



July 4th, 2023

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Audit Committee Meeting to be held on **Tuesday, 4th July 2023** at **2:00 pm** in **Chamber Downshire Civic Centre Downpatrick.**

Committee Membership 2023 - 2024

Ms Brona Slevin Independent **Chairperson**

Councillor C Bowsie

Councillor J Brennan

Councillor L Devlin

Councillor M Gibbons

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor T Kelly

Councillor C King

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor G Sharvin

Agenda

1.0 Appointment of Chairperson of Audit Committee. (Attached)

 *Rpt re Extension of Chairperson AC.pdf*

Page 1

2.0 Apologies & Chairperson's Remarks

Cllr L Devlin

Mr G Byrne Assistant Director (Finance)

3.0 Declaration of Interest

4.0 Action Sheet – Audit Committee meeting held 4 April 2023. (Attached)

 *4 - Action Sheet - Audit Cmte 04 April 2023.pdf*

Page 4

5.0 Audit Committee Annual Report. (Attached)

 *Cover Rpt re B Slevin Annual Report 2022-23.pdf*

Page 11

 *Chairpersons Annual Report 2022-23 UPdated 26 June 2023.pdf*

Page 14

Corporate Services - (OPEN SESSION)


6.0 Corporate Risk Register – NS Directorate Risk Register also to be tabled. (Attached)

 *6 - Corporate Risk Register June 2023.pdf*

Page 23

 *6 - Appendix 1 - CRR Overview - June 2023.pdf*

Page 26

 *6 - Appendix 2 - CRR - June 2023.pdf*

Page 27

 *6 - Appendix 3 - SE Directorate Risk Register.pdf*

Page 51

7.0 Prompt Payments. (Attached)

 *7 - Prompt Payments Report Q4.pdf*

Page 61

8.0 NMMDC Assurance Framework and Code of Governance.

(Attached)

 **8 - Assurance Framework and Annual Governance Statement.pdf**

Page 65

 **8 - Appendix 1 - Assurance Framework and Code of Governance 2021-22.pdf**

Page 68

Corporate Services (CLOSED SESSION)

9.0 Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and Accounts - update. (Attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.

 **9 - Draft Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts 202223.pdf**

Not included

 **9 - Appendix 1 - NMDDC Draft Statement of Accounts 31 March 2023.pdf**

Not included

 **9 - Appendix 2 - DfC LG 07-23 - Accounts Direction Circular 2022-23 - NI District Councils.pdf**

Not included

10.0 Update on Audit Recommendations. (Attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.

 **10 - Update on Audit Recommendations June 2023.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 2 - Audit Follow Up Tracker June 2023.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 3 - Audit Follow Up Tracker June 2023.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 4 - Audit Follow Up Tracker June 2023.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 5 - Audit Follow Up Tracker June 2023.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 6- Audit Follow Up Tracker June 2023.pdf**


Not included

11.0 Direct Award Contracts. (Attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.

 **11 - Cover Report - Direct Award Contracts.pdf**

Not included

 **11 - Appendix 1 - STA-DAC Q1.pdf**

Not included

12.0 Update on Fraud and Whistleblowing (including NFI). (Attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.

 **12 - Fraud and Raising Concerns update new.pdf**

Not included

 **12 - Appendix 1 - Fraud and Raising Concerns Register.pdf**

Not included

Internal Audit (CLOSED SESSION)

13.0 2022/23 Annual Assurance Report. (Attached)


This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.

 **13 - 2022.23 NMDDC Annual Assurance Report - Final.pdf**

Not included

14.0 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan. (Attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.


 **14 - 2023 to 2027 NMDDC IA Strategy and charter - draft for AC consideration v2.pdf**

Not included

NIAO (CLOSED SESSION)

15.0 NIAO Audit Strategy 2022/23. (Attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted by virtue of 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.

 **15 - NMD Audit Strategy 22-23 Cover Letter - to issue.pdf**





Not included

 **15 - NMD audit strategy 2022-23 - for issue.pdf**

Not included

Performance

16.0 Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24. (Attached)

 16 - Audit Committee Cover Report PIP 2023-24.pdf	Page 85
 16 Appendix 1 - Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.pdf	Page 88
 6 - Appendix 2 - CRR - June 2023.pdf	Page 125
 6 - Appendix 3 - SE Directorate Risk Register.pdf	Page 149

Circulars

17.0 Circular LG 13/23 - FILLING POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY ON A COUNCIL. (Attached)

 17 - Ig-13-2023-Fill Positions of Responsibility on a Council.pdf	Page 159
---	----------

18.0 CIRCULAR LG 14/2023 - APPOINTING COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES.. (Attached)

 18 - Ig-14-2023- Appointing Councillors to Committees.pdf	Page 180
---	----------

19.0 CIRCULAR LG 15/2023 - DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE. (Attached)

 19 - Ig-15-2023- Declaration of Acceptance of Office.pdf	Page 192
--	----------

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Ms Karen Beattie

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Mr Stephen Brannigan

Cllr Jim Brennan

Cllr Pete Byrne

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Mr Andrew Cassells

Cllr William Clarke

Mrs Linda Cummins

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Doire Finn

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Christine Hagan

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Roisin Howell

Ms Catherine Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Cllr Tierna Kelly

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Shona McConville

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Deborah McKim

Cllr Andrew McMurray

Cllr Declan Murphy

Cllr Kate Murphy

Cllr Selina Murphy
.....
Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
.....
Cllr Áine Quinn
.....
Cllr Henry Reilly
.....
Cllr Michael Rice
.....
Cllr Michael Ruane
.....
Cllr Michael Savage
.....
Cllr Gareth Sharvin
.....
Ms Brona Slevin
.....
Donna Starkey
.....
Sarah Taggart
.....
Cllr David Taylor
.....
Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
.....
Cllr Jill Truesdale
.....
Mrs Marie Ward
.....

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	4 th July 2023
Subject:	Extension of Chairperson
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly

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

For decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---------------------	--------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------------

1.0	Purpose and Background
	Contract for Independent Chair of the Audit Committee has been extended to 31 st October 2023. This will allow time to undertake an external recruitment for this position in late summer.
2.0	Key issues
3.0	Recommendations
	To note that extension has been extended by 4 months to allow time for recruitment of position.
4.0	Resource implications
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> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p>

	The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
8.0	Background Documents	

ACTION SHEET

AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY 04 APRIL 2023

Actions: arising from Audit Committee Meeting – 18 January 2023

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
AC/027/2023	ACTION SHEET: AUDIT COMMITTEE MTG 18 JANUARY 2023	To note the Action Sheet for Audit Committee Meeting held on Wed 18 January 2022	Brona Slevin	Noted	Y
AC/028/2023	DATES/START TIMES AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2023-2024	To note the following dates and start times, in respect of Audit Committee Meetings from July 2023 to April 2024, which will be tabled for formal approval via the Council's Annual Meeting to held on Monday 05 June 2023:	Brona Slevin	Agreed	Y

			<p>-Tuesday 04 July 2023 at 2.00pm</p> <p>-Thursday 21 September 2023 at 2.00pm</p> <p>-Tuesday 09 January 2024 at 2.00pm</p> <p>-Tuesday 09 April 2024 at 2.00pm</p>			
AC/029/2023	<p>AUDIT COMMITTEE</p> <p>- TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>- TIMETABLE</p>	<p>1. To approve the Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee.</p> <p>2. To note the Audit Committee Timetable 2023-2024.</p>	Gerard Byrne	Approved	Y	
AC/030/2023	<p>AUDIT COMMITTEE SELF ASSESSMENT 2022/2023</p>	<p>To approve Report from Ms B Slevin Independent Chairperson of Audit Committee, and note the Audit Committee Self-Assessment 2022/2023.</p>	Brona Slevin	Approved	Y	

AC/031/2023	ANNUAL ASSESSMENT RE: CHAIRPERSONS' PERFORMANCE AUDIT COMMITTEE 2022-23	To note the Annual Assessment of the Chairperson's Performance in respect of the Audit Committee for 2022/23.	Gerard Byrne	Noted	Y
AC/032/2023	CORPORATE RISK REGISTER	A) To approve the updates to the Corporate Risk Register highlighted within the summary at Appendix 1. (Full Corporate Risk Register can be evidenced at Appendix 2) B) To note the revised Corporate Services Directorate Risk Register at Appendix 3.	Gerard Byrne Gerard Byrne	Approved Noted	Y Y
AC/033/2023	PROMPT PAYMENT STATISTICS	To note the Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 2022-23 Prompt Payment statistics.	Gerard Byrne	Noted	Y

AC/034/2023	(EXEMPT) UPDATE RE-AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS	To note the update in relation to legacy audit recommendations.	Edel Cosgrove	Noted	Y
AC/035/2023	(EXEMPT) DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS	To note the Quarter 4 update in relation to Single Tender Actions.	Shona McConville	Noted	Y
AC/036/2023	(EXEMPT) CONTRACTS MAPPING WORK	To note the update in relation to the Procurement Action Plans for each Directorate and note the request for a report to be submitted to the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2023.	Shona McConville	Noted	Y
AC/037/2023	(EXEMPT) FRAUD & WHISTLEBLOWING	a) To note the update in relation to Fraud and Raising Concerns cases which have been detailed at Appendix 1. b) To note the Risk Based Approach to sampling of National Fraud Initiative matches as per NIAO guidelines.	Gerard Byrne Gerard Byrne	Noted Noted	Y Y

		c) To note the progress on actions arising from the NIAO Internal Fraud Risk Self Assessment.	Gerard	Noted	Y
AC/038/2023	(EXEMPT) ASM INTERNAL AUDIT SUMMARY REPORT	To note the ASM Internal Audit Summary Report and the request for an update on recruitment for the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2023.	Christine Hagan	Noted	Y
AC/039/2023	(EXEMPT) 2022/2023 ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT	To note the ASM Annual Internal Audit Assurance Report dated 01 April 2023, and refer for noting at the Audit Committee Meeting in July 2023.	Christine Hagan	Noted – although to go back to July Meeting as some Members had to leave the meeting early.	N
AC/040/2023	(EXEMPT) ASM INTERNAL AUDIT RE: 2021/22 FOLLOW UP WORK	To note ASM Internal Audit - Fieldwork 2022/23 - Follow up review.	Christine Hagan	Noted	Y

AC/041/2023	(EXEMPT) ASM INTERNAL AUDIT RE: COMMUNITY CENTRES	To note ASM Internal Audit -Audit Fieldwork 2022/23 – Report dated 14 March 2023 regarding Community Centres.	Christine Hagan	Noted	Y
AC/042/2023	(EXEMPT) ASM INTERNAL AUDIT RE REVIEW OF LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIPS	To note ASM Internal Audit Audit Fieldwork 2022/23 – Report dated 16 March 2023 regarding Review of Labour Market Partnerships.	Christine Hagan	Noted	Y
AC/043/2023	(EXEMPT) ASM INTERNAL AUDIT RE: REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES	To note ASM Internal Audit - Audit Fieldwork 2022/23 – Report dated 13 March 2023 regarding performance measures.	Christine Hagan	Noted	Y
AC/044/2023	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES	a) The 5 Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2023- 24, as outlined in Appendix 1. b) The proposed approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24, as outlined in Appendix 2, including approval to commence the consultation and engagement process on 20 March 2023.	Catherine Hughes	Noted	Y

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	
Subject:	Audit Committee Annual Report 2022-23
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Brona Slevin Independent Chair of Audit Committee
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Brona Slevin Independent Chair of Audit Committee

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

For decision	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------	--	------------------------	--------------------------

Members are asked to consider and approve the contents of this report prior to Reporting to Council.

1.0	Purpose and Background The Annual Report summarises the key activities and highlights any key issues arising throughout the year. This Report will inform the Governance Statement contained within the Council's Annual Accounts.
2	Key Issues The Annual Report of the Newry Mourne and Down Audit Committee for 2022-23 is attached.
3.0	Recommendations Members are asked to consider and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2022-23. The approved Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2022-23 to be reported to Council.
4.0	Resource implications None.
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</p>	<input 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	<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</p>	<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"/>
	Rationale:	
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</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
	Appendix 1 – Audit Committee Annual Report for 2022-23	
8.0	Background Documents	

--	--

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Audit Committee
Annual Report for 2022/2023

1. Overview

1.1 This Annual Report provides an overview of the Audit Committee activities for the Financial Year 2022/23 and demonstrates how the Committee has met its key responsibilities.

1.2 The Audit Committee met on four occasions during the year; on 19 July 2022, 22 September 2022, 18 January 2023 and 04 April 2023. A programme of work had been agreed by the Audit Committee and was allocated over a schedule of four meetings during the year.

1.3 The role of the Audit Committee is to support the Chief Executive (Accounting Officer) and Council by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment and the integrity of the financial statements.

2. Attendance

2.1 Members' attendance at committee meetings were as follows:

ATTENDANCE NARRATIVE – AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (July 2022 – April 2023)						
COUNCILLOR NAME	AUDIT COMMITTEE 19 July 2022	AUDIT COMMITTEE 22 September 2022	AUDIT COMMITTEE 18 January 2023	AUDIT COMMITTEE 04 April 2023		TOTAL MEETINGS ATTENDED
Indp Chair Ms B Slevin	✓	✓	✓	✓		4/4
Cllr K Owens		✓	Was not a Committee Member	Was not a Committee Member		1/2
Cllr Bowsle (replaced K Owen – 13.01.2023)	Was not a Committee Member	Was not a Committee Member	✓	✓		2/2
Cllr J Brennan (replaced C Mason & appointed to AC Cmttee after Sept Mtg)	Was not a Committee Member	Was not a Committee Member		✓		1 / 2
Cllr P Byrne	✓	✓	✓	✓		4/4
Cllr L Devlin		✓	✓			2/4
Cllr C Enright						0/4
Cllr M Gibbons						0/4
Cllr G Kearns (replaced C Casey – 13.01.23)	Was not a Committee Member	Was not a Committee Member				0/2
Cllr A Lewis		✓	✓	✓		3/4

2.2 Ms Brona Slevin was appointed as an Independent Member of the Audit Committee in March 2019 and in accordance with the Committee’s terms of reference took up the role of Chairperson in July 2019 after the previous Chairperson Mr Joe Campbell, stepped down. The appointment has been extended to October 2023.

2.3 The Audit Committee meetings requires the attendance of the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services and the Internal Auditors. The Assistant Director of Finance and Performance and NIAO representatives also usually attend and the Senior Management Team and other Senior Officers attend by invitation.

3. Performance Evaluation

3.1 In accordance with best practice, the Audit Committee self-assessed its performance against the National Audit Office Checklist for Audit Committees during the year which found it to be performing at a high level. The results were presented to the meeting on 04 April 2023. The Committee agreed the following actions/recommendations to build further effectiveness:

Principle 2: Skills

- (a) political parties to be asked to give consideration to appointing Elected Members for a term greater than one year where possible which will enable knowledge and skills to be built up in this area. Generally there is little change in the Audit Committee make up which shows the Council is committed to keeping the experience and knowledge of Members on the Audit Committee.
- (b) training for all Members on the Audit Committee to be progressed.

Principle 3 and 4: The role and scope of the Committee

- (c) the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference is approved by the Audit Committee annually. This is completed annually.

Principle 5: Communication and Reporting

- (d) Officers continue to strive to ensure internal audit reports are completed and reported on a timely basis to the Audit Committee.
- (e) Officers continue to strive to ensure that all papers are provided on a timely basis to Democratic Services so that papers are issued in compliance with Standing Orders so that Members have sufficient time to review them.

Members can take reassurance from the number of good practice questions that have been answered 'yes' demonstrating that the Audit Committee is following best practice and operating effectively.

3.2 An appraisal of the Chairperson performance was also completed by the Assistant Director of Finance and Performance and Councillor Murphy and it was agreed that the Chair carried out their role very effectively.

4. Terms of Reference

4.1 A review of the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference was undertaken and approved by Council on 5 March 2019 as part of the review of the terms of references of all Committees of Council. The Audit Committee noted the approved Terms of Reference at its meeting on 15 April 2019. The Audit Committee's Terms of Reference was again approved at the Audit Committee Meeting in July 2020, in April 2021, April 2022 and April 2023.

5. 2021/22 Financial Statements and External Audit

5.1 The Council's Audited Financial Statements for 2021/22 including the Annual Governance Statement were reviewed by the Audit Committee on 22 September 2022. The Committee also reviewed the draft Report to Those Charged With Governance.

5.2 The Audit Committee was pleased to note that the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) had certified the financial Statements with an unqualified audit Opinion and the Audit Committee approved the Accounts for signing.

5.3 The Audit Committee noted the contents of the final Report To Those Charged With Governance with management responses and the Annual Audit Letter at its meeting on 18 January 2023.

6. Risk Management

6.1 The Committee welcomed the continued good progress made by Officers on Risk Management and the structure put in place to ensure ownership and management of risk at all levels of the organisation.

6.2 The Council has a Corporate Risk Register which identifies the key corporate level risks faced, and to be managed. Each corporate risk is linked to specific priorities set out by the Council in its Corporate Plan. The Corporate Risk Register and mitigating actions are scrutinised at each Audit Committee meeting. Risk management is also a standing agenda item at monthly meetings of the SMT.

6.3 There were 11 corporate risks on the Corporate Risk Register at April 2023 and the corporate risks with the highest residual scores (shown in brackets) were as follows:

- CR. 01 Failure to develop and deliver the capital investment programme for the District (20)
- CR.02 Non-compliance with legislative requirements, including procurement (20)
- CR. 03 Failure to effectively manage waste (20)
- CR. 04 Failure to provide timely planning decisions (16)
- CR.05 Failure to adequately plan for the future and deliver efficiencies and improvement (16)
- CR. 07 Failure to implement an economic development programme to regenerate the District and attract inward investment due to financial uncertainties caused by the current economic and political climate, including the NI Protocol (20)
- CR. 09 Risk that Council does not adequately react to the Economic Shocks facing the district, therefore failing in its objectives to regenerate and build a prosperous district due to the inability of Council to be financially sustainable in the long term (20)
- CR. 10 Failure to effectively plan for and manage a cyber security attack (20)
- CR. 11 Risk of Industrial Action leading to the failure to have necessary staffing structures and resourcing to deliver services (20)

7. Internal Audit

7.1 ASM Limited were reappointed on 01 April 2019 as Internal Auditors with the final one year extension period approved in April 2022 to cover the year 2022/23.

7.2 From the Internal Audit Plan 2022/23, 8 Internal Audit Reports were reported to the Audit Committee during the year, 7 of which received a satisfactory assurance rating. One service area, Community Centres – compliance with building checklist, received a limited assurance rating. A review of grant funding applications to DfC was also completed.

7.3 All of the Internal Audit assurance work as detailed in the final Internal Audit Plan 2022/23, as approved by the Audit Committee, was completed.

7.4 ASM also supported the Council in a HR matter and completed a TOIL payment review – Strangford Road Officers (Cleansing and Refuse) with the final report dated 15 September 2022.

7.5 ASM, the Council's Internal Auditors, raised significant control issues in their Annual Report dated 01 April 2023. ASM stated that the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards ("PSIAS") requires that they bring to the Council's attention those significant control issues which may be relevant to the preparation of the Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2023. On this basis, they highlighted

- a) the limited assurance provided in the Community Centres - compliance with building checklist review
- b) the limited progress made in implementing the recommendations in the 2021/22 review of Estates Management and Security; IT Strategy; and IT systems and security. In particular, the Estates Management and Security and IT Strategy reviews which were previously issued with a limited assurance rating and there has been a lack of progress, exposing the Council to unacceptable risk
- c) the recommendations and learnings from the TOIL payment review – Strangford Road Officers (Cleansing and Refuse)

Internal Audit Annual Assurance Opinion

7.6 The Committee reviewed the Annual Internal Audit Assurance Report for 2022/23 at its meeting on 04 April 2023 and noted the Auditor's overall opinion that notwithstanding the significant issues identified above, the Council's systems in relation to internal control, risk management and governance were, in general adequate and operated effectively and they were able to provide satisfactory assurance in relation to the effective and efficient achievement of the Council's objectives.

7.7 The Audit Committee welcomed the overall opinion of Satisfactory Assurance and commended Officers for their good work. The Committee also requested regular progress

updates on the actions taken to address the significant issues referred to the Internal Audit Annual Assurance Report.

Follow up Review of Internal Audit Recommendations

7.8 The Committee also reviewed on 04 April 2023 a follow up report from Internal Audit on the Implementation of Prior Year Internal Audit Recommendations for 2021/22. The review identified that, out of the 40 accepted recommendations, 11 recommendations were fully implemented, 10 recommendations were partially implemented, 18 recommendations were not implemented, 1 recommendation was no longer accepted.

7.9 The Assistant Director of Finance and Performance also reported during the year the progress on the implementation of the Internal Audit Recommendations in the years prior to 2021/22. This included an update on the risk facing the Council when these recommendations were not implemented on a timely basis which enabled the Audit Committee to have a fuller understanding of the implications of these recommendations not being in place.

7.10 The Audit Committee is committed to ensuring the prior year Internal Audit recommendations are completed and reported to the Audit Committee at each meeting.

Tender for Internal Audit Services

7.11 Newry Mourne and Down District Council procured the services of ASM again as its Internal Audit Services provider from 01 April 2019. The contract was for two years with the options of two one-year extensions. The Audit Committee agreed to the second one year extension period which will be utilised to work on the fourth year of the four year Internal Audit Plan, i.e., 2022/23.

Approval of Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 and Internal Audit Strategy

7.12 The Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 will be brought to the Audit Committee Meeting in July 2023 for approval.

7.13 The Internal Audit Plan will then be kept under review throughout the year and will be considered against any emerging risks identified as part of the Council's wider risk management processes. Any future proposed changes will be brought to the Audit Committee for consideration.

8. External Audit Strategy

8.1 The NIAO will present their Annual Audit Strategy for the Year Ending 31 March 2023 to the Audit Committee on 04 July 2023.

8.2 The Audit certification deadline for certifying local government bodies' accounts is 30 September 2023 and to ensure compliance a meeting has been scheduled for 21 September 2023 to review and approve the audited accounts so they can be signed by the deadline.

9. Performance Improvement Arrangements

9.1 Every year the LGA is required to report on whether each Council has discharged its duties in relation to improvement planning, the publication of improvement information and the extent to which each Council has acted in accordance with the Department's Guidance.

9.2 The LGA proposed an unqualified audit and assessment opinion, with no statutory recommendations being made. An Audit and Assessment certificate of compliance has been received.

9.3 The LGA has certified that the Council has discharged its duties in connection with improvement planning and the publication of improvement information in accordance with section 92 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities guidance sufficiently.

9.4 The LGA has been unable to assess whether the Council has discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act, however, has acted in accordance with the DFC's guidance sufficiently during 2022/23.

9.5 The LGA has put forward the 3 following 'proposals for improvement' to assist the Council in meeting its performance improvement responsibilities in future years.

- a) An electronic performance management system would help to achieve long term continuous improvement as it would provide the basis for a more reliable system for identifying and monitoring improvements, as well as creating efficiencies in the process that could free up time to spend on value adding activities.
- b) The Council should consider using Internal Audit to review the performance improvement arrangements.
- c) Council should consider enhancing transparency of the self-assessment report by providing more detailed narrative to allow the reader to better understand how Council has determined the ratings of the trends in performance. Furthermore, where there are downward trends in performance or the Council has assessed targets are not likely to be achieved, appropriate explanations should be included as to how Council intends to address this

9.6 Strengthening existing performance management arrangements and embedding a culture of performance and improvement has gained momentum within Newry Mourne and

Down District Council. It is vital that performance is used as a key driver to identify improvements and facilitate the delivery of effective, efficient and value for money services in the post COVID-19 environment.

10. Acknowledgments

10.1 As Chair of the Audit Committee, I wish to extend my thanks to the Members for their support during the year and to the political parties for ensuring continuity of membership on the Committee from year to year. On behalf of the Audit Committee, I wish also to thank officers, the Internal and External Auditors for their hard work, also their open engagement with the Committee, thereby allowing it to meet its responsibilities.

Brona Slevin
Independent Chairperson
04 July 2023

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	4 July 2023
Subject:	Corporate Risk Register
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly – Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director of Finance & Performance

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 Corporate Risk Register was reviewed and updated by SMT on 20 June 2023. Yearend Assurance Statements for 2022-23 have been used to inform and update the content of the Corporate Risk Register. Where relevant, Officers have also provided updates in relation to specific controls and action plans.			
2.0	Key issues			
2.1	<p>Corporate Risk Register</p> <p>The Council has identified 11 corporate risks, 6 of which are red, 4 of which are Amber and 1 of which is a yellow level risk. Appendix 1 provides an overview of each risk, risk owner(s), gross and residual risk scores, as well as a summary of changes and updates which have been made to the Corporate Risk Register since April 2023.</p> <p>Several actions have been updated to ensure the Corporate Risk Register is a live document and can be used as a Management tool for decision making.</p> <p>The updated Corporate Risk Register is attached at Appendix 2.</p>			
2.2	<p>Other Risk factors which were considered</p> <p>No further risk factors considered for this quarters update.</p>			
2.2	<p>Directorate Risk Register – Sustainability and Environment (S&E)</p> <p>The Risk Reporting section of the Risk Strategy states that Directorate Risk Registers will be presented to the Audit Committee on a rotational basis. The Risk Register for the S&E Directorate is attached at Appendix 3. The Risk Register was reviewed and updated at a Departmental Team meeting on the 8 June 2023.</p>			
2.3	<p>Within the S&E Directorate Risk Register, six risks have been identified, five of which are amber and one yellow. These risks cover a range of service areas and functions.</p> <p>The S&E Risk Register will be updated on a regular basis and considered by the Audit Committee annually.</p>			

3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>To approve the updates to the Corporate Risk Register highlighted within the summary at Appendix 1. Full Corporate Risk Register can be evidenced at Appendix 2.</p> <p>To note the revised S&E Directorate Risk Register at Appendix 3.</p>
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no resource implications.
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	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service

	<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
	<p>Appendix 1: Summary Sheet – Corporate Risk Register – June 2023</p> <p>Appendix 2: Corporate Risk Register – June 2023</p> <p>Appendix 3: Sustainability & Environment Directorate Risk Register – June 2023</p>
8.0	Background Documents
	<p>None</p>

NMDDC Corporate Risk Register Cover Sheet - March 2023

Risk	Description	Risk Owner(s)	Gross Risk Score	Mar-23		Jun-23		Comments
				Revised Risk Score	Revised Residual Risk Score	Revised Risk Score	Revised Residual Risk Score	
CR01	Failure to develop and deliver the capital investment programme for the District	SMT Caolain Boyd	25	20	20	20	20	Risk score remains unchanged. Actions have been updated. New Capital Plan procedure to be brought to SPWG and SP&R in August 2023.
CR02	Non-compliance with legislative requirements, including procurement	Josephine Kelly Andrew Cassells	25	20	20	20	20	Risk score remains unchanged. Actions have been updated. New action in relation to the appointment of an insurance officer and the review of Council's Procurement Policy.
CR03	Failure to effectively manage waste	Andrew Cassells	25	20	20	20	20	Residual risk remains unchanged - actions have been updated - a report on compliance with the operators licence was tabled at the June SME Committee Meeting.
CR04	Failure to provide robust and timely planning decisions	Conor Mallon	25	16	16	16	16	Residual risk remains unchanged - actions have been updated. Internal Audit to undertake a review of overturn planning Decisions in August 2023. Review of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 - Initial Stakeholder Engagement commenced May 2023 - consultation responses back by July 2023 and Work is ongoing through the Local Government Development Management Working Group - Planning Improvement - PADS
CR05	Failure to adequately plan for the future and deliver efficiencies and improvement	Marie Ward Josephine Kelly	20	16	16	16	16	Residual risk remains unchanged - actions have been updated
CR06	Failure to adequately react to a major incident which would minimise any negative consequences/impact	Marie Ward Caolain Boyd	25	8	8	8	8	Residual risk remains unchanged - actions have been updated to include a further review of BCPs in July 2023.
CR07	Failure to implement an economic development programme to regenerate the district and attract inward investment due to financial uncertainties caused by the current economic and political climate, including the NI Budget	Marie Ward Conor Mallon	20	20	20	16	16	Risk Score reduced due to a number of factors - FFNI project now delivered and a digital transformation fund is now at Business Case stage. Council have also been successful in securing funding from Levelling up and Shared Island funds. All actions now updated.
CR08	Failure to adequately manage sickness absence resulting in delays and an inability to deliver Council services.	Senior Management Team	25	15	15	15	15	Risk Score remains unchanged and all actions now updated.
CR09	Risk that Council does not adequately react to the Economic Shocks facing the district, therefore failing in its objectives to regenerate and build a prosperous district due to the inability of Council to be financially sustainable in the long term	Senior Management Team	25	20	20	20	20	Risk score remains unchanged and actions now updated to include the formation of a new SPWG for the new term of Council.
CR10	Failure to effectively plan for and manage a cyber security attack.	Josephine Kelly Gavin Ringland	25	20	20	20	20	Residual risk remain unchanged - actions and controls updated.
CR11	Risk of Industrial Action leading to the failure to have necessary staffing structures and resourcing to deliver services.	Senior Management Team	25	20	20	20	20	Residual risk remain unchanged - actions and controls updated. Action includes narrative on the meetings which have taken place to date and what demands TU seek agreement on.

1. Corporate Risk Register NMDDC

6/27/2023 9:25:29 AM

Risk CR. 01 - Failure to develop and deliver the capital investment programme for the District

Risk	Consequence					Probability					Risk Rating		
	5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5			
Risk Categories	Buildings / Engineering / Environment Business operational/regulatory												
Risk Description	Failure to adequately resource the capital programme Failure to effectively manage capital contracts Capital programme does not sufficiently deliver on the Corporate Objectives												
Potential Root Cause	Lack of availability of construction materials and increases in the cost of materials due to - COVID19 / global demand / administrations at UK ports and container shortages Contractors on key projects fail to deliver on time and on budget Consultant and/or contractor collusion Procurement delays, failures or legal challenges Governance Arrangements not being adhered to Projected timelines too optimistic Delays due to the statutory approvals process Lack of awareness in staff and managers Lack of resources - economic downturn/recession Funding reduced/withdrawn, timescales extended leading to increased costs Impact of the pay award and inflation on the financial viability of the capital plan going forward												
Consequence	Impact on service delivery Financial impact - inflationary pressures / pay demands Legal challenge / Negative PR Impact on quality/cost of projects Future reduction on the capital budget Reputational damage												
Risk Owners	Caolain Boyd; Senior Management Team												
Gross/inherent Risk	Red 25										Last Review	8/20/2023	
Residual Risk	Red 20										Next Review	9/18/2023	
Target Risk Level	Yellow 9										Risk Appetite	Risk Open	

Objectives

1. Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills
6. Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities.
7. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key Controls Identified

1. Asset Management Strategy in Place to identify surplus assets
1. Monthly review of spend against budget
1. Professionally qualified and experienced staff
- 2 Project risk register in place for major projects
2. Capital Plan annually approved at Council
2. Four year Capital Plan
2. Large projects are project managed by external consultants who report to the Estates Team.
2. Monthly site progress meetings which are minuted
2. Strategic Finance Working Group scrutinises each Capital Project
3. Internal Audit of Project Governance of Capital projects scheduled for 2022/23.

Action Plans

Action Plan Cash Flow forecasting	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
	Detailed cash flow of Council capital plan to be brought to SFWG in May to display to Members the scale of the capital programme and communicate when Council's big outlay will be required.	In Progress	Gerard Byrne	8/30/2023	AD of finance received information for each project via detailed project plans/business cases. AD of finance will also meet with Council's treasury advisor to discuss options for financing the capital programme over the next 8 years. Work is continuing on estimating the MRP/Loan payments over the life of our capital programme. New Capital Plan Procedure to go to SFWG / SP&R in August 2023. Continue to keep Members updated of rising costs and supply chain difficulties leading to an impact on Council's Capital Plan.
Construction Industry - Material Shortages and Price Increases - Potential impact to our capital Plan	NI central government have informed me that the Dept of Finance is being lobbied by the construction industry to contribute to the unforeseen increase in material costs for those construction projects (large value) which were awarded in advance of the recent price spikes, as well as term service contracts with fixed rates for undertaking works.	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	8/30/2023	
Supplier/Contractor Options	AD of estates currently looking a number of option to counter act the over reliance on a small number of Contractors/Suppliers/PMs in NI	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	8/30/2023	Council has already availed of a number of construction frameworks and other options are being actively pursued.

Risk CR. 02 - Non-compliance with legislative requirements, including procurement

Risk	Probability					Consequence	Risk Categories	Risk Description	Potential Root Cause
	5	4	3	2	1				
								Business operational/regulatory Impact on individuals (staff or public) Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)	
								Failure to have the necessary policies and procedures in place with staff adequately trained to ensure legislative compliance. This includes complying with Procurement legislation, health and safety and fire risk assessments, best practice. Council not having adequate insurance cover.	
								Failure to understand and meet legal requirements in relation to Health and Safety, Information Management, Rural Needs, Disability, Section 75, Performance and Improvement and Safeguarding.	
								Lack of resources and inadequate training provision.	
								Staff not complying with Council's procurement policy.	
								Property and vehicle schedules not being up to date.	
								Absence of effective operational procedures and policies.	
								Fire Risk Assessments at Council buildings not being undertaken and actions not being implemented and managed.	
								Unforeseen events and public negligence/lack of responsibility.	
								COVID19 - Increased risks in relation to H&S at properties; statutory inspections required under legislation (i.e - vehicle and plant lifts, lifting equipment, pressurised water systems, local exhaust ventilation) are not taking place due to lack of access.	
								FRA / Legionella / Asbestos etc (are not being reviewed due to front line services being provided).	

Consequence	
Non-compliance leading to prosecution	
Personal liability / Corporate Manslaughter	
Risk of a fatality at a Council site	
Reputational damage	
Reduced trust and public confidence	
Increased number of complaints and queries	
Increased insurance premiums	
Loss of income	
Risk Owners	
Andrew Cassells, Josephine Kelly	
Gross/inherent Risk	Last Review
Red 25	6/20/2023
Residual Risk	Next Review
Red 20	9/18/2023
Target Risk Level	Risk Appetite
Yellow B	Risk Averse

Objectives

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

Key Controls Identified

1. Asbestos and Legionella Policies and Management Plans in place
1. COVID19 - New Governance Arrangements in place in Council. Delegated authority amended through SO.
1. COVID19 - New legislation introduced to allow virtual committee meetings
1. COVID19 Risk Assessments being completed and reviewed as required
1. Dedicated skilled teams in place for:
 - Health and Safety, HR, Legal and Procurement
1. Health and Safety Committees in place and ongoing programme of training in place
1. Policies and procedures in place - i.e H&S Policy, Procurement Policy, Access to Information, Records Management
1. Procurement training rolled out to all relevant staff
2. Compliance Reporting to SMT and H&S Committees
2. Procurement a standing agenda item at Councils Audit Committee
3. Internal Audit Completed
- H&S Check - 2019/20
- Contract Management - 2019/20
- Emergency Planning 2020/21
3. Internal Audits Scheduled
- Contract Management - 2021/22
- Information Governance - 2022/21

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Actions from Fire Risk Assessment Audits	The actions from the Fire Risk Assessments which have been completed need to be actioned as soon as possible for all Council properties by the Facilities Management and Maintenance Department.	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>The current level of risk regarding fire risks in our buildings is considered Low. The Fire Risk Management Policy has been approved and effective since 12th March 2020, however the associated Fire Safety Management Plan requires progressing. The priority is to seek agreement on a Fire Safety Management Plan which will guide future control of this risk.</p> <p>The Council has appointed a Council wide Contractor/s to undertake annual inspections of fire alarms and firefighting equipment. In relation to fire alarms inspections are likely to highlight a programme of work to upgrade some systems. The Council's Building Maintenance team continue to address work as required.</p>

Advisory Internal Audit Review - Implement the 30 recommendations arising from the internal audit review of Health and Safety	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	<p>An external review has been undertaken and an independent Report from by external body has been received and considered by the Directors of Corporate Services (CS) and Sustainability & Environment (SE). An action plan is being formulated. A revised Facilities Management Cross Service Working Group has been established under the Chairmanship of the Directors of CS and S&E.</p> <p>Where appropriate updates from the Working Group will be provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.</p> <p>The current level of risk for asbestos, is considered Low. All buildings have been surveyed and no significant risks have been identified which cannot be managed through good building practices.</p> <p>A Contractor was appointed in October 2020 for a three-year period to undertake inspections, air sampling, training and related asbestos consultancy work. There was a defined year 1, 2 and 3 work programmes. Current Contract being reviewed for retendering.</p> <p>E Learning is promoted throughout the organisation, however it should be noted that there is currently a joint Council E Learning platform contract in place that is lead by LCCC and expires on 30 June 2023. NMDOC HR staff are in regular communications with LCCC regarding this contract including any option to extend same.</p> <p>Work currently underway to validate Councils Operators License against Councils fleet insurance schedule. SMT has approved the recruitment of an Insurance Officer which is progressing.</p> <p>The current level of risk for legionella is considered Medium.</p> <p>A Contractor was appointed in August 2020 for three-year period to undertake legionella control measures on behalf of the Council. This comprises monthly, quarterly, six monthly and annual inspections and works. Current Contract being reviewed for retendering.</p> <p>Legislation to be reviewed to determine if this is possible while adhering to Public Contract Regulations. Procurement team are liaising with the LG Procurement Working Group. Council is currently adhering to legislative requirements. Procurement Policy to be reviewed in Q2.</p>
Asbestos Policy and Management Plans	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>Implementation of Asbestos Policies and Management Plans</p>
E-Learning Training	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	9/30/2023	<p>E-Learning training to be promoted throughout the organisation as take up is low - this is particularly relevant to mandatory training sessions.</p>
Insurance	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	9/30/2023	<p>CMT to ensure that Council Properties and Vehicles are adequately covered and schedules are up to date</p>
Legionella Policy and Management Plan	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>Implementation of Legionella Policies and Management Plans</p>
Social Procurement Policy	In Progress	Gerard Byrne	9/30/2023	<p>Council to consider bringing in a social procurement policy following the guidance issued by the Minister of Finance in June 2021.</p>

Risk CR. 03 - Failure to effectively manage waste

Consequence											Probability					Risk Categories	Risk Description	Potential Root Cause	Consequence	Risk Owners	Gross/Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk Level	Last Review	Next Review	Risk Appetite	Risk Cautious																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																									

Objectives

- 2. Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities.
- 7. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Contingency Plans in place
- 1. Long term Waste Strategic Plan in place
- 1. Partnership working with key stakeholders
- 3. Internal Audits Completed;
Fleet Management 2020/21
Fuel Management procedures
3. Internal Audits Scheduled;
Waste Management - 2021/22

Action Plans

arc21 Waste Management Group	<p>Following the May 2022 refusal to grant arc21 planning permission for their residual waste project and the requirement to recycle 70% by 2030 as per the Climate Change Bill and the Circular Economy package coupled with governance and internal issues within arc21 the long term viability of the group is now very questionable. Internal Audit carried out a review of the progress in implementing TRU and FTA recommendations in October 2018. A further review took place during November/December 2020 which has provisionally highlighted that limited progress has been made in implementing a number of recommendations from the 2018 audit.</p>	Action Plan Type In Progress	Action Plan Owner Andrew Cassells	Action Plan Action Date 9/30/2023	<p>Comments</p> <p>Failure to meet recycling Targets</p> <p>Reputational Issues</p> <p>Lower levels of customer satisfaction</p> <p>Impact on service delivery and lost productivity</p> <p>With high CPI price increases the budget for the 2023/24 year. management is likely to be insufficient for the 2023/24 year. A consolidated action plan in relation to compliance to the Council's Operators License (OL) was presented to SE Committee in November 2022. A further update on compliance was provided in June 2023 showing good progress towards full implementation of actions and ongoing compliance. Staffing issues are being addressed and the Head of Cleansing has been seconded as interim Head of Fleet. Further operators license COTC holders trained and named on the OL. A further follow up Audit by RHA is planned for 2023/24 and the Transport Regulation Unit is being regularly informed of progress.</p>
Operators Licence		In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	9/30/2023	
Waste Management Plan	<p>The Waste Management Plan is organised by ARC 21. The Council is required to feed into and approve ARC 21's Waste Management Plan.</p>	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>A review of the arc21 Waste Management Plan (which includes NMDDC) has been completed by WRAP on behalf of DAERA/NIEA. Technical expertise (RPS) has been procured to produce an Addendum for the Plan as part of the six yearly review. It is understood that DAERA will be consulting on a draft Waste Management Strategy for NI by the end of 2023; the publication of which will better inform the Council's Waste Management Plans.</p>

Risk CR. 04 - Failure to provide robust and timely planning decisions

Risk		Risk Categories		Business operational/regulatory Financial Quality of Service	
Consequence	5				
	4				
	3				
	2				
	1				
		Risk Description		Failure to provide robust and timely planning decisions	
		Potential Root Cause		Ineffective and/or inadequate resources Planning Legislation not being followed Ineffective technology - EPIC system changes	
		Consequence		Litigation and financial costs Reputational issues Lower levels of customer satisfaction Impact on service delivery and lost productivity Financial implications resulting in budget constraints Failure to achieve the statutory standards around local / major planning applications and enforcement cases	
		Risk Owners		Conor Mallon	
		Gross/inherent Risk		Red 25	
		Residual Risk		Amber 16	
		Target Risk Level		Yellow 9	
		Last Review		6/20/2023	
		Next Review		9/18/2023	
		Risk Appetite		Risk Open	

Objectives

- 3. Enhance, protect and promote our environment
- 6. Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities.

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Action plan in place to reduce backlog
- 1. Increase in employee numbers
- 1. Ongoing training for officers and members
- 2. Dedicated Planning Committee in operation
- 2. Local Development Plan developed and timetable agreed
- 2. Planning Consultant in place since January 2020 to bring about performance improvements
- 2. Scheme of Delegation in place to facilitate timely planning decisions

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Backlog cases	Implement action plan to reduce backlog in line with timeframe set	In Progress	Anthony McKay	7/30/2023	<p>Live applications at 10-1-22 are 1,269 (September 2022 1,105).</p> <p>Average processing times for 2021/22 across Councils was 17.2 weeks with Newry, Mourne and Down at 18.8 weeks.</p> <p>During 2021/22, Newry, Mourne and Down received the highest number of applications at 1,744 (accounting for 12.8% of all applications received across NI).</p> <p>The number of decisions issued during 2021/22 was the highest</p>
Internal Review of overturn decisions	Council will undertake a review/audit of overturn decisions - this is based on the NIAO Public Accounts Committee report on Planning decisions across Councils in NI	In Progress	Gerard Byrne Conor Mallon	9/30/2023	The Four Year Internal Audit Plan features an advisory review for Overturn Planning Decisions. The will commence in August 2023.
IT infrastructure	Upgrade of technical IT infrastructure (EPIC Replacement)	In Progress	Anthony McKay	7/31/2023	Went Live on the 5 December 2022 - Department still working on some go live improvements including accruals reports.
Regional Planning Review	The Public Accounts Committee issued a regional report on Planning in Northern Ireland on 24 March 2022	In Progress	Conor Mallon	7/30/2023	<p>Review of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 – Initial Stakeholder Engagement commenced May 2023 – consultation responses back by July 2023.</p> <p>Work also ongoing through the Local Government Development Management Working Group - Planning Improvement - PADS</p>

Risk CR. 05 - Failure to adequately plan for the future and deliver efficiencies and improvement

Risk Categories		Business operational/regulatory		Financial		Impact on Individuals (staff or public)		Quality of Service	
Risk Description		Failure to adequately plan for the future and deliver efficiencies and improvement							
Potential Root Cause		Difficulty recruiting key positions in Councils Management Team Corporate efficiency projects and other improvement activities are not currently joined-up with wider transformational activity The Council is currently unable to track the realisation of benefits (financial or non-financial) arising from investment in new IT systems (i.e. Legend) A lack of corporate capacity currently exists to support transformational activity The overall affordability of the Councils long term plans considering COVID19 / Cost of Living Crisis / Inflation / pay demands							
Consequence		Not promoting a single corporate identity The budget situation will continue to get worse (salaries and wages) therefore not providing VFM Our ability to provide citizens / customers with the services they require will be significantly constrained We will potentially lag behind other Councils & other public sector organisations							
Risk Owners		Josephine Kelly; Marie Ward							
Gross/inherent Risk		Red 20		Last Review		6/20/2023			
Residual Risk		Amber 16		Next Review		9/18/2023			
Target Risk Level		Yellow 9		Risk Appetite		Risk Hungry			

Consequence	Probability				
	1	2	3	4	5
5					
4				R	G
3			T		
2					
1					

Objectives

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

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Severance Rate agreed by Unions and Members
- 2. IT Project Group in place and meets monthly
- 2. Specialist independent IT consultants have been tasked with implementing the IT strategy

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Alternative methods of recruitment	HR to look at alternative method of recruitment due to the difficulties in recruiting into key positions across Council. The difficulties are not limited to senior positions, all Directorate are struggling to fill vacant posts currently.	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	9/30/2023	This includes the Regional Approach in relation to the Talent Management Strategy which is overseen by the LG Staff Commission. NMDDC represented on and contributing to LGSC Regional Talent Management Group - currently reviewing the LGSC Code of Procedures to ensure they are more fit for purpose in today's market. Council recruited several Apprentices on the 1 September 2022 and are now part of the BRCD apprenticeship scheme going forward. Council have also approved an Agile working policy in July 2022. Recruitment of AD posts is in progress as part of PFTF and other key positions across Council. There are still challenges across the Directorates on a number of posts. Working ongoing to develop the specification of processes. requires to drive efficiencies and integration of processes. Business Case to be finalised. Staff input to the systems being gathered through workshops in June 2023. Service reviews are progressing and discussion is ongoing with Trade Unions. The Business Administration severance has been agreed and has been implemented between December 2022 and August 2023. All exit dates have been agreed. The Tier 3 Business Case was approved in September 2022 and was implemented between April and June 2023. Tier 3 Developmental Centre's were held in March 2023 and candidates have received their report from this.
New HR System	New Self Service Human Resource Management system to be procured	In Progress	Josephine Kelly Catrina Miskelly	9/30/2023	
Service Reviews	Service Reviews are currently being completed across Directorate in line with paper which was approved at SP&R	In Progress	Senior Management Team	9/30/2023	
Voluntary Severance Call	Roll out of a voluntary severance call to communicated to staff	In Progress	Senior Management Team	9/30/2023	

Action Plans					
	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Documenting Business Continuity Plans	BCPs to be documented for each Service Area	In Progress	Captain Boyd	8/30/2023	Stage one of the work is now complete and was presented to SMT in June 2022 in relation to critical services and systems. Work is being led by the SHEP unit. Further review to take place on the 18 July 2023.
Northern Ireland Emergency Planning Structures	Officers will continue to attend and contribute to the NI Emergency Planning Structures.	In Progress	Senior Management Team	8/30/2023	Council is represented at NIEP5 were any upcoming incidents will be discussed.

Key Controls Identified

1. FFNI Operations team in place. Operations group established with other Councils. Project Risk Register established

1. Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25 in place

1. Rural Development Programme in place

2. Brexit Forum and Brexit Task and Finish Working Group operational

2. Engagement with other Councils, other Departments, NILGA and the Private Sector through the Chamber of Commerce

2. Establishment of Economic Forum including public and private sector stakeholders

2. Internal Brexit Working Group established and meeting regularly to plan for an respond to organisational impacts

2. Participation in Cross Council Brexit Working group. Liaising with the NI Executive Office.

3. Internal Audits Completed;

FFNI - 2019/20

Action Plans

City Deals	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
	Actively engage in Belfast Region City Deal	In Progress	Conor Mallon Marie Ward	9/30/2023	The Head of Terms have been signed (March 2019), OBCs for NMD projects have been approved by BRCD Board and relevant Government Departments. On the 15 December 2021, The Belfast Region City Deal was signed and unlocks £1 billion of transformative co-investment. In December 2022 Contracts for funding and funding agreements have been shared. FFNI has successfully secured and delivered £23.1m of UK DCMS Government funded investment to improve digital infrastructure across Northern Ireland. Together as a Consortium FFNI has delivered next generation Gigabit Capable connectivity to 887 public sector sites, which will vastly improve the robustness, resilience, and speed of service. A Business case is currently being assessed to deliver a £7.5m digital transformation fund to support business to implement digital action plans to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the fibre network. A separate WAN (Wide area network) project is now underway and being delivered by ABC Council to lay services over the top of the FFNI funded fibre. Councils are currently migrating existing services on to the fibre and WAN and this is expected to be completed by June 2023. ERDF and ESF funded programmes ceased as of 31 March 2023, contingency plans are in place to continue support and work is well advanced in developing new programmes to support businesses from inception through to growth under a range of funds such as Peace Plus, Shared prosperity fund, Shared island fund etc. Required checks are being completed at Warrenpoint Port on an on-going basis by trained and authorised staff. Regular meetings with relevant partners, DAERA, FSA, Border force, Seatruck, Warrenpoint Port, to continue to share learning and work through operational issues as they arise. Negotiations to commence in January 2022 around the FSA providing certainty of funding for a longer period. MoU signed with BCC in relation to offering staff assistance if required.
Full Fibre Network NI (FFNI)	Local Full Fibre Network to improve connectivity across all of Northern Ireland.	In Progress	Conor Mallon	9/30/2023	
Support local businesses	The Council is also providing support, advice and guidance to local businesses as they anticipate and manage the changes associated with Brexit.	In Progress	Conor Mallon	9/30/2023	
Warrenpoint Port	To ensure efficient delivery of statutorily required of food import checks on relevant Agri-Food goods entering Northern Ireland at Warrenpoint port	In Progress	Eoin Devlin	9/30/2023	

Action Plans

	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Return to Work Interviews	The completion rate of RTW is very low presently.	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	8/30/2023	SMT/CMT to follow up on RTW interviews and reiterate the importance of these being completed on a timely basis.
Training	All Managers must complete Managing Attendance training on the Council's e-learning platform	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	8/30/2023	In progress and regular reminders sent to staff to ensure their training records are up to date.

Key Controls Identified

1. Monthly Management Accounts completed by Finance
 2. Multi agency Community Hub
 2. NMDDC COVID-19 Recovery Group
 2. Service and Business plans now in place
 2. Working with ALFCO around a Council wide position to DfC and DoF.
 3. Internal Audits Completed;
- Emergency Planning with a focus on COVID19 - 2020/21

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Management Accounts	New procedure to be developed.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	ADs to provide variance analysis going forward on a quarterly basis on their own cost codes. This will feed into the Quarterly Management Accounts which are presented to SP&R. Now effective from Q2 2022/23. Quarterly budget meetings are to take place with Directorates, led by the DCS and AD of Finance & Performance. Commenced in March 2023.
Rates Support Grant	Director of Corporate Services to write to the Minister of Finance and Communities about the reduction of the Rates Support Grant and to ascertain the grant will not be reduced going forward	In Progress	Gerard Byme	6/30/2023	RSG allocations for 2022/23 were confirmed in December 2022. NMDDC's allocation for 2022/23 is £753,437. This is a huge impact on our management accounts position in year end on our rate for future years. The 2020/21 level was £1,473,859. SOLACE are lobbying the Department and AD of Finance & Performance is lobbying via the ALGCO Group. A further £4m has been proposed to the NI LG pot in 2023/24. Council has submitted a detailed response to the DfC Budget ECIA in May 2023.
Strategic Finance Working Group - rates process 2024/25	Strategic Finance Working Group to be established for new term of Council.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	SFVWG to be established for new term of Council. All Members can attend in relation to the Rates Estimate Process for 2024/25. New Capital Procedure to go through the Committee in August 2024.
Treasury Advice - Banking	The fallout from Silicon Valley Bank has quickly sparked international concerns and more uncertainty arose after Credit Suisse also collapsed. The turmoil in global markets fuel fears that this could mark the start of the next financial crisis.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	While we closely monitor market conditions, we are meeting with our Treasury Advisors in relation to our current Banking and Money Market arrangements and their exposure to a financial crisis.
Working Groups	Multiple Officer groups discussing these financial concerns on a regular basis.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Senior Management Team	6/30/2023	CEO attends Solace and the AD of Finance & performance attends the Council wide Finance Working Group and ALGCO. AD of Finance & Performance and the CEO have also met with our Treasury Advisors to get an overview of the economic situation on a global scale - i.e. interest rates / borrowing etc Officers will continue to attend and input into the above groups.

Risk CR.10 - Failure to effectively plan for and manage a Cyber Security Attack

Risk		Risk Categories		Business operational/reputational Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service	
Consequence		Risk Description		Risk of a cyber security event causing significant operational, financial and reputational damage to the Council	
Potential Root Cause		Cyber attack		Cyber attack	
Consequence		Lack of staff compliance with IT training		Lack of staff compliance with IT training	
		Accidental breach of security		Accidental breach of security	
		Breach of people, process, physical or technical controls		Breach of people, process, physical or technical controls	
		Failure to respond to and recover from a cyber incident within, or impacting upon, Council		Failure to respond to and recover from a cyber incident within, or impacting upon, Council	
		Lack of skills and competencies		Lack of skills and competencies	
		System vulnerabilities		System vulnerabilities	
		Threat to availability, integrity and confidentiality of Council information and systems		Threat to availability, integrity and confidentiality of Council information and systems	
		Failure to deliver Council services (including statutory and regulatory services)		Failure to deliver Council services (including statutory and regulatory services)	
		Financial loss		Financial loss	
		Reputational damage		Reputational damage	
		Extended period to recover services to Business as Usual (BAU)		Extended period to recover services to Business as Usual (BAU)	
		Destruction of systems and data		Destruction of systems and data	
		Theft of data for criminal use		Theft of data for criminal use	
		Political impact		Political impact	
		Environmental impact		Environmental impact	
Risk Owners		Josephine Kelly; Gavin Ringland		Josephine Kelly; Gavin Ringland	
Gross/inherent Risk		Red 25		Red 25	
Residual Risk		Red 20		Red 20	
Target Risk Level		Yellow 9		Yellow 9	
Last Review		6/20/2023		6/20/2023	
Next Review		9/18/2023		9/18/2023	
Risk Appetite		Risk Averse		Risk Averse	

Objectives

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

Key Controls Identified

1. Agile working policy now in operation from 12 September 2022
1. Back up arrangements
 1. Business Continuity Scenario Planning
 1. Participation in threat intelligence networks
 1. Penetration testing and vulnerability scanning
 1. Phishing simulation and learning exercises
 1. Technical security controls and arrangements
2. Engagement with Cyber bodies
2. National Cyber Security training
3. Internal Audits Scheduled: IT Systems and Security - 2021/22
IT Strategy 2021/22

Action Plans

	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Business Continuity Plans	BCP plans to be updated to reflect the cyber risk	In Progress	Carolain Boyd Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	Critical and Priority Services currently being prioritised via scenario planning - being managed by the SHEP Department. Further reviews scheduled for 18th July 2023.
Cyber Incident Response/Disaster Recovery	Establish and test cyber incident response and disaster recovery capabilities	In Progress	Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	Event Scenarios and PlayBooks are being continually tested and refined where confidence of no-impact is high. Deep impact testing will be completed and as part of the IT Services project (currently in due diligence phase of procurement)
IT Strategy	Implement additional security tools including multifactor authentication, conditional access and modern authentication where possible and appropriate	In Progress	Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	Remote access to LAN completely MFA. MFA and conditional access to Office 365 complete. MFA also enabled on many Line of Business Systems, including IDOX. Single Sign On (SSO) implemented on numerous systems.
Training / Development Plans	Training to increase User Resilience	In Progress	Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	In-person training was delivered to All Staff over Q4 (2022-23) as part of Access to Information Training. Further sessions are planned as Map Up along with a specific session for Elected Members

Risk **CR.11 - Risk of Industrial Action leading to the failure to have necessary staffing structures and resourcing to deliver services**

Consequence	Probability				
	1	2	3	4	5
5			T	R	G
4					
3					
2					
1					

Risk Categories	Business operational/reputational Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service
Risk Description	Risk of Industrial Action leading to the failure to have necessary staffing structures and resourcing to deliver efficient and effective services
Potential Root Cause	TU Demands in relation the current cost of living crisis Legacy Terms and Conditions impacting on future Council strategies
Consequence	Low staff morale and increase in absenteeism Negative impact on service delivery and lost productivity Negative PR for the Council Financial implication for Council in meeting the TU demands and the recurring costs
Risk Owners	Senior Management Team
Gross/inherent Risk	Red 25
Residual Risk	Red 20
Target Risk Level	Amber 15
Last Review	6/20/2023
Next Review	9/18/2023
Risk Appetite	Risk Averse

Objectives

- 2. Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities.
- 7. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Detailed budgeting process in operation
- 1. Qualified HR, IT & Finance professionals in place
- 2. LCNF Meeting
- 2. SMT / Party Leaders Meetings
- 2. Solace Meeting

Action Plans

Action Plan Description		Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Labour Relation Agency	Trade Unions are currently in dispute with Management.	In Progress	Senior Management Team	8/30/2023	<p>There are Industrial disputes registered by all four recognised Trade Unions. Industrial Action has already taken place in April 2023. Management will continue to engage through the agreed industrial mechanism processes to seek resolutions to the current dispute. The Labour Relations Agency and an independent facilitator are involved to aid resolution to the matters outstanding.</p> <p>In the period from April 2023 to June 2023 there have been 9 LRA facilitated meetings and one LCNF workshop with the trade unions, a further meeting with the LRA and the independent observer is scheduled for 28 June 2023. Focus has been on a list of demands received from the Unions and reaching an agreement which all parties can sign up to. This includes a timetable and work streams for the LCNF on policies, terms & conditions, facility time of union representatives. Once the agreement is finalised it will be provided for Council to consider.</p>

Sustainability and Environment

Risk	01. Failure to deliver operational services throughout the year due to staff shortages					
<div>Consequence</div>	5					
	4			G		
	3		T	R		
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		<div>Probability</div>				
Risk Categories		Business operational/regulatory Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)				
Risk Description		Failure to deliver operational services throughout the year due to staff shortages.				
Potential Root Cause		Breakdown in service during key holiday periods, particularly the waste collection service. Employees carrying over annual leave into 2023-24 will have an impact on service provision. The use of temporary contracts makes it difficult to attract, recruit and retain employees Difficulty in recruiting seasonal staff Trade Union negotiations. Legacy working arrangements and operating procedures. Levels of absenteeism Adverse weather conditions.				
Consequence		Health and safety risks Increase in Council complaints Staff shortages reduce service provision Services not operating effectively Reputational damage				
Risk Owners		Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane; Aidan Mallon; Sinead Murphy				
Gross/inherent Risk		Amber 12		Last Review		6/8/2023
Residual Risk		Yellow 9		Next Review		9/30/2023
Target Risk Level		Green 6		Risk Appetite		Risk Averse

Objectives

Consistently deliver reliable, operational services

Key Controls Identified

1. Business Continuity Plans
1. Ongoing recruitment campaigns
1. Overtime.
1. Service reviews
1. Temporary contracts project
1. Workforce Plans in place for each service.
3. Internal Audit of Services

Action Plans					
Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Business Continuity Plans	Continuously monitor, review and update the Business Continuity Plans and Contingency Plans.	In Progress	Gail Kane Aidan Mallon Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Continued implementation of the Business Continuity Plans to identify and address potential workforce deficits.
Directorate Re-structure	Re-structure of the Facilities Management and Maintenance department and Waste Management department, specifically the HRC / Cleansing / Garage sections/Refuse	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	The Directorate re-structure has been agreed by SMT. Both departments continue to work with Human Resources to progress the re-structure of specific sections, ensuring alignment with business needs.
Workforce Planning and Service Reviews	Continued implementation of Workforce Plans and Service Reviews.	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Continue to implement, monitor, review and update the Workforce Plans and progress Service Reviews to ensure effective service provision.

Risk 02. Failure to maintain a modern and legislatively compliant fleet

Risk	02. Failure to maintain a modern and legislatively compliant fleet					Risk Categories	
						Buildings / Engineering / Environment Quality of Service Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)	
		Risk Description				Potential Root Cause	
						Failure to maintain a modern and legislatively compliant fleet	
						Failure to comply with operators licence.	
						Failure to finalise, implement and adhere to fleet policies and procedures.	
						Failure to plan ahead and budget for new vehicles/services when required.	
						Challenge of transitioning to a green fleet.	
						Failure to update operators licence and insurance on changes to fleet including hire.	
						Managing vehicles across satellite depots.	
						Managing and maintaining an older fleet	
						Delivery times of vehicles due to global supply issue	
						Loss of operators licence / financial penalties of breaching the operators licence.	
						Potential to result on serious accidents and injuries.	
						Reputational damage for the Council.	
						Failure to deliver services, particularly essential services across the District.	
						Breach in health and safety.	
						Andrew Cassells; Sinead Murphy	
						Amber 16	
						Amber 12	
						Green 6	
						Last Review	
						6/8/2023	
						Next Review	
						9/30/2023	
						Risk Appetite	
						Risk Averse	

Objectives

Review Fleet Services to ensure it meets service demands into the future

Key Controls Identified

- 1 Capital Programme funding.
- 1. Corporate Procurement Policy and Procedures in place.
- 1. Fleet Management audits and action plans.
- 1. Fleet Management Policy and Procedures.
- 1. Meeting PMI schedule for fleet.
- 1. Services review of the 'Garages' section.
- 1. Sustainability and Environment Procurement Action Plan in place.
- 3. Audit of Fleet in 2023-24.

Action Plans

Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Fleet Management Audits and Action Plans	In Progress	Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	The follow up internal audit of Fleet Management was carried out by ASM in April 2021 and the external audit was carried out in January 2022.
Fleet Replacement Programme	In Progress	Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Business case approved for new fleet. A 4 year programme for fleet replacement 2023-27. Business cases approved for 2023-25.
Service Review of Garages and resources	In Progress	Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Progress the service review of the Garages section to determine and inform future resource requirements.

Risk 03. Lack of burial capacity at Council Cemeteries

Risk	Consequence				
	5	4	3	2	1
Probability					
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					

Risk Categories
Buildings / Engineering / Environment
Business operational/reputational
Impact on individuals (staff or public)

Risk Description
Potential Root Cause

Lack of burial capacity at Monks Hill cemetery
The existing cemetery is running out of space.
Structural issues with existing cemetery

Consequence

An essential service not being provided to the public.
Reputational damage.
Negative impact on local community.

Risk Owners

Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane

Gross/inherent Risk

Amber 12

Last Review

6/8/2023

Residual Risk

Yellow 9

Next Review

9/30/2023

Target Risk Level

Green 6

Risk Appetite

Risk Averse

Objectives

Delivery of Facility Management and Maintenance Service to meet Council needs

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Capital programme includes funding for new graveyard and/or extensions to existing graveyard
- 1. Committee approval in place for cemetery extensions
- 1. Extensions of Struell, Lough Inch, Warrenpoint, Kilbroney and Phase 2 at Monks Hill cemeteries complete.

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Digitalisation of burial records	Progress the Outline Business Case through the ITPG for a burial record system	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	The Council has a legal responsibility to manage burial records and work is underway to prepare a Project Mandate for an electronic solution, through the IT Projects Board. It is anticipated that this bespoke software solution to manage burial records will cost £30k, with an annual £10k maintenance fee.
Kilbroney Cemetery	Phase 3-5 - Kilbroney Cemetery	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	Work progressing for submission of planning application for Phase 3 - 5 extension to cemetery.
Long term cemetery provision	Plan ahead for the long term provision of cemeteries and burials.	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	Scope out anticipated burial projections across the District in line with demographic / population trends and begin the process of identifying potential land and sites to meet projected need.
Monks Hill Cemetery	Phases 3 extension at Monks Hill Cemetery.	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	The phase 2 extension is complete providing burial capacity for a further 6 months. Phase 3 cemetery works is currently out to tender, closing 24 June 2023 to be completed by January 2024.

Risk 04. Failure to comply with relevant statutory and legislative requirements in Council Facilities

Risk		Risk Categories		Business operational/regulatory Financial	
		Risk Description		Impact on individuals (staff or public)	
		Potential Root Cause		Fire Risk Assessments/Legionella/Asbestos)	
		Consequence		Lack of adherence to Council policy and procedures, including training. Controls not being implemented for Legionella / Asbestos or Remedials for Fire Risk Assessments. Failure to comply with Council policies. Remedials for Fire Risk Assessments of Council buildings not being undertaken.	
		Risk Owners		Injury/death to staff or public. Damage to the Council reputation. Increased insurance premiums. Breach in legislation and compliance.	
		Gross/inherent Risk		Andrew Cassells; Aidan Mallon	
		Residual Risk		Amber 16	
		Target Risk Level		Amber 12	
				Green 4	
				Last Review	
				6/8/2023	
				Next Review	
				9/30/2023	
				Risk Appetite	
				Risk Averse	

Objectives

Implement policies and procedures and monitoring arrangements to ensure corporate legislative compliance in respect of k

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Asbestos Policy and Management Plan
- 1. Fire Safety Policy
- 1. Legionella Policy and Management Plan
- 1. Portable Electrical Appliances Policy and Management Plan
- 2. Regular reporting to the Health and Safety Committee, Audit Committee and SMT

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan		Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
		Type	In Progress			
18th Electrical Testing Codes	Continue to implement tests to achieve fixed wire and emergency light certification.	In Progress		Aidan Mallon	8/30/2023	Tender progressed to establish appropriate arrangements for the next 3 years.
Asbestos Policy and Management Plan	Continued implementation of the Asbestos Management Plan.	In Progress		Aidan Mallon	8/30/2023	Contractor led asbestos management reviews continue. No significant issues observed. Continuing work required concerning training through e learning and contractor led training. Outstanding issues to be resolved following fire at Albert Basin Store.
Legionella Policy and Management Plan	Continued implementation of the Legionella Management Plan.	In Progress		Aidan Mallon	8/30/2023	Contractor led management works continue. Continuing work required concerning training through e learning and contractor led training. Full implementation of the agreed Legionella Management Plan required to keep risk at a low level.

Risk 05. Failure to develop and implement a planned maintenance programme

Risk	Consequence					Probability
	5	4	3	2	1	
Risk Categories						
Risk Description						
Potential Root Cause						
Consequence						
Risk Owners						
Gross/inherent Risk						
Residual Risk						
Target Risk Level						
Buildings / Engineering / Environment Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service Failure to develop and implement a planned maintenance programme. Over reliance on reactive maintenance and contractors. Inadequate funding Lack of inspections and documentation records. Reactive / forward planning split imbalanced H&S implications. Negative PR for the Council and reputational damage. Closure of buildings. Legal liabilities. Increased costs. Reactive and inefficient service provision. Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane; Aidan Mallon						
Last Review 6/8/2023						
Next Review 9/30/2023						
Risk Appetite Risk Averse						

Objectives

Delivery of Facility Management and Maintenance Service to meet Council needs

Engage Council Estate in a way which promotes sustainable development and climate change adaptation

Action Plans

Action Plan Description

Property Maintenance Strategy Develop and implement the Property Maintenance Strategy to include planned and reactive maintenance.

Action Plan Type

In Progress

Action Plan Owner

Aidan Mallon

Action Plan Action Date

8/30/2023

Comments

The Property Maintenance Strategy is complete. The strategy takes into account the 3i Maintenance System for the reactive and planned maintenance of facilities, as well as M&E contracts..

Key Controls Identified

1. Building maintenance team being reformed

1. Property Maintenance Strategy Plan developed

Risk 06. Failure to procure and manage contracts in line with the Council's procurement procedures

Consequence	Probability				
	1	2	3	4	5
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					

Risk Categories	Buildings / Engineering / Environment Financial Impact on individuals (staff or public)
Risk Description	Failure to procure and manage contracts in line with the Council's procurement procedures.
Potential Root Cause	Insufficient resources. Lack of understanding of the Procurement Policy and procedures. Lack of training and awareness. Availability of contractors. Increased costs due to market forces. Capacity of the Procurement Team to support the Directorate. Lack of forward planning and appropriate management controls. Lack of timely reviews of contracts. Delay in meeting project deadlines. Financial impact. Impact on customer satisfaction through delayed service delivery. Risk of litigation. Failure to comply with the corporate Procurement Policy. Managing conflicting demands.
Consequence	Delay in meeting project deadlines. Financial impact. Impact on customer satisfaction through delayed service delivery. Risk of litigation. Failure to comply with the corporate Procurement Policy. Managing conflicting demands.

Risk Owners	Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane; Aidan Mallon; Sinead Murphy
Gross/inherent Risk	Amber 16
Residual Risk	Amber 12
Target Risk Level	Green 8
Last Review	6/8/2023
Next Review	9/30/2023
Risk Appetite	Risk Averse

Objectives

Implement policies and procedures and monitoring arrangements to ensure corporate legislative compliance in respect of k

Key Controls Identified

- Approved STA's in place to cover any out of contract situations.
- Contract management controls in place.
- Governance and Procurement training delivered to staff.
- Procurement Policy and Procedures in place.
- Sustainability and Environment Procurement Action Plan in place.




Action Plans




Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
SE Procurement Action Plan	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	The SE Procurement Action Plan is monitored and reported to the SE Committee and Audit Committee on a regular basis.

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	4 July 2023
Subject:	Prompt Payment Statistics – Quarter 4
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Catherine Hughes – Head of Performance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne: Assistant Director of Finance & Performance

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

For decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---------------------	--------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------------

1.0	Purpose and Background																									
1.1	<p>'Prompt payment' is the payment of valid supplier invoices by public bodies, as set in government targets.</p> <p>This dataset contains the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total amount paid by each Northern Ireland council to suppliers• Total number of invoices• Number of invoices paid within 10 working days• Number of invoices paid within 30 calendar days• Number of invoices paid outside 30 calendar days <p>Adherence to the policy is not mandatory for councils, but in a letter issued to council Chief Executives in October 2013, the Department of Environment's Local Government Policy Division said that: 'District councils are encouraged to pay suppliers as promptly as possible and to endeavour to meet the 10 day prompt payment commitment made by Northern Ireland Executive in response to the current economic position'.</p>																									
2.0	Key issues																									
2.1	In 2019/20 the Council paid 90% of invoices within the payment period of 30 calendar days, compared to 86% for 2020/21. In the 2021/22 year Council paid 88.5% of invoices within the 30 day period.																									
2.2	Quarter 1 - 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022 <table><tr><td></td><td>Paid within 10 days</td><td>Paid within 30 days</td><td>Paid outside payment period</td><td>Total invoices</td></tr><tr><td>Number of Invoices</td><td>1140</td><td>2984</td><td>1179</td><td>4,163</td></tr><tr><td>Percentage</td><td>27%</td><td>72%</td><td>28%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Value</td><td>£2,907,312</td><td>£10,044,705</td><td>£11,179,379</td><td>£21,224,083</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Average number of days to pay suppliers: 32</td><td colspan="2">Performance trend: </td></tr></table>		Paid within 10 days	Paid within 30 days	Paid outside payment period	Total invoices	Number of Invoices	1140	2984	1179	4,163	Percentage	27%	72%	28%	100%	Value	£2,907,312	£10,044,705	£11,179,379	£21,224,083	Average number of days to pay suppliers: 32			Performance trend: 	
	Paid within 10 days	Paid within 30 days	Paid outside payment period	Total invoices																						
Number of Invoices	1140	2984	1179	4,163																						
Percentage	27%	72%	28%	100%																						
Value	£2,907,312	£10,044,705	£11,179,379	£21,224,083																						
Average number of days to pay suppliers: 32			Performance trend: 																							

	Quarter 2 - 1 July 2022 to 30 September 2022				
		Paid within 10 days	Paid within 30 days	Paid outside payment period	Total invoices
	Number of Invoices	1,673	3,506	487	3,993
	Percentage	42%	88%	12%	100%
	Value	£3,506,407	£6,113,869	£3,185,822	£9,299,691
	Average number of days to pay suppliers: 26			Performance trend: 	
	Quarter 3 - 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022				
		Paid within 10 days	Paid within 30 days	Paid outside payment period	Total invoices
	Number of Invoices	1,835	3,286	321	3,607
	Percentage	51%	91%	9%	100%
	Value	£4,662,166	£14,236,507	£1,298,148	£15,534,655
	Average number of days to pay suppliers: 26			Performance trend: 	
	Quarter 4 - 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023				
		Paid within 10 days	Paid within 30 days	Paid outside payment period	Total invoices
	Number of Invoices	2,082	3,970	256	4,226
	Percentage	50%	94%	6%	100%
	Value	£5,301,519	£14,824,309	£985,872	£15,810,181
	Average number of days to pay suppliers: 31			Performance trend: 	
3.0	Recommendations				
31	To note: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Q4 2022-23 Prompt Payment statistics.				
4.0	Resource implications				
4.1	The Accounts Payable Team provide statistics to the Department for Communities on a quarterly basis.				

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> <p>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 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

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	4 July 2023
Subject:	Assurance Framework and Annual Governance Statement
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly – Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director of Finance & Performance

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

	For decision	For noting only	X
1.0	Purpose and Background		
1.1	<p>The purpose of this paper is to explain to Members the key elements of the 'year-end' process and the 'assurance framework' that the Council developed to help ensure that the Council complies with statutory requirements and Members and senior officers can have effective, ongoing oversight of the Council's governance and assurance arrangements.</p> <p>The Assurance Framework and Code of Governance at Appendix 1 are used to inform Council's Governance Statement within our Statement of Accounts.</p>		
1.2			
2.0	Key issues		
2.1	<p><u>Assurance Framework</u></p> <p>The Council's Assurance Framework is summarised at Appendix 1. It demonstrates how different sources of assurance and related key elements / control measures combine to enable the Council to monitor its governance arrangements and produce the evidence to support its Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>The diagram shows how the Council's Audit Committee, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and Council provide oversight of these governance arrangements.</p> <p>Only minor amendments have made to the Assurance Framework including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Management Accounts now supported by Directorate variance analysis Council Magazine 'NMD Connect' now removed – replaced by the 'roving reporter'. 		
2.2	<p><u>Annual Governance Statement 2022/23</u></p> <p>The Council has a statutory responsibility to annually prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement as part of the Financial Statements. Many different processes inform the preparation of the Statement as can be seen from the Assurance Framework at Appendix 1.</p> <p>The Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 is presented at item number 9. It will be incorporated into the unaudited statement of accounts and will be subject to review by the NIAO as part of their annual audit.</p>		

3.0	Recommendations
3.1	Members are asked to note the Council's Assurance Framework and the Code of Governance, illustrated and described at Appendix 1.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no resource implications.
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	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service

	<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 1: Appendix 1 – NMDDC Assurance Framework (including Code of Governance)
8.0	Background Documents
	Agenda Number 9 – Annual Governance Statement

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Assurance Framework



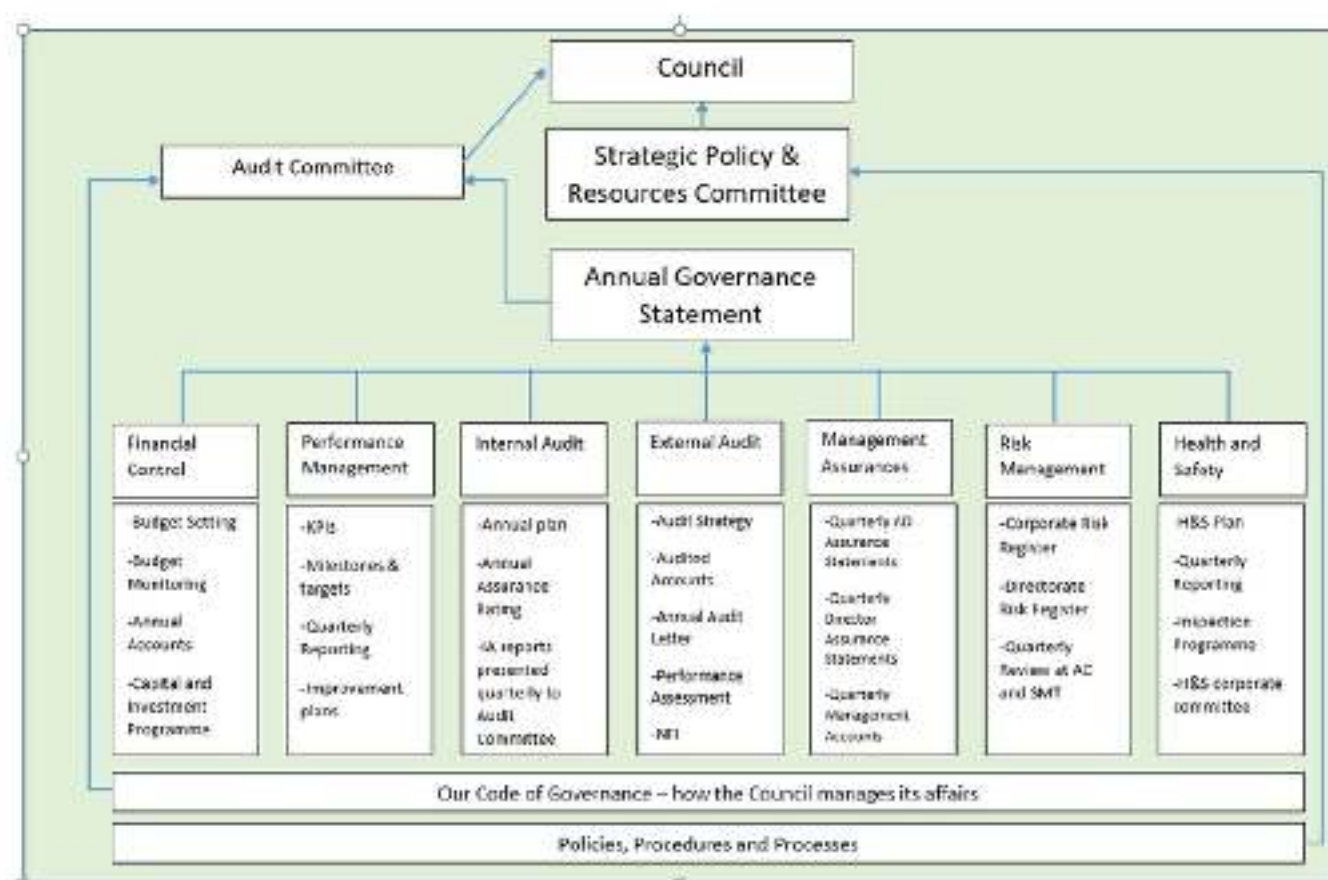
Effective Date: June 2019

Version 4.0

Policy Control

Policy Title	Assurance Framework
Departmental Ownership	Corporate Services
Document Owner	Josephine Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Officer Responsible	Gerard Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
Date of Approval	Audit Committee – 3 July 2019 Council – 5 August 2019
Date of Last update	June 2023
Updated by	Gerard Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
Date of next Review	June 2024
Location where document is held and referenced	Shared Drive and NMDDC Website

Key Components of the Councils Assurance Framework



Description of Key Elements the Council's Assurance Framework

The diagram shows how different sources of assurance and related key elements / control measures combine to enable the Council to monitor its governance arrangements and produce the information which enables the Council to prepare their Annual Governance Statement. The diagram also shows how the Council's Audit Committee, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (SP&R) and Council provide oversight of these governance arrangements. The key elements of the framework are described below.

Financial Control

A Financial Report for the year ended 31 March is prepared annually and submitted to the Department for Communities by 30 June. The report is then audited by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and published by 30 September each year (after approval by Committee). There is a budgetary control process including budget setting, budget monitoring and budget reporting. Senior Management Team (SMT), Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee challenge the process corporately when budgets are approved annually and performance is reported quarterly.

Standing Committees are also responsible for challenging and approving their annual budget and subsequently scrutinizing their budget performance at the end of each quarter in the following financial year.

Performance Management

The Council's performance management framework supports the implementation of the corporate and directorate plans through regular monitoring, reporting and review and, in future, will support monitoring / reporting on Community Planning outcomes. These plans set out what the Council

intends to deliver over the course of the year and through the performance framework regular performance reports are produced detailing progress against key milestones and targets.

These reports are considered by Directorate Management Teams and the CMT and actions for improvement are agreed. These arrangements are also designed to ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties in relation to performance improvement and our performance and related plans are subject to annual NIAO audit.

Internal Audit

Internal auditing is an independent and objective assurance designed to add value and improve an the Councils operations. The Council has an Audit Services Manager, who liaises with the fully independent specialist Auditing contractor who prepares an annual Strategy and Plan of work designed to ensure that:

- there is a robust system of internal audit of key Council activities and processes through a plan of work which affords suitable priority to the Council's objectives and risks
- there is a process of ensuring improvements to the Council's control environment, by providing management with advice, training and recommendations to improve risk management, governance and control arrangements, including the formal monitoring of the implementation of audit recommendations
- the specialist Auditing Contractor will be in a position to provide, at the end of each year, a professional, evidence-based opinion on the adequacy of the Council's risk management, control and governance arrangements which, in turn, will support the preparation of the Council's Annual Governance Statement
- the Council meets its legislative responsibilities for internal control, risk management and internal audit.

External Audit

Each year, the Local Government Auditor (LGA), the NIAO, completes an audit of the Council's accounts in accordance with legislation and the Local Government Code of Audit Practice issued by the Chief LGA. The LGA Annual Report sets out their opinion on the Council's financial statements and is included within the annual Financial Report.

The NIAO also examines annually whether the Council has proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and that public money is properly accounted for and undertakes an annual audit and assessment of the Council's performance improvement arrangements. Their findings are summarised in an Annual Audit Letter, a Performance audit report and a Report to those Charged with Governance.

Assurances from Management & Governance Statement

Each quarter, Assistant Directors provide their Director with a Quarterly Assurance Statement. The Directors in turn then prepare a quarterly assurance statements for the Chief Executive. The Assurance Statements confirms:

- Their responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound risk management and internal control system which supports the achievement of the corporate and directorate objectives.
- Compliance with the risk review process and outlining progress to manage key risks and highlight any significant governance issues that should be considered by SMT for inclusion within the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

Assistant Directors provide analysis on all budget variance quarterly to both their Director and to Finance.

Risk Management

There is an agreed risk management strategy which sets out the processes the Council has put in place to manage risk. Risk registers and risk action plans are in place at corporate, directorate and

project level and are recorded on the corporate risk management system, GRACE Governance Solutions. There is reporting to CMT, SMT and the Audit Committee on risk management.

National Fraud Initiative (NFI)

NFI is a UK-wide counter-fraud exercise. In Northern Ireland, the exercise is undertaken by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland (C&AG) under his statutory data matching powers set out in Article 4 of the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. The C&AG works in collaboration with the Cabinet Office, Audit Scotland and Audit Wales, which undertake the NFI exercise in England, Scotland and Wales respectively.

The NFI uses computerised techniques to compare information about individuals, held by different public bodies and on different financial systems, which might suggest the existence of fraud or error. It means that public bodies can take action if any fraud or error has taken place, and it allows auditors to assess the fraud prevention arrangements which those organisations have in place.

The Audit Services Manager coordinates this bi annual exercise to ensure Council complies with its statutory duties and to ensure Council controls are effective to assist in preventing and detecting fraud and error.

Health and Safety (H&S)

The Council has an H&S Policy in place with an associated Organisation Structure and Arrangements to deliver on the Policy. The Corporate Health and Safety Unit reports on a quarterly basis to a senior management H&S Assurance Board and then on to the Audit Assurance Board and Audit & Risk Panel on compliance and strategic matters regarding the Council's health and safety management system. Operational matters are dealt with through the quarterly H&S Committee structure. Routine reports include information on performance against health and safety targets, accident statistics, policy changes, legislative changes and emerging health and safety issues. The Corporate H&S Unit deliver an annual programme of health and safety inspections, audits and training to monitor and support the management system. Risk assessments are in place at an operational level to identify and manage health and safety risks.

Code of Governance

Underlying our Assurance Framework is our Code of Governance. The Council is committed to the principles of good governance and our Code of Governance is a public statement of that commitment. Our Code has been prepared in line with best practice and a summary is contained in the Annual Governance Statement, see appendix 1 for further detail.

Policies, procedures and processes

Policies, procedures and processes are designed to underpin day-to-day operations. All policies are controlled centrally by the Head of Corporate Policy.

Audit Committee

Its purpose is to provide an independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and associated control environment.

Strategic Policy & Resources Committee (SP&R)

The SP&R Committee also oversees directly the financial management / stewardship of the Council.

Code of Governance

Introduction

Governance arrangements in the public sector are keenly observed and sometimes criticised. We need to ensure that we meet the highest standards and that our governance arrangements are not only sound but are seen to be sound.

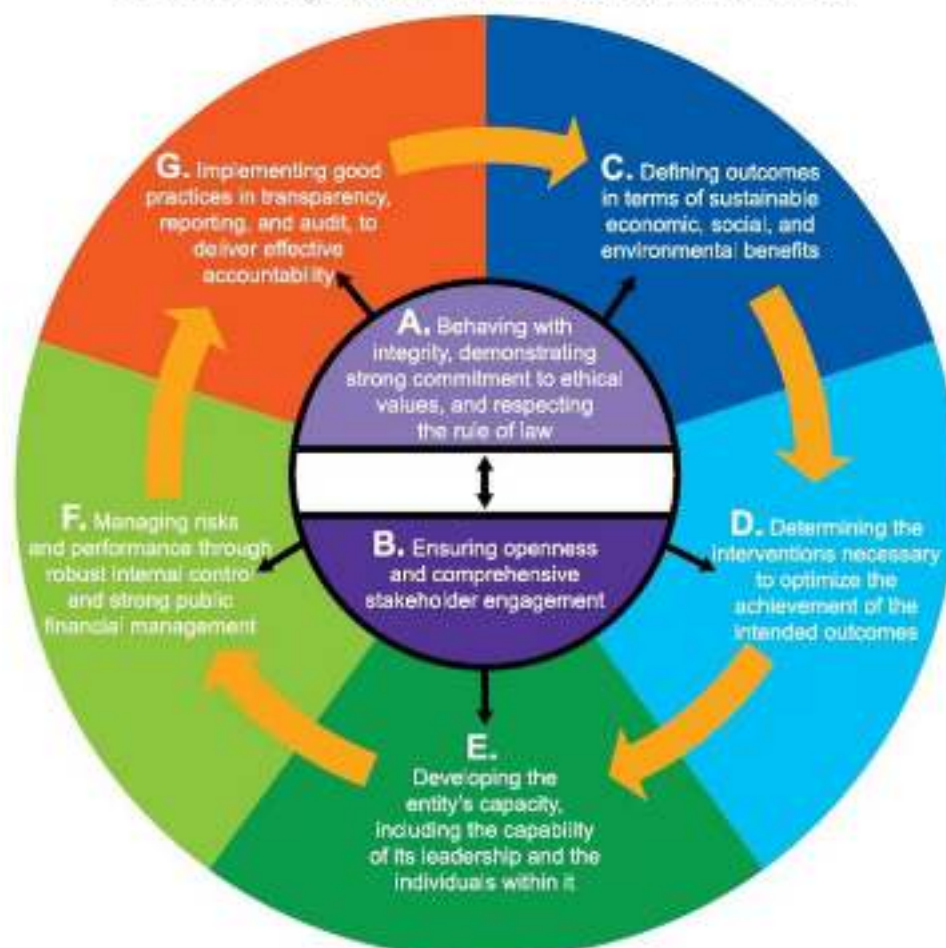
Governance is about how Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. It comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages with and, where appropriate, leads its community.

The CIPFA Solace 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework' was issued in April 2016 and represents best practice for developing and maintaining a local code of governance and applies to annual governance statements prepared for the 2018/19 financial year onwards.

NMDDC is committed to the principles of Good Governance and has developed this Code of Governance to demonstrate this commitment. This Code will be updated and approved by the Audit Committee on an annual basis.

The 7 Principles of Good Governance

Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



A. Behaving with integrity

- Shared values communicated via community plan, corporate plan and key strategies
- Mandatory Code of Conduct for Councillors
- NI charter for Elected Member Development
- Staff Code of conduct
- Council Constitution including Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation
- Council Anti-Fraud Policies and Fraud Response Plan
- Council participate in the National Fraud Initiative – Bi annual data matching exercise
- Council Whistleblowing Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Declarations of interest
- Conflicts of Interest Policy

B. Ensuring Openness

- Council and Committee meetings open to the public
- Council and Committee agendas and minutes displayed on the Council web site
- Consultation and engagement with staff and trade unions
- Annual financial report published on the Council's web site
- Access to Information Policy and Procedure
- Community Plan and Local Development Plan

C. Defining Outcomes

- Community Plan 'Living well together'
- Corporate and Directorate Plans
- Leisure Transformation - Newry Leisure Centre and Down Leisure Centre Provision
- Organisational Development
- Tourism Development and Marketing Strategy
- Performance Improvement Plans
- Local Development Plan

D. Optimising the achievement of outcomes

- Corporate and Directorate plans
- Constitution
- Strategic financial planning
- Risk Management Policy

E. Developing Capacity and Capability

- Organisational Development
- Harmonisation of policies
- Development of a joint Employee Relations consultation and negotiating policy
- Elected Members Development Charter/Member Leadership Programme

F. Finance, Performance and Risk Management

- Financial Regulations
- Risk Management Policy
- Audit Committee
- Audit Services Manager who liaises with a fully independent outsourced Internal Audit firm
- Annual Internal Audit Strategy and Plan
- Data Protection policy and procedures

- Director and Assistant Director quarterly Assurance reporting
- Independent Audit Committee Chairperson

G. Transparency, Reporting and Effective Accountability

- NMDDC website
- Publication of key reports including Annual Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Performance Improvement Report
- Committee support framework
- Monitoring of all Internal and External Audit recommendations and quarterly updates to the Audit Committee.

Compliance with the Code

This Code of Governance is supported by Policies, Procedures and Systems that determine and control how the Council manages its affairs. **Appendix B** provides more detail, demonstrating how the Council currently complies with the Code.

Monitoring and Review

Our governance arrangements are reviewed annually to ensure that they are adequate and operating effectively in practice. The results of these reviews are reported to the Audit Committee and inform the preparation of our Annual Governance Statement which forms part of our published financial report.

Internal Audit will undertake reviews of the Councils governance arrangements to ensure they are adequate and operating effectively in practice.

Appendix B

Core Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
A.1 Behaving with integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mandatory Code of Conduct for Councillors – The NI code of Local Government Conduct for Members ➤ Code of conduct for NMDDC staff ➤ NI Charter for Elected Member Development ➤ Declarations of interest a standing agenda item for Council/Committee meetings ➤ Conflicts of Interest Policy ➤ Annual Mandatory declarations of Interest to be completed by staff down to Head of Service grade. Voluntary declarations to be completed by other staff ➤ Council minutes include whether any declarations of interests have been made ➤ Fraud and Whistleblowing policies in place ➤ Council participate in the National Fraud Initiative – Bi annual data matching exercise ➤ Gifts and Hospitality Policy with each Department maintaining a register (Director's secretaries record all declarations) ➤ Members approve the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constitution ▪ Standing Orders and Financial Regulations ▪ Codes of Conduct ➤ Members approval of the Community and Corporate Plans ➤ Scheme of Delegation ➤ Party Group Leaders Forum ➤ Members Training and Workshops ➤ Shared values communicated through the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and the Annual Performance Improvement Plan ➤ Open and transparent committee system and reporting
A.2 Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mandatory Code of Conduct for Councillors ➤ Register maintained of Members' declarations of interest ➤ Register maintained of Officers' declarations of interest ➤ Ethical requirements of Professional Standards ➤ Standing Orders ➤ Register maintained of Members' declarations of interest ➤ Ongoing monitoring and reporting through Internal Audit and Risk Management processes ➤ Systems and processes for financial administration ➤ Partners and Contractors required to comply with relevant policies ➤ Policies in place which demonstrate our commitment to ethical values includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan

Core Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equality and Diversity Framework ▪ Good Relations Forum ▪ Disability Action Plan ▪ Data Protection Policy <p> Robust Equality Screening process Letters of Offer issued with Grants Monitoring arrangements Procurement guidance and policy </p>
A.3 Respecting the rule of law	<p> Council Constitution Updated Financial Regulations Updated Standing Orders Register maintained of Members' declarations of interest Register maintained of Officer' declarations of interest Operating Protocol for Planning Committee Council Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan Council participate in the National Fraud Initiative – BI annual data matching exercise Council Whistleblowing Policy Gifts and Hospitality Policy Qualified majority voting and Call-In process in operation in accordance with the Local Government Act 2014 External expert legal and other professional advice sought when necessary. Fraud and Whistleblowing investigations undertaken HR Disciplinary processes. </p>

Core Principal B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
B1: Openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Council meetings are open to the public and members of the media ➤ Council's web site provides up-to-date information regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council activities • Policies • Reports issued ➤ Use of Social Media ➤ Internal Communications issued via Chief Executives' briefs ➤ Consultation with stakeholders regarding the Community and Performance Improvement Plans ➤ Community Planning Process ➤ Corporate Complaints Procedure ➤ Customer Service Standards in Draft format – to be brought through Council Summer 2019. ➤ Council minutes are published on the website ➤ Standard pro forma for all Committee reports. ➤ Annual Performance Improvement Plan published on the web site. ➤ Categories for 'confidential business' for Committee ➤ Staff Consultations ➤ Access to Information Policy and Procedure
B2: Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A co-ordinated and strategic approach to community engagement and involvement that enables partners to bring together their community engagement work and plans and connects Members, community and citizen engagement and partnership decision making ➤ Local Development Planning ➤ Community Planning Process ➤ Monthly Community Planning team meetings ➤ Community planning partnership meets 3 times per year ➤ Community Plan Statutory Partners ➤ Place Shaping Agenda ➤ Ongoing engagement with Trade Unions



B3: Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Plan developed following consultation with Statutory Partners, stakeholders and the public Local Development Plan Annual Performance Improvement Plan
---	---

Core Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
C1: Defining Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Living well Together' the Districts Community Plan 2017-2030 The Corporate Plan will be driven by priorities set out in the 'Living Well Together' Community Plan Annual Performance Improvement Plan Corporate Planning Framework for the development of the 2019-2023 Corporate Plan Transformation programme being developed which will include detailed service reviews Treasury Management 4-year Capital Programme Prudential Financial Framework Local Development Plan Annual Directorate Business Plans Sports Facilities Strategy Document NMDDC Tourism Strategy 2017-2022 Tourism Marketing Plan Tourism Experience Brochure
C2: Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Living well Together' the Districts Community Plan 2017-2030 Annual Performance Improvement Plan Local Development Plan New Corporate Plan will be driven by priorities set out in the Community Plan Corporate Planning Framework for the development of the 2019-2023 Corporate Plan Local Development Plan – Preferred Options Papers Risk Management processes Policy Officer Established processes for governance, management and administration of grants Equality Impact Assessments EQIA completed for all policies

Core Principal D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievements of the intended outcomes!		
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles	
D1: Determining interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evidence and Research team support the Council in the development of a data and evidence based approach to support the creation of the Community Plan, Local Development Plan and key related strategies. ➤ Ongoing consultation and engagement with the public, stakeholders and the community and voluntary sectors. ➤ Ongoing consultation and engagement with the public and key stakeholders ➤ Professional advice sought when required ➤ Transformation programme being developed which will include detailed service reviews 	
D2: Planning interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Planning processes encompassing Community, Corporate and Performance Improvement Plans ➤ Community Planning engagement framework completed through thematic groups via the DEA's ➤ Local Development Plan ➤ Strategic Planning Framework ➤ Directorate business plans ➤ Performance Improvement Plans including KPI's ➤ Risk Management processes ➤ Budgetary Control including a rolling 4 year capital plan ➤ Monthly Management accounts ➤ Financial planning ➤ Estimates process including Efficiency Working Group ➤ Performance Indicators ➤ Transformation programme being developed which will include detailed service reviews ➤ Medium term financial planning ➤ Financial management of capital programme ➤ Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators 	
D3: Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Financial reporting ➤ Reporting to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee ➤ Treasury Management ➤ Estimates Process ➤ Budgetary Reporting ➤ MRP Policy ➤ Estimates Process ➤ Council/Committee Reporting ➤ Community Plan ➤ Local Development Plan 	

Core Principal E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
E1: Developing the entity's capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Development Transformation programme being developed which will include detailed service reviews Performance Improvement Plan Annual NIAO Improvement Audits and Assessments of Council Monitoring of the performance of the delivery of Council Improvement Objectives to ensure compliance with the performance improvement requirements of part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 Directors and Assistant Directors quarterly assurance statements Community Plan Statutory Partners Service Level Agreements
E2: Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Party Leaders Meetings Induction Training and Learning and Development Programme for Members Member Development Charter Scheme of Delegation Audit Committee undertake an annual self-assessment exercise against CIPFA standards Planning Scheme of Delegation CE Job Description/Specification and Appraisal Scheme Terms and conditions of employment Capacity building around the Code of Conduct Performance Improvement consultation Consultation on major Council strategies Performance Improvement Plan Directorate business plans Project Plans Corporate Management Team Meetings Continuing Professional Development Corporate Health & Safety Occupational Health Service including Westfield Health All staff have access to leisure facilities A number of post related to improving health and wellbeing in the district (i.e. Exercise referral coordinator, GP referral coordinator, Macmillan move more coordinator and Age friendly Coordinator)



Core Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
F1: Managing risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk Management Policy ➤ Risk Management software system ➤ SMT update Corporate Risk Register quarterly and present to audit Committee ➤ Directorate risk registers updated bi-annually ➤ Director and Assistant Director Quarterly Assurance Statements
F2: Managing performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual NIAO Audit and Assessment Reports ➤ Annual Performance Improvement Plans ➤ Directorate business plans ➤ Agreed pro forma for Committee reports showing option appraisals and implications. ➤ Regular reporting of financial information to the SP&R committee ➤ Legal and professional advice obtained as necessary ➤ The SP&R and Audit Committee oversees and monitors performance management, processes, systems and related arrangements. ➤ The SP&R Committee oversees and monitors structures, governance arrangements and financial information. ➤ Performance Improvement updates ➤ Financial Management ➤ Risk Management processes and reporting ➤ Budgetary reporting
F3: Robust internal control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Directorate Business Plans ➤ Risk Management Policy and processes ➤ Risk registers in place and linked to objectives ➤ Audit Services Manager in place who liaises with a fully independent internal audit firm ➤ Independent External Review of Internal Audit every 5 years. ➤ Internal Audit planning ➤ Risk based auditing ➤ Recommendation tracker to monitor all Internal Audit recommendations ➤ Council Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan ➤ Council Whistleblowing Policy ➤ Council participate in the National Fraud Initiative – Bi annual data matching exercise ➤ Gifts and Hospitality Policy ➤ Directors and Assistant Director Quarterly Assurance Statements ➤ Annual Governance Statement ➤ Audit Committee with an independent Chairperson

Core Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management	
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles
F4: Managing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Data Protection Policy ➤ Data Protection training ➤ IT Transformation Project underway ➤ Access controls in place on Council network ➤ Secure physical access to Council buildings and IT server rooms
F5: Strong public financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rates Estimates process ➤ Annual Budget setting process and Budgetary reporting systems ➤ Financial management detailed in Directorate Business Plans ➤ Prudential Framework ➤ Compliance with CIPFA's Code on a Prudential Framework for Local Authority Capital Finance and CIPFA's Treasury Management Code ➤ Transformation programme being developed which includes detailed service reviews ➤ All Committee reports include financial implications ➤ Financial Regulations

Core Principal G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability		
Supporting Principles	How we meet these principles	
G1: Implementing good practice in transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Financial Report published on the Council's website. ➤ The Financial Report and accounts are prepared in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting the UK ➤ The Council web site provides the public with up to date information ➤ Standard Committee report template 	
G2: Implementing good practices in reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Accounts published on the Council's web site ➤ Established timescale for submission and approval of annual accounts ➤ Performance Improvement – Annual Audit and Assessment Reports ➤ Publication of statutory performance indicators in line with the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014 ➤ Annual Governance Statement reviewed by Chief Executive and published on Council's website ➤ Council Committees consider and approve reports which are ratified by full Council ➤ Review of Corporate Governance carried out by Internal Audit ➤ Service Level Agreements ➤ The Annual Accounts are prepared in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK based on International Financial Reporting Standards and the Department of Communities Accounts Direction. ➤ Committee reports presented by Senior Officers 	
G3: Assurance and effective accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All NIAO recommendations are included on the recommendation tracker with updates reported to Audit Committee ➤ All NIAO (External Audit) reports presented to the Audit Committee ➤ Audit Services Manager in place who liaises with fully independent Internal Audit firm ➤ External audit completed by NIAO ➤ NIAO Proper Arrangements Audit ➤ Internal Audit annual review of effectiveness ➤ Community Planning Statutory Partners ➤ The Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 ➤ Service Level Agreements ➤ Contract Management ➤ Directorate Business Plans in place which contain key corporate actions, risk actions and performance indicators 	

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	04 July 2023
Subject:	Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director: Finance and Performance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catherine Hughes – Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting)

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

	For decision	For noting only	X
1.0	Purpose and Background		
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to recommend the final version of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24. This plan is supported by the Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24 and Delivery Plans which have been developed for each Performance Improvement Objective 2023-24.</p> <p>The Performance Improvement Plan was approved by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee on 15 June 2023 and will be published on the Council's website following full Council ratification in July 2023.</p>		
1.2	<p>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.</p>		
1.3	<p>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.</p>		
2.0	Key issues		
2.1	<p>In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council is required to publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2022. At the beginning of June 2023 however, written confirmation received from the Department for Communities advised that they would move the suggested publication date as set out in paragraph 45 of the guidance to the 30 September 2023.</p> <p>The Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 is attached at Appendix 1, and includes the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance improvement objectives 2023-24 • Statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management • Self imposed performance indicators, as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-23 		

	Public Consultation and Engagement 2023-24
2.2	<p>The development of the performance improvement objectives 2023-24 is based on a robust and reliable evidence base which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 764 responses to the Residents Survey (September 2022) • 581 individuals engaged in the consultation on COVID-19 and the draft Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020) <p>This was supplemented by an eight week public consultation and engagement process around the proposed performance improvement objectives 2023-24 which took place between 20 March – 15 May 2023 and consisted of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 123 responses to the survey on the draft performance improvement objectives, published through the Speak NMD platform • Engagement with 27 stakeholders through Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice, Newry and Mourne Senior Forum and the Cedar Foundation <p>Overall, the feedback from the consultation and engagement process revealed widespread support for the proposed performance improvement objectives, as outlined in Appendix 2.</p>
	Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24
2.4	<p>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.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>To note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 (including the five performance improvement objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24 and Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	<p>There are no financial resource implications within this report.</p>
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>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 checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> At the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meeting in March 2023, it was agreed to implement an eight week consultation and engagement process, in order to meet the then statutory deadline of 30 June 2023 for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan.</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 – Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 • Appendix 2 – Consultation and Engagement Report 2023-24 • Appendix 3 – Objective Delivery Plans 2023-24
8.0	Background Documents
	Performance Improvement Plans 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2022-23

Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24



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

Contents

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



An Cathaoirleach
Chairperson
Councillor Valerie Harte



An
Príomhfheidhmeannach
Chief Executive
Marie Ward

Foreword

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

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

Through our economic development programmes, we supported 423 local businesses and social enterprises and helped to create 235 local jobs. We improved the processing times of local planning applications, and we hope to achieve further improvements with the

embedding of the new electronic planning system which was launched at the end of last year.

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

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

Introduction

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

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

Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

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

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

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



Performance Improvement Objective 1

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

Why this matters

You told us that:

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

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

Looking Back: What we did in 2022-23



720,000 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities



Recorded 225,795 visits across a total of 10 community trails.



9,534 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities



Progressed a number of new build and/or upgraded capital projects



9,306 people participating in targeted health programmes

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24

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

How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Number of paid attendances recorded at:						
Newry Leisure Centre	864,190	27,253	183,224	307,153	△	750,000
Down Leisure Centre	377,842	30,199	177,496	246,978	△	
Kilkeel Leisure Centre	40,219	10,367	66,987	69,797	△	
St. Colmans Sports Complex	37,349	2,945	36,717	54,024	△	
Newcastle Centre & Tropicana Outdoor Swimming Complex	284,230	2,778	33,801	25,517	▽	
Ballymote Sports and Wellbeing Centre	38,993	1,754	10,309	15,365	△	
Number of people participating in targeted health programmes	10,793	2,270*	322*	9,309	△	9,400
Number of young people participating in targeted youth health and wellbeing initiatives	New measure			19,365	-	20,000
Number of leisure centre memberships	New Measure			9,534	-	9,750
Number of capital leisure projects progressed	New Measure				-	Not set
Number of recorded visits at community trails	57,849	96,563	211,718	225,795	△	225,000
What you will see by March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the number of paid attendances at our six leisure centres to 750,000 by end of 2023-24• Increase in the number of people participating in targeted health programmes to 9,400• Increase in the number of young people participating in targeted health and wellbeing initiatives to 20,000.• Increase in the number of memberships being taken out to 9,750.• 225,000 recorded visits to community trails.• A number of new build and/or upgraded capital leisure projects progressed• 'Mystery Visitor' Programme implemented and baseline established					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities• Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We all enjoy long, healthy, active lives• People want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service Availability	Fairness		
Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities					

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

Performance Improvement Objective 2






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

Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Improving skills, employability and job prospects' was your top priority for improving the local area in the 2022 residents survey • 'Supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' is in your top three priorities for improvement • Investment to grow the economy, create jobs and attract tourists is the most important form of investment • 95% of respondents to our 2022-23 survey agreed with this objective <p>As we continue to emerge and recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, Newry, Mourne and Down has recorded increases in the number of VAT/PAYE registered businesses, employee jobs and the birth rate of new businesses in the past year. When compared to 2020, the claimant count for unemployment benefit has also reduced but remains above pre-pandemic levels.</p> <p>Continuing to support the economic recovery of Newry, Mourne and Down remains a key priority for the Council. During 2022-23, the Council awarded approximately £1m to assist local businesses in navigating the impact of the pandemic. Whilst much has been achieved, there is still more to do to rebuild and revitalise the local economy.</p> <p>For 2023-24 all NI Councils will be supporting businesses and job creation through an Entrepreneurship Support Service. This is to ensure better collaboration across Businesses, Councils and Government Departments. It will also ensure more consistency at a regional level. A funding application has been submitted to the Shared Prosperity Fund with a launch expected in September 2023. Through this Service, the Council will continue to deliver a range of business start-up and growth programmes to help new and established businesses to innovate, grow and expand.</p>								
Looking Back: What we did in 2022-23	<table> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1485 512 1552">😊</td><td data-bbox="512 1485 1426 1552">187 new business starts created and 187 new jobs promoted through business start activity</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1552 512 1664">😊 😊</td><td data-bbox="512 1552 1426 1664">12 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 new social enterprise jobs created</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1664 512 1776">😊</td><td data-bbox="512 1664 1426 1776">347 businesses supported and 467.5 mentoring days delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales Accelerator' programmes.</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1776 512 1854">😊</td><td data-bbox="512 1776 1426 1854">'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District</td></tr> </table>	😊	187 new business starts created and 187 new jobs promoted through business start activity	😊 😊	12 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 new social enterprise jobs created	😊	347 businesses supported and 467.5 mentoring days delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales Accelerator' programmes.	😊	'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District
😊	187 new business starts created and 187 new jobs promoted through business start activity								
😊 😊	12 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 new social enterprise jobs created								
😊	347 businesses supported and 467.5 mentoring days delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales Accelerator' programmes.								
😊	'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District								
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll-out the NMD 'Make it Local' campaign to support the revitalisation of our local economy • Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme 								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support the growth of existing businesses and creation of new jobs through the Entrepreneurship Support ProgrammeSupport the establishment of new businesses through the Entrepreneurship Support ProgrammeContinue to create opportunities for employability and skills through implementation of a revised LMP Action Plan to reflect reduced budget available. (Action Plan may be revised again during the year if more funding from the Department is provided).					
How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	10	12	12	12	▶	12
Number of social enterprise jobs created	12	14	13	12-	▶	12
Number of business plans created for start-up businesses and employer enterprises	298	266	358	311	▽	300
Number of jobs promoted via business start-up activity	194	199.5	215	187	▽	155
Number of new businesses & employer enterprises supported to start up	203	181	215	187	▽	190
Number of existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions	198	327	373	347	▽	200
What you will see by March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">300 business plans created for Start-Up businesses and employer enterprises190 new Business / employer enterprises supported to start-upSupport provided to 200 existing businesses to progress growth and scaling ambitions155 new jobs promoted via business start-up activity.12 social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 social enterprise jobs createdMore support for new and established local businesses and more employment opportunities across the DistrictThe 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 potentialOur economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutralPeople want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service availability	Innovation		
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism					

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

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	
Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog mess and dog fouling and rubbish or litter lying around are your top two perceived problems in your local area • 6% of the residents surveyed were dissatisfied with the cleansing service provided by the Council, which was the third highest level of dissatisfaction recorded across Council services • 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure. • 89% of respondents to our 2022-23 survey agreed with this objective <p>Since 2019-20, the LEAMS* score for the District has remained at 64, which falls below the current regional average of 66. Issues around street cleanliness continue to escalate largely as a result of the increased number of illicit dumping, littering and dog fouling incidents reported to the Council and the prioritisation of the refuse collection service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>In order to improve the overall cleanliness of the District, the Council is currently reviewing cleansing operations to design a more effective model of service provision. The Council also remains committed to collaborating with partner organisations and local communities to promote responsible dog ownership, address issues around littering and illicit dumping and generate local pride in having a cleaner, greener District for everyone to enjoy.</p>
Looking Back: What we did in 2022-23	 Issued 110 fixed penalty notices, 91 of which were paid
	 Supported 39 community clean-ups
	 10 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme
	 Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out
	 Increase in the rate of recycling, to 50.3%
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24	<p>Address issues around littering, illicit dumping and dog fouling by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to implement the Enforcement Action Plan • Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns • Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of littering and illicit dumping along the border area • Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres • Supporting local community clean ups • Implementation of a Paint Re-Use Scheme at 7 Household Recycling Centres throughout the district.

	Work in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commission surveys to monitor street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots• Promote the 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns• Encourage community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'• Highlight the impact of littering on the marine environment					
How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index)	64	64	64	-	▶	65
Number of fixed penalty notices issued	83	52	114	110	☹▶	120
Number of fixed penalty notices paid	72	26	101	91	☹▶▼	96
Number of community clean ups supported	94	33	94	39	☹▶▼	100
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	34	24	18	10	▶▼	No target
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	53.7%	51.9%	49.1%	50.3% (Q1-Q3)	😊▶	50%by 2020 65% by 2030
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	2,131t	2,538t	2,685t	1,782 (Q1-Q3)	😊▶	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20)
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	84,610t	86,900t	87,336t	63,512t (Q1-Q3)	▶	No target
What you will see by March 2024	<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, littering and illicit dumping• Improved opportunities to report littering, dog fouling and illicit dumping• Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites.• Opportunities to engage in community clean ups and participate in the 'Live Here Love Here' campaign and 'Adopt a Spot' scheme• Landfill and recycling targets are achieved• A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<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: Sustainability and Environment / Director: Active and Healthy Communities					

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

**The Q1-Q3 2022-23 data for the statutory waste management performance indicators remains provisional and will be finalised when the year-end data is validated and published by DAERA.

***The 2019-20 NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) target has been included as the Council awaits more up to date targets from DAERA.

Performance Improvement Objective 4

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

Why this matters

You told us that:

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

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

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

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

Looking Back:

What we did



Declared a 'Climate Emergency' in October 2019



Hosted a Climate Change Symposium 'Our Climate – Our Challenge' in March 2020



Produced and launched a 10 year active travel Masterplan for the District in 2021

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2023-24	Address issues around climate change and sustainability by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing a climate change and sustainable development strategy• Completing the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan• Developing a new biodiversity strategy 2023-28• Implementing the Council's Tree Strategy• Installing new public drinking water fountains• Supporting the implementation of new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points• Undertaking a baseline assessment of the Council's carbon footprint• Implementing the Council's fleet replacement programme					
How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Carbon footprint of Council estate	To be established					
Percentage of Council fleet younger than 8 years	New measure					50%
Number of vehicles within the Council fleet that have an alternative fuel source	New measure					10
Number of trees planted on Council managed estate	New measure					Not set
Number of Council supported EV charging points	New measure					20
What you will see by March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a climate change and sustainable development strategy• Development of a climate change adaptation plan• Development of the new Newry, Mourne and Down Biodiversity Strategy (2023-2028)• New trees planted• Carbon footprint of Council estate established• 20 new Council supported EV charging points installed• Increase in the percentage of younger, less polluting vehicles within the Council fleet• 10 new electric vehicles ordered for use within the Council fleet.• 5 new public drinking water fountains erected.					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<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	Efficiency	Innovation	Sustainability		
Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities / Director: Sustainability and Environment					

Performance Improvement Objective 5

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

Why this matters

Delivering a more efficient and effective Planning Service for customers is a key priority for improvement, for the Council. Planning plays a significant role in promoting sustainable development, regeneration, economic prosperity, investment and job creation for present and future generations of our District. 95% of respondents to our 2022-23 survey also agreed with this objective.

The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is well underway with a new planning portal launched in December 2022 allowing customers to submit applications online and track live planning applications. This new system has been accompanied by the expected teething problems however it is operating, and the normal work of the planning department is ongoing.

In January 2022, the Council carried out a Customer Satisfaction survey with key stakeholders to understand current perceptions of the service. Feedback from the survey highlights areas where users of the planning service are dissatisfied including with time taken to process applications; availability of officers to discuss applications; and clarity of information and guidance received. Satisfaction was registered however, with reception service; helpfulness of officers; information and guidance received; and expertise and knowledge of planning officers. It is hoped that the implementation of this new system which makes it easier for users to engage with the planning process will assist in improving some of these areas of dissatisfaction.

The 2022-23 processing times for planning applications is based on the first two quarters of the year as Q3 data was withdrawn to allow more time to fully develop the data extracts from the new planning portal. The Council has not yet achieved the statutory standards, but we remain committed to delivering further improvements and providing a high-quality service to all customers.

Looking Back:

What we did between April-December 2022



Processed 51.7% of planning enforcement cases within 39 weeks, which is below the regional average of 73.4%



Average processing time of 18.2 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 15 weeks












Average processing time of 67.4 weeks for major planning applications, which is below the regional average of 50.0 weeks



Received 763 local planning applications, which is the highest across Northern Ireland

Looking Forward:

- Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months

What we will do in 2023-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted• Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'• Effectively implement the new electronic planning system					
How we will measure success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	Q1/Q2* 2022-23	Status Trend	2023-24 Target
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	20.6	19	18.3	18.2	 	<15 weeks
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	94	64.6	49.8	67.4	 	<30 weeks
Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks	36.2%	40.9%	46.9%	51.7%	 	70%
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more**	183	187	187	228		150
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less**	685	788	825	793		700
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more**	620	551	486	483		450
What you will see by March 2024	<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	Service quality	Efficiency		
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism					

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

**The 2023-24 targets have been carried forward from 2022-23.

Strategic Alignment

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

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

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

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

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

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

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

- Inclusion within the Performance Improvement Plan, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.

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

Self Imposed Performance Indicators

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

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

Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	Increased citizen satisfaction
	Compliance with the Duty of Improvement
Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District	Compliance with the Duty of Community Planning / monitor delivery of outcomes with partners
	Percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

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

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

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

Identifying the Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

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

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

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

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

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

PIO's - 2022-23	PIO's 2023-24	Progress / Rationale	Status Proposed
<p>PIO 1: We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces</p>	<p>PIO 1: We will improve the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of recorded visits to the Council's forest parks, municipal park and community trails has been increasing year on year, with visitor numbers to the forest parks also reported through DAERA. • In the 2022 Residents Survey the number of residents advising that they have visited Council's parks and open spaces within the last 12 months increased by 11% to 41% compared to the previous residents survey carried out in 2018. • 32% of residents said they had used the leisure centres in the past 12 months which was a decrease of 9% compared to the 2018 result, • We have achieved the highest number of green and blue flags available for the District, • The Council's play strategy is now complete. • Physical activity opportunities such as leisure centres, gyms and sports facilities were ranked of higher importance by the public than access to outdoor spaces such as parks, forests, beaches and community trails for the health and wellbeing opportunities residents want to see more of. • An increase in residents' dissatisfaction with leisure centres between 2018 and 2022. 	<p>Amend The PIO 1 2022-23 to be amended for 2023-24 to reflect the performance improvement needs of the Council.</p>

<p>PIO 2: We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs</p>	<p>PIO 2: We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs</p>	<p>During 2022-23 progress was made against a number of key actions under this objective including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceeding the targets set for the NI 'Go For It' Programme. • Supporting local businesses and creating new jobs through the Council's economic development programmes. • Exceeding all targets set through the Social Economy programme. <p>However, there is still improvements to be made and the 2022 residents survey ranked 'improving skills, employability, and job prospects' and 'supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' as the 1st and 3rd highest priorities for improving the local area.</p>	<p>Retain This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2023-24.</p>
<p>PIO 3: We will improve the cleanliness of our district by addressing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling incidents</p>	<p>PIO 3: We will improve the cleanliness of our district by addressing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling incidents</p>	<p>During 2022-23 progress was made against a number of key actions under this objective including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity campaigns and dog licences • Working with neighbouring County Council's on the border to raise awareness of the impact of fly-tipping along the border area. • Supporting community clean ups. <p>However, improvement is still needed. While our recycling rate is above the 2020 target of 50%, we are still a long way off the 65% target set for 2030. Also, the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill has been increasing.</p>	<p>Retain This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2023-24</p>

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

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme.	We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted.• Implementation of the new electronic planning system. <p>However, much improvement is still required as the statutory standards for the average processing times of major and local planning applications and enforcement cases is still not being met and has increased in some instances.</p>	This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2023-24
---	--	--	---

Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down

113

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

114

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>
	

<p>Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement</p> <p>We will build a high performing Council, fit for the future, that delivers efficient and effective services for the benefit of all</p>	<p>Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District</p> <p>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.</p>
---	--

Alignment with the Strategic Aspects of Improvement

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

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

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

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

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

- Legitimate
- Clear
- Robust
- Deliverable
- Demonstrable

Equality Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment

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

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

Consultation and Engagement

117

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

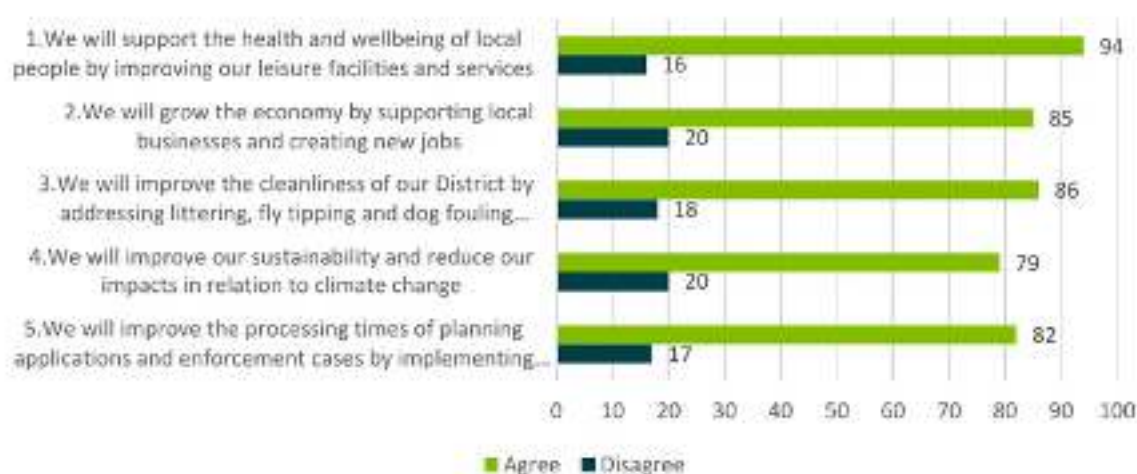
This year, the Council used the Speak NMD platform to host the consultation and engagement process. As a dedicated online space, which is facilitated through the Newry, Mourne and Down Community Planning Partnership, Speak NMD enables residents to participate in local consultation and engagement activities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

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

Electronic documentation, survey on the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24 on the Speak NMD platform.	Survey: 123 responses
Engagement with the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 75 groups, including the Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice, Newry and Mourne Senior Forum and Cedar Foundation 	27 consultees
Electronic survey and focus groups on the impact of COVID-19 and the Corporate Plan 2021-23 (September 2020)	560 respondents to survey 21 participants in focus groups
Residents Survey (September 2022)	764 respondents

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

Agreement on Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24



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

Achieving Continuous Improvement

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

We will be:	What this means:
Accountable	We will be accountable for 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.

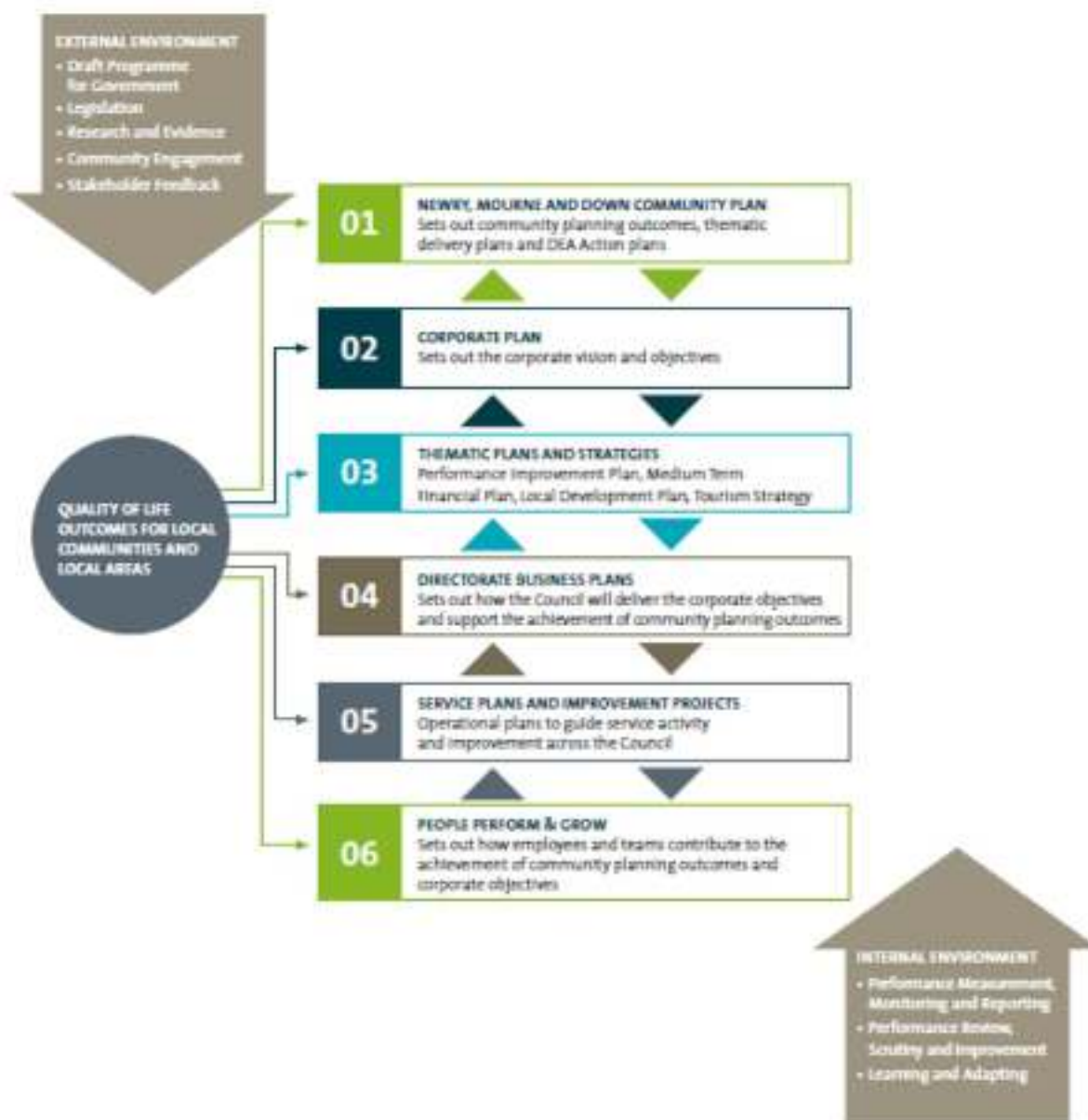
The Council also assesses how performance compares with other Councils. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is working with the Association of Public Service Excellence to benchmark performance against the performance of Councils across Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions. This information is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

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

Business Planning and Performance Management Framework

120

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Governance Arrangements

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



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

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

How to Propose New Performance Improvement Objectives

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

The Council can be contacted in the following ways:

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

Telephone: 0300 013 2233

Email: performance@nmandd.org

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

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

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

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

Key Controls Identified

1. Asset Management Strategy in Place to identify surplus assets
1. Monthly review of spend against budget
1. Professionally qualified and experienced staff
- 2 Project risk register in place for major projects
2. Capital Plan annually approved at Council
2. Four year Capital Plan
2. Large projects are project managed by external consultants who report to the Estates Team.
2. Monthly site progress meetings which are minuted
2. Strategic Finance Working Group scrutinises each Capital Project
3. Internal Audit of Project Governance of Capital projects scheduled for 2022/23.

Action Plans

Action Plan Cash Flow forecasting	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
	Detailed cash flow of Council capital plan to be brought to SFWIG in May to display to Members the scale of the capital programme and communicate when Council's big outlay will be required.	In Progress	Gerard Byrne	8/30/2023	AD of finance received information for each project via detailed project plans/business cases. AD of finance will also meet with Council's treasury advisor to discuss options for financing the capital programme over the next 8 years. Work is continuing on estimating the MRP/Loan payments over the life of our capital programme. New Capital Plan Procedure to go to SFWIG / SP&R in August 2023. Continue to keep Members updated of rising costs and supply chain difficulties leading to an impact on Council's Capital Plan.
Construction Industry - Material Shortages and Price Increases - Potential impact to our capital Plan	NI central government have informed me that the Dept of Finance is being lobbied by the construction industry to contribute to the unforeseen increase in material costs for those construction projects (large value) which were awarded in advance of the recent price spikes, as well as term service contracts with fixed rates for undertaking works.	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	8/30/2023	
Supplier/Contractor Options	AD of estates currently looking a number of option to counter act the over reliance on a small number of Contractors/Suppliers/PMs in NI	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	8/30/2023	Council has already availed of a number of construction frameworks and other options are being actively pursued.

Risk CR. 02 - Non-compliance with legislative requirements, including procurement

Risk	Probability					Consequence	Risk Categories	Risk Description	Potential Root Cause
	5	4	3	2	1				
								Business operational/regulatory Impact on individuals (staff or public) Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)	
								Failure to have the necessary policies and procedures in place with staff adequately trained to ensure legislative compliance. This includes complying with Procurement legislation, health and safety and fire risk assessments, best practice. Council not having adequate insurance cover.	
								Failure to understand and meet legal requirements in relation to Health and Safety, Information Management, Rural Needs, Disability, Section 75, Performance and Improvement and Safeguarding.	
								Lack of resources and inadequate training provision.	
								Staff not complying with Council's procurement policy.	
								Property and vehicle schedules not being up to date.	
								Absence of effective operational procedures and policies.	
								Fire Risk Assessments at Council buildings not being undertaken and actions not being implemented and managed.	
								Unforeseen events and public negligence/lack of responsibility.	
								COVID19 - Increased risks in relation to H&S at properties; statutory inspections required under legislation (i.e - vehicle and plant lifts, lifting equipment, pressurised water systems, local exhaust ventilation) are not taking place due to lack of access.	
								FRA / Legionella / Asbestos etc (are not being reviewed due to front line services being provided).	
								Non-compliance leading to prosecution	
								Personal liability / Corporate Manslaughter	
								Risk of a fatality at a Council site	
								Reputational damage	
								Reduced trust and public confidence	
								Increased number of complaints and queries	
								Increased insurance premiums	
								Loss of income	
								Andrew Cassells, Josephine Kelly	
								Last Review	6/20/2023
								Next Review	9/18/2023
								Risk Appetite	Risk Averse

Objectives

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

Key Controls Identified

1. Asbestos and Legionella Policies and Management Plans in place
1. COVID19 - New Governance Arrangements in place in Council. Delegated authority amended through SO.
1. COVID19 - New legislation introduced to allow virtual committee meetings
1. COVID19 Risk Assessments being completed and reviewed as required
1. Dedicated skilled teams in place for:
 - Health and Safety, HR, Legal and Procurement
1. Health and Safety Committees in place and ongoing programme of training in place
1. Policies and procedures in place - i.e H&S Policy, Procurement Policy, Access to Information, Records Management
1. Procurement training rolled out to all relevant staff
2. Compliance Reporting to SMT and H&S Committees
2. Procurement a standing agenda item at Councils Audit Committee
3. Internal Audit Completed
- H&S Check - 2019/20
- Contract Management - 2019/20
- Emergency Planning 2020/21
3. Internal Audits Scheduled
- Contract Management - 2021/22
- Information Governance - 2022/21

Action Plans

Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
<p>The actions from the Fire Risk Assessments which have been completed need to be actioned as soon as possible for all Council properties by the Facilities Management and Maintenance Department.</p>	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>The current level of risk regarding fire risks in our buildings is considered Low. The Fire Risk Management Policy has been approved and effective since 12th March 2020, however the associated Fire Safety Management Plan requires progressing. The priority is to seek agreement on a Fire Safety Management Plan which will guide future control of this risk.</p> <p>The Council has appointed a Council wide Contractor/s to undertake annual inspections of fire alarms and firefighting equipment. In relation to fire alarms inspections are likely to highlight a programme of work to upgrade some systems. The Council's Building Maintenance team continue to address work as required.</p>

Advisory Internal Audit Review - Implement the 30 recommendations arising from the internal audit review of Health and Safety	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	<p>An external review has been undertaken and an independent Report from by external body has been received and considered by the Directors of Corporate Services (CS) and Sustainability & Environment (SE). An action plan is being formulated. A revised Facilities Management Cross Service Working Group has been established under the Chairmanship of the Directors of CS and S&E.</p> <p>Where appropriate updates from the Working Group will be provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.</p> <p>The current level of risk for asbestos, is considered Low. All buildings have been surveyed and no significant risks have been identified which cannot be managed through good building practices.</p> <p>A Contractor was appointed in October 2020 for a three-year period to undertake inspections, air sampling, training and related asbestos consultancy work. There was a defined year 1, 2 and 3 work programmes. Current Contract being reviewed for retendering.</p> <p>E Learning is promoted throughout the organisation, however it should be noted that there is currently a joint Council E Learning platform contract in place that is lead by LCCC and expires on 30 June 2023. NMDOC HR staff are in regular communications with LCCC regarding this contract including any option to extend same.</p> <p>Work currently underway to validate Councils Operators License against Councils fleet insurance schedule. SMT has approved the recruitment of an Insurance Officer which is progressing.</p> <p>The current level of risk for legionella is considered Medium.</p> <p>A Contractor was appointed in August 2020 for three-year period to undertake legionella control measures on behalf of the Council. This comprises monthly, quarterly, six monthly and annual inspections and works. Current Contract being reviewed for retendering.</p> <p>Legislation to be reviewed to determine if this is possible while adhering to Public Contract Regulations. Procurement team are liaising with the LG Procurement Working Group. Council is currently adhering to legislative requirements. Procurement Policy to be reviewed in Q2.</p>
Asbestos Policy and Management Plans	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>Implementation of Asbestos Policies and Management Plans</p>
E-Learning Training	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	9/30/2023	<p>E-Learning training to be promoted throughout the organisation as take up is low - this is particularly relevant to mandatory training sessions.</p>
Insurance	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	9/30/2023	<p>CMT to ensure that Council Properties and Vehicles are adequately covered and schedules are up to date</p>
Legionella Policy and Management Plan	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>Implementation of Legionella Policies and Management Plans</p>
Social Procurement Policy	In Progress	Gerard Byrne	9/30/2023	<p>Council to consider bringing in a social procurement policy following the guidance issued by the Minister of Finance in June 2021.</p>

Risk CR. 03 - Failure to effectively manage waste

Risk	Consequence					Probability				
	5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5
Risk Categories	Buildings / Engineering / Environment Quality of Service Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)									
Risk Description	Failure to effectively manage waste									
Potential Root Cause	Industrial dispute lodged by the Trade Unions Insufficient resources (particularly availability of HGV drivers) Market forces enable commercial operators to increase prices (MDR) Failure to plan effectively for the future (including financial planning) Historic contract arrangements which may not be providing the Council with VFM Future changes to waste management arrangements Structure of new contracts to process & dispose of our waste to reflect changes in legislation Operation of the ARC21 Corporate Body going forward									
Consequence	Failure to meet recycling Targets Reputational Issues Lower levels of customer satisfaction Impact on service delivery and lost productivity With high CPI price increases the budget for waste management is likely to be insufficient for the 2023/24 year.									
Risk Owners	Andrew Cassells									
Gross/inherent Risk	Red 25					Last Review 6/20/2023				
Residual Risk	Red 20					Next Review 9/18/2023				
Target Risk Level	Yellow 9					Risk Appetite Risk Cautious				

Objectives

- 2. Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities.
- 7. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Contingency Plans in place
- 1. Long term Waste Strategic Plan in place
- 1. Partnership working with key stakeholders
- 3. Internal Audits Completed;
Fleet Management 2020/21
Fuel Management procedures
3. Internal Audits Scheduled;
Waste Management - 2021/22

Action Plans

arc21 Waste Management Group	<p>Following the May 2022 refusal to grant arc21 planning permission for their residual waste project and the requirement to recycle 70% by 2030 as per the Climate Change Bill and the Circular Economy package coupled with governance and internal issues within arc21 the long term viability of the group is now very questionable. Internal Audit carried out a review of the progress in implementing TRU and FTA recommendations in October 2018. A further review took place during November/December 2020 which has provisionally highlighted that limited progress has been made in implementing a number of recommendations from the 2018 audit.</p>	Action Plan Type In Progress	Action Plan Owner Andrew Cassells	Action Plan Action Date 9/30/2023	<p>Comments</p> <p>Failure to meet recycling Targets</p> <p>Reputational Issues</p> <p>Lower levels of customer satisfaction</p> <p>Impact on service delivery and lost productivity</p> <p>With high CPI price increases the budget for waste management is likely to be insufficient for the 2023/24 year.</p> <p>A consolidated action plan in relation to compliance to the Council's Operators License (OL) was presented to SE Committee in November 2022. A further update on compliance was provided in June 2023 showing good progress towards full implementation of actions and ongoing compliance. Staffing issues are being addressed and the Head of Cleansing has been seconded as interim Head of Fleet. Further operators license COTC holders trained and named on the OL. A further follow up Audit by RHA is planned for 2023/24 and the Transport Regulation Unit is being regularly informed of progress.</p>
Operators Licence		In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	9/30/2023	
Waste Management Plan	<p>The Waste Management Plan is organised by ARC 21. The Council is required to feed into and approve ARC 21's Waste Management Plan.</p>	In Progress	Andrew Cassells	9/30/2023	<p>A review of the arc21 Waste Management Plan (which includes NMDDC) has been completed by WRAP on behalf of DAERA/NIEA. Technical expertise (RPS) has been procured to produce an Addendum for the Plan as part of the six yearly review. It is understood that DAERA will be consulting on a draft Waste Management Strategy for NI by the end of 2023; the publication of which will better inform the Council's Waste Management Plans.</p>

Risk CR. 04 - Failure to provide robust and timely planning decisions

		Consequence					Probability				
Risk Categories		5					1	2	3	4	5
Business operational/reputational											
Financial											
Quality of Service											
Risk Description		Failure to provide robust and timely planning decisions									
Potential Root Cause		Ineffective and/or inadequate resources Planning Legislation not being followed Ineffective technology - EPIC system changes									
Consequence		Litigation and financial costs Reputational issues Lower levels of customer satisfaction Impact on service delivery and lost productivity Financial implications resulting in budget constraints Failure to achieve the statutory standards around local / major planning applications and enforcement cases									
Risk Owners		Conor Mallon									
Gross/inherent Risk		Red 25									
Residual Risk		Amber 16									
Target Risk Level		Yellow 9									
		Last Review 6/20/2023 Next Review 9/18/2023 Risk Appetite Risk Open									

Objectives

- 3. Enhance, protect and promote our environment
- 6. Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities.

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Action plan in place to reduce backlog
- 1. Increase in employee numbers
- 1. Ongoing training for officers and members
- 2. Dedicated Planning Committee in operation
- 2. Local Development Plan developed and timetable agreed
- 2. Planning Consultant in place since January 2020 to bring about performance improvements
- 2. Scheme of Delegation in place to facilitate timely planning decisions

Action Plans						
	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments	
Backlog cases	Implement action plan to reduce backlog in line with timeframe set	In Progress	Anthony McKay	7/30/2023	Live applications at 10-1-22 are 1,269 (September 2022 1,105). Average processing times for 2021/22 across Councils was 17.2 weeks with Newry, Mourne and Down at 18.8 weeks. During 2021/22, Newry, Mourne and Down received the highest number of applications at 1,744 (accounting for 12.8% of all applications received across NI). The number of decisions issued during 2021/22 was the highest	
Internal Review of overturn decisions	Council will undertake a review/audit of overturn decisions - this is based on the NIAO Public Accounts Committee report on Planning decisions across Councils in NI	In Progress	Gerard Byrne Conor Mallon	9/30/2023	The Four Year Internal Audit Plan features an advisory review for Overturn Planning Decisions. The will commence in August 2023.	
IT infrastructure	Upgrade of technical IT infrastructure (EPIC Replacement)	In Progress	Anthony McKay	7/31/2023	Went Live on the 5 December 2022 - Department still working on some go live improvements including accruals reports.	
Regional Planning Review	The Public Accounts Committee issued a regional report on Planning in Northern Ireland on 24 March 2022	In Progress	Conor Mallon	7/30/2023	Review of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 – Initial Stakeholder Engagement commenced May 2023 – consultation responses back by July 2023. Work also ongoing through the Local Government Development Management Working Group - Planning Improvement - PADS	

Risk CR. 05 - Failure to adequately plan for the future and deliver efficiencies and improvement

Risk	Probability					Consequence
	5	4	3	2	1	
Risk Categories						Business operational/regulatory Financial Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service
Risk Description						Failure to adequately plan for the future and deliver efficiencies and improvement
Potential Root Cause						Difficulty recruiting key positions in Councils Management Team Corporate efficiency projects and other improvement activities are not currently joined-up with wider transformational activity The Council is currently unable to track the realisation of benefits (financial or non-financial) arising from investment in new IT systems (i.e. Legend)
Consequence						A lack of corporate capacity currently exists to support transformational activity The overall affordability of the Councils long term plans considering COVID19 / Cost of Living Crisis / Inflation / pay demands Not promoting a single corporate identity The budget situation will continue to get worse (salaries and wages) therefore not providing VFM Our ability to provide citizens / customers with the services they require will be significantly constrained We will potentially lag behind other Councils & other public sector organisations
Risk Owners						Josephine Kelly; Marie Ward
Gross/inherent Risk						Red 20
Residual Risk						Amber 16
Target Risk Level						Yellow 9
Last Review						6/20/2023
Next Review						9/18/2023
Risk Appetite						Risk Hungry

Objectives

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

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Severance Rate agreed by Unions and Members
- 2. IT Project Group in place and meets monthly
- 2. Specialist independent IT consultants have been tasked with implementing the IT strategy

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Alternative methods of recruitment	HR to look at alternative method of recruitment due to the difficulties in recruiting into key positions across Council. The difficulties are not limited to senior positions, all Directorate are struggling to fill vacant posts currently.	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	9/30/2023	This includes the Regional Approach in relation to the Talent Management Strategy which is overseen by the LG Staff Commission. NMDDC represented on and contributing to LGSC Regional Talent Management Group - currently reviewing the LGSC Code of Procedures to ensure they are more fit for purpose in today's market. Council recruited several Apprentices on the 1 September 2022 and are now part of the BRCD apprenticeship scheme going forward. Council have also approved an Agile working policy in July 2022. Recruitment of AD posts is in progress as part of PFTF and other key positions across Council. There are still challenges across the Directorates on a number of posts. Working ongoing to develop the specification of processes. requires to drive efficiencies and integration of processes. Business Case to be finalised. Staff input to the systems being gathered through workshops in June 2023. Service reviews are progressing and discussion is ongoing with Trade Unions. The Business Administration severance has been agreed and has been implemented between December 2022 and August 2023. All exit dates have been agreed. The Tier 3 Business Case was approved in September 2022 and was implemented between April and June 2023. Tier 3 Developmental Centre's were held in March 2023 and candidates have received their report from this.
New HR System	New Self Service Human Resource Management system to be procured	In Progress	Josephine Kelly Catrina Miskelly	9/30/2023	
Service Reviews	Service Reviews are currently being completed across Directorate in line with paper which was approved at SP&R	In Progress	Senior Management Team	9/30/2023	
Voluntary Severance Call	Roll out of a voluntary severance call to communicated to staff	In Progress	Senior Management Team	9/30/2023	

Action Plans					
	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Documenting Business Continuity Plans	BCPs to be documented for each Service Area	In Progress	Caolain Boyd	8/30/2023	Stage one of the work is now complete and was presented to SMT in June 2022 in relation to critical services and systems. Work is being led by the SHEP unit. Further review to take place on the 18 July 2023.
Northern Ireland Emergency Planning Structures	Officers will continue to attend and contribute to the NI Emergency Planning Structures.	In Progress	Senior Management Team	8/30/2023	Council is represented at NIEP5 were any upcoming incidents will be discussed.

Risk	CR. 07 - Failure to implement an economic development programme to regenerate the district and attract inward investment due to financial uncertainties caused by the current economic and political climate, including the Windsor Framework
-------------	--

Consequence	1	2	3	4	5	Risk Categories
5	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service
4	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red	Orange	Risk Description
3	Green	Green	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Potential Root Cause
2	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	
1	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	
	1	2	3	4	5	Probability

Objectives

1. Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills
4. Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage.
6. Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities.
7. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key Controls Identified

1. FFNI Operations team in place. Operations group established with other Councils. Project Risk Register established

1. Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25 in place

1. Rural Development Programme in place

2. Brexit Forum and Brexit Task and Finish Working Group operational

2. Engagement with other Councils, other Departments, NILGA and the Private Sector through the Chamber of Commerce

2. Establishment of Economic Forum including public and private sector stakeholders

2. Internal Brexit Working Group established and meeting regularly to plan for an respond to organisational impacts

2. Participation in Cross Council Brexit Working group. Liaising with the NI Executive Office.

3. Internal Audits Completed;

FFNI - 2019/20

Action Plans

City Deals	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
	Actively engage in Belfast Region City Deal	In Progress	Conor Mallon Marie Ward	9/30/2023	The Head of Terms have been signed (March 2019), OBCs for NMD projects have been approved by BRCD Board and relevant Government Departments. On the 15 December 2021, The Belfast Region City Deal was signed and unlocks £1 billion of transformative co-investment. In December 2022 Contracts for funding and funding agreements have been shared. FFNI has successfully secured and delivered £23.1m of UK DCMS Government funded investment to improve digital infrastructure across Northern Ireland. Together as a Consortium FFNI has delivered next generation Gigabit Capable connectivity to 887 public sector sites, which will vastly improve the robustness, resilience, and speed of service. A Business case is currently being assessed to deliver a £7.5m digital transformation fund to support business to implement digital action plans to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the fibre network. A separate WAN (Wide area network) project is now underway and being delivered by ABC Council to lay services over the top of the FFNI funded fibre. Councils are currently migrating existing services on to the fibre and WAN and this is expected to be completed by June 2023. ERDF and ESF funded programmes ceased as of 31 March 2023, contingency plans are in place to continue support and work is well advanced in developing new programmes to support businesses from inception through to growth under a range of funds such as Peace Plus, Shared prosperity fund, Shared island fund etc. Required checks are being completed at Warrenpoint Port on an on-going basis by trained and authorised staff. Regular meetings with relevant partners, DAERA, FSA, Border force, Seatruck, Warrenpoint Port, to continue to share learning and work through operational issues as they arise. Negotiations to commence in January 2022 around the FSA providing certainty of funding for a longer period. MoU signed with BCC in relation to offering staff assistance if required.
Full Fibre Network NI (FFNI)	Local Full Fibre Network to improve connectivity across all of Northern Ireland.	In Progress	Conor Mallon	9/30/2023	
Support local businesses	The Council is also providing support, advice and guidance to local businesses as they anticipate and manage the changes associated with Brexit.	In Progress	Conor Mallon	9/30/2023	
Warrenpoint Port	To ensure efficient delivery of statutorily required of food import checks on relevant Agri-Food goods entering Northern Ireland at Warrenpoint port	In Progress	Eoin Devlin	9/30/2023	

Action Plans

Action Plan Description		Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Return to Work Interviews	The completion rate of RTW is very low presently.	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	8/30/2023	SMT/CMT to follow up on RTW interviews and reiterate the importance of these being completed on a timely basis.
Training	All Managers must complete Managing Attendance training on the Council's e-learning platform	In Progress	Catrina Miskelly	8/30/2023	In progress and regular reminders sent to staff to ensure their training records are up to date.

Risk **CR. 09 - Risk that Council does not adequately react to the Economic Shocks facing the district, therefore failing in its objectives to regenerate and build a prosperous district due to the inability of Council to be financially sustainable in the long term**

Consequence	Probability				
	1	2	3	4	5

Risk Categories

Risk Description

Potential Root Cause

Business operational/regulatory
Financial
Quality of Service
Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)

Risk that Council does not adequately react to the Economic Shocks facing the district, therefore failing in its objectives to regenerate and build a prosperous district due to the inability of Council to be financially sustainable in the long term

Inflation and rising utility costs
Political uncertainty - RSG cuts
Environmental Services - Loss of income (SEUPB/PHA)
Leisure - significant loss of Leisure centre income and members going forward
Community - Loss of income at community centres / difficulty in progressing financial assistance claims / uncertainty over PEACE funding
Impact on Capital Projects - funding reduced/withdrawn, timescales extended / increased costs - capital budget may be reduced going forward
Loss of Ratepayers income
TU Demands in relation to staff pay and the recurring costs into the future
Potential Banking Crisis

Consequence

Council income reducing
Going concern issues
Large increase in District Rate going forward - negative publicity
Council Reserves reducing to inadequate levels
Social impact - economic inequality and increased risk factor for poor mental health

Risk Owners

Gross/inherent Risk
Residual Risk
Target Risk Level

Senior Management Team
Red 25
Red 20
Yellow 9
Last Review 6/20/2023
Next Review 9/18/2023
Risk Appetite Risk Open

Objectives

- 1. Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills
- 2. Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities.
- 3. Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities.
- 4. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement
- 5. Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the district.

Key Controls Identified

1. Monthly Management Accounts completed by Finance
 2. Multi agency Community Hub
 2. NMDDC COVID-19 Recovery Group
 2. Service and Business plans now in place
 2. Working with ALFCO around a Council wide position to DfC and DoF.
 3. Internal Audits Completed;
- Emergency Planning with a focus on COVID19 - 2020/21

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Management Accounts	New procedure to be developed.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	ADs to provide variance analysis going forward on a quarterly basis on their own cost codes. This will feed into the Quarterly Management Accounts which are presented to SP&R. Now effective from Q2 2022/23. Quarterly budget meetings are to take place with Directorates, led by the DCS and AD of Finance & Performance. Commenced in March 2023.
Rates Support Grant	Director of Corporate Services to write to the Minister of Finance and Communities about the reduction of the Rates Support Grant and to ascertain the grant will not be reduced going forward	In Progress	Gerard Byme	6/30/2023	RSG allocations for 2022/23 were confirmed in December 2022. NMDDC's allocation for 2022/23 is £753,437. This is a huge impact on our management accounts position in year end on our rate for future years. The 2020/21 level was £1,473,859. SOLACE are lobbying the Department and AD of Finance & Performance is lobbying via the ALGCO Group. A further £4m has been proposed to the NI LG pot in 2023/24. Council has submitted a detailed response to the DfC Budget ECIA in May 2023.
Strategic Finance Working Group - rates process 2024/25	Strategic Finance Working Group to be established for new term of Council.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	SFWG to be established for new term of Council. All Members can attend in relation to the Rates Estimate Process for 2024/25. New Capital Procedure to go through the Committee in August 2024.
Treasury Advice - Banking	The fallout from Silicon Valley Bank has quickly sparked international concerns and more uncertainty arose after Credit Suisse also collapsed. The turmoil in global markets fuel fears that this could mark the start of the next financial crisis.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Josephine Kelly	9/30/2023	While we closely monitor market conditions, we are meeting with our Treasury Advisors in relation to our current Banking and Money Market arrangements and their exposure to a financial crisis.
Working Groups	Multiple Officer groups discussing these financial concerns on a regular basis.	In Progress	Gerard Byme Senior Management Team	6/30/2023	CEO attends Solace and the AD of Finance & performance attends the Council wide Finance Working Group and ALGCO. AD of Finance & Performance and the CEO have also met with our Treasury Advisors to get an overview of the economic situation on a global scale - i.e. interest rates / borrowing etc Officers will continue to attend and input into the above groups.

Risk CR.10 - Failure to effectively plan for and manage a Cyber Security Attack

Risk		Risk Categories		Business operational/reputational Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service	
Consequence	5				
	4				
	3				
	2				
	1				
		Risk Description		Risk of a cyber security event causing significant operational, financial and reputational damage to the Council	
		Potential Root Cause		Cyber attack Lack of staff compliance with IT training Accidental breach of security Breach of people, process, physical or technical controls Failure to respond to and recover from a cyber incident within, or impacting upon, Council Lack of skills and competencies System vulnerabilities	
		Consequence		Threat to availability, integrity and confidentiality of Council information and systems Failure to deliver Council services (including statutory and regulatory services) Financial loss Reputational damage Extended period to recover services to Business as Usual (BAU) Destruction of systems and data Theft of data for criminal use Political impact Environmental impact	
		Risk Owners		Josephine Kelly; Gavin Ringland	
		Gross/inherent Risk		Red 25	
		Residual Risk		Red 20	
		Target Risk Level		Yellow 9	
		Last Review		6/20/2023	
		Next Review		9/18/2023	
		Risk Appetite		Risk Averse	

Objectives

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

Key Controls Identified

1. Agile working policy now in operation from 12 September 2022
1. Back up arrangements
 1. Business Continuity Scenario Planning
 1. Participation in threat intelligence networks
 1. Penetration testing and vulnerability scanning
 1. Phishing simulation and learning exercises
 1. Technical security controls and arrangements
2. Engagement with Cyber bodies
2. National Cyber Security training
3. Internal Audits Scheduled: IT Systems and Security - 2021/22
IT Strategy 2021/22

Action Plans

	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Business Continuity Plans	BCP plans to be updated to reflect the cyber risk	In Progress	Carolain Boyd Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	Critical and Priority Services currently being prioritised via scenario planning - being managed by the SHEP Department. Further reviews scheduled for 18th July 2023.
Cyber Incident Response/Disaster Recovery	Establish and test cyber incident response and disaster recovery capabilities	In Progress	Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	Event Scenarios and PlayBooks are being continually tested and refined where confidence of no-impact is high. Deep impact testing will be completed and as part of the IT Services project (currently in due diligence phase of procurement)
IT Strategy	Implement additional security tools including multifactor authentication, conditional access and modern authentication where possible and appropriate	In Progress	Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	Remote access to LAN completely MFA. MFA and conditional access to Office 365 complete. MFA also enabled on many Line of Business Systems, including IDOX. Single Sign On (SSO) implemented on numerous systems.
Training / Development Plans	Training to increase User Resilience	In Progress	Gavin Ringland	12/31/2023	In-person training was delivered to All Staff over Q4 (2022-23) as part of Access to Information Training. Further sessions are planned as Map Up along with a specific session for Elected Members

Risk **CR.11 - Risk of Industrial Action leading to the failure to have necessary staffing structures and resourcing to deliver services**

5			T	R	G
4					
3					
2					
1					
	1	2	3	4	5
		Probability			

Risk Categories	Business operational/reputational Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service
Risk Description	Risk of Industrial Action leading to the failure to have necessary staffing structures and resourcing to deliver efficient and effective services
Potential Root Cause	TU Demands in relation the current cost of living crisis Legacy Terms and Conditions impacting on future Council strategies
Consequence	Low staff morale and increase in absenteeism Negative impact on service delivery and lost productivity Negative PR for the Council Financial implication for Council in meeting the TU demands and the recurring costs
Risk Owners	Senior Management Team
Gross/inherent Risk	Red 25
Residual Risk	Red 20
Target Risk Level	Amber 15
Last Review	6/20/2023
Next Review	9/18/2023
Risk Appetite	Risk Averse

Objectives

- 2. Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities.
- 7. Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Detailed budgeting process in operation
- 1. Qualified HR, IT & Finance professionals in place
- 2. LCNF Meeting
- 2. SMT / Party Leaders Meetings
- 2. Solace Meeting

Action Plans				
Labour Relation Agency	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date
	Trade Unions are currently in dispute with Management.	In Progress	Senior Management Team	8/30/2023
<p>Comments</p> <p>There are Industrial disputes registered by all four recognised Trade Unions. Industrial Action has already taken place in April 2023. Management will continue to engage through the agreed industrial mechanism processes to seek resolutions to the current dispute. The Labour Relations Agency and an independent facilitator are involved to aid resolution to the matters outstanding.</p> <p>In the period from April 2023 to June 2023 there have been 9 LRA facilitated meetings and one LCNF workshop with the trade unions, a further meeting with the LRA and the independent observer is scheduled for 28 June 2023. Focus has been on a list of demands received from the Unions and reaching an agreement which all parties can sign up to. This includes a timetable and work streams for the LCNF on policies, terms & conditions, facility time of union representatives. Once the agreement is finalised it will be provided for Council to consider.</p>				

Sustainability and Environment

Risk	01. Failure to deliver operational services throughout the year due to staff shortages											
Consequence	5										Risk Categories Business operational/regulatory Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory) Failure to deliver operational services throughout the year due to staff shortages. Breakdown in service during key holiday periods, particularly the waste collection service. Employees carrying over annual leave into 2023-24 will have an impact on service provision. The use of temporary contracts makes it difficult to attract, recruit and retain employees Difficulty in recruiting seasonal staff Trade Union negotiations. Legacy working arrangements and operating procedures. Levels of absenteeism Adverse weather conditions. Health and safety risks Increase in Council complaints Staff shortages reduce service provision Services not operating effectively Reputational damage	
	4				G							Risk Owners Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane; Aidan Mallon; Sinead Murphy Amber 12 Last Review 6/8/2023 Yellow 9 Next Review 9/30/2023 Green 6 Risk Appetite Risk Averse
	3			T	R							
	2											
	1											
							</					

Objectives

Consistently deliver reliable, operational services

Key Controls Identified

1. Business Continuity Plans
1. Ongoing recruitment campaigns
1. Overtime.
1. Service reviews
1. Temporary contracts project
1. Workforce Plans in place for each service.
3. Internal Audit of Services

Action Plans					
Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Business Continuity Plans	Continuously monitor, review and update the Business Continuity Plans and Contingency Plans.	In Progress	Gail Kane Aidan Mallon Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Continued implementation of the Business Continuity Plans to identify and address potential workforce deficits.
Directorate Re-structure	Re-structure of the Facilities Management and Maintenance department and Waste Management department, specifically the HRC / Cleansing / Garage sections/Refuse	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	The Directorate re-structure has been agreed by SMT. Both departments continue to work with Human Resources to progress the re-structure of specific sections, ensuring alignment with business needs.
Workforce Planning and Service Reviews	Continued implementation of Workforce Plans and Service Reviews.	In Progress	Andrew Cassells Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Continue to implement, monitor, review and update the Workforce Plans and progress Service Reviews to ensure effective service provision.

Risk 02. Failure to maintain a modern and legislatively compliant fleet

						Risk Categories	Buildings / Engineering / Environment Quality of Service Statutory Duty (Legal/Regulatory)
						Risk Description	Failure to maintain a modern and legislatively compliant fleet
						Potential Root Cause	Failure to comply with operators licence. Failure to finalise, implement and adhere to fleet policies and procedures. Failure to plan ahead and budget for new vehicles/services when required. Challenge of transitioning to a green fleet. Failure to update operators licence and insurance on changes to fleet including hire, Managing vehicles across satellite depots, Managing and maintaining an older fleet Delivery times of vehicles due to global supply issue
						Consequence	Loss of operators licence / financial penalties of breaching the operators license. Potential to result on serious accidents and injuries. Reputational damage for the Council. Failure to deliver services, particularly essential services across the District. Breach in health and safety.
						Risk Owners	Andrew Cassells; Sinead Murphy
						Gross/inherent Risk	Amber 16
						Residual Risk	Amber 12
						Target Risk Level	Green 6
						Last Review	6/8/2023
						Next Review	9/30/2023
						Risk Appetite	Risk Averse

Objectives

Review Fleet Services to ensure it meets service demands into the future

Key Controls Identified

- 1 Capital Programme funding.
- 1. Corporate Procurement Policy and Procedures in place.
- 1. Fleet Management audits and action plans.
- 1. Fleet Management Policy and Procedures.
- 1. Meeting PMI schedule for fleet.
- 1. Services review of the 'Garages' section.
- 1. Sustainability and Environment Procurement Action Plan in place.
- 3. Audit of Fleet in 2023-24.

Action Plans

Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Fleet Management Audits and Action Plans	In Progress	Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	The follow up internal audit of Fleet Management was carried out by ASM in April 2021 and the external audit was carried out in January 2022.
Fleet Replacement Programme	In Progress	Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Business case approved for new fleet. A 4 year programme for fleet replacement 2023-27. Business cases approved for 2023-25.
Service Review of Garages and resources	In Progress	Sinead Murphy	8/30/2023	Progress the service review of the Garages section to determine and inform future resource requirements.

Risk 03. Lack of burial capacity at Council Cemeteries

Risk	Consequence				
	5	4	3	2	1
Probability					
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					

Risk Categories
Buildings / Engineering / Environment
Business operational/reputational
Impact on individuals (staff or public)

Risk Description
Potential Root Cause

Lack of burial capacity at Monks Hill cemetery
The existing cemetery is running out of space.
Structural issues with existing cemetery

Consequence

An essential service not being provided to the public.
Reputational damage.
Negative impact on local community.

Risk Owners

Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane

Gross/inherent Risk

Amber 12

Last Review

6/8/2023

Residual Risk

Yellow 9

Next Review

9/30/2023

Target Risk Level

Green 6

Risk Appetite

Risk Averse

Objectives

Delivery of Facility Management and Maintenance Service to meet Council needs

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Capital programme includes funding for new graveyard and/or extensions to existing graveyard
- 1. Committee approval in place for cemetery extensions
- 1. Extensions of Struell, Lough Inch, Warrenpoint, Kibronney and Phase 2 at Monks Hill cemeteries complete.

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
Digitisation of burial records	Progress the Outline Business Case through the ITPG for a burial record system	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	The Council has a legal responsibility to manage burial records and work is underway to prepare a Project Mandate for an electronic solution, through the IT Projects Board. It is anticipated that this bespoke software solution to manage burial records will cost £30k, with an annual £10k maintenance fee.
Kilbroney Cemetery	Phase 3-5 - Kilbroney Cemetery	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	Work progressing for submission of planning application for Phase 3 - 5 extension to cemetery.
Long term cemetery provision	Plan ahead for the long term provision of cemeteries and burials.	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	Scope out anticipated burial projections across the District in line with demographic / population trends and begin the process of identifying potential land and sites to meet projected need.
Monks Hill Cemetery	Phases 3 extension at Monks Hill Cemetery.	In Progress	Gail Kane	9/30/2023	The phase 2 extension is complete providing burial capacity for a further 6 months. Phase 3 cemetery works is currently out to tender, closing 24 June 2023 to be completed by January 2024.

Risk 04. Failure to comply with relevant statutory and legislative requirements in Council Facilities

Risk		Risk Categories		Business operational/regulatory Financial	
		Risk Description		Impact on individuals (staff or public)	
		Potential Root Cause		Fire Risk Assessments/Legionella/Asbestos)	
		Consequence		Lack of adherence to Council policy and procedures, including training. Controls not being implemented for Legionella / Asbestos or Remedials for Fire Risk Assessments. Failure to comply with Council policies. Remedials for Fire Risk Assessments of Council buildings not being undertaken.	
		Risk Owners		Injury/death to staff or public. Damage to the Council reputation. Increased insurance premiums. Breach in legislation and compliance.	
		Gross/inherent Risk		Andrew Cassells; Aidan Mallon	
		Residual Risk		Amber 16	
		Target Risk Level		Amber 12	
				Green 4	
				Last Review	
				6/8/2023	
				Next Review	
				9/30/2023	
				Risk Appetite	
				Risk Averse	

Objectives

Implement policies and procedures and monitoring arrangements to ensure corporate legislative compliance in respect of k

Key Controls Identified

- 1. Asbestos Policy and Management Plan
- 1. Fire Safety Policy
- 1. Legionella Policy and Management Plan
- 1. Portable Electrical Appliances Policy and Management Plan
- 2. Regular reporting to the Health and Safety Committee, Audit Committee and SMT

Action Plans

Action Plans	Action Plan Description	Action Plan Type	Action Plan Owner	Action Plan Action Date	Comments
18th Electrical Testing Codes	Continue to implement tests to achieve fixed wire and emergency light certification.	In Progress	Aidan Mallon	8/30/2023	Tender progressed to establish appropriate arrangements for the next 3 years.
Asbestos Policy and Management Plan	Continued implementation of the Asbestos Management Plan.	In Progress	Aidan Mallon	8/30/2023	Contractor led asbestos management reviews continue. No significant issues observed. Continuing work required concerning training through e learning and contractor led training. Outstanding issues to be resolved following fire at Albert Basin Store.
Legionella Policy and Management Plan	Continued implementation of the Legionella Management Plan.	In Progress	Aidan Mallon	8/30/2023	Contractor led management works continue. Continuing work required concerning training through e learning and contractor led training. Full implementation of the agreed Legionella Management Plan required to keep risk at a low level.

Risk 05. Failure to develop and implement a planned maintenance programme

Risk	Consequence					Probability
	5	4	3	2	1	
Risk Categories						
Risk Description						
Potential Root Cause						
Consequence						
Risk Owners						
Gross/inherent Risk						
Residual Risk						
Target Risk Level						
Buildings / Engineering / Environment Impact on individuals (staff or public) Quality of Service Failure to develop and implement a planned maintenance programme. Over reliance on reactive maintenance and contractors. Inadequate funding Lack of inspections and documentation records. Reactive / forward planning split imbalanced H&S implications. Negative PR for the Council and reputational damage. Closure of buildings. Legal liabilities. Increased costs. Reactive and inefficient service provision. Andrew Cassells; Gail Kane; Aidan Mallon						
Last Review 6/8/2023						
Next Review 9/30/2023						
Risk Appetite Risk Averse						

Objectives

Delivery of Facility Management and Maintenance Service to meet Council needs

Engage Council Estate in a way which promotes sustainable development and climate change adaptation

Action Plans

Action Plan Description

Property Maintenance Strategy Develop and implement the Property Maintenance Strategy to include planned and reactive maintenance.

Action Plan Type

In Progress

Action Plan Owner

Aidan Mallon

Action Plan Action Date

8/30/2023

Comments

The Property Maintenance Strategy is complete. The strategy takes into account the 3i Maintenance System for the reactive and planned maintenance of facilities, as well as M&E contracts..

Key Controls Identified

1. Building maintenance team being reformed

1. Property Maintenance Strategy Plan developed



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

159

Local Government Circular LG 13/23

Clerk & Chief Executive of each District Council

Local Government & Housing
Regulation Division
Level 4
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EG.

Tel (028) 90 823355
e-mail :
tommy.mccormick@communities-ni.gov.uk

Date 25 April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

FILLING POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY ON A COUNCIL

1. Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 specifies the positions of responsibility which must be allocated across the political parties and independents represented on a council in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
2. Schedule 1 to the 2014 Act includes detailed provisions in relation to the filling of positions of responsibility and specifies the operation of the procedures that are available to a council: i.e.:
 - d'Hondt (see Part 1 of Schedule 1)
 - Sainte-Laguë (see Part 1 of Schedule 1)
 - Single Transferable Vote (STV) (see Part 2 of Schedule 1)

A council must follow one of the above methods when allocating members of the council to the positions of responsibility.

3. D'Hondt is the default method of filling positions of responsibility. A council may, by a qualified majority, decide to adopt the Sainte-Laguë method (paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 1) or the STV method (paragraph 1 of Schedule 1) as an alternative.

4. As provided for in Schedule 1, the majority of positions of responsibility will be held for a one year term of office. If a council chooses to operate executive arrangements, membership of a cabinet-style executive will be held for the council term from one local government election to the next. The term of office on an external statutory body will be for the period specified by that body.
5. When using either the d'Hondt or Sainte-Laguë method, councils and nominating officers for the political parties should have regard to the provisions in Schedules 1 and 2 to the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 in relation to the appointment of political members of a Policing and Community Safety Partnership or a District Policing and Community Safety Partnership. Further advice on this matter can be sought from the Department of Justice (telephone 028 9076 3000).
6. This circular replaces Local Government Circular No. LG 02/2019.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Broadway

Local Government and Housing Regulation Division
Department for Communities

April 2023

ANNEX 1 - APPLICATION OF D'HONDT (Default Method)

Step 1 The complete list of positions to be allocated across the political parties and independents, over the full term of the council, should be recorded on a schedule by the clerk to the council. The schedule should also record the term of the appointment. An example is attached at Appendix A. (The list must include all positions and appointments including appointments to external statutory bodies).

Step 2 The clerk to the council should record the number of elected members by political party, as elected at the general local government election.

Members elected as independents shall be recorded individually.

The number of 1st preference votes cast for each political party and for each independent member should also be recorded.

Fig 1

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Members	6	5	3	3	1	1
1 st Pref Votes	5,434	4,203	2,620	3,633	1012	960

The appointment of members to positions will be made by the nominating officers of the respective political parties when called upon by the clerk to the council.

A nominating officer may decline to nominate a member for a position when asked to do so. In such a circumstance, the nominating officer of the political party with the next highest allocation quotient, as calculated following the procedures set out below, will be asked to nominate a member.

Step 3 The nominating officer of the political party with the greatest number of elected members will select the position they wish a member of the council, elected on behalf of their party, to fill and the year (or where appropriate, the

time period) for the appointment. Selection will be by party preference and not by a prescribed order. If the term selected is the first year of the council's term, the nominating officer should also name the member to hold the position.

[See Note 1 below in relation to the situation where two or more political parties have the same number of members.]

Using the example in Fig 1, the nominating officer for Party A will make the first selection as this party has the greatest number of elected members.

$$\frac{6 \text{ (number of members)}}{1 + 0 \text{ (Positions allocated)}} = 6$$

The position and term of appointment selected, and the party which will fill the position, should be recorded on the schedule prepared at Step 1. If appropriate, the name of the member to hold the position should also be recorded.

Step 4 Following the filling of a position, the strength (the number of elected members) of the party that has selected the position is recalculated. The resultant figure is referred to as the notional strength. This is done by dividing the number of members elected on behalf of that party by 1 plus the number of positions already allocated to that particular party.

Using the example in Fig 1, the recalculated notional strength for Party A after the first position has been allocated is 3.

$$\frac{6 \text{ (number of members)}}{1 + 1 \text{ (Positions allocated)}} = 3$$

This is the notional strength that will be used for that party when determining the party to nominate a member for the next position.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Position 1	6	5	3	3	1	1
	6/1+1 = 3					
Position 2	3	5	3	3	1	1

Step 5 The nominating officer of the political party that now has the greatest notional strength or allocation quotient will be asked to select a position of responsibility to be held by a member of their party and the term for which it is to be held. If the term selected is the first year of the council’s term, the nominating officer should also name the member to hold the position.

[See Note 1 below in relation to the situation where the notional strength for two or more political parties is the same.]

In this example, the nominating officer of Party B may make the nomination as that party’s notional strength (5) is the greatest.

This process is repeated until all of the remaining identified positions of responsibility have been allocated.

The divisor to determine that party’s notional strength increases, as subsequent positions are allocated to the same party.

Using Fig 1, the allocation of a second position to Party A would result in their notional strength or allocation quotient reducing to 2.

$$\frac{6 \text{ (Party Strength)}}{1 + 2 \text{ (Positions already allocated)}} = 2$$

A worked example showing the process for sixty nominations is attached at Appendix B.

Note 1 Where the notional strength (in terms of elected members) for two or more political parties is the same, the determination of the political party to make a

selection is made by reference to the number of 1st preference votes cast for the respective parties at the last general local government election, rather than the number of elected members. In such cases, the calculation is made by dividing the 1st preference votes for the relevant parties by 1 plus the number of positions already allocated to each relevant party.

In the example in Fig 1 above, parties A, C and D will have the same notional strength following the allocation of the first two positions as shown below:

Fig 2

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Position 1	6	5	3	3	1	1
Position 2	3	5	3	3	1	1
Position 3	3	2.5	3	3	1	1

The determination of the party that will make the third selection is shown below:

Fig 3

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
1 st Pref Votes	5,434		2,620	3,633		
Positions Allocated	1		0	0		
Calculation	5,434 / (1+1)		2,620 /(1+0)	3,633 /(1+0)		
Quotient	2,717		2,620	3,633		

As Party D has the highest allocation quotient based on 1st preference votes, its nominating officer makes the third selection. In this example, 1st preference votes cast is also used to determine which party will make the fourth selection – as indicated in the table below which shows the order of selection for eight positions.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
--	---------	---------	---------	---------	-------	-------

Position 1	6	5	3	3	1	1
Position 2	3	5	3	3	1	1
Position 3	3	2.5	3	3	1	1
Position 4	3	2.5	3	1.5	1	1
Position 5	2	2.5	3	1.5	1	1
Position 6	2	2.5	1.5	1.5	1	1
Position 7	2	1.6	1.5	1.5	1	1
Position 8	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1	1

ANNEX 2 - APPLICATION OF SAINT LAGUE

Step 1 The complete list of positions to be allocated across the political parties and independents, over the full term of the council, should be recorded on a schedule by the clerk of the council. The schedule should also record the term of the appointment. An example is attached at Appendix A. (The list must include all positions and appointments including appointments to external statutory bodies).

Step 2 The clerk of the council should record the number of elected members by political party, as elected at the general local government election.

Members elected as independents shall be recorded individually.

The number of 1st preference votes cast for each political party and for each independent member shall also be recorded.

Fig 1

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Members	6	5	3	3	1	1
1 st Pref Votes	5,434	4,203	2,620	3,633	1012	960

The appointment of members to positions will be made by the nominating officers of the respective political parties when called upon by the clerk to the council.

A nominating officer may decline to nominate a member for a position when asked to do so. In such a circumstance, the nominating officer of the political party with the next highest allocation quotient, as calculated following the procedures set out below, will be asked to nominate a member.

Step 3 The nominating officer of the political party with the greatest number of elected members will select the position they wish a member of the council, elected on behalf of their party, to fill and the year (or where appropriate, the time period) for the appointment. Selection will be by party preference and

not by a prescribed order. If the term selected is the first year of the council's term, the nominating officer should also name the member to hold the position.

[See Note1 below in relation to the situation where two or more political parties have the same number of members.]

Using the example in Fig 1, the nominating officer for Party A will make the first selection as this party has the greatest number of elected members.

$$\frac{6 \text{ (number of members)}}{1 + (2 \times 0) \text{ (Positions allocated)}} = 6$$

The position and term of appointment selected, and the party which will fill the position, should be recorded on the schedule prepared at Step 1. If appropriate, the name of the member to hold the positions should also be recorded.

Step 4 Following the filling of a position, the strength (the number of elected members) of the party that has been allocated the position is recalculated. The resultant figure is referred to as the notional strength. This is done by dividing the number of members elected on behalf of that party by 1 plus twice the number of positions already allocated to that particular party.

Using the example in Fig 1, the recalculated notional strength for Party A after the first position has been allocated is 2.

$$\frac{6 \text{ (number of members)}}{1 + (2 \times 1) \text{ (Positions allocated)}} = 2$$

This is the notional strength that will be used for that party in the determination of the party to nominate a member for the next position.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Position 1	6	5	3	3	1	1
	$6/(1+(2 \times 1)) = 2$					
Position 2	2	5	3	3	1	1

Step 5 The nominating officer of the political party that now has the greatest notional strength or allocation quotient will be asked to select a position of responsibility to be held by a member of their party and the term for which it is to be held. If the term selected is the first year of the council's term, the nominating officer should also name the member to hold the position.

[See Note 1 below in relation to the situation where the notional strength for two or more political parties is the same.]

In this example the nominating officer of Party B may make the nomination as its notional strength (5) is the greatest.

This process is repeated until all of the remaining representative positions have been allocated.

The divisor to determine that party's notional strength increases by two, as subsequent positions are allocated to the same party.

Using Fig 1, the allocation of a second position to Party A would result in their quotient reducing to 1.2.

$$\frac{6 \text{ (Party Strength)}}{1 + (2 \times 2) \text{ (Positions allocated)}} = 1.2$$

A worked example showing the process for sixty nominations is attached at Appendix C.

Note 1 Where the notional strength (in terms of elected members) for two or more political parties is the same, the determination of the political party to make a selection is made by reference to the number of 1st preference votes cast for the respective parties at the last general local government election, rather than the number of elected members. In such cases, the calculation is made by dividing the 1st preference votes for the relevant parties by 1 plus twice the number of positions already allocated to each relevant party.

In the example in Fig 1 above, parties C and D will have the same notional strength following the allocation of the first two positions as shown below:

Fig 2

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Position 1	6	5	3	3	1	1
Position 2	2	5	3	3	1	1

The determination of the party that will make the third selection is shown below:

Fig 3

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
1 st Pref Votes	5,434	4,203	2,620	3,633	1012	960
Positions Allocated			0	0		
Calculation for position 3			$2,620/(1+0)$	$3,633/(1+0)$		
Quotient			2,620	3,633		

As Party D has the highest allocation quotient based on 1st preference votes, its nominating officer makes the third selection – as indicated in the table below which shows the order of selection for eight positions.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Ind 1	Ind 2
Position 1	6	5	3	3	1	1
Position 2	2	5	3	3	1	1
Position 3	2	1.66	3	3	1	1
Position 4	2	1.66	3	1	1	1
Position 5	2	1.66	1	1	1	1
Position 6	1.2	1.66	1	1	1	1
Position 7	1.2	1	1	1	1	1
Position 8	0.9	1	1	1	1	1

ANNEX 3 - APPLICATION OF SINGLE TRANSFERRABLE VOTE

- Step 1 The complete list of positions of responsibility to be filled by members of political parties and independents, over the full term of the council, should be recorded on a schedule by the clerk to the council. The schedule should also record the term of the appointment. An example is attached at Appendix A. (The list must include all positions and appointments including appointments to external statutory bodies).
- Step 2 The clerk to the council shall make a copy of the schedule available to every member of the council and seeking nominations for each of the positions identified on the schedule.
- Step 3 Those council members seeking election shall deliver to the clerk of the council, by a date agreed by the council, a nomination paper specifying the position of responsibility to which election is sought and the term for which the position would be held. The member's nomination must be supported by at least two other councillors.
- Step 4 Once the deadline for the submission of nomination papers has passed, the clerk to the council shall publish a statement setting out for each position of responsibility, and term of office, the persons nominated for election to that position, in alphabetic order of surname.

The clerk to the council shall also arrange for the preparation of ballot papers which will enable members of the council to signify their selection preference in relation to the candidates for a position of responsibility.

The ballot paper should specify the position of responsibility, the term for which it is to be held, the particulars of the candidates for that position and should contain the facility for members to record their order of preference for candidates.

Step 5 The clerk to the council shall make appropriate arrangements for members to cast their votes, and for the counting of those votes.

Step 6 First Stage

After all members have cast their votes the clerk to the council shall sort the ballot papers by position of responsibility and, the candidates which have first preference votes.

The number of first preference votes will be counted and recorded for each candidate for each position of responsibility and term of office.

The number of valid ballot papers for each position of responsibility and term of office shall also be recorded by the clerk to the council.

Step 7 The Quota

The clerk to the council will determine the quota of votes which will be sufficient to secure election by dividing the number of valid ballot papers by 2 with the consequent result being increased by 1:

$$\frac{38 \text{ (valid ballot papers)}}{2} + 1 = 20$$

Step 8 The Count

The counting of votes cast will be conducted in accordance with Rules 49 – 51 as specified in Schedule VI to the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962.

A candidate shall not be deemed to be elected until the procedures set out in paragraphs (1) to (3) of rule 51 has been complied with.

Step 9 If a candidate is put forward for election to a number of positions of responsibility that are mutually exclusive, in a given year, for example, the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the council and, the candidate is elected to one of these positions the clerk to the council will need to put in place arrangements to resolve the issue.

APPENDIX A - ALLOCATION OF COUNCIL POSITIONS - EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Council Chair				
Council Vice Chair				
Committee A – Chair				
Committee A – Vice Chair				
Committee B – Chair				
Committee B – Vice Chair				
Committee C – Chair				
Committee C – Vice Chair				
Committee D – Chair				
Committee D – Vice Chair				
Committee E – Chair				
Committee E – Vice Chair				
Committee F – Chair				
Committee F – Vice Chair				
Committee G – Chair				
Committee G – Vice Chair				
External Appointment 1 (4 year term)				
External Appointment 2 (4 year term)				
External Appointment 3				
External Appointment 4				
External Appointment 5				
External Appointment 6 (4 year term)				
External Appointment 7				
External Appointment 8				

APPENDIX B - APPLICATION OF D'HONDT – WORKED EXAMPLE

Selection	Party 1st Pref Votes Members	A 25443 14	B 13515 10	C 7844 6	D 6336 5	E 2060 2	F 934 1	Ind1 900 1	Ind2 846 1
1		14	10	6	5	2	1	1	1
2		7	10	6	5	2	1	1	1
3		7	5	6	5	2	1	1	1
4		4.6666	5	6	5	2	1	1	1
5		4.6666	5 13515/2 6757.5	3	5 6336/1 6336	2	1	1	1
6		4.6666	3.3333	3	5	2	1	1	1
7		4.6666	3.3333	3	2.5	2	1	1	1
8		3.5	3.3333	3	2.5	2	1	1	1
9		2.8	3.3333	3	2.5	2	1	1	1
10		2.8	2.5	3	2.5	2	1	1	1
11		2.8	2.5	2	2.5	2	1	1	1
12		2.3333	2.5 13515/4 3378.75	2	2.5 6336/2 3168	2	1	1	1
13		2.3333	2	2	2.5	2	1	1	1
14		2.3333	2	2	1.6666	2	1	1	1
15		2 25443/ 3634.7	2 13515/5 2703	2 7844/3 2614.6	1.6666	2 2060/1 2060	1	1	1
16		1.75	2 13515/5 2703	2 7844/3 2614.6	1.6666	2 2060/1 2060	1	1	1
17		1.75	1.6666	2 7844/3 2614.6	1.6666	2 2060/1 2060	1	1	1
18		1.75	1.6666	1.5	1.6666	2	1	1	1
19		1.75	1.6666	1.5	1.6666	1	1	1	1
20		1.5555	1.6666 13515/6 2252.5	1.5	1.6666 6336/3 2112	1	1	1	1
21		1.5555	1.4285	1.5	1.6666	1	1	1	1
22		1.5555	1.4285	1.5	1.25	1	1	1	1
23		1.4	1.4285	1.5	1.25	1	1	1	1
24		1.4	1.4285	1.2	1.25	1	1	1	1
25		1.4	1.25	1.2	1.25	1	1	1	1
26		1.2727	1.25	1.2	1.25	1	1	1	1
27		1.1666	1.25 13515/8 1689.37	1.2	1.25 6336/4 1584	1	1	1	1
28		1.1666	1.1111	1.2	1.25	1	1	1	1
29		1.1666	1.1111	1.2	1	1	1	1	1
30		1.1666	1.1111	1	1	1	1	1	1
31		1.0769	1.1111	1	1	1	1	1	1

32		1.0769	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
33		1 25443/ 1817.3	1 13515/1 1351.5	1 7844/6 1307.3	1 6336/5 1267.2	1 2060/2 1030	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
34		0.9333	1 13515/1 1351.5	1 7844/6 1307.3	1 6336/5 1267.2	1 2060/2 1030	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
35		0.9333	0.9091	1 7844/6 1307.3	1 6336/5 1267.2	1 2060/2 1030	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
36		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	1 6336/5 1267.2	1 2060/2 1030	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
37		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.8333	1 2060/2 1030	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
38		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.8333	0.6666	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
39		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	1 900/1 900	1 846/ 846
40		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	0.5	1
41		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
42		0.875	0.9091	0.8571	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
43		0.875	0.8333	0.8571	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
44		0.875	0.8333	0.75	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
45		0.8235	0.8333 13515/1 1126.25	0.75	0.8333 6336/6 1056	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
46		0.8235	0.7692	0.75	0.8333	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
47		0.8235	0.7692	0.75	0.7143	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
48		0.7777	0.7692	0.75	0.7143	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
49		0.7368	0.7692	0.75	0.7143	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
50		0.7368	0.7143	0.75	0.7143	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
51		0.7368	0.7143	0.6666	0.7143	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
52		0.7	0.7143 13515/1 965.36	0.6666	0.7143 6336/7 905.14	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
53		0.7	0.6666	0.6666	0.7143	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
54		0.7	0.6666	0.6666	0.625	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
55		0.6666 25443/ 1211.5	0.6666 13515/1 901	0.6666 7844/9 871.56	0.625	0.6666 2060/3 686.67	0.5	0.5	0.5
56		0.6364	0.6666 13515/1 901	0.6666 7844/9 871.56	0.625	0.6666 2060/3 686.67	0.5	0.5	0.5
57		0.6364	0.625	0.6666 7844/9 871.56	0.625	0.6666 2060/3 686.67	0.5	0.5	0.5
58		0.6364	0.625	0.6	0.625	0.6666	0.5	0.5	0.5
59		0.6364	0.625	0.6	0.625	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
60		0.6087	0.625	0.6	0.625	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5

			13515/1 844.69		6336/8 792				
Positions Allocated		22	16	9	7	3	1	1	1

APPENDIX C - APPLICATION OF SAINT LAGUE – WORKED EXAMPLE

Selection	Party 1st Pref Votes Members	A 25443 14	B 13515 10	C 7844 6	D 6336 5	E 2060 2	F 934 1	Ind1 900 1	Ind2 846 1
1		14	10	6	5	2	1	1	1
2		4.6667	10	6	5	2	1	1	1
3		4.6667	3.3333	6	5	2	1	1	1
4		4.6667	3.3333	2	5	2	1	1	1
5		4.6667	3.3333	2	1.6667	2	1	1	1
6		2.8	3.3333	2	1.6667	2	1	1	1
7		2.8	2	2	1.6667	2	1	1	1
8		2 25443/7 3634.714	2 13515/5 2703	2 7844/3 2614.667	1.6667 1.6667 1.6667	2 2060/1 2060	1 1 1	1 1 1	1 1 1
9		1.5556	2 13515/5 2703	2 7844/3 2614.667	1.6667	2 2060/1 2060	1	1	1
10		1.5556	1.4286	2 7844/3 2614.667	1.6667	2 2060/1 2060	1	1	1
11		1.5556	1.4286	1.2	1.6667	2	1	1	1
12		1.5556	1.4286	1.2	1.6667	0.6667	1	1	1
13		1.5556	1.4286	1.2	1	0.6667	1	1	1
14		1.2727	1.4286	1.2	1	0.6667	1	1	1
15		1.2727	1.1111	1.2	1	0.6667	1	1	1
16		1.0769	1.1111	1.2	1	0.6667	1	1	1
17		1.0769	1.1111	0.8571	1	0.6667	1	1	1
18		1.0769	0.9091	0.8571	1	0.6667	1	1	1
19		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	1 6336/5 1267.2	0.6667	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/1 846
20		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.7143	0.6667	1 934/1 934	1 900/1 900	1 846/1 846
21		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	1 900/1 900	1 846/1 846
22		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	1
23		0.9333	0.9091	0.8571	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
24		0.8235	0.9091	0.8571	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
25		0.8235	0.7692	0.8571	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
26		0.8235	0.7692	0.6667	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
27		0.7368	0.7692	0.6667	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
28		0.7368	0.6667	0.6667	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
29		0.6667	0.6667	0.6667	0.7143	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
30		0.6667 25443/21	0.6667 13515/15	0.6667 7844/9	0.6667 6336/9	0.6667 2060/3	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333

		1211.571	901	871.555	704	686.666			
31		0.6086	0.6667 13515/15 901	0.6667 7844/9 871.555	0.6667 6336/9 704	0.6667 2060/3 686.666	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
32		0.6086	0.5882	0.6667 7844/9 871.555	0.6667 6336/9 704	0.6667 2060/3 686.666	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
33		0.6086	0.5882	0.5455	0.6667 6336/9 704	0.6667 2060/3 686.666	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
34		0.6086	0.5882	0.5455	0.4545	0.6667	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
35		0.6086	0.5882	0.5455	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
36		0.5600	0.5882	0.5455	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
37		0.5600	0.5263	0.5455	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
38		0.5185	0.5263	0.5455	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
39		0.5185	0.5263	0.4615	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
40		0.5185	0.4762	0.4615	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
41		0.4828	0.4762	0.4615	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
42		0.4516	0.4762	0.4615	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
43		0.4516	0.4348	0.4615	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
44		0.4516	0.4348	0.4	0.4545	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
45		0.4516	0.4348	0.4	0.3846	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
46		0.4242	0.4348	0.4	0.3846	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
47		0.4242	0.4	0.4	0.3846	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
48		0.4 25443/35 726.943	0.4 13515/25 540.6	0.4 7844/15 522.933	0.3846	0.4 2060/5 412	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
49		0.3784	0.4 13515/25 540.6	0.4 7844/15 522.933	0.3846	0.4 2060/5 412	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
50		0.3784	0.3704	0.4 7844/15 522.933	0.3846	0.4 2060/5 412	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
51		0.3784	0.3704	0.3529	0.3846	0.4	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
52		0.3784	0.3704	0.3529	0.3846	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
53		0.3784	0.3704	0.3529	0.3333	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
54		0.3589	0.3704	0.3529	0.3333	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
55		0.3589	0.3449	0.3529	0.3333	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
56		0.3415	0.3449	0.3529	0.3333	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
57		0.3415	0.3449	0.3158	0.3333	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
58		0.3415	0.3226	0.3158	0.3333	0.2857	0.3333	0.3333	0.3333
59		0.3256	0.3226	0.3158	0.3333 6336/15 422.4	0.2857	0.3333 935/3 311.333	0.3333 900/3 300	0.3333 846/3 282
60		0.3256	0.3226	0.3158	0.2941	0.2857	0.3333 935/3 311.333	0.3333 900/3 300	0.3333 846/3 282
Positions Allocated		21	15	9	8	3	2	1	1



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

180

Local Government Circular LG 14/23

Clerk & Chief Executive of each District Council

**Local Government & Housing
Regulation Division
Level 4
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EG.**

Tel (028) 90 823355
e-mail :
tommy.mccormick@communities-ni.gov.uk
Date 25 April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

APPOINTING COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES

1. Schedule 2 to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 makes detailed provision in relation to the appointment of councillors to committees and specifies the operation of the procedures that are available to a council: i.e.
 - Quota Greatest Remainder (See paragraphs 2 and 3(1) and (2))
 - Droop Quota (See paragraphs 2 and 3(1) and (3))
2. A council must follow one of the above methods when appointing councillors to committees.
3. Quota Greatest Remainder is the default method for appointing councillors. However, a council may decide, by a qualified majority, to adopt the Droop Quota method as an alternative.
4. In accordance with paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, standing orders must make provision for the appointment



Department for

Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn

Pobal

Department for

Commonities

181

of councillors to committees in cases where a council decides to appoint more than one committee at the same time.

5. The calculations in the attached worked examples are based on:

- a council with 40 members
- the appointment of 6 committees
- 15 members per committee.

6. The reference point in relation to political party strengths is the number of members who stood in the name of each party when elected, at the last local election.

7. This circular replaces Local Government Circular No. LG 03/2019.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Broadway

Local Government and Housing Regulation Division

Department for Communities

Annex A

APPLICATION OF QUOTA GREATEST REMAINDER (Default Method)

Appointing a single committee

- Step 1
- Determine the number of councillors to be appointed to the committee.
- Step 2
- Divide the number of councillors on the council by the number of committee places to be filled by councillors to calculate the quota:

40 (number of councillors)

.....

= 2.667

15 (councillor membership of committee)

- Step 3
- Divide the number of councillors who stood for each political party at the last local government election by the quota calculated at step 2. Independents should be treated as if they were a 1-member party.

The resultant whole numbers represent the number of members that the nominating officer of each political party or independent may appoint to the committee.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Members	15	10	7	5	2	1	
Quota	2.667	2.667	2.667	2.667	2.667	2.667	
Party Allocation	5.6243	3.7495	2.6247	1.8748	0.7499	0.375	
Positions	5	3	2	1			11

In this example, this stage of the process provides only for the appointment of 11 members of the committee.

Any remaining places on the committee shall be filled by the nominating officers of each political party, on the basis of the greatest residual remainders once the whole numbers have been removed from the Party Allocation, as shown below:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Remainders	0.6243	0.7495	0.6247	0.8748	0.7499	0.375	
Positions		1	1	1	1		4

Therefore, the total number of places on the committee for each Party/Independent is:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Total Positions	5	4	3	2	1		15

- Step 4** The number of total positions on the committee includes positions of responsibility. Therefore, the nominating officer of each party must take account of party members who have been appointed to fill a position of responsibility on the committee. For example, in the above scenario, if a member of Party A has been appointed as the Chairperson of the committee, then the nominating officer of that party may only nominate a further four members of the committee.

Appointing more than one committee

Step 1 Determine the total number of members across all the committees.

Step 2 Divide the number of councillors on the council by the number of committee places to be filled by councillors to calculate the quota:

$$\frac{40 \text{ (number of councillors)}}{90 \text{ (Councillor membership of committees)}} = 0.444$$

Step 3 Divide the number of councillors who stood for each political party at the last local government election by the quota calculated at step 2. Independents should be treated as if they were a 1-member party.

The resultant whole numbers represent the number of members that the nominating officer of each political party or independent may appoint to the committees.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Members	15	10	7	5	2	1	
Quota	0.444	0.444	0.444	0.444	0.444	0.444	
Party Allocation	33.784	22.523	15.766	11.261	4.5045	2.2523	
Positions	33	22	15	11	4	2	87

In this example, this stage of the process provides only for the appointment of 87 members across the six committees.

Any remaining places to be filled across the committees shall be filled by the nominating officers of each political party, on the basis of the greatest,

residual remainders, once the whole numbers have been removed from the Party Allocation, as shown below:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Members	15	10	7	5	2	1	
Remainders	0.784	0.523	0.766	0.261	0.5045	0.2523	
Positions	1	1	1				3

Therefore, the total number of committee places (across all the committees) for each Party/Independent is:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Total Positions	34	23	16	11	4	2	90

Step 4 In accordance with paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, standing orders must make provision for the appointment of councillors to committees in cases where a council decides to appoint more than one committee at the same time. Councils may wish to include a requirement that each nominating officer must ensure that:

- a) not all the members of a committee are nominated by the same nominating officer (i.e., in this example the nominating officers of parties A, B or C cannot nominate members to hold all the places on a particular committee)
- b) a nominating officer of a party may nominate members to fill the majority of places on a committee, if the majority of members of the council were elected as members of that party (i.e., in this example as Party A holds

37.5% of the seats on the council, the nominating officer of Party A may nominate members to hold 37.5% of the seats on a committee; and

- c) subject to (a) and (b) and as far as is practicable, the number of members which each nominating officer nominates to a particular committee is in proportion to the number of members of that party elected to the council.

Step 5 When nominating councillors to be members of a committee, the nominating officer of each party shall take account of members of their party who have been appointed to fill a position of responsibility on that committee.

Annex B

APPLICATION OF DROOP QUOTA

Appointing a single committee

- Step 1
- Determine the number of councillors to be appointed to the committee.
- Step 2
- Divide the number of councillors on the council by the number of committee places to be filled by councillors to calculate the quota:

40 (number of councillors)

15 (Councillor membership of committee) +1

+1 = 3.5

- Step 3
- Divide the number of councillors elected from each political party at the last local government election by the quota calculated at step 2. Independents should be treated as if they were a 1-member party.

The resultant whole numbers represent the number of members that the nominating officer of each political party or independent may appoint to the committee.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Members	15	10	7	5	2	1	
Quota	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	
Party Allocation	4.286	2.857	2	1.429	0.571	0.286	
Positions	4	2	2	1			9

In this example, this stage of the process provides for the appointment of 9 members of the committee.

Any remaining places on the committee shall be filled by the nominating officers of each political party, on the basis of the greatest residual remainders, once the whole numbers have been removed from the Party Allocation as shown below:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Remainders	0.286	0.857	0.0	0.429	0.571	0.286	
Positions	1	1		1	1	1	5
		1					1

The total number of places on the committee for each Party/Independent is as below:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Remainders	5	4	2	2	1	1	15

- Step 4** The number of total positions on the committee includes positions of responsibility. Therefore, the nominating officer of each party must take account of party members who have been appointed to fill a position of responsibility on the committee. For example, in the above scenario, if a member of Party A has been appointed as the Chairperson of the committee, then the nominating officer of that party may only nominate a further four members of the committee.

Appointing more than one committee

Step 1 Determine the total number of councillors to be appointed to the committees.

Step 2 Divide the number of councillors on the council by the number of committee places to be filled by councillors to calculate the quota:

$$\frac{40 \text{ (number of councillors)}}{90 \text{ (Councillor membership of committees)} \div 1} = 1.44$$

Step 3 Divide the number of councillors elected from each political party at the last local government election by the quota calculated at step 2. Independents should be treated as if they were a 1-member party.

The resultant whole numbers represent the number of members that the nominating officer of each political party or independent may appoint to the committee.

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Members	15	10	7	5	2	1	
Quota	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	
Party Allocation	10.417	6.944	4.861	3.472	1.389	0.694	
Positions	10	6	4	3	1	0	24

In this example, this stage of the process only provides for the appointment of 24 members across the six committees.

Any remaining places to be filled across the committees shall be filled by the nominating officers of each political party or independent, on the basis

of the greatest residual remainders once the whole numbers have been removed from the Party Allocation, as shown below:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Remainders	0.417	0.944	0.861	0.472	0.389	0.694	
Positions (11 rounds of further allocations)	11	11	11	11	11	11	66

In the above example, the additional places to be filled on the basis of the remainders, is arrived at after 11 separate rounds of allocation for each party.

Therefore, the total number of committee places (across all the committees) for each Party/independent is as below:

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Ind 1	
Remainders	21	17	15	14	12	11	90

Step 4 In accordance with paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, standing orders must make provision for the appointment of councillors to committees in cases where a council decides to appoint more than one committee at the same time. Councils may wish to include a requirement that each nominating officer must ensure that:

- not all the members of a committee are nominated by the same nominating officer (i.e. in this example the nominating officers of parties A, B or C cannot nominate members to hold all the places on a particular committee);

- b) a nominating officer of a party may nominate to fill the majority of places on a committee, if the majority of members of the council were elected as members of that party (i.e. in this example as Party A hold 37.5% of the seats on the council the nominating officer of Party A may nominate members to hold 37.5% of the seats on a committee; and
- c) subject to (a) and (b) and as far as is practicable, that the number of members which each nominating officer nominates to a particular committee is in proportion to the number of members of that party elected to the council.

Step 5 When nominating councillors to be members of a committee, the nominating officer of each party shall take account of members of their party who have been appointed to fill a position of responsibility on that committee.



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

192

Local Government Circular LG 15/23

Clerk & Chief Executive of each District Council

Local Government & Housing
Regulation Division
Level 4
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EG.

Tel (028) 90 823355
e-mail :
tommy.mccormick@communities-ni.gov.uk
Date 25 April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

1. In advance of the forthcoming local elections on 18 May 2023, and to assist councils in preparing for the incoming councillors following the elections, the Department is updating and reissuing the circular on Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The purpose of this circular is to highlight the requirement that all councillors must, following their election, complete and sign a Declaration on Acceptance of Office before they can act as a councillor.
2. Section 7 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 ("the 1972 Act") states that a person elected¹ to the office of councillor cannot act in that office until they have made and served on the Clerk/Chief Executive of the council, a declaration on acceptance of office.

¹ The term "elected" is defined in section 148 of the 1972 Act as including "appointed, nominated or otherwise selected or returned".



Department for

Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn

Pobal

Department for

Commonities

193

3. The declaration required by section 7 is the *Declaration of Councillor*, as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the 1972 Act, the wording of which is replicated in **Annex A** to this circular.
4. All councillors should be made aware that, under paragraph (2) of section 7, if a person elected to the office of councillor fails to make the necessary declaration and serve it on the Clerk/Chief Executive of the council, within the period of two months from the day of their election, the office of that person shall at the end of that period become vacant.
5. The Declaration of a Councillor contains a statement affirming that the councillor has read and will observe the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors (as revised from time to time) ("the Councillors' Code") in the performance of their functions as a councillor.
6. Councillors should be provided either with a copy of the Councillors' Code or provided with a link to view it online, prior to being asked to complete the Declaration of a Councillor.

[Northern Ireland Local Government Code Of Conduct For Councillors \(2014\)](#)

7. To assist councillors, a link to the Local Government Commissioner for Standards' guidance on the Councillors' Code is provided below.

[Guidance - The NI Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors \(2017\)](#)

8. The Department would also remind councils that, under section 16 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, persons who are not councillors, but who are appointed to committees, are required to complete and sign a declaration. The form of that declaration (i.e., the *Declaration on Appointment to a Committee of a Person Who is Not a Councillor*) is set out in Schedule 3 to the 2014 Act and is replicated in **Annex B** to this circular.



Department for

Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn

Pobal

Depairtment fur

Commonities

194

9. The declaration set out in Schedule 3 to the 2014 Act requires a person who is not a councillor and who is appointed to a council committee to affirm that they have read and, in the performance of their functions as a member of the committee, will observe the Councillors' Code (as revised from time to time). A copy of the Councillors' Code or a link to view it online should be provided prior to this declaration being signed. (Please also see the link to the Local Government Commissioner for Standards' guidance on the Councillors' Code, above).
10. The Department would also like to take this opportunity to draw councils' attention to the requirement under Section 5 of the Councillors' Code for councillors to declare personal interests (both financial or otherwise) within 28 days of their election or appointment to office (if that is later). Paragraph 5.2 of the Councillors' Code sets out the detailed "categories of interest" that a councillor must declare in writing to the Chief Executive.
11. Clerks/Chief Executives should inform the Department when all councillors have completed their declarations, as soon as possible after the election but no later than 31 July 2023.
12. This circular replaces Local Government Circular No. LG 06/2019.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Broadway

Local Government and Housing Regulation Division

Department for Communities

ANNEX A

**Declaration of a councillor under section 7 of the
Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972**

I.....having been chosen Councillor for
the District ofhereby declare that I
take the said office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties thereof
according to the best of my judgement and ability.

I affirm that I have read and will observe the Northern Ireland Local Government Code
of Conduct for Councillors (as revised from time to time) in the performance of my
functions as a councillor.

Dated this.....day of Signed.....

ANNEX B

Declaration, under section 16 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, on Appointment to a Committee of a Person who is not a Councillor

Having been appointed as a member of [*name the committee*]

I declare that I accept the appointment and that I will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of a member of that committee to the best of my judgement and ability.

I affirm that I have read and in the performance of my functions as a member of that committee will observe the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors (as revised from time to time)