



Corporate Plan

April 2017 - September 2017

Realising our potential

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council

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1. Background

- 1.1 On 1st April 2015 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council was established by the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. One of the very early decisions for the newly formed Council was to agree the Council's first Corporate Plan.
- 1.2 The 40 Elected Members of Mid and East Antrim set the vision of **"Mid and East Antrim: Working together to create a better future for all"**. This vision underpins the agenda for a challenging and ambitious Corporate Plan setting the direction for Council up to March 2019.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan is established around five strategic priorities. Each of the strategic priorities has a number of corporate objectives. The strategic priorities are:



- 2.2 Two and a half years in to the lifetime of the Corporate Plan, significant progress is underway against the identified priorities and corporate objectives.
- 2.3 To further enhance and strengthen our performance management approach, in April 2017 the Council approved a suite of 25 performance indicators against which the Corporate Plan is now measured. This 6-month review of progress is the first report against these indicators and seeks to assure our citizens that Council is moving towards the realisation of its vision, whilst continuing the transformation process to build the new Council.

- 2.4 Council Officers continue to provide high standards of service delivery, within a changing environment and in addition to the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan, continue to strive for continuous improvement. Council arrangements for securing continuous improvement are set out in the Council's Performance Management Framework which includes our annual Performance Improvement Plan and directorate and service level business service plans.





Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is committed to reporting progress every 6 months. This reporting has the following benefits:

- An internal self-evaluation process allows Council to systematically examine its services, achievements and processes to assess how well it is meeting its stated aims, objectives and outcomes and to re-focus and re-prioritise as necessary.
- It provides Elected Members with an opportunity to review the priorities set in 2015. It also provides a level of assurance that the priorities Council has set are being delivered, and the needs of local communities are being met.
- It is important for accountability and demonstrates the Council's commitment to the corporate value of integrity.

3. Progress against Strategic Priorities including Corporate Indicators

- 3.1 The review report provides a summary of progress against the corporate objectives and the corporate indicators under each of the strategic priorities, and gives a holistic overview across all functional areas.
- 3.2 The report focusses on significant achievements and does not provide detail on all progress attained over the last 6 months. More detail on service specific projects is reported in business plans to the Audit and Scrutiny committee on a rolling basis.
- 3.3 This report details progress from 1st April 2017 to 30th September 2017. As agreed by Members, a suite of corporate performance indicators were introduced to measure progress from 1st April 2017. This is the first report using the corporate indicators to detail performance for the period 1st April - 30th September 2017.

3.4 Corporate Indicator
R/A/G Status.

	On track and progressing as planned
	Progressing but may be delayed
	Not progressing/stopped
	Target not defined

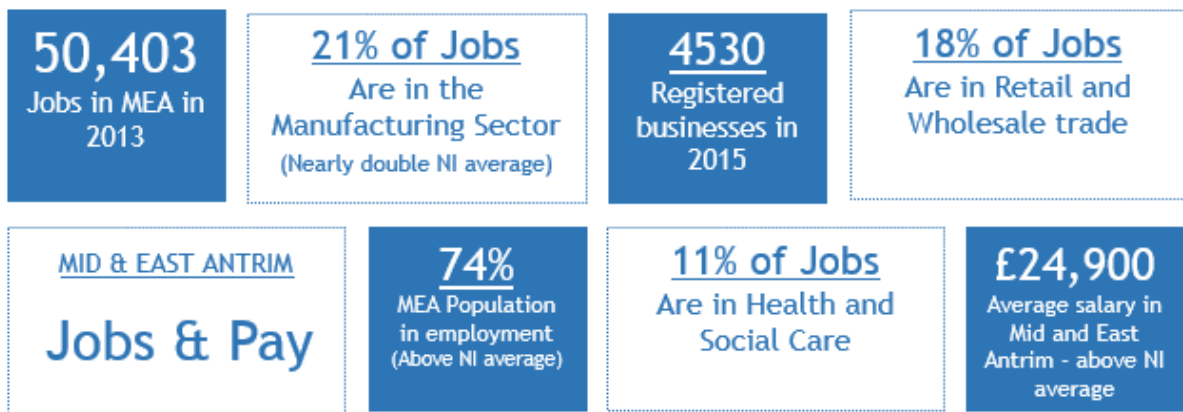
1. Growing the Economy

Jobs and investment in the Mid and East Antrim area are vital to achieving our vision. Council is committed to growing the economy by creating the conditions which attract inward investment to our Borough, support sustainable employment, expand existing businesses and promote entrepreneurship and innovation.

What are our corporate objectives within the strategic priority of Growing the Economy?



Growing the economy: Context



What have we done in the last 6 months?

Strategic Planning

The development of Council's Integrated Economic Strategy is 75% complete with a launch planned for March 2018.

Securing Businesses

The development of the ECOS innovation centre has been successfully progressed, having agreed a lease with one digital innovation tenant and another in the process of signing.

Marketing & Promotion

Council and Catalyst Inc. have proactively delivered a positive marketing campaign both locally through the Council's Connections magazine and regionally through Agenda NI to showcase the rebranding of ECOS and its evolution as an Innovation Centre.

Job Creation



Council are currently on target for job creation of 125 knowledge economy jobs by 2022 with 10 jobs created to date in connection with the Ecos Innovation Centre.

Northern Ireland Business Start Up 'Go For It' Programme is on track for successful completion by March 2018 with the completion of 99 business plans and the promotion of 75 jobs to date.

A new project team has been established to take the lead on the Community Plan priority 'Sustainable Jobs and Tourism', with 10 priority themes identified.

Achievement of this priority will support and contribute to the Corporate Plan.

Events

Two Go2Tender events have been held with a total of 31 participating companies. Our target was to attract 15 companies.



9 events have been arranged as part of Enterprise week in November 2017, with partners including Enterprise Agencies, Sentinus, Catalyst Inc., Invest NI, University of Ulster and others.

Consultation



Mid and East Antrim Preferred Options

Paper (POP) public consultation was published in June 2017 and ended on 6th September. Responses to the public consultation are on track for completion by November 2017.

Funding

A Peace IV funding application has been completed and lodged in a bid to secure €9,000,000 to progress the development of the St Patricks Barracks site in conjunction with the Department for Communities. The application decision is expected by December 2017.

Successful allocation of Rural Development Funding has provided support to 17 rural businesses, created 36 new jobs and was fundamental to the completion of 18 village plans.

A PEACE IV Local action plan has been officially launched with 3 approved projects implemented and we are on track to implement another 8 by January 2018.

Bids

Strategic bids have been submitted for:

- Heathrow logistics hub
- Local full fibre broadband Networks
- City Deal
- Digital Catapult

Broadband Survey






Work is ongoing to establish the current state of Broadband in the Borough. A Broadband survey was conducted in September with 1796 responses. A recommendations report will be issued by January.

Town centre Investment

Larne public realm has been successfully completed with the aim to increase footfall and enhance the town centre. Success will be measured by positive stakeholder satisfaction collected via surveys.

How we measure success:

The following corporate performance indicators are the means by which we will measure our progress towards achieving our strategic priorities.

Indicators (*Statutory Indicator)	Targets (SMART)	Baseline (2016/17)	Actual Performance (2017/18) Q1 & Q2	Progress
Number of Jobs Promoted through business start-up activity*	85 new jobs through business start-up activity	193	75	
Number of Integrated Partnerships with third party organisations to deliver economic benefit to the Mid & East Antrim area	4 key partnerships	-	4	
The average processing time of major planning applications*	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average 30 weeks	67.8 weeks	16.8 weeks	
The average processing time of local planning applications*	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks	9 weeks	9.8 weeks	
The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.*	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint	88.1 %	87.9 %	

2. Developing our Tourism Potential

Mid and East Antrim Borough boasts some of the most beautiful and scenic land and seascapes in Northern Ireland. It is rich in culture and heritage and offers the warmest of welcomes from its local communities. Council believes that the potential of our tourism product has not been fully realised, and has the promise of delivering great economic benefit to the Borough.

What are our corporate objectives within the strategic priority of Growing the Economy?



Developing Our Tourism Potential: Context

Occupancy Rates Ranked 2 nd for highest hotel and B&B occupancy rates in the region 2016	3959 Jobs supported through Tourism accounting for 9% of total jobs in Mid and East Antrim 2016	The average length of stay in Mid and East Antrim is 3.5 nights with an average spend per trip of £153 2016	TOP 3 ATTRACTIONS Carrickfergus Castle Braid Arts Museum Carrickfergus Museum
Tourism Mid and East Antrim			

What have we done in the last 6 months?

In the past 6 months there have been a number of Key achievements that have increased Mid and East Antrim's tourism potential.

Attractions



The Gobbins Cliff Path reopened on 30th June 2017 with 9350 visitors in its first 3 months.

A successful pilot project with the Department for Communities was completed from April - September 2017 to extend the opening hours of Carrickfergus Castle. As a result of the extended opening hours, visitor numbers have increased 21%.

Business Support

A number of business support interventions have been made, with the Glens and Gobbins Business Clusters being launched and Galgorm cluster planned for launch November 2017.

Marketing & Promotion

Mid and East Antrim was promoted at key trade and consumer shows in Germany, USA, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Market Research

A Borough-wide tourism and travel trade industry database has been developed which will increase the availability of tourism data unique to MEA and allow the Council to monitor and plan for tourism growth.

Raising Standards





The Gobbins, Arthur Cottage and Andrew Jackson Centre have all achieved a 4 star rating from the Tourism NI quality assurance grading scheme.



99% of businesses across the Borough who are subject to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme are rated 3 or above with 76% rated the top score of 5.

How we measure success:

The following indicators are the means by which we will measure our progress towards achieving our strategic priorities.

Indicators	Targets (SMART)	Baseline (2016/17)	Actual Performance (2017-2018) Q1 & Q2	Progress
The number of overnight visitor trips (sustainable jobs and tourism), short-term annual data.	To increase the number of visitor trips.	301,768 overnight visitor trips in 2016	Reported Annually	
Number of business led clusters developed	2 business clusters established around key tourism assets	N/A	1	

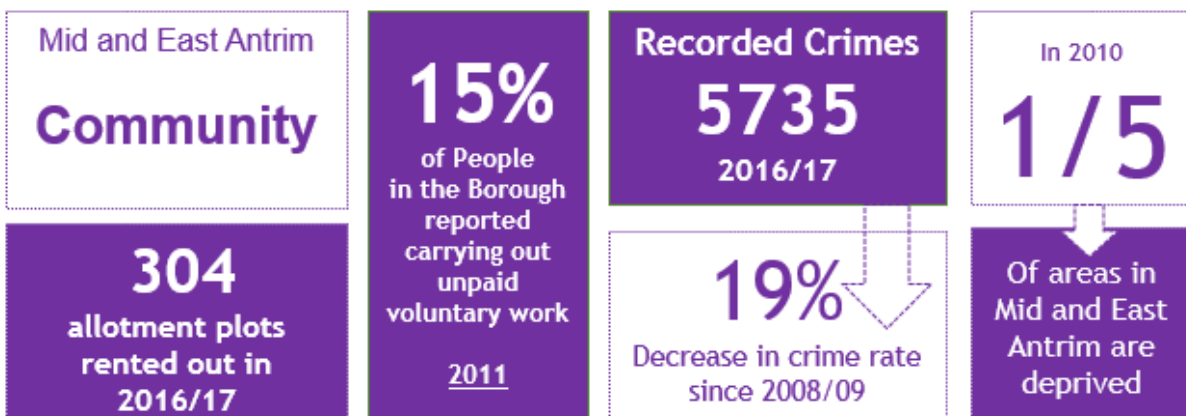
3. Building Stronger, Safe and Healthy Communities

Council wants vibrant, safe and healthy communities for all our citizens, and the Council's lead role in developing the Community Plan for our area will be key to delivering this. Continuing to work with our communities, we will secure a better quality of life, improved health and wellbeing and protection of our green and clean Borough.

What are our corporate objectives within the strategic priority Building Stronger, Safe and Healthy Communities?



Stronger, Safer, Healthier Communities: Context



What have we done in the last 6 months?

Community

'Putting People First', the first Community Plan for Mid and East Antrim area was launched in June 2017.



The Council are working on delivering the Community Development Strategy which was approved by Council in September 2017. The main objectives for delivery are:-

- 1) Continued investment in core community development
- 2) Enhanced partnership and connectivity
- 3) Improved community centre effectiveness and sustainability.

As part of Mid and East Antrim Borough Councils Volunteer Strategy Council is working to promote existing 'Friends of' groups and identify potential new groups with the aim of increasing the number of people participating in Parks and Open Spaces volunteering activities.

Council continues to deliver its Good Relations and PCSP action Plan.

Awards



8 parks have been awarded Green Flag status. An MEA employee has also been awarded Green Flag Employee of the year.

Carnfunnock Country Park has retained its 4 star touring caravan park and campsite award.

The Museum Service has won the NI category for Volunteering within Museums and attended the British Museum Awards in London.

Funding

£479m in funding was received from Peace IV to deliver a project entitled 'Your Place - Our Space'. The key purpose of the project is to deliver inter-generational environmental initiatives using parks and open spaces to promote community wellbeing.

£90,620 of funding has been received for 2017/18 to deliver the Every Body Active 2020 Programme which targets groups of women/girls, people with a disability and people with high social need.

£34,669 of funding has been received from Sport NI to support delivery of grassroots community sports

projects across the Mid and East Antrim Borough.

Events

A wide range of events have been held including 9 World of Wonder weekends, 3 Circus Skills training events, 3 Big Tent Weekends.

The SuperCup NI event was successful.

The fully refurbished US Rangers Museum in Carrickfergus re-opened to the public in June 2017.

Community Investment

The long awaited Play Park development at Tullygarley is nearing completion.

Over one million wildflower seeds have been planted in meadows throughout the Borough, twice the number from last year.

Supporting Health & Wellbeing

Disability Sport NI has provided approximately £45,000 worth of inclusive **sports equipment** to Council as part of a **new initiative** between Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Disability Sport NI to develop a **disability sport hub** in the Borough.

The new Leisure Pricing Policy has been introduced. Council now provides consistent free access to pool and health suites for over 65s across the whole Borough.

Concessionary rates for over 70s, disabled persons and those on Income Support have been introduced as well as free access for Carers who accompany disabled persons.

Education

14,509 participants attended the Summer Schemes and programmes across the Borough during July and August.

Educational visits promoting food waste awareness and reduction to households, schools, businesses and community groups are ongoing.

Grants






There have also been 314 grant applications processed from April 2017 -September 2017 awarding a total of £483,582.






Waste Reduction

Quarter 1 of 2017/18 saw the household waste recycling rate at 55.7% (7.2% increase from same quarter last year - 2nd in NI).

How we measure success:

The following indicators are the means by which we will measure our progress towards achieving our Strategic priorities.

Indicators (*Statutory Indicator)	Targets (SMART)	Baseline (2016/17)	Actual Performance (2017-2018) Q1 & Q2	Progress
Childhood obesity rate of P1 pupils (good health and well-being) short term annual data.	-	4.9% in 2012/13 - 14/15 for P1 pupils and 28.2% in 2012/13 - 14/15 for Year 8 pupils*	Reported annually.	
The proportion of the over 65 population reporting they are in good health (good health and well-being) only available every 10 years via Census.	-	In 2011, 80.2% of people stated their general health was either good or very good (Census 2011)	Reported every 10 years.	
Gap in life expectancy between the most deprived areas in the Borough and the Borough as a whole (good health and well-being) data only available approximately every 5 years, next update due 2017.	-	3.3 years for males in 2012-14 and 3.2 years for females in 2012-14*	Update due end of 2017.	
Number of parks and green spaces awarded Green Flag status (our environment) short term annual data.	8	In 2016, 7 parks and green spaces were awarded Green Flag status (Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful)	8	
The percentage of household waste collected by Council that is sent for recycling (including	50% household recycling by 2020	2016/17 45.07%**	55.70%	

waste prepared for reuse)*				
The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.*	*20,644 tonnes	2016/17 19167 tonnes	7714 tonnes	
The amount (tonnage) or Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arising.*	No target	2016/17 75187	20093	
Grant Support Scheme: % of the funding awarded in Grant claims to be drawn down by applicants.	90% to be drawn down by March 2018	82% of awarded funding drawn down during 2015/16***	87%	
The percentage of people who feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood (community safety and cohesion) short term annual data.	-	86.1% felt a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood in 3 year average 2013 - 2015 ****	Reported Annually	
The number of hate crime incidents recorded (community safety and cohesion) short term annual data.	143 incidents in 2015/16 (PSNI)	141 incidents reported (PSNI) 2016/17	Reported Annually	

*NI health and social care inequalities monitoring system, Department of Health 2017

**Note: The 2016-2017 waste figures are provisional only and will be audited and publically released by NIEA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency) on 1st December 2017. They can be used as a strong indicator of performance and are unlikely to change, but cannot be published anywhere in advance of their release by NIEA.

***Indicator amended to 12 month rolling target

****Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK)

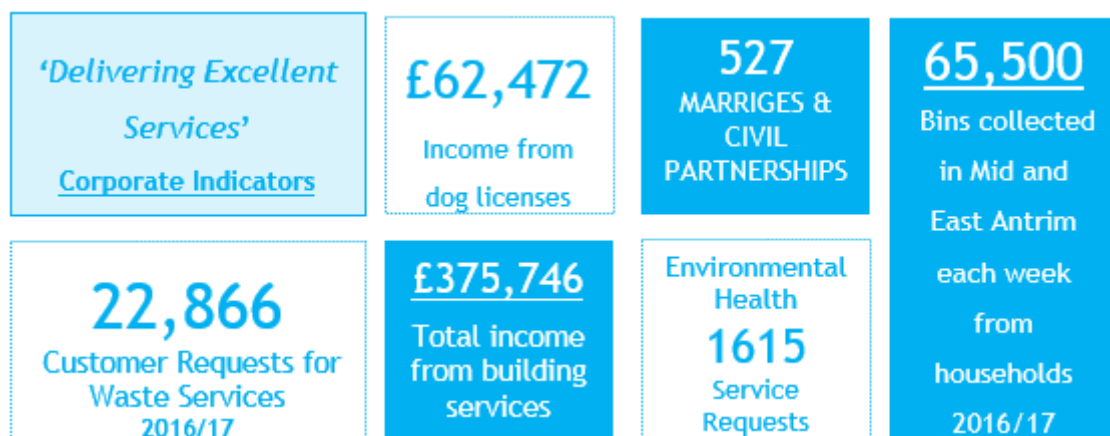
4. Delivering Excellent Services

During this time of transformation, Council will ensure first class frontline services which make a positive impact on the quality of life for all our citizens. Moving forward Council will deliver continuous improvement in the design and delivery of our services and challenge partner organisations to do the same.

What are our corporate objectives within the strategic priority of Delivering Excellent Services?



Delivering Excellent Services: Context



What have we done in the last 6 months?

Environment



The Schools Energy Detectives Initiative which is delivered in local primary schools was shortlisted as a finalist in the category "Best Renewable Energy Efficiency Initiative" category at the APSE Awards 2017.

Council maintained the Platinum Status in the Annual Environmental Benchmarking Survey for Environmental standards. This is the highest standard.

Food Waste Reduction



There has been significant uptake on the new food waste policy leading to improved recycling rates and an overall saving of approximately £51,100 in the first quarter of

2017/18; An additional 5219 brown bins and 7648 food caddies have been distributed as a result of the new policy:

From April-Jun 2017/18, compared to same period in the previous year:

- Dry Recyclables increased 77 tonnes.
- Landfill tonnage fell 1378 tonnes.
- Organic Recycling rose 1479 tonnes.

The Food recycling campaign has been a huge success, with the majority of households making use of Brown bins to dispose of food waste.

Safety First

Council have appointed a new Emergency Planning Co-ordinator to prepare Council for emergencies.

The Safety Certification was dealt with in a positive manner to enable matches to proceed safely and in

compliance with legislation and guidance

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Mid and East Antrim submitted a regional bid to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Awards 2017 (Best Environmental Health Project) on behalf of all councils in Northern Ireland for social media campaign highlighting the dangers of blind cords - "It only takes seconds". The initiative was shortlisted and a representative from MEA will attend the award ceremony in London on 2nd November. In Northern Ireland there have been 3 blind cord deaths in the past four years.

Mid and East Antrim became the first council in Northern Ireland to form a partnership with Public Health Agency and

community partners to address the issue of suicide awareness and prevention. The partnership will provide suicide awareness training to elected members and link them to the various agencies and services available across the Borough promoting mental and emotional wellbeing.

Service Delivery

Council's first Customer Service Charter has been published.



Mid and East Antrim is the first council in

Northern Ireland to implement the new Pavement Café Licensing regime. The first approvals were issued in May 2017 and a total of 8 premises have now successfully applied for licences.

A new appointments system for Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages was introduced into the Larne office from April to improve customer service. It has proven successful that plans to roll out the system to Ballymena and Carrickfergus have been brought forward to November 2017.

Over 13,000 householders visited Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) every week increasing the

use of HRCs by 2% compared with 2016/17. This was also coupled with an overall reduction of commercial waste being deposited at HRCs.


Larne South HRC has been identified as having the highest recycling levels across Northern Ireland.

Procurement

Council continues to participate in collaborative insurance procurement and is leading collaborative procurement in relation to a capital assets management software solution.

How we measure success:

The following **indicators** are the means by which we will measure our **progress** towards achieving our **strategic priorities**.

Indicators	Targets (SMART)	Baseline (2016/17)	Actual Performance (2017-2018) Q1 & Q2	Progress
% of formal complaints responded to, in line with MEA complaints policy, to ensure concerns are dealt with promptly	100% complaints responded to within the timescales specified in the policy	53%	50%	

5. Developing a High Performing Council

As an organisation, Council will strive to be the best that it can be through effective leadership and a teamwork ethos at all levels and foster a culture which is supportive of innovation and taking risk where appropriate.

What are our corporate objectives within the strategic priority Building Stronger, Safe and Healthy Communities?



Developing a High Performing Council: Context



What have we done in the last 6 months?

Partnership

Mid and East Antrim Support Hub, in partnership with PSNI, DoJ and other statutory partners, has been operational since September 2017.

Work is ongoing to develop an Ageing Well Model for the Borough. Partners are working together to develop a vision and proposals for a business model that will work efficiently and provide the best outcomes for the most isolated and vulnerable older people in our Borough.

Council have also established a crisis/partnership fund to address a gap in funding for MEAAP and to retain services until the Aging Well Model is further developed.

Health

A new Occupational Health Provider has been appointed for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

Performance

Council's Performance Improvement Plan for 2017/18 was published on 30th June.



Council have signed up to the APSE (Association of Public Sector Excellence) NI Benchmarking Project, to enable performance to be monitored and compared across a range of key functions with other councils.

Customer Service

Council have approved a digital transformation strategy that aims to improve efficiency and effectiveness of Council delivered services which have been digitally transformed.

Achieve



A staff communication survey has been completed and results indicate that approximately 60% of staff are happy with communications. The survey results will now be used to identify ways of improving communication within Council.

Council's Performance Management Framework sets out the various plans across Council that demonstrate our wider commitment to continuous improvement. A Personal Development Planning (PDP) process has been developed and successfully tested with a group of staff. The PDP process will now be rolled out on an incremental basis to senior managers by March 2018 and on an incremental basis to the wider organisation by March 2019.

The Business Planning process has been agreed for 2018/19, in line with the Performance Management Framework.

Finance and Savings

Council has developed a Business Improvement and Efficiency strategy with plans to save £0.5m by March 2018.

A 2016/17 year-end review of prudential indicators showed that all indicators were within the limits set in the Treasury

Management Strategy and Policy as presented with the rates estimate in February 2016.

Awards

The following awards have been achieved:

4 coast care awards.

3 Seaside (Beach) awards.

3 Council parks have been nominated for the UK Fields in Trust

Park of the Year:

- Marine Park,
- Dixon Park,
- Shaftesbury Park.





12 Translink Ulster in Bloom Awards were achieved for towns and villages within the Borough:

Recycling

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council are the top performing Council in Arc21 during the first quarter of this year for recycling glass and organic waste.

How we measure success:

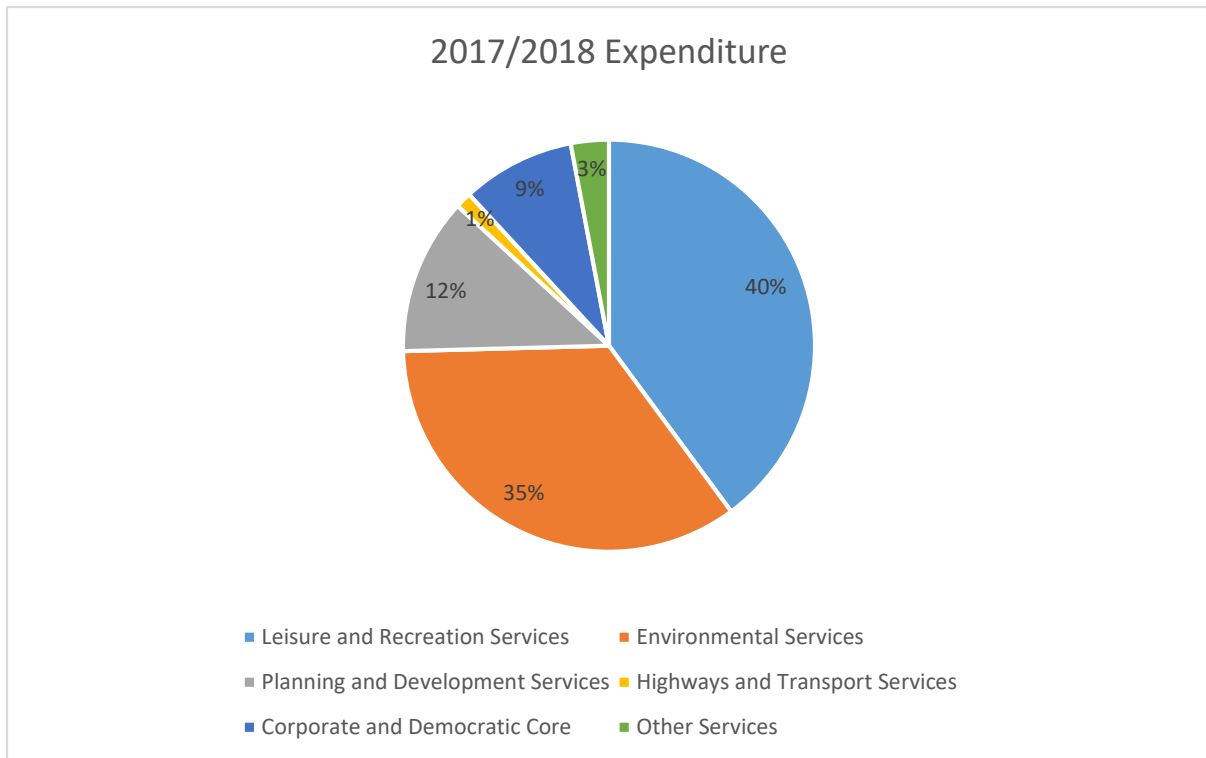
The following indicators are the means by which we will measure our progress towards achieving our strategic priorities.

Indicators	Targets (SMART)	Baseline (2016/17)	Actual Performance (2017-2018) Q1 & Q2	Progress
Absenteeism levels	16 days	18.32 days	7.96	
Health & Safety Accidents	5% decrease on accidents from 16/17 - 54 target	57	32	
% of invoices paid within 30 working days	80% of invoices paid within 30 working days	88.1%	88.73%	
District Fund Balance of Council within required range	5 - 7.5% of net operating expenditure	TBD*	7.6%	

*To be determined

4. Budget Summary

The Council's budget for 2017/2018 is £61.9million, with £45.4million generated through domestic and non-domestic rates. The remaining £16.5 million will be generated through a combination of grants and other income from Council activities.



5. Capital Investment

Council continues to work with the community to deliver capital projects across the Borough and attract the maximum amount of funding to the Borough. Since commencing in April 2015, Council has invested £22m in capital projects.

A potential investment of £21 million, has been identified to deliver a range of capital projects to provide efficient Council services and attract visitors to the town and villages within the Borough.

5.1 Capital Projects Delivered To Date

Since the inception of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council in 2015 a number of significant projects have been delivered for the benefit of the community and in line with the strategic objectives for including:

- (1) **Public Realm Schemes** in Ballymena and Larne have been completed in conjunction with the Department for Communities
- (2) **ECOS** has been repaired and refurbished to facilitate accommodation for business start-ups in conjunction with Catalyst Inc.
- (3) The **Ballymena Capital Community Enabling Scheme** time frame has been extended to allow community groups and sports clubs to access funding for capital schemes to benefit their areas
- (4) **Harryville Community Centre** and changing pavilion is complete and operational
- (5) The storm damage and rock fall at **The Gobbins** has been repaired and the facility was opened during Summer 2017 as planned
- (6) **The Council Chamber at The Braid** was completely refurbished to meet the needs of Elected Members. **Members' rooms** at Carrickfergus Civic Centre and Smiley Buildings, Larne have also seen improvement
- (7) A new **Citizens' Advice Bureau** facility at Carrickfergus Civic Centre has been designed, delivered and is operational
- (8) A new **play park at Carnlough** has been developed and is open for public use
- (9) Significant **health and safety issues** have been addressed at Larne Leisure Centre, Inver Park in Larne and Taylor's Avenue and Sullatober HRC in Carrickfergus
- (10) **Summerfield Bridge at ECOS** which was closed to the public has been replaced and is now operational
- (11) A **play area at Drumtara** has been delivered and the **play area at Tullygarley** is nearing completion for public use.

6. Performance Improvement 2016-2017

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 put in place a new framework to support continuous improvement in the delivery of council services, in the context of strategic objectives and issues that are important to our citizens and customers. Progress against the Performance Improvement Plan 2016/17 was reported to Audit and Scrutiny Committee, 27th November 2017 and is provided as Appendix 1 to this report.

Statutory performance improvement indicators

In addition to the improvement areas identified by Council, the Department for Communities also set targets for Councils. For 2017/18, these are set in the functional areas of Planning, Economic Development and Waste. These are included in the Corporate Performance Indicator tables in the previous sections of this report.

This information is currently collated by Department for Infrastructure, Invest NI and Northern Ireland Environmental Agency (NIEA). Once released to Council, we will publish this information for citizens and other stakeholders to assess our improvement in these areas.

7. Next steps

- 7.1 The Chief Executive will work with Elected Members to continue **'to create a better future for all'** through the delivery of the Corporate Plan. A Members Workshop will be held January 2018 to provide the opportunity for Elected Members to review current progress against the Corporate Plan Strategic Priorities and Corporate Indicators. Council considers performance every six months.
- 7.2 Directorate Business Plans will be presented to the Chief Executive in March 2018. These high-level plans set out how Directorates plan to fulfil the Council's vision in an innovative yet cost effective manner and will detail a number of key performance indicators to support future progress reporting.
- 7.3 The partnership approach between Elected Members and Council Officers will continue to be fostered, to enable Officers to provide Members with the information they require to assure Council is achieving its desired outcomes.



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