.

Satellite branches reduce the cost of the branch network, allow cash and cheques to be deposited, extend access time for members outside of normal hours and take transactional banking back into areas that have lost these facilities.

Telephone service

Northern Mutual will offer telephone banking with phones prioritised for information and service enquiries and banking for vulnerable customers.

Geography

Northern Ireland is a large UK region which contains:

- 2 large cities – Belfast and Derry
- 5 large towns (>40,000) Newtownabbey, Craigavon Urban Area, Bangor, Castlereagh, and Lisburn
- 6 medium towns (20,000-39,000) Ballymena, Newtownards, Carrickfergus, Newry, Coleraine, and Antrim.

Some small towns in the region will be important local and administrative centres which serve larger populations from surrounding areas.

Northern Ireland has seen one third of its bank branches closed since 2015. In December 2020 alone, four Danske Bank branches were closed²². There are currently only 183 bank branches in the region (see Table 8 below).

Parliamentary Constituency	Branches Remaining (2015-2019)	% of network lost since Jan 2015
Belfast East	4	60
Belfast North	10	29
Belfast South	15	48
Belfast West	9	25
East Antrim	5	29

²² <https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2020-09-11/danske-bank-set-to-close-4-ni-branches>

East Londonderry	12	25
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	17	15
Foyle	10	17
Lagan Valley	10	23
Mid Ulster	7	46
Newry & Armagh	13	24
North Antrim	11	15
North Down	10	23
South Antrim	5	55
South Down	8	33
Strangford	8	43
Upper Bann	18	10
West Tyrone	11	27
	183	Average 30% reduction of branches since 2015

Source: Which Branch Closures Data 2015-19

The financial model assumes 7 main branches and 21 satellite branches by year 5, commensurate with other smaller banks.

Research into the optimum location of branches is underway taking into consideration:

- Population density, based on 'travel to work', 'travel to shop' and tourist numbers
- Size and industry sectors of local businesses such as co-operatives, SMEs, micro enterprises, social enterprises, sole traders, or farmers
- Existence (or not) of other Bank branches
- Locating a satellite Northern Mutual area within a host organisation, such as town council or post office, subject to satisfying security and customer care standards
- Local demand for branch access, particularly in rural areas
- Financial inclusion
- Access to cash

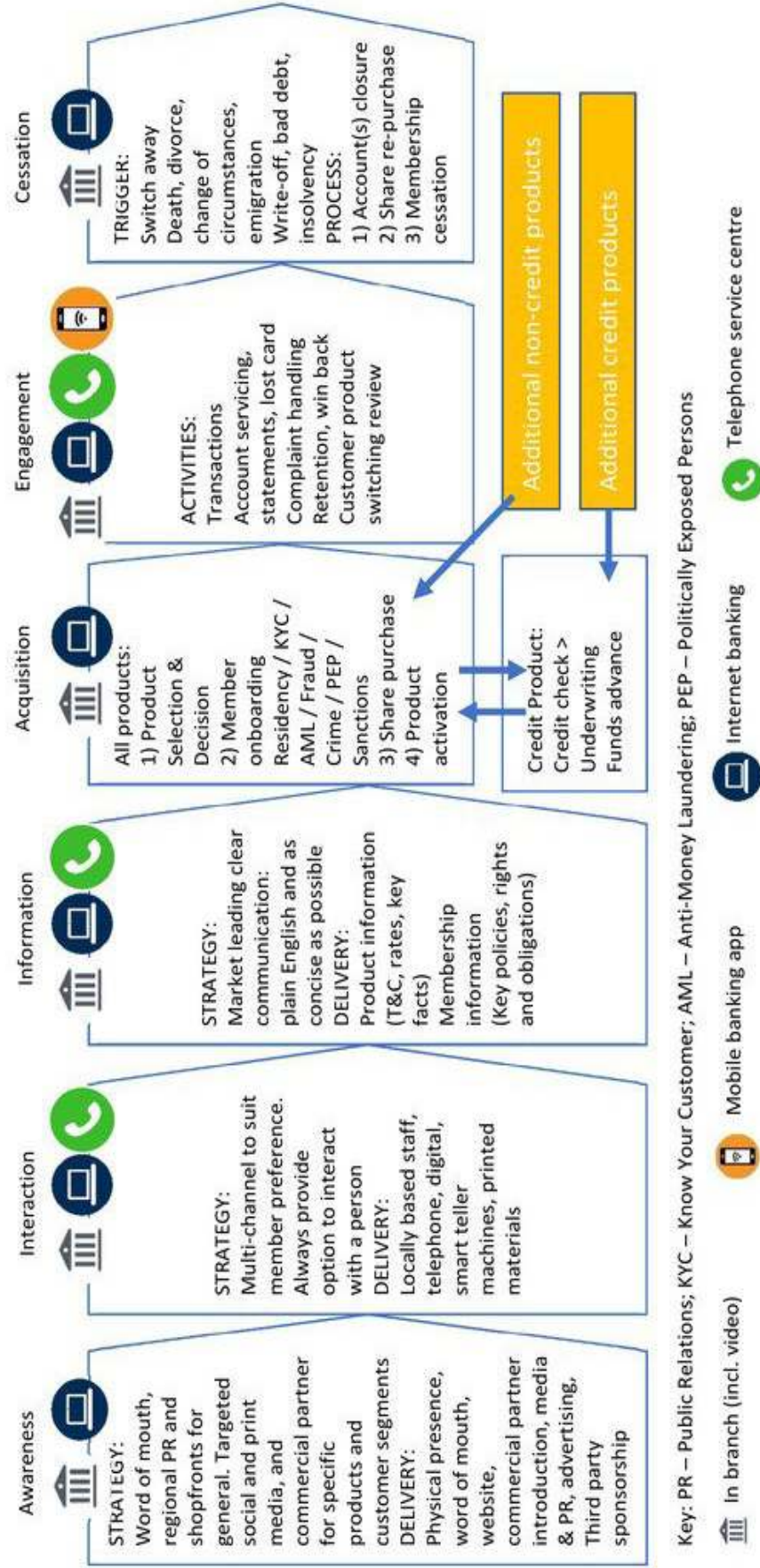
Acquisition Strategy

In addition to the above, Northern Mutual can seek to manage the costs of acquisition by seeking employer support from Government agencies, local councils and major employers so that it can build critical mass locally at fair cost.

5.5 Customer (Member) Journey Framework

A broad framework for customer journeys is set out below. Once market analysis, product features and distribution strategies have been completed Northern Mutual should produce detailed journeys for each product and channel, including analysis of specific conduct risks at each stage.

Figure 3 – Customer Journey Framework



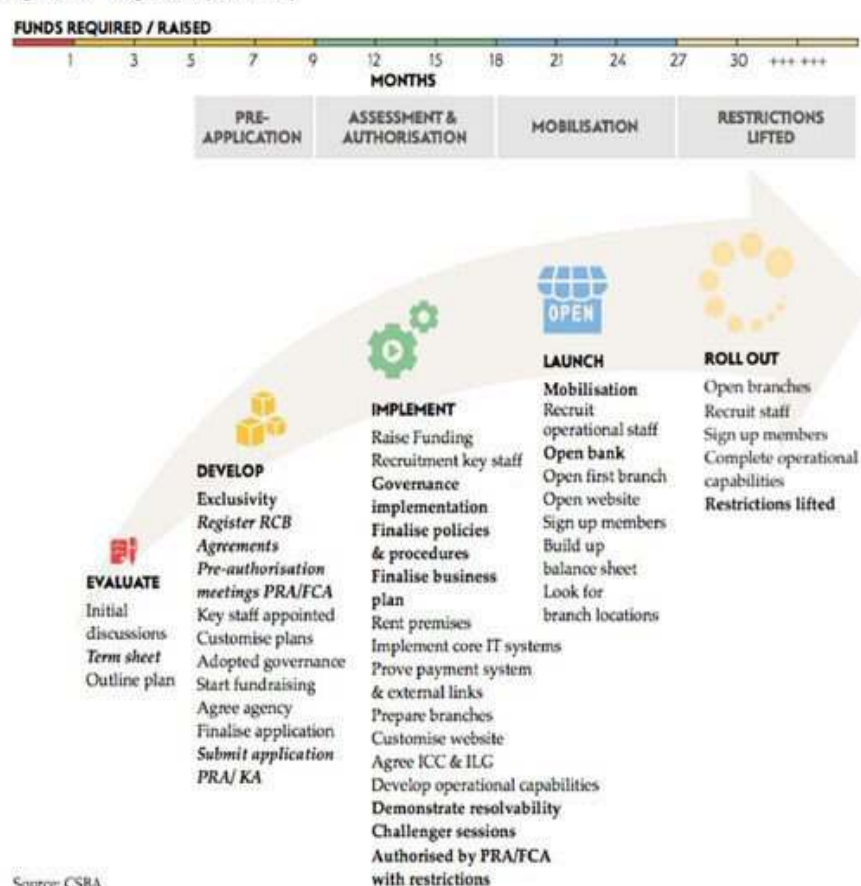
5.6 Regulatory Permissions

The working assumption is that Northern Mutual will seek the following regulatory permissions:

- Accepting deposits from retail and wholesale customers
- Agreeing to carry on a regulated activity
- Dealing in Investments as Principal
- Entering into regulated credit agreements (excluding high-cost short-term credit, bill of sales loan agreement and a home credit loan agreement)
- Exercising or having the right to exercise, lender's rights and duties under a regulated credit agreement (excluding high-cost short-term credit, bill of sales loan agreement and a home credit loan agreement)
- Entering into a regulated mortgage contract
- Administering a regulated mortgage contract
- Advising on regulated mortgage contracts

The rationale for permission applied for will be included in the RBP (Regulatory Business Plan). The regulatory journey is outlined in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 – Regulatory Journey



Source: CSBA

Source: Travers-Smith, F. and Van Lerven, F. (2018) 'The Local Banking Toolkit', The New Economics Foundation, (Available at: https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/NEF_LOCAL-BANKING-TOOLKIT.pdf)

6. Ownership and Governance

6.1 Ownership and Control

Northern Mutual is a mutual society incorporated under the CO-OPERATIVE AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1969 and is registered with the FCA Mutuals Register.

The Society has share capital comprising one class of non-voting ordinary shares and will be controlled by its members on the principle of “one member one vote”. Members may be individuals or incorporated bodies such as businesses, charities or public authorities.

Customers are required to become members to access products and services, and all members are required to purchase at least one share, or two shares for incorporated bodies, and are also required to satisfy one of the following tests of residency within the Region:

- Permanent residence (for example, home owner, renting, living with family)
- On the electoral register/has a registered office
- Significant financial interest (for example ownership of a property)
- Significant business interest (for example ownership, directorship or employment)
- Meaningful community interest (for example being a trustee of a charity)

Precise definitions are to be set by the Board. These will be included in the Real Business Plan.

Members each have one vote regardless of the size of their shareholding and therefore, unlike limited company structures, major shareholders do not have a controlling interest in the Bank.

The CSBA consider this structure to be beneficial in ensuring the Board acts in the best interest of stakeholders as a whole and has clear operational independence from major investors. This is particularly important in the case of public sector investors. No individual, organisation or consortium of members will be able to hold a controlling interest.

6.2 Governance

Board responsibilities

The Board will be responsible for the overall leadership of Northern Mutual and will set the Bank's Vision, Purpose and Values and the individuals in key positions will have to be approved by the PRA and FCA (see Section 6.1). In addition, the Board is responsible for:

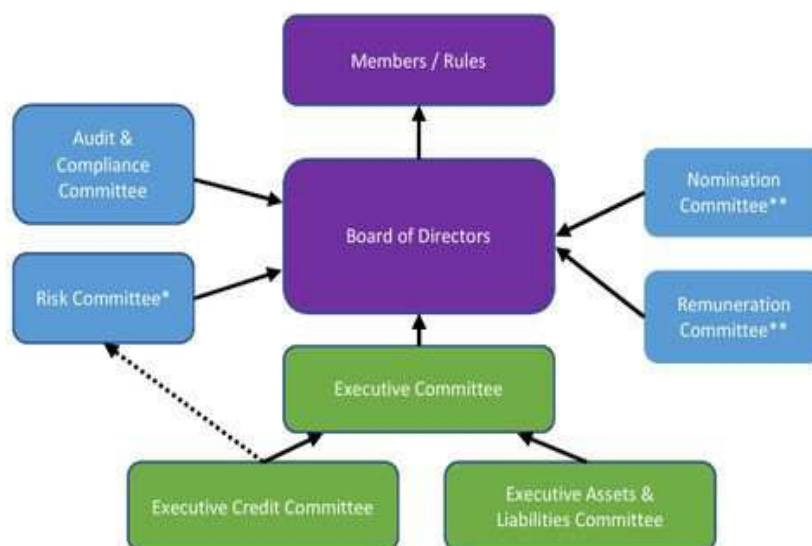
- Approving appointment of all Senior Managers
- Oversight of the CEO and Executive Team
- Oversight of financial / business performance
- Setting and agreeing the long-term strategy
- Determining Northern Mutual's Risk Appetite, including the management of the financial risks from climate change
- Oversight of 'treating customers fairly' policy
- Setting remuneration policies
- Approval of the Annual Report and Accounts
- Seeking expert opinions on specialised or niche business activities to help make informed decisions

In addition, the following responsibilities are relevant in the application for authorisation process:

- Oversight of capital raising
- Oversight of banking launch project plan

The Board will be supported by a number of Sub-Committees shown Figure 5.

Figure 5 – Overview of Board Committee Structure



Notes: * Risk committee receives reports direct from Executive Credit Committee

** Nom and Rem have separate ToR, agenda and minutes, but the same non-executive members and the same Chair. CEO is a member of Nom, but not Rem.

Sub-committees

Northern Mutual will have three sub-committees before mobilisation, Audit, Risk and Nomination and Remuneration.

All committees will be chaired by the appropriate SMF function. Terms of Reference for all committees stipulate that the Chair of the Board can sit on sub-committees but cannot chair them.

Board Composition

The composition of the Board will first and foremost satisfy regulatory requirements, and within those requirements it will create a balance between membership and executive. The Board will have Trustee Directors made up of the Mutual's membership and two Executive Directors (the CEO and the CFO). The rules will provide for a maximum of 12 directors with the majority as Non-Executive Directors.

To ensure sound and informed decision-making, Board members will be provided with relevant training and roles will be well defined. There will be a maximum length of time that an individual can sit on the Board.

During the development stage, a regular skills audit of the Board will be necessary to ensure that the Board comprises the correct and appropriate skills set at each stage of the application process and when fully authorised.

Corporate governance code

It is expected that the Board will agree to voluntarily adopt the Financial Reporting Council's UK Corporate Governance Code 2018.

7. Operating Structure and Model

7.1 Organisational Structure

The Bank plans to launch with four Senior Managers and Certification Regime (SM&CF) roles and expand these as the business evolves. Key roles and reporting lines are summarised in Figure 4, below and key assumptions noted below. SM&CF roles are those that require approval of the individuals from the PRA and FCA. This is critical to the success of the mutual and its ability to move through the regulatory process.

CEO (SM&CF 1 and member of Board)

- responsible for managing the co-sourcing of Internal Audit from an accounting firm with oversight by Audit & Compliance Committee
- Head of Marketing reports to CEO with all financial promotions approved by the Compliance Manager

CFO (SM&CF 2 and member of Board)

- CFO is responsible for regulatory reporting and treasury in addition to accounting, MI, forecasting and data analytics

CRO (SM&CF 4)

- CRO will have direct access to report to the Risk Committee
- CRO and Compliance Manager will have direct access to report to the Audit & Compliance Committee
- Responsible for Second Line of Defence monitoring of credit decisions.

COO (SM&CF 24)

- responsible for oversight of IT systems and other operational outsourcing arrangements, supported by a Head of IT and Outsourcing
- Branch Directors have delegated authority within specific limits to approve lending and are responsible for FLOD.
- The main branch at head office will also act as the service centre supporting other branches

Figure 6 – Organisational Structure



7.2 Target Operating Model

Northern Mutual Example Target Operating Model ... to be well managed, well-funded and treat members fairly									
STAKEHOLDER & MEMBER ENGAGEMENT									
SUPPLIERS & OUTSOURCING Card/ATM: Mastercard Smart teller: Glory Security: Gunnebo Card management: Evry Indirect access to payment systems: TBC Internal audit: TBC External audit: TBC Authorisation: KPMG		RESOURCES People and values Automated branch model Local knowledge Collective bargaining on procurement (CSBA)		VALUES-BASED CULTURE VALUE PROPOSITION Purpose: Just transition Place: NI Region Participation: Co-op Human-scale: personal touch when needed Relational: Lifetime and portfolio approach		PRODUCTS Current accounts Savings Overdrafts Term loans Mortgages CHANNELS Internet banking Mobile app Branches: [7 principal / 21 satellite]		MEMBERS 1) Values-led 2) Underserved via A. Provision of mass-market products to targeted customers B. Provision of tailored products to niche markets [72,800 personal / 13,400 corporate]	
		PROCESSES Strategic/scenario analysis Product/service design Marketing/promotions Sales and service Impact measurement & reporting		RISK MANAGEMENT ICAAP & ILAAP KYC & AML ERMF Climate & ESG		COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS Member benefits / Info. & guidance / Account subsidy			
COST STRUCTURE Interest paid, staff, software, hardware, payment systems, regulatory, premises & marketing [CIR 46%, 108 FTE]		BALANCE SHEET Loan book 75% of assets. Deposit funded. No own account financial trading. Range of products to diversify risk. (£475m assets; 18% CAR)		BALANCE SHEET Loan book 75% of assets. Deposit funded. No own account financial trading. Range of products to diversify risk. (£475m assets; 18% CAR)		REVENUE STREAMS Interest received, account fees, payment fees, safe deposit boxes [£29m income / £15.5m PAT; 3.3% ROA]			
INFORMATION SYSTEMS Cloud based core banking system with single customer view across branch, mobile and internet Integrated modules for financial, treasury, credit scoring, regulatory reporting, etc.									
GOVERNANCE									
Society's Rules	One member one vote	UK Corporate Governance Code	Threshold conditions PRA/FCA Handbooks	Senior Managers and Certification Regime	Three lines of defence	ERMF	Outsourcing and co-sourcing		

8. Financial Projections

8.1 Summary Financial and Operating Metrics

Northern Mutual has prepared a detailed financial model as a proof of concept. It will be developed and tested in greater detail, including stress testing, prior to submission of the Regulatory Business Plan (RBP).

Key operating statistics, summary financials and market shares are shown in the tables below. Profitability is driven primarily by the rate of customer acquisition during the early years, which is in turn driven by the opening of branches. One would also anticipate internet customers from areas without a branch but for simplicity, no separate estimates have been made for these.

After 5 years a principal branch is projected to have 7,000 personal and 700 business members, a satellite branch has 1,400 personal and 140 business members. By comparison:

- Nationwide - 23,000 total and 11,500 active members per branch,
- Metrobank - 25,000 customers per branch,
- US community banks are profitable with 1000 to 4000 core customers per branch.

The projections are based on opening 7 principal branches each of which has 3 satellite branches.

Current account markets remain highly concentrated, although smaller banks and challenger banks have been gaining share. Market shares for savings and loans are lower, reflecting conservative growth assumptions and focus on niche markets and smaller businesses.

Table 9 – Key operating statistics

YEAR	1	2	3	4	5
Staffed branches at y/e	3	4	6	7	7
Automated branches at y/e	1	4	7	10	13
Individual customers - '000	6.7	22.9	41.4	62.2	81.4
Business customers – '000	0.5	1.6	3	4.5	5.9
Staff - FTE	13.4	40.3	51.8	70.3	85.1

Table 10 - Loan Book (£'000)

	1	2	3	4	5
Personal Loans	£775	£4,285	£10,984	£19,913	£31,955
SME loans	£1,550	£8,570	£21,967	£39,826	£63,910
Mortgages	£2,842	£15,712	£40,273	£73,014	£117,168
Totals	£5,168	£28,568	£73,224	£132,752	£213,032

8.2 Balance Sheet

Assumptions about growth in deposits and loans are cautious, with balances projected to reach £40 million per principal branch and £8 million per satellite branch by year 8 and then staying constant in real terms. By comparison,

- Nationwide = £220m per branch
- Metrobank = £193m per branch

Loans are projected to reach 92% of deposits, or £40 million per principal branch and £8 million per satellite branch. However, this projection will be fed into further stress testing of the Capital Requirement calculations.

The focus during the first few years will be to attract current account deposits and not substantial savings, ISA and term deposits. Interest rates will be structured in line with this objective, with higher rates on smaller balances. As the bank is a mutual, each member buying a share will top up the capital of the bank.

The loan book in the base model is roughly split 32% personal loans, 27% SME loans and 41% residential mortgages. All of these percentages are estimates only and will require further analysis later in the Mutual's development phase. This is a lower proportion of mortgages than most high street banks. As mortgage lending is low margin and high volume this results in the Bank's return on assets, return on capital employed and net interest margins being higher than market averages.

Bad debt ratios have been assumed to be 25% higher than the market average in order to be prudent. However, the aim of the Bank's strategy is that being close to customers and markets will enable better credit decisions and lower rates of default. Scenarios and stress tests will be performed prior to submission of the RBP.

Table 11 – Northern Mutual – Financial Summary

(financial figures '000)									
Summary									
Number of Principal Branches opened									
Cumulative No. of Principal Branches	Pre Open	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Cumulative no of Satellite Branches	1	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
Operating P&L	1	3	4	6	7	7	7	7	7
	-	1	4	7	10	13	14	14	14
	-£2,764	-£3,413	-£2,368	£251	£3,337	£8,288	£13,603	£16,479	£18,059
									£19,676
Capital									
Cumulative Profit/Loss									
Outsourced Services	-£2,764	-£6,177	-£8,544	-£8,293	-£4,957	£3,331	£16,934	£33,413	£51,472
Dividend paid to shareholders	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£124	-£202	-£244
Bonuses paid to members	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£1,607	-£1,624	-£1,634
Total Dividend & Bonuses paid to members	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£4,144	-£6,802	-£8,239
Opening balance	£0	£17,255	£13,967	£11,851	£12,423	£16,136	-£5,751	-£8,426	-£9,873
Capital Injection	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£24,755	£32,843	£41,023
Sales of Shares to members	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	£19	£124	£251	£321	£377	£331	£235	£128	£81
Capital	£17,255	£13,967	£11,851	£12,423	£16,136	£24,755	£32,843	£41,023	£49,289
Total Shares in issue	£20,019	£20,143	£20,395	£20,716	£21,093	£21,424	£21,659	£21,787	£21,868
Individual Customers	6,725	22,975	41,400	62,225	81,400	90,775	96,622	93,625	94,000
Registered SMEs/Organisations	518	1,678	3,012	4,538	5,932	6,622	6,850	6,880	6,880
Visa card transaction fees	24	52	98	157	221	268	297	313	320
	328								
Capital Requirement Calculations									
Net Loan Book	£5,116	£28,283	£72,497	£131,434	£210,918	£292,939	£357,324	£403,908	£438,014
Deposits	£14,920	£60,080	£127,080	£205,840	£296,360	£376,160	£426,560	£460,160	£483,680
Tier 1 Capital Ratio	160.5%	46.8%	23.2%	17.4%	17.2%	16.8%	17.3%	18.5%	20.2%
CREDIT RWA Capital (Loans + Fixed Assets+credit institutions)	£7,010	£20,863	£45,376	£76,541	£117,197	£157,097	£186,991	£208,539	£224,559
Capital Requirement - Credit	£561	£1,669	£3,630	£6,123	£9,376	£12,568	£14,959	£16,083	£17,965
Operational RWA	£1,690	£4,474	£8,191	£16,195	£26,486	£37,626	£47,833	£55,470	£60,810
Capital Requirement - Operational Risk	£135	£358	£655	£1,296	£2,119	£3,010	£3,827	£4,438	£4,865
Capital required credit + operational	£696	£2,027	£4,285	£7,419	£11,495	£15,578	£18,786	£21,121	£22,830
Additional Capital Buffer available	£13,271	£9,824	£8,138	£8,717	£13,261	£17,265	£22,237	£28,169	£35,548
Net Loans/Deposits	34%	47%	57%	64%	71%	78%	84%	88%	91%
Cumulative Capital raised	£20,019	£20,143	£20,395	£20,716	£21,093	£21,424	£21,659	£21,787	£21,949

8.3 Profit and Loss

The summary profit and loss account is shown in table 12, below. The main source of income is net interest margin although the Bank's strategy is to seek a diversified income stream with 30% of income from fees and charges.

Other income is made up of membership fees, income from safe deposit boxes, debit card fees, and fees for non-members using ATMs. This accounts for one third of income by year 9. Cost assumptions are based on quotes and proposals obtained from suppliers in the case of software, hardware and payments and interbank charges, and market information in the case of staff and premises costs.

Projected staff numbers rise from 33 at launch to 86 in year 5, with 30% in head office functions. There is a maximum salary ratio of 10:1.

In comparison with large high street UK banks, Northern Mutual has a high net interest margin reflecting the lower proportion of mortgages and higher proportions of personal and SME loans.

Table 12 Summary profit and loss account						
All financial figures £'000s	Pre-open	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Income						
Interest Payable		(£86)	(£345)	(£731)	(£1,184)	(£1,704)
Interest Receivable		£342	£1,817	£4,574	£8,229	£13,114
Net Interest						
Receivable		£256	£1,471	£3,844	£7,046	£11,410
Other Income		£645	£2,400	£4,490	£6,662	£8,927
Net Operating Income		£901	£3,871	£8,333	£13,707	£20,337
Operating Expenses						
Branch						
Administration (excl. dep)	(£94)	(£1,185)	(£2,577)	(£3,693)	(£5,131)	(£6,097)
Provision for bad & doubtful debts	£0	(£52)	(£233)	(£443)	(£591)	(£796)
Central						
Administration (excl. dep)	(£2,670)	(£2,871)	(£3,122)	(£3,542)	(£4,106)	(£4,515)
Depreciation	£0	(£206)	(£307)	(£405)	(£543)	(£641)
Total Costs	(£2,764)	(£4,314)	(£6,238)	(£8,082)	(£10,371)	(£12,050)
Operating profit/(loss)	(£2,764)	(£3,413)	(£2,368)	(£251)	£3,337	£8,228
Table 13 – Key ratios						
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Net Interest Income/ Total Income	28.4%	38.0%	46.1%	51.4%	56.1%	
Cost/Income ratio	478.6%	161.2%	97.0%	75.7%	59.2%	

Mutual trading tax treatment

HMRC have confirmed that if banks meet the conditions of Mutual Trading there will be no corporation tax liability on profits.

9. Capital and Funding

9.1 Capital

Capital Structure – CET1

The Bank plans to have a simple capital structure with one form of issued shares qualifying as CET1 capital and no other Tier 1 capital instruments. Shares will have the following key features:

- Directly issued by the Society
- Fully paid up
- Classified as equity for both accounting and insolvency law purposes
- Perpetual, non-withdrawable and non-redeemable
- No differentiated or preferential distribution rights
- No cap on the level of distributions
- No obligation on the Society to make distributions
- Non-voting
- Transferable
- Dividend can be paid (target is 7.5% when the bank becomes profitable)

These qualify as CET1 capital as defined in Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and its amending regulation (EU) No 648/2012, associated technical standards and PRA guidance.

Capital Requirement

Initial financial models indicate that a total of £20m will be required over the first five years to meet current regulatory and internally assessed capital requirements.

The initial financial model has been built on the assumption that all capital is CET1, and the level of CET1 exceeds 13.5% throughout.

This initial estimate of capital requirement remains subject to stress testing and development of the full ICAAP, and currently does not include any Pillar 2B requirement Northern Mutual could look at using Tier 2 subordinated debt capital to provide an additional capital buffer during the years either side of projected breakeven. Once the bank is able to build capital from retained profits then it will have a simple capital structure with CET1 as the only type.

9.2 Capital Adequacy

The Pillar 1 capital resource requirement for credit risk and operational risk calculations are:

- **Credit risk** – all credit risk exposures (business assets, liquidity, off balance sheet, etc.) are allocated risk weights specified under the Standardised Approach in the Rulebook. The aggregate is then multiplied by 8%
- **Operational risk** – calculated by multiplying average of last three years' net income by 15%

The Bank will initially use the average of the projected net income for the first three years as there will not be three years' historic data.

The bank will use the Basic Indicator Approach for calculating the Pillar 1 operational risk requirement.

Capital requirements have been calculated from the Bank requirements with advice from KPMG in Table 14 below.

Table 14 Capital Requirements	
Element	Minimum
Pillar 1 requirement	8.0%
Pillar 2A requirement	2.0%
Capital conservation buffer	2.5%
Countercyclical buffer	1.0%
Total capital requirement	13.5%

Projected initial capital requirements are shown in table 15 based on a minimum ratio of 13.5% and assume initial CET1 of £20 million. The excess of capital over the minimum requirement is lowest in year 6 and increases thereafter.

These preliminary estimates exclude Tier 2 or post authorisation equity and are subject to stress testing and business scenario modelling to be undertaken prior to submission of the draft RBP.

The draft Enterprise-wide Risk Management Framework is set out in section 10, and the Bank is developing its Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process ("ICAAP") assessment process and risk appetite statements for inclusion in the draft RBP. The detailed ICAAP will be developed prior to application for authorisation.

Table 15 – Tier 1 Capital Calculations (years 1-9)

Tier 1 Capital Calculations													
All financial figures 000s													
Credit Risk													
Net Loans to members RWA													
Net Fixed Assets	£2,437	£13,475	£34,539	£62,618	£100,486	£139,562	£170,236	£192,430	£208,678				
Loans to Banks & Financial Institutions RWA	£1,794	£2,150	£2,736	£2,855	£3,191	£3,302	£3,302	£3,302	£3,302				
Credit RWA	£2,779	£5,239	£8,102	£11,068	£13,521	£14,233	£13,452	£12,807	£12,578				
	£7,010	£20,863	£45,376	£76,541	£117,197	£157,097	£186,991	£208,539	£224,559				
Operational Risk													
Average Operating Income	£901	£2,386	£4,369	£8,637	£14,126	£20,067	£25,511	£29,584	£32,432				
Operational Capital	£135	£358	£655	£1,296	£2,119	£3,010	£3,827	£4,438	£4,865				
Operational RWA	£1,690	£4,474	£8,191	£16,195	£26,486	£37,626	£47,833	£55,470	£60,810				
Total RWA	£8,700	£25,337	£53,567	£92,736	£143,683	£194,723	£234,824	£264,010	£285,369				
Tier 1 ratio	160.5%	46.8%	23.2%	17.4%	17.2%	16.8%	17.3%	18.5%	20.2%				

9.3 Fundraising Strategy

Potential investors

There are seven categories of potential investor currently identified to take shares in the Bank:

1. Local authorities. The Bank could receive equity investment from local authorities in the region as well as long-term investment at larger scale
2. Central government departments. The Bank could receive investment from Financial Transactional Capital.
3. Pension funds, for example, NILGOSC. A precedent has been set for this by the investment in Cambridge and Counties Bank by Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Fund
4. Anchor/economic institutions such as Universities, PSNI, Social Landlords, Credit Unions, CDFIs, charities, charitable foundations, and C&V sector organisations.
5. Impact investors, including social investment funds and religious organisations
6. High net worth / ultra-high net worth individuals and sophisticated investors
7. Regional businesses.
8. Crowdfunding. This option is under consideration for the final tranche of equity capital prior to exiting mobilisation.

9.4 Access to Future Capital

The Bank's business growth strategy is to fund expansion through retained profits and therefore it is not anticipated that the bank would require access to additional capital for this purpose. As every member joins the bank, they buy a share, so capital accrues as the customer base grows.

The following strategies are intended to minimise the risk of needing to raise capital under duress in the event of adverse macroeconomics conditions or other causes of unexpected losses:

- Building capital reserves in excess of minimum requirements through favouring profit retention over maximising returns on equity for shareholders
- A cautious approach to credit growth during the expansionary stage of the credit cycle

Nevertheless, the CSBA have carefully considered the need to readily access additional capital if required for prudent banking.

To enhance the ability to attract equity capital now and over the long term, the Directors will need to consider liquidity, returns and shareholder appetite.

1. Liquidity

There will be a private secondary market for shares in order to provide liquidity and price formation.

2. Returns

The dividend policy is to provide steady growth throughout the economic cycle, so far as underlying profitability and the satisfaction of capital adequacy allow, and thereby to achieve a lower variability in returns than those of publicly listed bank shares. As a co-operative, the Society will follow the Co-operative Principles as agreed by the International Co-operative Alliance. Accordingly, surplus profits are distributable to members in proportion to their economic contribution to the business. The CSBA interpretation is that the economic contribution of capital providers is essential to banking and so profit distribution will satisfy a fair market return on shares *before* other forms of profit distribution to members.

3. Shareholder appetite

The bank will seek to attract a core institutional shareholder base committed to the Bank's business model and who have the financial capacity to subscribe to future equity share offerings. The initial business plan aims for a member base of over 85,000 all of which would also be eligible to buy and sell shares in the secondary market.

9.5 Funding and Liquidity

Funding and Liquidity Strategy

The Bank's strategy is to fund member loans entirely from member deposits (see Table 16 below).

Table 16 – Deposits and Loans ('000)					
£ million	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Deposits	£9,600	£44,400	£106,000	£184,400	£274,000
Net loan book	£3,797	£21,300	£58,401	£112,945	£184,101

The Bank will attract deposits primarily through interest bearing current accounts, augmented by fixed term and notice savings accounts. Current accounts are a more stable source of funding than instant and short notice savings accounts. The provision of both business and personal current accounts also assists with intra-month liquidity. On the asset side, the diversification of loans across overdrafts, SME and mortgage products results in a spread of maturities.

Liquidity Management

The Bank will develop an Internal Liquidity Adequacy Assessment Process ('ILAAP') statement to set out how it will determine the appropriate quantity and quality of liquidity needed to meet the Overall Liquidity Adequacy Rule ('OLAR') at all times, even under severe but plausible stresses.

In achieving this, Northern Mutual will need to set out:

- The Bank's current calculation and calibration of the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) requirement; and
- Areas of the Bank's specific liquidity risk profile that are not fully captured within the LCR

LCR and key metrics will be calculated following detailed definition and financial modelling of the product range and stress testing. The ILAAP will be developed in full prior to the authorisation application with details of governance, risk appetite and initial metrics in the draft RBP.

The Bank will have a Treasury management function to manage liquidity and maturity mismatches. Central bank reserves and short-term financial assets, including High Quality Liquid Assets, will be held for liquidity management only. The Bank will not trade on its own account.

Medium and Longer-Term Funding Stability

The Bank recognises that liquidity strength depends on more than just meeting short term LCR requirements. Therefore, the Bank will set an internal risk appetite limit for an appropriate number of survival days before running out of liquidity in stress scenarios; and will maintain an appropriate Net Stable Funding Ratio at all times.

10. IT Strategy and Infrastructure

10.1 Core Banking System

The Bank's IT strategy is to adopt an outsourced model using proven components from reputable and stable third-party suppliers. This avoids the high risks and capital costs of proprietary systems development.

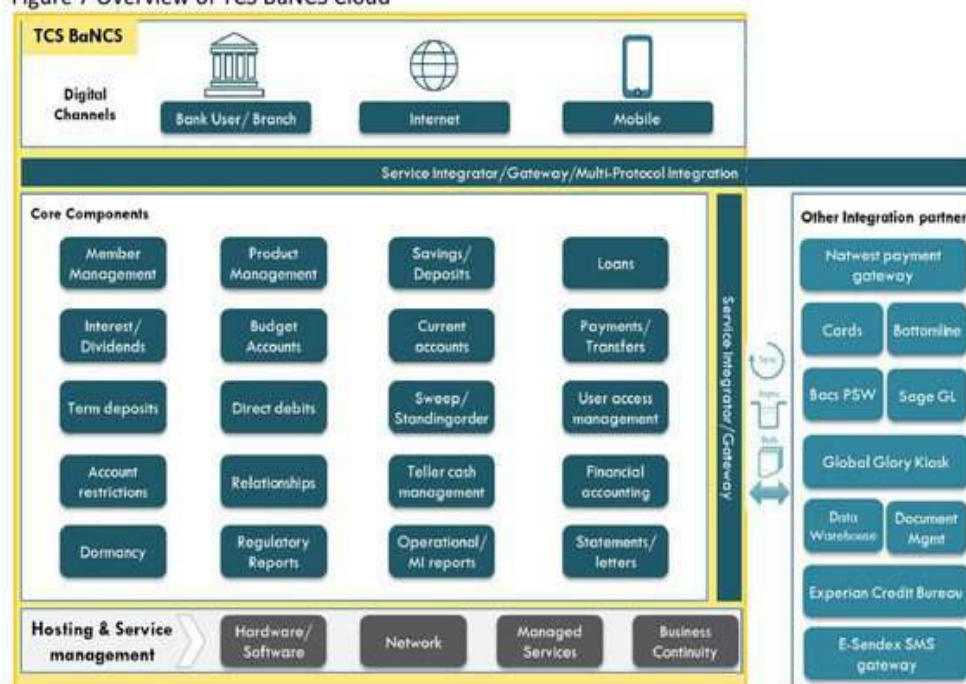
Currently our favoured core banking system is TCA BaNCS Cloud from Tata Consulting Services. The system provides full functionality for:

- Current Accounts, including overdraft facility, Direct Debits, Standing Orders, Transfers (payments in and out), BACS, Faster payments, ATM and Point of Sale integration, Statement production
- Deposits / Savings Accounts / Notice Accounts / Term Accounts
- Cash ISAs
- Loans – these will be established via a Loan Origination Solution which facilitates both automated and manual underwriting
- Fees and Charges – calculated and charged automatically

Members can apply for and service their accounts via their preferred choice of internet, mobile app or in person via their local branch.

KYC and Sanctions screening can be achieved either manually or through an integrated solution from a third-party provider linked to the TCS BaNCS Core Banking System.

Figure 7 Overview of TCS BaNCS Cloud



10.2 Integrated Solutions

TCS BaNCS is configured for integration with appropriate third-party packages such as:

Teller Infinity (Glory Global): An enhanced Automated Teller Machine (ATM) providing additional services / functionality such as video links and cash recycling. Interfaced with the Core Banking System for full range of member account management services and to the Link network for non-member ATM functionality.

Payment Systems: The Bank is presently negotiating with an Indirect Access Provider to agree sponsored access to payment systems to facilitate Faster Payments, Direct Debits, SWIFT, BACS and cheque clearing. Our preferred partner is NatWest and contracts will ensure compliance with ISO20022 / ISO8583 standards.

Experian: Identity check and Address lookup functionality to ensure the AML / KYC check is completed. Provides and / or checks address details to Royal Mail convention. Also provides PEP and Sanctions Screening.

Evry: Mastercard debit card issuance and management. Services include Transaction Surveillance, notification by customers of fraudulent transactions and of lost or stolen cards. In addition, Evry will authorise card transactions against balance limits (including Limits / Amount to Spend etc) as provided by the Bank.

[Risk, Regulatory and Management Reporting](#)

A full suite of software solutions can be integrated with TCS BaNCS to provide MI and reporting. These include:

- Lombard Risk: Risk Reporting
- Fairmort WILF: Regulatory Reporting
- SAGE200: General Ledger
- Htec Labs: Document Management System
- Indus Soft: Collections Management

The above are indicative only and may change as negotiations develop. Nevertheless, they are considered to demonstrate the availability of a full range of third-party suppliers that the Bank will be able to contract with to support the Bank's services to members.

10.3 Governance of IT and Outsourcing

Key to negotiations with third-party suppliers is commitment to appropriate service levels the Bank considers necessary to deliver a safe and viable service to our members. Appropriate pre-contract due diligence will be undertaken on all third-party IT suppliers. This will be completed before submission of application for authorisation, with a view to having agreed contracts in place prior to entering mobilisation.

In completing this due diligence, the Bank will pay due regard to the FCA's finalised guidance 'FG 16/5 – Guidance for firms outsourcing to the 'cloud' and other third-party IT services'.

The Bank has determined that the outsourced function is regarded as 'critical or important' as defined by the guidance and in SYSC 8.1.4.

Pre-Implementation

Prior to implementation the core banking system and integrated solutions will undergo a full and robust program of User Acceptance Testing (UAT), including live testing during mobilisation within the Bank's authorisation with restrictions.

IT systems will not be implemented until UAT results are seen and approved by the Board. During implementation and for six months after exiting mobilisation the COO will be supported by a steering group responsible for ensuring full IT functionality and security. This steering group will be chaired by a non-executive director and will report regularly to the Board.

Post-Implementation

Once fully operational the COO will be accountable for the day to day oversight of the customer facing IT systems including adherence to all SLAs negotiated with third party suppliers.

The COO will be responsible to the Board for the ongoing performance of the Bank's IT infrastructure. A monthly dashboard report will be made available to the Board for full analysis of all Key Performance and Key Risk Indicators.

Disaster Recovery and Service Interruption

The BaNCS core banking system is hosted in the cloud and mirrored in real time on a secondary site. Their system includes automated failover provisions and robust disaster recovery mechanisms.

Third party suppliers of integrated solutions such as NatWest and Evry are all expected to host their systems in dual secure locations. For example, the Evry systems are hosted in their Norwegian Data centre with two separate facilities interconnected by a virtual data centre.

11. Risk Management Framework

A draft version of the Enterprise-wide Risk Management Framework (ERMF) has been developed by the CSBA for review on a regular basis by the Board. As the Bank works towards mobilisation and full authorisation the ERMF will continue to evolve and develop. This will ensure that all risks materialising as the business evolves are identified, assessed and appropriately mitigated or controlled. A final version will be completed and agreed by the Board before the Bank leaves mobilisation.

The scope of the ERMF extends to all major risk types faced by the Bank and is underpinned by appropriate governance, controls, processes, systems and policies. It provides details on how risks are to be managed and key control activities conducted. The ERMF consists of six main constituents (Governance, Risk Universe, Appetite, Policy, Processes and Tools) which are summarised in Figure 6 and described in the following sections.

The Management Responsibilities Map sets out relationships between Board, sub-committees, employees and other stakeholders and is a key part of how risk is monitored and managed and how the Bank identifies and assesses the potential impact of risks on the business.

Many of the risks that will impact the Bank have already been identified and work is in progress to determine the level of risk Northern Mutual considers appropriate to its business and strategic goals and what controls and mitigation should be in place.

In accordance with SS3/19, responsibility for managing the financial risks from climate change rests with the Board and the CEO. The Audit and Risk Committee will review the ERMF as it develops. Ultimately, as the Bank's operations grow in scale and scope, it is envisaged that the Audit and Risk Committee will be demerged into two separate Committees.

A number of other policy and procedural documents also support and direct the Bank's Risk Governance. These are:

- Conduct Risk Policy
- Lending Policy
- Organisation Chart
- Financial Crime & Anti-Money Laundering Manual
- Climate and ESG Risk Strategy



11.1 Three Lines of Defence

Overlapping all aspects of the Bank's Risk Governance is the Three Lines of Defence model widely applied in banking. Figure 7 provides an overview of how the Bank should expect this model to function following full authorisation.

The model promotes the ethos that the First Line is 'responsible for compliance'. However, this cannot be relied upon in isolation and just as important is the culture of an organisation. Section 2 of this document discusses the Bank's Vision, Purpose and Values – these demonstrate that there is a culture embedded at the heart of the Bank that fully supports and promotes good conduct and robust risk mitigation.

First Line

The Bank's operational and branch management and the executive directors. They own and are responsible for identifying, monitoring and reviewing the risks within their area and subsequently providing updates to the second line of defence via departmental risk and control self-assessments and the risk register.

Second Line

Compliance and Risk Management departments (reporting to the CRO) which are responsible for providing oversight and challenge to the first line of defence and providing assurance to the Board on risk management and compliance with the Bank's legal and regulatory requirements.

Third Line

Internal audit function and external auditors. There are independent of each other. Internal Auditors report to the CEO while External Auditors report to the Audit Committee.

Figure 8 – Three lines of defence model

Oversight	Board		
	Executive Committee		
Who	First line Marketing Member acquisition Operations - includes all aspects of member management post acquisition	Second line Risk Management Compliance	Third line Internal Audit External Audit
What	Responsible for drafting and acting in line with policies and procedures Designs and implements appropriate Controls Undertakes First Line Monitoring / Testing of Controls	Independent challenge and ad hoc advice to First Line Advises First Line on Regulatory mapping Second line testing (independent verification of First Line findings) Provides risk management framework in accordance with risk appetite	Internal audit: planned regular periodic assurance for Board External audit: full scope external audit

11.2 Risk Universe

The Risk Universe comprises five risk categories and three risk lenses. All risks the Bank may be subject to fit within one of the categories to allow effective bottom-up and top-down assessment. The three risk lenses are cross-cutting and may enhance or reduce risks within each category.

Risk Lenses			Risk Categories
Climate Risk: Physical	Climate Risk: Transition	Other ESG risks	Operational and conduct
			Financial crime
			Credit
			Business and strategic
			Market and liquidity

Operational and Conduct Risk

Operational Risk is the risk of loss from inadequate or failed internal processes and systems, or from external events (such as regulation/sector environment).

Conduct risk is the risk of the Bank treating its members unfairly and delivering inappropriate outcomes. The Board believes that the fair treatment of members is be integral to its culture, embracing the FCA's Principle 6 which states "a firm must pay due regard to the interest of its customers and treat them fairly". Regulatory risk is considered to be part of conduct risk.

Financial Crime Risk

The risk of cyber-attacks on the Bank, attempts to defraud the Bank's customers, or to use bank accounts for money laundering either directly or through the exploitation of customers as mules and/or financing or facilitating criminal activities.

Credit Risk

There are three main types of credit risk which may have an impact on the Bank:

- Default Risk - customers failing to meet their credit repayment obligations. This is a key risk for the Bank.
- Counterparty Risk – loss of investments and deposits with other financial institutions. This is considered minimal as Northern Mutual aims to deposit surplus funds with the Bank.
- Concentration Risk – risk arising from concentration of lending to a single or small number of counterparties, and/or a limited number of industry sectors; and/or a restricted geographical area.

The CSBA considers that the geographic concentration risk of operating in Northern Ireland is mitigated by diversification across different types of loan, industry sectors and personal and business members.

Business & Strategic Risk

The risk that the Bank fails to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in the RBP due to changes in markets, technology, consumer trends, competitive position and macroeconomic forces such as adverse impacts on output and employment from global economic conditions, Brexit and UK interest rates. From the second year of authorisation the RBP will be replaced by the Strategic Plan which will be reviewed annually for approval by the Board.

Market & Liquidity Risk

Market risk is defined as the risk of losses in on- and off-balance-sheet positions arising from movements in market prices, and typically encompass the risks pertaining to interest rate related instruments and equities in the trading book, and foreign exchange risk and commodities risk throughout the Bank. As with Counterparty Risk, Market Risk is considered reduced as surplus liquidity will be held with the Bank. Foreign exchange risk is reduced as transacting in foreign currency will be limited to providing personal customers with travel money facilities.

Liquidity Risk is the risk that the Bank cannot meet its financial obligations as they fall due.

In alignment with the Bank's vision, purpose and values, it applies three cross-cutting Environment, Social and Governance risk (ESG) lenses to all four categories of risk described above.

Climate Risk - Physical

Physical risks can arise from climate and weather-related events, such as heatwaves, droughts, floods, storms and sea level rise. They can result in large financial losses, impairing asset values and the creditworthiness of borrowers. They also present a threat to the Bank's operations.

Climate Risk - Transition

Transition risks can arise from the process of adjustment to a low-carbon economy. Changes in policy, technology and sentiment could prompt a reassessment of the value of a large range of assets and create credit exposures for the Bank as costs and opportunities become apparent.

Other ESG risks

Other environmental and social impacts of business activities can affect long-term financial performance and understanding them is integral to forming a comprehensive understanding of risks. The Bank intends to apply UNEP FI Principles for Responsible Banking and incorporate ESG factors into its risk and credit assessment criteria.

11.3 Risk Appetite Framework

The Bank's Risk Appetite is 'The level of risk the Board is willing to take in order to deliver its Strategic Objectives.' Risk Appetite is intended to act as the link between Business Strategy and the Risk Strategy by bringing strategic context to identified risks; clear escalation criteria and informing capital and liquidity planning and stress testing.

A clearly articulated risk appetite communicates the Board's view on the risks that should be acquired, avoided, retained or removed from the Bank. This supports the Bank by providing direction to key decisions such as long-term planning; new product development; business process change; pricing decisions/reviews; marketing campaigns; and infrastructure investment decisions.

The four Risk Categories have been broken down into their constituent parts and reviewed to determine the level of risk the Bank is prepared to accept. Currently there are 25 sub-categories of risk with the appetite mostly set at Low, Very Low or No Risk. There are currently only two sub-categories of risk where the Bank is prepared to accept Medium Risk, and both are sub-categories of Credit Risk. There are no risks sub-categories where the Bank is prepared to accept a High Risk.

11.4 Policy, Processes and Tools

Risk Policy

Effective risk management requires that all staff working in the Bank clearly understand their roles and responsibilities and the limits placed upon them. A clear framework of policies and accountabilities is integral to achieving this, giving staff clear guidelines about what they can and cannot do, and what to do when something is outside of their role responsibility.

The policy framework is a key component of the Bank's ERMF. It allows the Bank to adopt a consistent approach to risk management; increasing efficiencies and effectiveness and ensuring operations are conducted within the Board's risk appetite. The Bank's policy documents provide clear rules and guidance to assist effective decision making and cover all aspects of risk.

All policies are therefore subject to a process which covers their preparation, internal review and approval.

Risk policies are categorised as Level One Policies (which require Board approval), Level Two (which require Executive Committee approval) and Level Three (which require Policy Owner approval).

Risk Processes

A timetable will be agreed for the review of the Bank's internal risk processes including the ICAAP, Recovery & Resolution Plan, the Pillar III Disclosures and Annual Report and the ILAAP. These processes are integral to the Bank's Risk Management Framework and are designed to meet the Bank's regulatory requirements as a Capital Requirements Regulation credit institution.

Risk Management Tools and Techniques

The Bank will apply scenario analysis methodologies to understand macro risks, including climate, political, social and economic risk, and stress testing to understand how potential scenarios impact the balance sheet.

To support measuring, monitoring, reporting and record-keeping of specific risks, the Bank will integrate appropriate risk and compliance systems into its core banking system. The Risk Committee will review internal risk management techniques to ensure there is adequate internal assessment from both bottom-up and top-down approaches to risk management.

12. Key Current and Future Risks

The Bank will have a risk register in place as part of its ERMF to assess and monitor pre-trading risks as well as key risks post-authorisation.

The register records estimates of likelihood and impact, as modified by controls and mitigation strategies, in order to assess each risk.

Set out below are six selected key risks from the register.

Table 18 – Risks, Controls and Mitigation				
Risk	Outcome	Likelihood	Impact	Key Controls/Mitigation
Failure to raise sufficient capital	The Bank will be unable to progress with its banking licence application	MEDIUM	HIGH	Early fundraising work to gauge interest. Progress on capital raising will be monitored monthly by the Board. Management accounts are prepared by the CEO and scrutinised as part of the review. In the event of failing to raise sufficient capital, staff contracts and other financial commitments allow for an orderly dissolution of the Society.
Failure to obtain authorisation	The Bank will be unable to trade	MEDIUM	HIGH	Northern Mutual will have a strong and experienced team who will work with forerunner CSBA banks to navigate the application process. Progress is reviewed by the Board. The Board will commission professional advice if needed. In the event of failing to gain authorisation, staff contracts and other financial commitments allow for an orderly dissolution of the Society.
IT Systems do not meet business need	The Bank will be unable to deliver the functionality promised. This could prevent exiting mobilisation within the 12-month time limit.	LOW	HIGH	Full due diligence paying regard to FG 16/% - guidance for firms outsourcing to the 'cloud' and other third-party IT services will be undertaken on all IT suppliers prior to signing contracts. Via the CSBA at Bicester office the Bank has access to a fully functioning 'branch' allowing full testing of system's functionality before contracts are signed. Full UAT testing during mobilisation.
Failure to attract enough members	Additional capital may be needed. Persistent underperformance would lead to orderly resolution.	MEDIUM	MEDIUM/HIGH	Market research in the early stage will test demand. Further research prior to submitting the RBP and application for authorisation. The Board will review and approve the RBP including an assessment on demand to ensure viability.
Poor implementation of plan	Risk of failing to attract staff with the right skills, calibre and in sufficient numbers	LOW	MEDIUM	Northern Mutual will create a high-level project plan (similar to example SWM plan on page 62) which will outline the recruitment plans needed to ensure that the correct people are in place at the

	to deliver the plan, leading to customer detriment, reputational damage and regulatory sanction.			correct stages up to and after full banking licence approval. Recruitment plans and their progress form a key part of the Board's oversight of the application.
Cyber Crime	IT systems being illegally breached would mean the bank is unable to carry out day to day operations and/or loss of sensitive data.	LOW	LOW/HIGH depending on extent	<p>Pre-mobilisation – enforcement of security procedures and IT policies by staff. Use of Microsoft systems and carefully selected IT suppliers.</p> <p>Post-authorisation – staff training, robust enforcement of risk processes around IT and data. Prepared response to various cyber breach scenarios designed for rapid action to minimise harm to members.</p>

13. Project Timeline

Northern Mutual is at an early stage of development, the mutual is registered and there is a small voluntary team. For the project to grow it will need to bring in funding to without an initial team and resource, the author is unable to set out a specific timeline here.

Other CSBA mutual banks further along this process indicate that it is likely to take 2-3 years to reach mobilisation.

Feedback has shown that Brexit has impacted on the resources of the PRA and FCA and that some delays have been expected. Any timeline will also be impacted by availability of appropriately skilled staff and resource to get a team working on this.

By Spring 2020 it is expected that Avon Mutual and South West Mutual will have had a feedback meeting from the regulators after submitting their RBP and will have been invited to submit the full banking licence application. 9/10 banks that are invited to submit a banking licence application receive their licence.

The following page is an example project plan taken from South West Mutual's draft Business Plan which gives an idea of the necessary stages, however it has taken them longer than expected, notwithstanding the Coronavirus crisis which has expanded timescales further.

Tony Greenham, Director of South West Mutual has provided the following update:

"A bank that can draw on our experience will save a huge amount of time compared with the timetable below, but there is a basic reality of the to and fro with the regulators that means that I think 6 months would be impossible. I think for planning expect it to take 12 months from the initial submission. Of course the other big factor in the timetable is fundraising. If I already had the funds, I would get to licence many months quicker and our progress going forward is more dependent on capital raising than anything else now (as we have made great progress on the RBP).

To an extent it depends on how much work is done in the preparation stage, but pre-application involves a number of steps. This the SWM timeline:

10 April 2019. I wrote to the new bank start up unit requesting an initial meeting. They reply requesting a business plan

20 June 2019. We send in our initial submission (outline business plan). We provided more information than is usual and it was important to show genuine market research and knowledge.

8 August 2019. Initial meeting with NBSU (note 7-week timeline elapsed between submission and meeting)

21 August 2019. Feedback letter received (another 2 weeks)

28 August 2020. First draft RBP submitted. This took us 1 year, but it was severely delayed by 6-8 months to resolve some issues, and then because of Covid-19 and lockdown. You could allow 3-4 months but it needs to be high quality so don't rush it.

4/5th November 2020. Feedback meetings. Note the time of c10 weeks in between submission and meeting. This was entirely outside of our control. We are expecting written feedback before end of November.

January 2021. We aim to submit 2nd draft RBP and will have prepared (but not yet submitted) a draft ICAAP/ILAAP

March 2021. Submission of 1st draft ICAAP/ILAAP (and updated RBP)

May 2021. Submission of 2nd draft ICAAP/ILAAP.

June 2021 Invitation to Challenge Sessions"

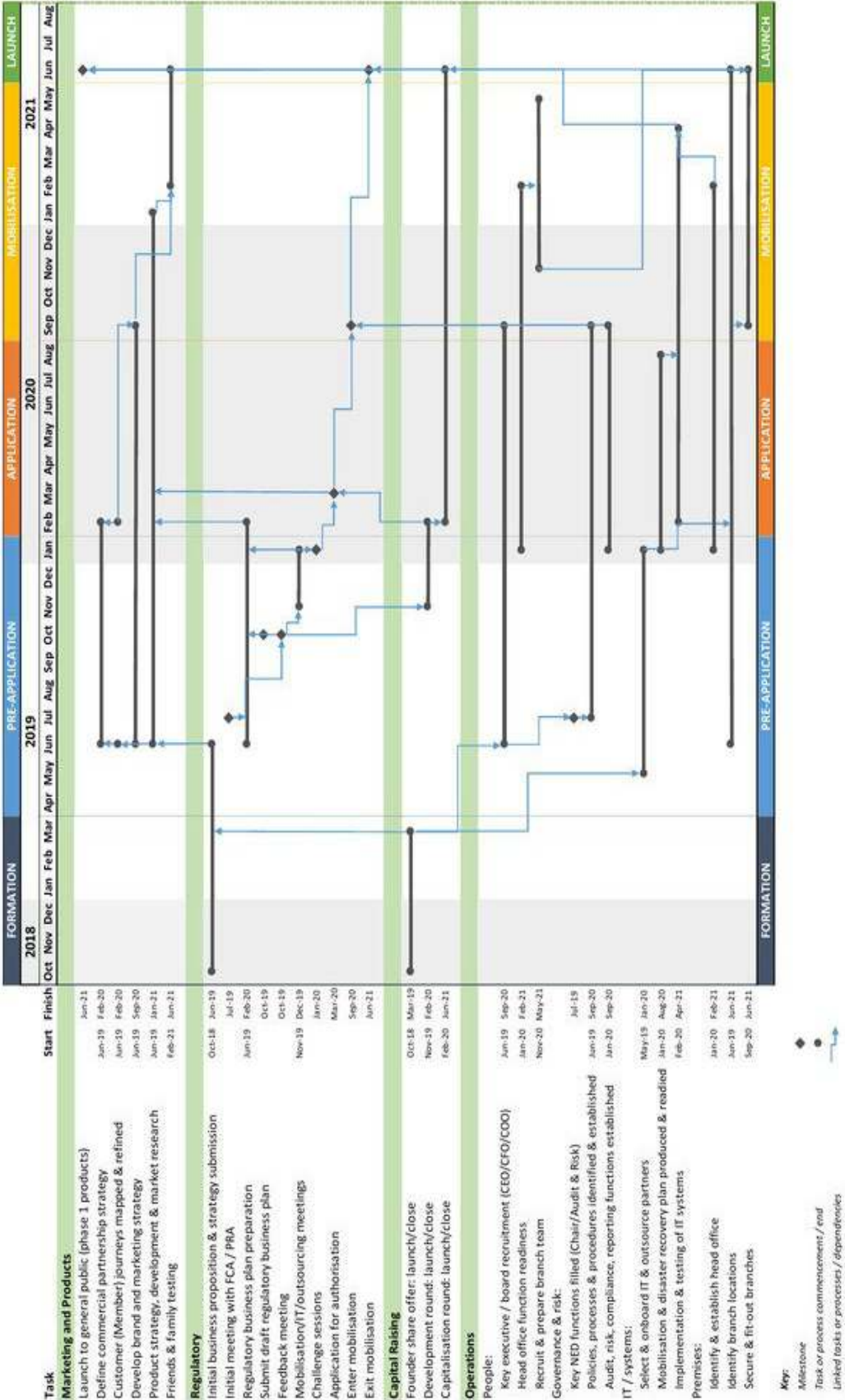
Bearing in mind this feedback, the timetable is dependent on a) fundraising capacity (largely in order to pay for the work needed and provide capacity to withstand any delays) b) team skills and preparedness and c) any unforeseen delays. The regulator has a set timetable at certain points in the process, however feedback so far is that they will try to ensure that you have everything in place before you are allowed to submit at the various stages of the process.

The author strongly recommends the Northern Mutual team liaising with and drawing on the expertise of the mutual banks further along the regulatory process to minimise any delays.

13.1 Next steps

The Northern Mutual Team need to raise money to develop a team with some key, experienced banking professionals to lead early discussions with the regulators and to develop a fundraising strategy to enable the Mutual and begin conversations with key sectors and potential partners in the region to develop this early stage proposition.

South West Mutual Draft Project Plan Overview



14. List of Abbreviations

AML	Anti-Money Laundering	ILAAP	Internal Liquidity Adequacy Assessment Process
BCA	Business Current Account	ISA	Individual Savings Account
CIR	Cost-Income Ratio	JMLSG	Joint Money Laundering Steering Group
CAR	Capital Adequacy Ratio	KYC	Know Your Customer
CDFI	Community Development Finance Institution	MI	Management Information
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	PAT	Profit After Tax
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	PCA	Personal Current Account
COO	Chief Operative Officer	PEP	Politically Exposed Person
CSBA	Community Savings Bank Association	PR	Public Relations
ERMF	Enterprise-wide Risk Management Framework	PRA	Prudential Regulation Authority
ESG	Environment, Social and Governance	RBP	Regulatory Business Plan
FCA	Financial Conduct Authority	RRP	Recovery and Resolution Plan
FCSC	Financial Services Compensation Scheme	ROA	Return on Assets
FLOD	First Line of Defence	SLOD	Second Line of Defence
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent	SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
GLM	Greater London Mutual	SM&CR	Senior Managers & Certification Regime
ICAAP	Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process	SWM	South West Mutual
ID	Identification	SWIG	South West Investment Group
		T&Cs	Terms and Conditions
		UAT	User Acceptance Testing

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021
Subject:	Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower – 20 November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
Contact Officers:	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer Sarah Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

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

For decision	X	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background								
1.1	<p>20 November 2021 marks the centenary of the opening of the Ulster Tower Memorial on the Somme battlefields. The Ulster Tower is a memorial commemorating the service and sacrifice of men from the island of Ireland at the Somme and the wider First World War.</p> <p>The Somme Association in conjunction with Leger Holidays have organised a fully escorted trip with specialist guides to the Ulster Tower Centenary Commemoration event 18-21 November 2021 as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>18 November 2021</td><td>Travel from Belfast to selected UK Airports to join tour coach and travel to Dover for ferry crossing to Northern France.</td></tr> <tr> <td>19 November 2021</td><td>Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower</td></tr> <tr> <td>20 November 2021</td><td>Travel to Flanders and visit battlefields the Irish Regiments fought on</td></tr> <tr> <td>21 November 2021</td><td>Travel back to the UK and flight back to Belfast.</td></tr> </table> <p>The tour costs is from £549 per person and includes return flights from Belfast to the UK with one piece of hand luggage, 3 nights hotel with continental breakfast, specialist Battlefield guide and excursions.</p> <p>Key visits will include Ulster Tower Centenary Commemoration; Thiepval Wood, Pozières Memorial to the mission; Thiepval Memorial to the missing, Messines Ridge, Spanbroekmolen Mine Crater; Tyne Cot Cemetery and Last Post Cemetery.</p>	18 November 2021	Travel from Belfast to selected UK Airports to join tour coach and travel to Dover for ferry crossing to Northern France.	19 November 2021	Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower	20 November 2021	Travel to Flanders and visit battlefields the Irish Regiments fought on	21 November 2021	Travel back to the UK and flight back to Belfast.
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20 November 2021	Travel to Flanders and visit battlefields the Irish Regiments fought on								
21 November 2021	Travel back to the UK and flight back to Belfast.								

1.2	<p>At the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group meeting on 30 April 2021, in light of the 2020 Somme Pilgrimage not taking place due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, it was recommended that Council give consideration to approving a delegation of four Councillors to attend the event in November 2021.</p> <p>The delegation to include Councillor Burgess and Councillor Owen, who had been nominated to attend the Somme Pilgrimage in 28 June 2020, and Councillors McKee and Andrews (the 2021 nominees agreed at Annual Council Meeting in 2019).</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>At the Council Meeting held on Monday 2 March 2020 the following was agreed:</p> <p>CONFERENCE/EVENTS</p> <p>C/051/2020 2020 C.F. BATTLEFIELD TOURS</p> <p>Read: Correspondence regarding 2020 C.F. Battlefield Tours. (Copy circulated)</p> <p>Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna, that Councillors Burgess and Owen would attend The Somme Pilgrimage from 28th June 2020.</p>
2.2	The Somme Pilgrimage from 28 June 2020 did not take place due to Covid-19 travel restrictions.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	Members are asked to agree to Councillors Burgess, Owen, McKee and Andrews attending the Ulster Tower Centenary Commemoration event 18-21 November 2021.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Cost for the four-day trip 18-21 November 2021 is from £549pp.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>

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

Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower

18th November 2021

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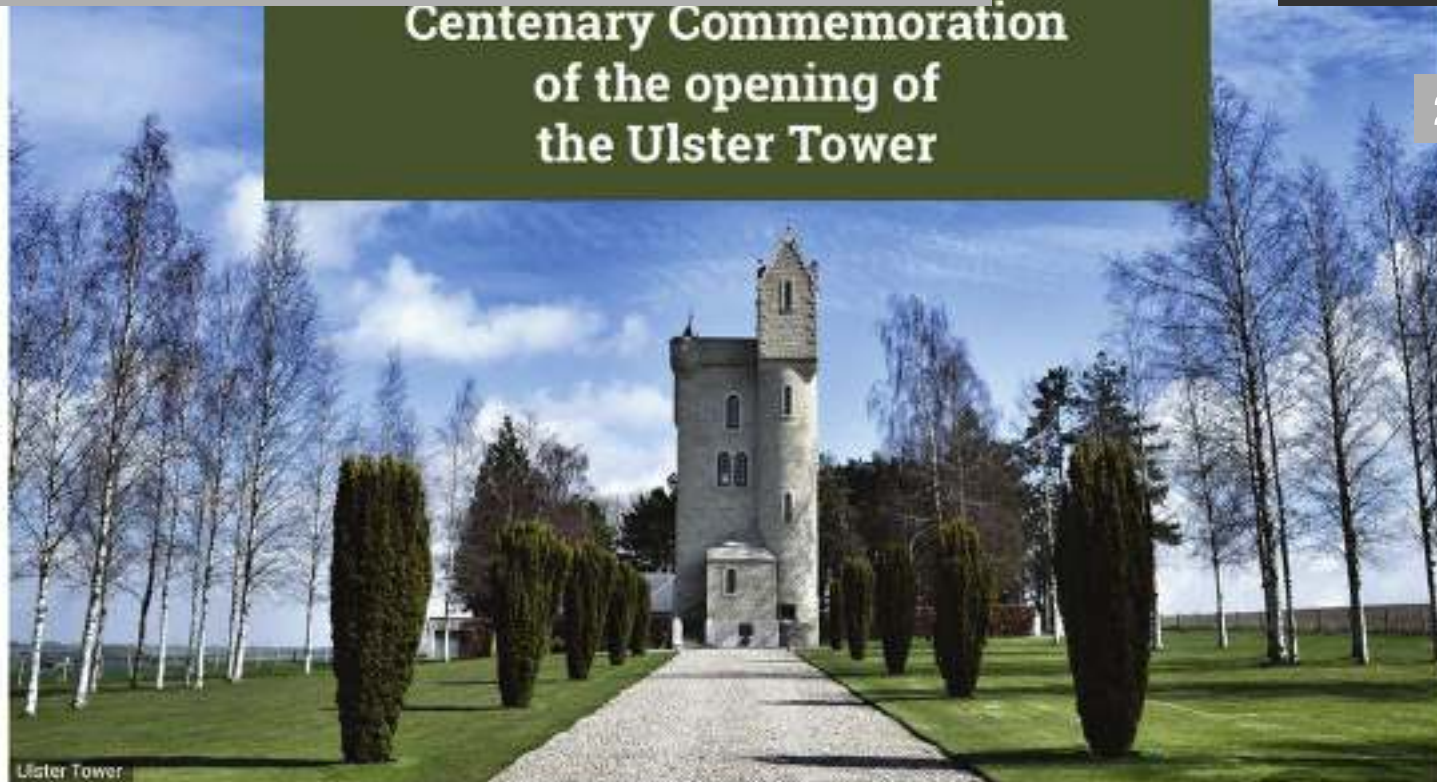
- Return flights from Belfast to the UK with one piece of hand luggage
- 3 nights hotel with continental breakfast
- Specialist Battlefield Guide
- Excursions and visits as per itinerary



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leger
HOLIDAYS

Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower



Ulster Tower

November 2021 marks the centenary of the opening of the Ulster Tower Memorial on the Somme battlefields, a memorial commemorating the service and sacrifice of men from the island of Ireland at the Somme and the wider First World War. Travel with us to attend the commemoration service and visit some of the key battlefield sites.

Day 1: 18 November 2021

Fly from your local airport in Belfast to selected UK airports where you will join your tour coach and travel to Dover for the ferry crossing to France. We continue to our hotel in Northern France for three nights.

Day 2: 19 November 2021

Today is the Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Tower. We attend the ceremony and events here, with time to visit Thiepval Wood. Later, we look at the fighting on the Somme, seeing the Pozieres Memorial to the Missing, the battlefield at Guillemont and ending at the impressive Thiepval Memorial to the Missing. B



Messines Ridge

Day 3: 20 November 2021

We travel to Flanders and look at the role of Irish Regiments here in the fighting during the Great War. On the Messines Ridge we visit the Island of Ireland Peace Tower, look at the battlefield where the 16th (Irish) and 36th (Ulster) Divisions fought side-by-side in June 1917, seeing the Spanbroekmolen mine crater, the Lone Tree Cemetery and the nearby memorials at Wytchaete. After lunch we visit the battlefield at Hill 60, and then look at the Third Battle of Ypres seeing the areas where Irish Regiments fought and visiting the vast Tyne Cot Cemetery and Memorial, the largest British War Cemetery in the World. In the evening we have free time in Ypres, prior to attending The Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, which is sounded at 8pm each evening. B



Thiepval Memorial

Day 4: 21 November 2021

We travel back to the UK and to your UK airport for the flight back to Northern Ireland. B



Tyne Cot Cemetery

4 days from £549

Your tour includes...

- 3 nights hotel with continental breakfast
- Specialist Battlefield Guide
- Return flights from Belfast to the UK (supplements may apply) with one piece of hand luggage
- Battlefield visits as described

Key visits

- ✓ Ulster Tower Centenary Commemoration
- ✓ Thiepval Wood
- ✓ Pozieres Memorial to the Missing
- ✓ Thiepval Memorial to the Missing
- ✓ Messines Ridge
- ✓ Spanbroekmolen Mine Crater
- ✓ Tyne Cot Cemetery
- ✓ Last Post Ceremony

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021
Subject:	Request for names to be added to Killyleagh War Memorial
Reporting Officer:	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Contact Officer:	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)

For decision	x	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	Council has received a request on behalf of the Royal British Legion and Killyleagh Remembers The Great War Group to add names of deceased servicemen who died in World Wars One and Two to Killyleagh War Memorial.
1.2	The purpose of this report is to set out Council's powers in this matter and seek approval in relation to the request.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	Legislative provision relating to Council's powers in relation to War Memorials is contained within the following: Section 42 Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 Section 7 Local Government Act (NI) 1923 Section 8 Public Health and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1955 Schedule 3 to The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985.
2.2	Essentially the Local Government Act (NI) 1923, as amended, gives Council the power to maintain, repair, protect and light War Memorials within the District whether vested in it or not. These are discretionary powers. Council is also permitted to incur reasonable expenditure in the alteration of any War Memorial so as to make it serve as a Memorial in connection with which it was erected and in the correction of any error or omission in the inscription on any such Memorial.
2.3	Traditionally Council has carried out repair works to War Memorials, replaced names missing from War Memorials, added additional names upon request, organised power washing and painted surrounding railings. In relation to additional names upon request, such requests are infrequent, the last one having been received by the Administration Department back in 2012. Ordinarily the requests will come from relatives, the Royal British Legion or local historical groups who undertake research to identify servicemen with a local connection.

2.4	Council's traditional approach to War Memorials as set out in 2.3 above was previously confirmed by DOE and legal opinion from Belfast City Council Legal Services Department.
2.5	On previous advice from DOE there is no formal criteria laid down nationally which covers the names to be included on a War Memorial. It is not however common practice for Councils to include on War Memorials the names of those killed whilst serving elsewhere than in international conflicts such as the two Great Wars and Korean War. The practice is for the names of soldiers and others killed in other conflicts to be added to the Roll of Honour of their individual Army Regiment/organisation.
2.6	<p>The request relates to the following deceased servicemen who were representative of both sides of the community:</p> <p>1st World War: Private John Henry McBratney; Private Daniel Atkinson; Private John Kinkead; Private John Morgan</p> <p>2nd World War: Fusilier John Henry McNeilly.</p>
2.7	<p>Evidence has been provided in support of the request including extracts from Army Roll Index Cards, birth registration information to prove the individuals originated from Killyleagh, Memorial Records and Commonwealth War Graves information. The application therefore appears to meet the criteria for the names to be included on a War Memorial traditionally sought by Council.</p> <p>It is proposed that the names will be added by engraving them on the War Memorial itself or by the addition of a plate to the War Memorial, dependent on the amount of space available.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	As the application appears to meet the criteria for names being added to a War Memorial traditionally sought by Council it is recommended that Council accede to this request and add the five names listed at 2.6 above to Killyleagh War Memorial.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	It is estimated that the proposed cost to Council in this matter will be less than £500. Whilst no budget allocation has been made to facilitate such applications it is proposed to use Council's General Maintenance budget to cover the cost, and therefore no additional expenditure will be incurred.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

	<p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	None.
8.0	Background Documents
	None.

Agenda

National Association of Councillors, General Management Meeting

13/01/2020

10.00am

The Queens Hotel, Leeds.

Meeting called by:
General Secretary

Note taker:

Attendees:
NAC Delegates

Agenda topics

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Chairman's Welcome | Cllr Stephen Brookes |
| 2. Apologies for Absence | |
| 3. Minutes of meeting held January 2020 | General Secretary |
| 4. Matter's Arising | |
| 5. General Secretary's Report | Brian Nelson |
| 6. Future role and titles of officers | |
| 7. NAC Certificate for Councillors,
University Course | |
| 8. Conferences and Training for
members | |
| 9. Finance Statement | |
| 10. Regional Reports | Regional Secretaries |
| 11. Covid 19 Members involvement | Open floor to Delegates |
| 12. Format & Dates for future meetings | |
| 13. Any other urgent Business, 7 days'
notice required | |
| 14. Lunch | |



Report to:	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2021
Subject:	Sickness Absence
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Louise Fitzsimons, Human Resources Manager
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Louise Fitzsimons, Human Resources Manager

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

For decision	For noting only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a year on year comparison of sickness absence levels in Council, for the 12 months ending 31 March 2021 compared with same period in 2020.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	For the twelve-month period ending 31 March 2021, days lost due to sickness decreased by 2,476 representing an overall decrease of 16.98%.
2.2	All Directorates experienced a reduction in short-term sickness absence and there was a decrease in long-term absence in two Directorates.
2.3	604 sickness absence days were attributed to Coronavirus for the twelve-month period ending 31 March 2021.
2.4	Between March 2020 and March 2021 approximately 318 employees were working from home and 223 employees were on furlough leave for some or all of that period.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To note the contents of this report.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	As detailed in Section 2 of this report (Key Issues)
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
	<p>1. General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>2. Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</p>

	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>3. Proposal initiating consultation</p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	None
8.0	Background Documents
	None

THE SOMME ASSOCIATION



Vice-Presidents
The Viscount Brookeborough, DL

Chairman
Mr Alan McFarland

Director
Mrs Carol Walker, MBE

233 Bangor Road
Newtownards
BT23 7PH

Telephone 028 91823202

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Website: www.sommeassociation.com

Email: sommeassociation@btconnect.com

Face Book: The Somme Association

Honorary President:

H.R.H The Duke of Gloucester, KG, GCVO

26th May 2021

Mr Liam Hannaway
Chief Executive
Newry Mourne and Down District Council
Monaghan Row
Newry
BT35 8DJ



Dear Mr Hannaway

Re: 'Friends of the Somme' yearly subscription 2021/22

I am writing to inform you that your council's yearly subscription to the Somme Association is now due. This year's fee, in line with the previous year, is as follows: £1,000.00 plus VAT of £200.00 making a total of £1,200.00. The subscription relates to the financial year ending 31st March 2022. Please find invoice enclosed which contains our bank details for BACS payments.

Due to the times we all find ourselves in, this year's annual subscription is extremely important to the Association and its' work going forward as we recover after COVID restrictions.

At a recent meeting of the Somme Advisory Council representatives from each Council were updated on our work over the past year and our future plans.

The Officers of the Somme Association wish me to thank your Council for its continued support over this very difficult time and sincerely hope that it will continue to support our work at the Somme Museum and the Ulster Memorial Tower, France. May I take this opportunity to send best wishes and continuing good health.

If you have any questions, you would like answered, please do not hesitate to contact me by email – sommeassociation@btconnect.com

Yours faithfully

Carol Walker MBE
Director
Enc.

The Somme Association

233 Bangor Road
Newtownards, Co. Down, BT23 7PH
United Kingdom
Telephone: 02891823202
Mobile 07712833082
Email sommeassociation@btconnect.com

Invoice To:

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Monaghan Row
Newry
BT35 8DJ

SALES INVOICE

Invoice Date 25/05/2021	Due Date 24/06/2021	Reference SAMEM2022003	Customer Code New002	Invoice Number SI-1848
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Code	Description	Qty/Hrs	Price/Rate	VAT %	Net Amt
Membership/Subscription Fees	Council Membership Apr21-Mar22	1.00	1,000.00	20.00	1,000.00

VAT Rate	Net	VAT	Net Amount	1,000.00
Standard 20.00% (20.00%)	£1,000.00	£200.00	VAT Amount	200.00
			TOTAL	£1,200.00

Notes:

Make all cheques payable to: Somme Association
BACs: Account Name: The Somme Association, Somme Association Account
Bank: First Trust
Sort Code: 93-84-91
Account No. 13603367

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting
held on Tuesday 13th April 2021, 11am
MS Teams**

In Attendance:

Councillors

Councillor Roisin Mulgrew - Chair
Councillor Pete Byrne
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Gary Stokes
Councillor David Taylor
Councillor Gavin Malone

NMDDC Officials

Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration
Paul Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Andy Patterson, Assistant Director, Tourism Culture and Events
Janine Walker, Arts Officer (Programming)
Tracie McLoughlin, PA

External Members

Damian Mulholland, Dept for Communities

Apologies:

Cllr W Walker
Mr M Lipsett
Mr C Quinn

Also Attending: Mr Geoff Fenlon, Excellence in Work for Agenda Item 7

NCCR/60:- Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr W Walker, Mr Michael Lipsett and Mr Colin Quinn

NCCR/61: Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 3rd March 2021

Noted: Minutes have previously been agreed by Members and noted at Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on 11th March 2021.

NCCR/62: Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration/Belfast Region City Deal Project Board Meeting held on 23rd March 2021

Noted: It was agreed to 'Note' the Minutes of the NCCR/BRCD 23rd March 2021

NCCR/63: Minutes of Albert Basin Park Project Meeting held on 23rd March 2021

Noted: It was agreed to 'note' the Minutes of the Albert Basin Park Project Meeting held on 23rd March 2021.

NCCR/64: Request by Cllr G Stokes to invite representatives from Newry Parish Council to the next meeting of the NCCR Program Board.

The Chairperson Cllr R Mulgrew advised Members that the co-chairs of this Programme Board wrote to the Chair and Vice Chair of Newry Parish Council (NPC) seeking clarification on the original source of the request to attend the Program Board meeting and asking if they would confirm their wish to attend. The Chair and Vice Chair of NPC advised that the Parish Council will discuss this at their next Meeting scheduled for Wed 14th April and will respond back with their decision.

Cllr Malone asked that it be put on record that he was disappointed at the decision taken at Council Meeting on 7th April 2021 not to hold a full Council Meeting and invite the Newry Parish Council to discuss this matter and he was amazed that Newry Parish Council are grouped in with other stakeholders in the engagement and consultation process. Cllr Malone asked if members of this programme board were made aware that the co-chairs had invited NPC to a meeting with them only?

The Chairperson repeated that the co-chairs had contacted Newry Parish Council representatives for the purpose of clarification if they had indeed requested a meeting with the Programme Board.

Cllr Taylor noted the NPC concerns over car parking, and lack of progress being made in relation to the cathedral garden and reiterated need to discuss these issues with the NPC.

Cllr Taylor said he would welcome the opportunity to meet with the NPC to clarify the position on carparking and the gardens.

Cllr Taylor also said he was concerned regarding the recent meeting co-chairs had with a media representative. He said it was agreed at the previous Programme Board Meeting that all responses to media enquiries would be signed off collectively by the members of the Programme Board but Members were not made aware that a meeting would be taking place with the co-chairs and the Newry Reporter editor.

The Chairperson suggested that future media enquiries should be responded to stating that 'this will be discussed at the next meeting of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting and a response issued thereafter'.

Cllr Stokes asked:

Q1. Can we have an update from officers on previous discussions with the Parish representatives? The Chairperson said this will be addressed later in the meeting.

Q2. What is DfC's view on the Project with particular reference to NPC opposition to the Civic Hub and the gardens access.

Damian Mulholland said DfC await the outcome of the full public consultation and said the decision to build a Civic & Regional Hub was not DfCs and whilst they have not looked at the benefits of this specifically they are supportive of it. He also said that NPC should be consulted as a stakeholder and an adjacent landowner.

Cllr Stokes agreed that NPC should be considered as a separate consultee and proposed that representatives of Newry Parish Council be invited to the next Programme Board Meeting.

Conor Mallon advised members that as reported at Full Council Meeting on 7th April 2021 the governance arrangements did not allow for the Newry Parish Council to attend a meeting with the full Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board, and the proposal for a special council meeting with the NPC was not agreed.

Conor Mallon advised that although the recent statement by Newry Parish Council stated that they had met with Council Officials three times, he was only aware of them meeting with himself and A Grimshaw on 2 occasions. Once in Sept 2020 and again in Jan 2021. Officials are scheduled to meet with NPC on 20th April. He confirmed that at both meetings, carparking was discussed and they advised that spaces will be relocated and up to 50/60 of the existing spaces retained.

He further advised members that at both meetings with NPC there was no indication of a reluctance to include the gardens in any proposals and that Council officials had presented drawings of the proposals for the Civic and Regional hub and associated public realm to inform the parish representative and the Parish Council. At the meeting in January an update on the proposed car parking and transportation strategy for Newry City was reported to the Parish representatives and they were advised that progress on this strategy has been impacted by covid as DfI Roads have advised that

any traffic survey information collected at this time would not be reflective of normal conditions.

Mr Mallon advised that copies of the documents presented to the Parish representatives at the meetings will be shared to the members by Adrian Grimshaw. He asked members to note that the drawings within the documents are representative of the project at that time.

Cllr Byrne said that the Programme Board previously agreed to wait on the DfI Traffic and Transport Studies which are delayed due to Covid but thought that we need to put this back on the agenda.

Cllr Taylor considered that performing current traffic and transport surveys at this time would not be an accurate reflection of normal conditions.

In summary, the Chairperson Cllr Mulgrew confirmed:
Invite has been issued to Newry Parish Council to attend a meeting of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board and we await their response.
All Members agreed to note.

NCCR/65: Theatre/Conference Half Fly Tower

Adrian Grimshaw advised members that at the Value Engineering Workshop on 2nd Dec 2020, it was agreed that officials look into the benefits of provision of a Half fly tower and report back to the Programme Board.

Mr Grimshaw outlined the key issues and following discussion, members agreed with the Officers recommendations:

Agreed: Members noted the content of the report and unanimously agreed that the half fly tower is omitted from the new theatre auditorium.

NCCR/66: Theatre/Conference Theoretical Diary

Adrian Grimshaw provided Members with an oversight of the developing theoretical diary and key issues. He said it provides a vision of the facility in use in 10 years time and broadly sets out how the facility will be utilised, the range and number of events it will host, the staffing demands and the potential income generated.

Agreed: Members noted the contents of the report and unanimously agreed to the continued development of the theoretical diary on the basis noted.

NCCR/67: Frequently Asked Questions

Adrian Grimshaw presented the report and advised it relates to a number of regularly cited questions being posed within the public domain in response to the ongoing business case consultation process. The purpose of this report is to table the circulated 'Your Questions Answered' graphic for the Programme Board to consider and approve for use on Councils social media channels and in media/ print.

Damian Mulholland commented:

- a. Carparking - can wording on statement be stronger, exclude word 'mitigating'... ie 'we will ensure sufficient parking to meet needs'
- b. Calculated benefits – DfC have focussed on the analysis for BRCD Public Realm and Urban Development Grant (Grade A) elements
- c. Albert Basin consultation – suggested providing indication how this is going to be assessed/ developed.
- d. DfC did not agree with ranking projects within the consultation.

It was agreed that Mr Grimshaw will contact Mr Mulholland to discuss these further.

Cllr Stokes commented:

- a. Carparking – wording should indicate 'relocating' as opposed to 'mitigating'
- b. Footfall to businesses – suggest changing 'aim to increase' to 'this will increase' if we are not confident that this will increase footfall then leave it out.
- c. Office Space – he had seen no evidence to demonstrate market failure in this area.

Cllr Byrne commented:

- a. Carparking – agree wording should be changed to 'relocating'.
- b. Albert Basin – Programme Board did not agree to ranking projects.
- c. Office Space – further discussion is need on this and more indication on the benefits.

The Chairperson thanked Members for their comments and asked that Officials make the changes and circulate to members for approval today. She further asked how this will be advertised?

Mr Mallon advised that this will be issued on social media tomorrow and in local press next week along with a press statement from all members of the Programme Board.

EXEMPT ITEMS**NCCR/68: Newry City Centre Regeneration Dashboard**

Mr Grimshaw summarised the programme overview noting the various interdependencies and targeted timescales.

Cllr Stokes asked if there was a budget for the relocation of the carpark.

Mr Grimshaw advised that there was no budget currently allocated as per previous agreement until Traffic and Transport Studies were completed.

D Mulholland stated it would be useful to set out timescales in the media and public risks section and it should be advised that the Traffic and Transport Studies are not expected to be available until at least Sept 2021.

C Mallon advised he had recently contacted DfI for an update on the expected commencement date for the Traffic and Transport Study and he will report back to the Programme Board.

Noted: Following discussion, all Members in attendance agreed to 'Note' the content of the Dashboard documents as presented.

This concluded the business of the Meeting. The Meeting ended at 12.50pm

**For approval at Newry City Centre Programme Board Meeting 20th May 2021
To be ratified at the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee
Meeting 17th June 2021**

**NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD
WORKSHOP
4TH MAY 2021 11AM**

In Attendance:

Councillor R Mulgrew (Chair)
Councillor C Casey
Councillor G Malone
Councillor G Stokes
Councillor P Byrne
Councillor W Walker
Conor Mallon, Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director ERT
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Damian Mulholland, Dept for Communities
Tracie McLoughlin, PA to ERT Director

Ben Aston, Hamilton Architects
Mark Priestly, Hamilton Architects

Apologies:

Councillor D Taylor
Michael Lipsett
Colin Quinn
Andy Patterson

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Ben Aston and Mark Priestly from Hamilton Architects who would present on the Theatre/Conference Facility and the Civic & Regional Hub.

Presentation by Ben Aston on Theatre & Conference Facility.

Ben began by highlighting the project aims and the concept approach.

Aims:

- New purpose-built theatre with ancillary services supporting Town Hall
- Conferences, Bar & Café, outdoor event space
- Enhance Newry Town Hall
- Catalyst for regeneration

Approach:

- Boundary
- Theatre service constraints
- Public Connectivity.

Ben displayed proposed site and ground floor plans and further detailed the project aims for the Newry Town Hall and the Theatre:

Newry Town Hall:

- Improved acoustics
- Upgraded cooling and ventilation
- New good & accessible lifts
- Refurbished back-of-house
- New flexible rooms for exhibition, meetings
- workshops & offices

New flexible theatre:

- End-on layout approx. 250 seats
- 'In the round', cabaret & conference
- Upper and lower balconies
- Bleacher seating
- Innovation hub with flexible studio rehearsal
- space & recording studio

Atrium:

- Open space between Town Hall and New Theatre
- Shared box-office, café, bar and viewing gallery;
- Bridge connections to existing openings in Town Hall.

The Chair thanked Mr Aston for his presentation and opened for questions/comments.

Cllr Stokes thanked Mr Aston for the detail provided and said it was good to get an update. Cllr Stokes asked:

- a) what is the increased audience capacity number?
- b) What is the projected opening date.

Mr Aston responded that the ability to programme efficiently would increase audience capacity as opposed to the seating provision, i.e. multiple performances can be scheduled on the same day as the facility will provide more efficient workable functions.

Mr Grimshaw advised that existing capacity at the Arts Centre was circa 125 – the new space will provide circa 258 spaces and said officers are mindful not to create a situation whereby the Arts Centre is directly competing against the Town Hall.

In relation to the projected opening date, Mr Grimshaw advised that this was dependant on approvals such as planning submission, procurement and thereafter build time.

Mr Mulholland thanked Mr Aston and commented that the concept design looked great. He asked if we are in PAD discussions yet and if so, when can these be expected to complete.

Mr Grimshaw confirmed that there are pre-planning application discussions ongoing, principally with HED and DFI Roads and subject to design acceptance a further pre-planning public consultation session is to be arranged.

The Chair thanked the members for their comments and asked Mr Priestly to proceed with his presentation on the Civic and Regional Hub.

Presentation by Mark Priestly on Civic and Regional Hub.

Mr Priestly presented on:

- Existing Site
- Concept Plan
- Materials
- Concept Elevations
- Verified views
- Floor & Roof Plans
- Concept Designs
- Proposed Elevations
- Proposed Site Plan

The Chair thanked Mr Priestly for his presentation and opened for questions/comments, proposing that questions related to the Newry Cathedral and Parish are considered under the separate agenda item.

Cllr Casey welcomed the presentation and said it was an exciting proposal and he was pleased to see the retention of some car parking spaces behind the Cathedral. He commented that there was good pedestrian access which blended in tastefully and the design is good given the restrictions from HED.

Mr Mulholland commended the Architects on the excellent concept designs and asked:

- a) Have DFI expressed an opinion through the PAD process?
- b) Has on-street carparking been moved?
- c) Who calculated the 'slow 5min walk' to access the alternative spaces as indicated in the separate paper?
- d) Show where the replaced carparking spaces are as the Programme Board committed to at the previous meeting.

Mr Priestly responded:

- a) the team have ongoing discussion with DFI Roads
- b) There are currently 150-180 surface carparking spaces – 32 of these are being retained at Lower Water Street; with further provision of spaces alongside the building.

Mr Mallon noted that proposals for active and sustainable travel etc will reduce traffic flow and officers expect survey of the baseline traffic and car parking surveys to commence in June. Mr Mallon advised these surveys have been

delayed due to impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. A traffic engineer was appointed as part of the existing consultant teams.

Cllr Byrne thanked Mr Priestly for the presentation and commented that we all should be up to date on the active travel commitments, parking and impact the pandemic has had. Cllr Byrne also commented he is aware that there are ongoing discussions with the Parish Council on use of the cathedral garden space, and questioned what the Newry Parish had seen and whether it would be beneficial for the Parish Council to view this presentation?

In response to Cllr Byrne the Chair proposed that questions related to the Newry Cathedral and Parish are considered under the separate agenda item.

Cllr Stokes thanked the presenters and commented that we should be mindful that with the green travel aspects, parking will need to be provided for electric charging points. With regards to the Civic and Regional hub, Cllr Stokes enquired will the façade of the building facing Mill Street be regenerated to provide a more favourable view?

Mr Priestly advised that the building would be stepped back and will also be elevated, this along with enhanced street paving on Mill Street will provide an enhanced view.

Cllr Malone welcomed the presentation and thanked the presenters for the excellent concept designs, and was keen to receive an update on the status of discussions with Newry Cathedral on the garden proposal

The Chairperson, Cllr Mulgrew said these are evolving concepts and said the underpass linkage from the North Street car park and the new buildings is vital and would need upgrading to address safety concerns and encourage use.

(12:15pm - Cllr Casey, Mr Priestly and Mr Aston left the meeting)

Report of Site Meeting 20th April 2021 – Newry Cathedral Parish

The Chairperson referred to letter members had received from Newry Parish Council regarding the Civic & Regional Hub. She said it was disappointing that the Parish had indicated their requests for meetings had been ignored by Council, when in fact the Co-chairs wrote to the Parish Representatives 4 weeks ago requesting a meeting but the offer was not availed of.

Cllr Malone said he also received the letter and said it was concerning that the Parish are verbally telling elected representatives that their concerns are not being addressed by Council Officials. Cllr Malone said the Programme Board need to meet with the Parish Representatives as a matter of urgency to clarify the situation.

The Chair Cllr Mulgrew confirmed that the co-chairs had been communicating with the Parish on behalf of the Programme Board and this has been reported back to the Programme Board at the monthly meetings. She stated that each member has a responsibility to relay any information back through to their parties/constituents.

A Grimshaw responded to previous comments:

Cllr Byrne – What had Parish Representatives seen of the Civic and Regional Hub proposals? A Grimshaw advised that the Parish Representatives have been kept updated at various meetings with Officials and have been provided with overview of similar concept drawings to the Programme Board.

In response to plan depicting car parking within a 5 minute walk of the Cathedral, A Grimshaw advised that the consultant traffic engineers Systra had reviewed and were content with the analysis.

As an aside, A Grimshaw advised he was continuing to work with Council and NICS representatives and legal teams on developing a Head of Terms with the NICS for the Regional element of the hub.

Cllr Stokes declared for noting that himself and Cllr Savage met with the Parish Representatives on 22nd April.

Cllr Byrne said it was disappointing that the Programme Boards request to meet with the Parish Representatives was not taken up and proposed that a further letter be sent requesting an urgent meeting.

Cllr Malone asked if the previous offer to meet the Parish Representatives was for the co-chairs to meet or with the full Programme Board? The Chairperson confirmed the invitation was for the full Programme Board to meet with the Parish Representatives. Cllr Malone proposed that this information is released in the public domain.

D Mulholland said today's presentation was excellent and we need to continue to communicate the good work being done through our key stakeholders. Mr Mulholland said the Department had worked on similar engagement and he would forward details to Council Officials.

The Chairperson said as soon as Covid-19 restrictions are eased and public events are permitted we can continue with further face to face public engagement.

Cllr Stokes welcomed Mr Mulholland's suggestion of further engagement with stakeholders. Cllr Stokes advised he received 2 x letters from Newry Parish Council which we is willing to share with the Programme Board. Cllrs Byrne & Mulgrew advised they had **not** received a second letter. Cllr Malone also advised he received 2 x letters and said it was not acceptable that some Councillors on the Board were excluded from correspondence from the Parish.

Cllr Malone agreed with Mr Mulholland's previous suggestion of further engagement with stakeholders under the Terms of Reference of this Programme Board, arrangements have already been agreed for this engagement but given the seriousness of the Parish situation we must engage with this stakeholder as a matter of urgency.

AGREED ACTIONS:

The Co-chairs write to Newry Parish Council requesting an urgent meeting with the Programme Board.

The Workshop concluded at 12:50pm
For noting at the Newry City Centre Programme Board Meeting
on 20th May 2021.

DRAFT