

Proposed – Draft Corporate Performance Improvement Objectives: 2019-20

Corporate Improvement Objective	1) To assist in the growth of the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to our district	
Senior Responsible Officer:	Community Plan Theme & Outcome	Project (Action)
Adrian Mc Creesh (Director of Business & Communities)	Theme 1: Economic Growth Outcome: We have more people working in a diverse economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A programme of tourism activities, developing collaborative partnerships, to get more people to visit and stay in our district
<p>Why we are doing it?</p> <p>Tourism is a major engine for job creation and a driving force for economic growth and development, as highlighted by recent figures. There has been a steady growth in overall tourism in Northern Ireland from 2011¹. In the year ended March 2018, visitors spent £939 in the local economy², with 70% coming from external visitors, making tourism worth £662m as an export business. Overall tourism represents 5.4% of total jobs (supporting 1 in every 18 jobs), across Northern Ireland. The Programme for Government has set one of its outcomes as wanting Northern Ireland to “...create a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest”, and one of its indicators is to, “Improve Northern Ireland’s attractiveness as a destination”.</p> <p>Tourism is recognised as an economic driver, to stimulate growth by the Council, to deliver jobs and investment. We want to increase the number of the 3,000 plus local tourism and tourism related jobs in the district³. Opportunities for tourism growth lie in building on existing and new tourism propositions into a single tourism product or destination by capitalising on Mid Ulster’s central position in Northern Ireland, within an hour’s drive of the Causeway Coast, North West, Fermanagh Lakes, Belfast and many cross border destinations. Mid Ulster has scope to grow within the tourism marketplace; it is a developing destination and as such has not yet fulfilled its potential.</p> <p>We will work with our partners and others to promote Mid Ulster as a successful tourist destination. We want to assist with establishing good communication and collaborative relationships between stakeholders with an interest in sites, facilities, hospitality, skills development, quality standards, attractions and marketing. We want to ensure a welcoming and clean public realm, including public toilets, street furniture, signage etc.; all that is necessary to facilitate the quality of the visitor experience. We will work to seek improvements in skills development and coordinated approaches to vocational education and training, enhancing the sectors image and service quality. The challenge is to bring together Mid Ulster’s tourism assets and attributes, support the dispersal of visitor spend and investment across the area and provide an offering for visitors to visit and stay in our district.</p> <p>¹ Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics 2017. https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Annual-Tourism-Statistics-Publication-2017%20.pdf</p> <p>² Department for the Economy. Tourism Performance for the year ended 31march 2018. https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/topics/tourism</p> <p>³ Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. NI Local Government District tourism Statistics 2017. https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Local-Government-District-Publication-2017.pdf</p>		

Corporate Improvement Objective	2) To improve the average processing time of Local Planning Applications	
Senior Responsible Officer:	Community Plan Theme & Outcome	Project (Action)
Dr. Chris Boomer (Planning Manager)	<p>Theme 1: Economic Growth</p> <p>Outcome: We prosper in a stronger and more competitive economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A programme of review and application of design thinking to ensure council's local planning application process is positioned to attain the standard of them being processed, from date valid to decision or withdrawal, within an average of 15 weeks

Why we are doing it?

We want to make the process of applying for planning permission better, thereby making our residents' lives easier. The outcome of a planning application has the potential to influence the applicant hugely. People unable to make the changes they want to their home will sometimes move altogether. If you can get it right for the one-time, householder applicant, who simply wants to build a new room, then you can get it right for everyone. We recognise that sometimes it is ostensibly minor improvements that can make a difference to people's lives. There are some big, complicated planning applications made each year, but there are many more household applications. Each one may be small, but if we can make a difference with such a high volume, we can have a huge impact.

The number of Local planning applications received in Northern Ireland during 2017/18 was 12,770 representing a decrease of 1.0% in 2016.17¹. Across Councils, Belfast City (1,788), Newry Mourne & Down (1,562) and Mid Ulster (1,397) received the highest number of local applications during 2017/18². These Councils also received the highest number of applications the previous year. Mid Ulster Council was below the regional average for all councils of 15.2 weeks average processing time for local planning applications during 2017/18. During 2017/18, Belfast City Council (1,779), Newry Mourne and Down Council (1,779) and Mid Ulster District Council (1,189) issued the most local decisions across the 11 Local Authorities. This in part reflected by the high volumes received in these Councils. During 2017/18, the average processing time to bring local applications to decisions or withdrawal was 15.2 weeks, across all the councils, an improvement of 1.0 week on the average time taken in 2016/17.

In 2017/18, Mid Ulster (14.4 weeks) along with four other Councils; Mid-East Antrim (9.6), Antrim and Newtownabbey (12.1) Fermanagh and Omagh (12.4), and Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon (14.0) were within the 15-week statutory target. The shortest processing time taken by Mid-East Antrim (9.6 weeks) , with Lisburn and Castlereagh having the longest processing times (21.6 weeks) and Causeway Coast and Glens (20.4 weeks). Performance at 14.4 weeks has been the same for Mid Ulster Council for the past two years, with this in mind we want to improve the average processing time for applicants.

¹ Local applications means an application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and any other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under the Act

² Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency. NI Planning Statistics 2017/18 Annual Statistical Bulletin. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/planning-statistics-2017-18-bulletin.pdf> for further information).

Corporate Improvement Objective	3). To improve the accessibility of our services by increasing the number available online	
Senior Responsible Officer:	Community Plan Theme & Outcome	Project (Action)
JJ Tohill (Director of Finance)	Theme 4: Health & well Being Outcome: We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of a programme to e-enable customer centric services
<p><i>Why we are doing it?</i></p> <p>The internet has transformed almost every aspect of private, public and work life. It is changing the way workplaces communicate, creating new industries and helping to improve public services and transparency. The Internet (or world wide web, which celebrates its 30th anniversary in March 2019), provides the public with the ability to conduct business at their convenience and at their own pace, without the need to travel to a Council office or wait to meet with one of our staff. In addition to being convenient, increased use of online services benefits the public and the Council by reducing the average time our employees spend processing forms, payments, applications, claims etc., freeing them to handle workloads that are more complicated. Online services are vital to good public service.</p> <p>Over the last few years, we implemented several new, secure and easy-to-use online services, which allow us to handle applications, bookings, and payments better. Our goal is to continue increasing the variety of online services, we offer, including the ability to apply, pay for and book a range of services, and access information instantly. We are committed to making our online services secure and easy to use.</p> <p>Developing online services for a population with a variety of experiences and comfort levels with technology presents a unique challenge. We solicit stakeholder input using a variety of methods prior to developing our services. Focus groups/discussions are common tools we use to engage our external stakeholders. We also consult with our employees when developing online services. Once we implement new online services, we continue to engage the public by soliciting their feedback using various methodologies. We will continue to provide appropriate support for those who interact with our services in non-digital ways such as face-to-face, written correspondence or by telephone.</p>		

Corporate Improvement Objective	4). To support people to adopt healthier lifestyles by increasing usage of council recreational facilities.	
Senior Responsible Officer:	Community Plan Theme & Outcome	Project (Action)
Ann-Marie Campbell(Director of Leisure & Outdoor Recreation)	Theme 4: Health & Well Being Outcome: We are better enabled to live longer healthier lives and more active lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity to increase the number of people who participate in a healthier lifestyles programme

Why we are doing it?

People in the UK are around 20% less active now than in the 1960's¹. If current trends continue, we will be 35% less active by 2030. We are the first generation to need to make a conscious decision to build physical activity into our daily lives. Fewer of us have manual jobs. Technology dominates at home and at work, the two places where we spend most of our time. Societal changes have designed physical activity out of our lives and an increase in car usage has meant a 25% reduction in travel by foot or bicycle. Council wants to help people to adopt and continue to develop healthy lifestyles. We have chosen this objective based on what our local communities have told us, whilst taking into account our identified health inequalities within the district, accessibility opportunities and participation rates.

Locally, core wellbeing levels are below Northern Ireland averages, and while 80% of the population rate their health as good (Northern Ireland wide those rating their health stands at 79.5%), approximately 20% of the population have life limiting illnesses. In absolute terms, long-term health issues continue to exert pressure on communities, affect overall health outcomes within communities and create challenges for the delivery of public services (i.e. the significant burden of chronic disease in health and social services). Sedentary behaviour is a risk factor for poor health, with just over 25% of adults in Northern Ireland lead a sedentary lifestyle by sitting for extending periods². Within our district, obesity rates in children and adults are increasing, coupled with it being an area with the highest proportion of deaths due to circulatory diseases, points us towards a need to increase participation in local health and well-being programmes.

Promoting active healthier lifestyles for Mid Ulster residents, can help address the important challenges facing us locally today. Increasing physical activity and promoting active lifestyles have the potential to improve the physical and mental health of Mid Ulster residents. Being active can help us live longer and feel better, improve our mood, help improve our sleep and even reduce the risk of conditions like diabetes and coronary heart disease. Even small changes can make a big difference to health and make people feel better.

¹ Public Health. Gov.UK. Health matters: getting every adult active every day. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-getting-every-adult-active-every-day/health-matters-getting-every-adult-active-every-day>

² Western health and Social Care Trust. Physical Activity. <http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net/livewell/3189.html>