

May 15th, 2026

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend a meeting of the

Mid and East Antrim Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee

to be held on **Monday, 18th May 2026 at 6:30 pm** in **Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access.**

Yours sincerely



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Agenda

1 NOTICE OF MEETING

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality, they may have in respect of items on this Agenda.

4 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION

4.1 Information Governance - Quarterly Update - Circulated (13.5.26)

📄 *Information Governance - Quarterly Update.pdf*

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4.2 Public Consultation Briefing - Circulated

📄 *Public Consultation Briefing.pdf*

Page 11

📄 *Appendix 1 - Consultation Summary Report.pdf*

Page 13

4.3 HR & OD Training: Six-Monthly Update Report - Circulated (13.5.26)

📄 *HR & OD Training Six Monthly Update.pdf*

Page 15

4.4 Committee Chamber ICT Infrastructure Upgrade - Circulated (13.5.26)

📄 *Committee Chamber ICT Infrastructure Upgrade.pdf*

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5 ITEM FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

5.1 ICT Strategy - Circulated

📄 *ICT Strategy.pdf*

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📄 *Appendix 1 - ICT Strategy 2026 - 2029.pdf*

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📄 *Appendix 2- ICT Workplan Year One.pdf*

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📄 *Appendix 3- Equality Screening.pdf*

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Appendix 4- RNIA.pdf	Page 57
Appendix 5 - DPIA Screening.pdf	Page 69
Appendix 6 - Sustainability Screening.pdf	Page 76

6 TABLED QUESTIONS

Closed Committee - In accordance with Council policy, representatives of the Press will not be in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

7 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION – CLOSED COMMITTEE

7.1 Procurement Update - Circulated

Procurement Update.pdf	Not included
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7.2 Bad Debt Write-Off Report - Circulated (13.5.26)

Bad Debt Write Off Report.pdf	Not included
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Appendix 1 - Bad Debt Write Off List 2025-26.pdf	Not included
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7.3 Technology One Programme Quarterly Update - Circulated

TechOne Update.pdf	Not included
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8 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – CLOSED COMMITTEE

8.1 Deed of exchange – Ballykeel Community Centre and Playing Fields - Circulated

Deed of Exchange - Ballykeel Community Centre & Playing Fields.pdf	Not included
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Appendix 1 - Ballykeel Rectification Map A3 OS (2026).pdf	Not included
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8.2 Revised Credit Card Policy - Circulated (13.5.26)

Revised Credit Card Policy.pdf	Not included
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Appendix 1 - Credit Card Policy.pdf	Not included
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Appendix 2 - Equality Screening Template Credit Card Policy.pdf	Not included
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📄 *Appendix 3 - Credit Card Policy Rural Needs Impact Analysis_.pdf* *Not included*

📄 *Appendix 4 - DPIA Screening Credit Card Policy.pdf* *Not included*

📄 *Appendix 5 - Sustainability Screening Credit Card Policy.pdf* *Not included*

Open Committee

9 FORWARD PLAN FOR CORPORATE RESOURCES, POLICY & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - Circulated

📄 *CRPG Forward Plan .pdf*

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Council/Committee:	Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee
Date:	18 May 2026
Report Title:	Information Governance – Quarterly Update
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director - Business Support, Lesley Kerr, Information Governance Manager and Data Protection Officer
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate & Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the quarterly update on Council's Information Governance Programme of work, including the performance overview for Q4 (Jan– Mar) of the 25/26 year.
- 1.2. This report also includes a year-end overview for 25/26 financial year.

2. Background

- 2.1. 'Information Governance' is comprised of several key statutory functions as outlined in Council's Information Governance Framework, including access to information, data protection, information security, records management and training.
- 2.2. This report has been laid out to address work progress in each pillar.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

Pillar 1 – Data Protection

- 3.1. Work is progressing to address gaps in the completion of data protection impact assessments (DPIAs), data sharing agreements and privacy notices.

Data Breaches

- 3.2. In **Q4 25/26**, 6 breaches were reported to the Data Protection Officer. After investigation, and upon DPO risk assessment, none of the breach incidents were found to meet the ICO threshold to report.
- 3.3. In each instance, preventative actions were recommended to the service areas to lessen the risk of recurrence.



3.4. Data breaches are outlined to the Information Governance Steering Group at it's monthly meeting.

Year-end position Re data breaches (2025-2026)

3.5. During financial year 2025-2026, 16 breaches were reported to the Data Protection Officer. The most common breach type was 'disclosed in error', in particular using the wrong email address.

3.6. After investigation, and upon DPO risk assessment, none of the breaches were found to meet the ICO threshold to report. Mitigating actions to prevent recurrence were recommended in each instance.

3.7. The Information Governance Manager (DPO) is going to issue reminders to staff of the importance of checking email addresses before sending.

Figure 1: Data Breaches 2025-2026

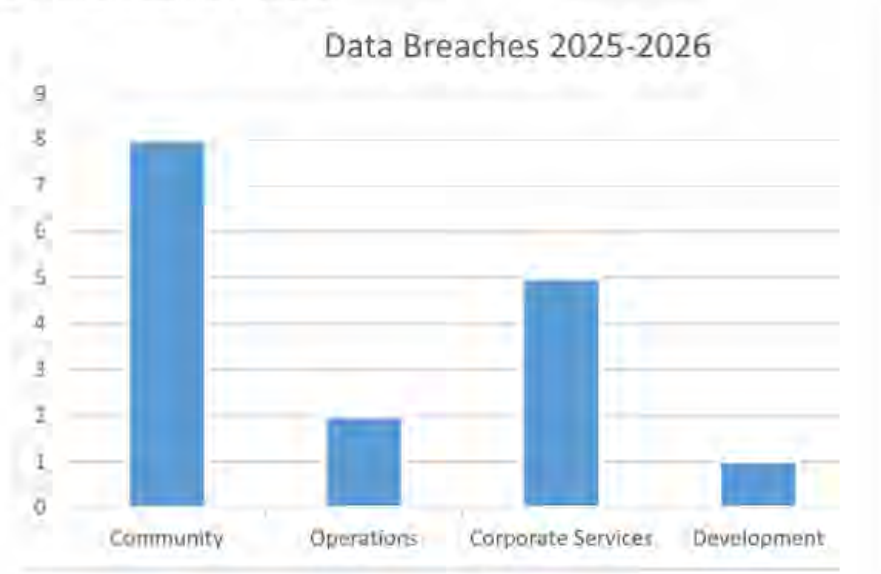
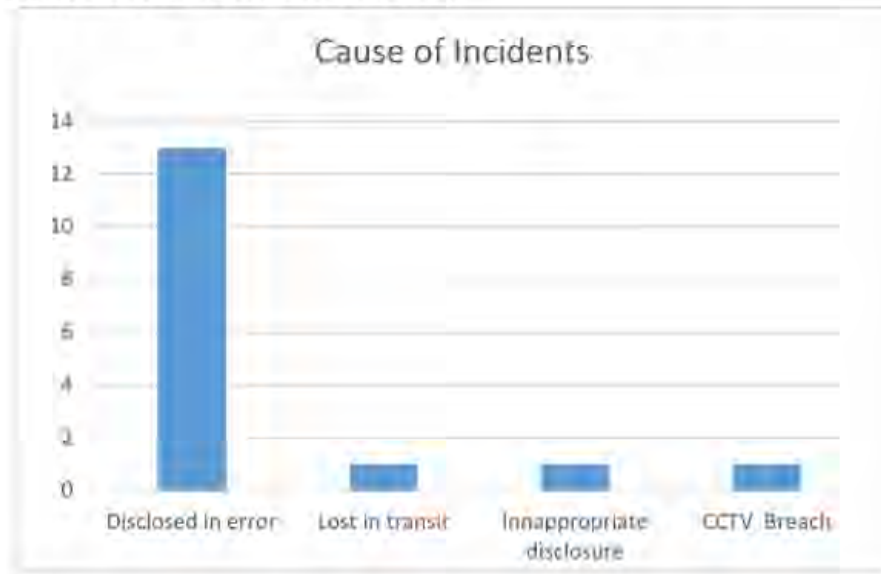




Figure 2: Cause of Data Breaches 2025-2026



Pillar 2 – Information Security

- 3.8. Work is ongoing in partnership with the Facilities Management and IT teams to ensure sufficient information security measures are in place.
- 3.9. An Access Control Policy and a Responsible Disposal Policy are in development.

Pillar 3 - Risk Management

- 3.10. Work is ongoing to consult with service areas across council to ensure all business continuity plans have appropriate information governance considerations.
- 3.11. Actions to satisfy the outstanding internal audit recommendations made by Deloitte in early 2024 are nearing completion.
- 3.12. Work to address information governance-related risks in relation to CCTV and Body Worn Video is currently ongoing. A separate report is in development, setting out the wider issues in relation to these risks, together with suggested ways forward. This report will be presented to SMT in the coming weeks.

Pillar 4 – Records Management

Record of Processing Activities (RoPA) and Information Asset Register (IAR)

- 3.13. A significant piece of work to establish a full IAR and RoPA is nearing completion, with only HR to be completed, which has been delayed by the implementation of TechOne. This is due for completion by end July 2026 and will also close an outstanding audit action.

Retention and Disposal Schedule

- 3.14. The Information Governance Team will be initiating a Council-wide records review, in line with the Retention and Disposal Schedule, which will assist with reducing both hard copy and electronic storage requirements. A Project Initiation Document (PID) will be presented to SMT separately in the coming weeks for approval prior to the launch of this project.
- 3.15. By way of background, a regional model approach to retention and disposal is in development.
- 3.16. PRONI has now written to SOLACE to commend the regional approach and SOLACE, in turn, has communicated its endorsement to the regional group of information governance officers.
- 3.17. A sub-group of the Regional IG group is now being established to progress this project and is expected to hold its first meeting in the summer months.
- 3.18. In the meantime, MEABC continues to apply the existing, ratified schedule.
- 3.19. As soon as the regional R&D Schedule is in place, the Information Governance Team will action its application within MEABC, including the update of Council's Records Management Policy.

Pillar 5 – Information Sharing

- 3.20. Upon completion of the council's Record of Processing Activities (RoPA), the Information Governance team will commence a review of all information sharing activities across the council to ensure any information shared between MEABC, its partner organisations and any other statutory bodies, is being conducted with the appropriate, lawful documentation in place.
- 3.21. A programme of work will be put in place to prioritise and address any issues that arise during the course of that review.

Pillar 6 - Access to information

FOI

- 3.22. In Q4, between 1st January 2026 and 31 March 2026, there were a total of 129 new FOI requests received. 15 requests were carried forward from Q3.

EIR

- 3.23. In Q4, between 1st January 2026 and 31 March 2026, 57 new EIR requests were received. 2 EIRs were carried forward from Q3.

SARs

- 3.24. 12 new SARs were received in Q4. 3 SARs were carried forward from Q3.

INTERNAL REVIEWS

3.25. 3 requests for Internal Review were received in Q4. 0 were carried forward from Q3.

Information Commission’s Office (ICO)

3.26. 0 ICO notices were received in Q4.

External Body Requests (EBR), formally referred to as Police Data Requests (PDR)

3.27. 0 new External Body Requests were received in Q4.

Summary of Q4 new requests

FOI	EIR	SAR	IR	ICO
129	57	12	2	0

End of year reporting

25/26 FOI

3.28. In 2025-2026 there was a total of 597 FOI requests received. At year end, 19 requests were live on the register, none were overdue.

25/26 EIR

3.29. In 2025-2026 there was a total of 105 EIR requests received. At year end, 12 requests were live on the register, one was overdue. Of the 105 EIR requests received, 11% were completed by the Information Governance Team on receipt (12).

25/26 SARs

3.30. In 2025-2026 a total of 48 SARs were received. At year end, 9 were live on the register. None were overdue.

25/26 Internal Reviews

3.31. In 2025-2026 a total of 9 requests for Internal Review were received. At year end, none remained open.

25/26 - ICO

3.32. In 25/26, we received 3 ICO letters to include:

- A letter that related to an ICO complaint which was closed at an early stage as the complainant accepted their request being amended to a Subject Access Request;
- A letter that related to a SAR response that was overdue; and
- A letter that contained queries relating to a SAR from 2022



External Body Requests (EBR), formally referred to as Police Data Requests (PDR)

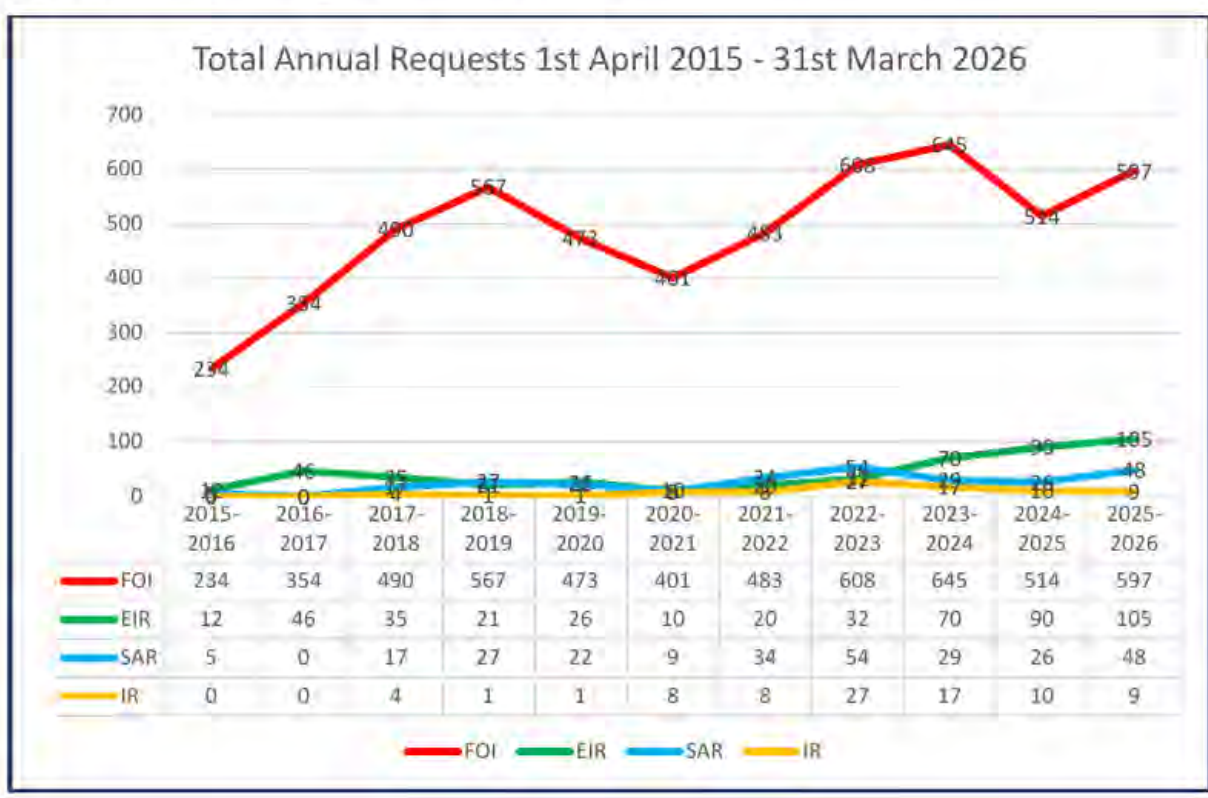
3.33. 13 External Body Requests were received over the course of the 25/26 financial year.

Closure upon Receipt

3.34. Of the 597 FOI requests received in 25/26, 38% were completed by the Information Governance Team upon receipt (222).

3.35. These primarily involved requests relating to processes not carried out by the council, in which case information and guidance were provided to requestors in line with the requirements of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or for information already held by the Information Governance team, or accessible without placing extra burden upon departments (confirmed to be correct at time of processing).

Figure 3: Annual Stats 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2026





Summary of 25/26 requests

New requests.

FOI	EIR	SAR	IR	ICO
597	105	48	9	3

Closed requests.

FOI	EIR	SAR	IR	ICO
603	96	42	9	3

Requests in progress at year end.

FOI	EIR	SAR	IR	ICO
19	12	9	0	0

Overdue requests.

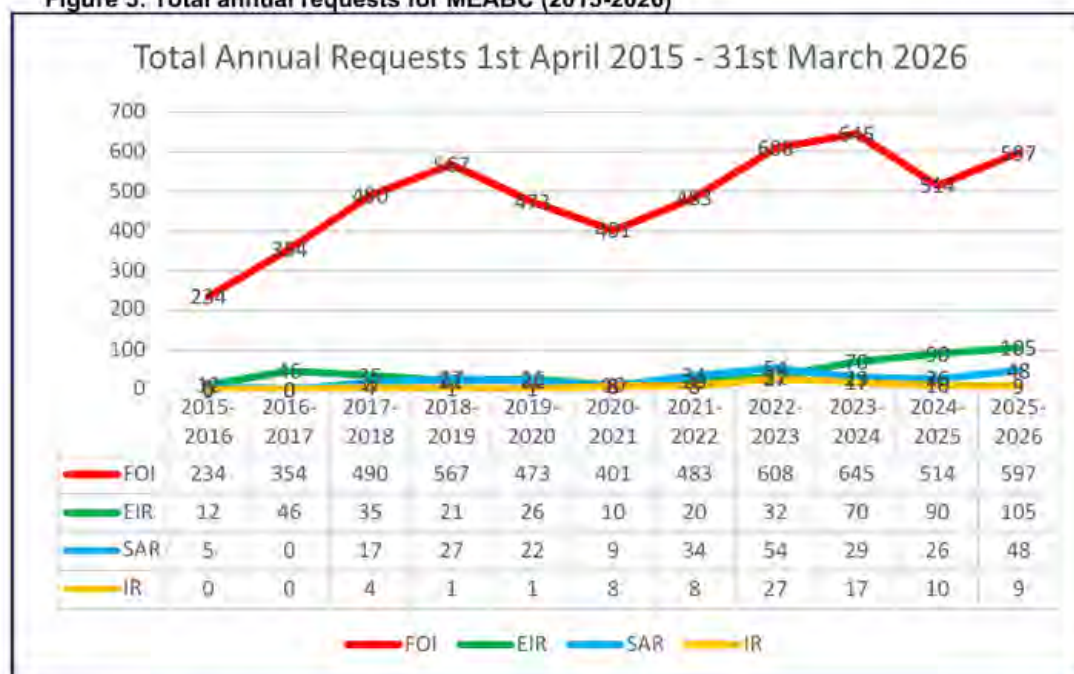
FOI	EIR	SAR	IR	ICO
25	5	9	0	0

Figure 4: Reason for overdue requests.

	FOI	EIR	SAR	IR	ICO
Awaiting information from Dept.	25	4	-	-	-
Information being processed	-	-	-	-	-
Awaiting approval from Management to release	-	1	9	-	-
Awaiting clarification from requestor	-	-	-	-	-
Request initially misdirected by requestor	-	-	-	-	-

Year on Year Comparison

Figure 5: Total annual requests for MEABC (2015-2026)



Pillar 7 – Training and Communication

- 3.36. The pilot year of the in-house curriculum of information governance training sessions concluded at the end of Q3 (modules ran Jan-Dec 2025). New training models are in the final stages of development and planned to commence in summer 26/27.
- 3.37. A skills needs assessment was conducted in April 2026 to inform the development of new modules. It is intended to introduce additional modules to cover DPIAs, records management and the role and responsibilities of an Information Asset Owner, together with an onboarding module that would be delivered during the induction process. A separate briefing paper on the IG training plan will be presented to SMT in the coming weeks.
- 3.38. As part of Council's overall approach to improving its information governance, a focus has been placed on formalising the skill set within the information governance team by pursuing accredited training qualifications.
- 3.39. Each Information Governance Officer has undergone, or is scheduled to complete, training in their relevant area of expertise. As a result the Information Governance team is now resourced with a qualified and accredited Data Protection Officer, Freedom of Information Practitioners, Records Management Practitioners and a Data Protection Practitioner.
- 3.40. The Information Governance team also pursues ad hoc training on a continual basis and has completed training this year, including but not limited to,

information governance compliance, the handling of children's data and AI in the public sector.

Pillar 8 - Governance

- 3.41. The IG team provide quarterly performance reports to SMT and CRPG Committee, as per the requirements of the Information Governance Framework.
- 3.42. Work is ongoing to develop an annual IG assurance statement based upon the standards outlined within the ICO Accountability Framework.
- 3.43. The Information Governance Steering Group (IGSG) comprises officers with key responsibilities in respect of information governance within their service areas. The Group continues to meet monthly to consider the ongoing programme of IG work within the council, together with any risks that arise and provides update reports to SMT.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1 Financial implications (provide details of budget required and if budget has been allocated already or if this is new spend): No financial resource is required in this instance.
- 4.2 Human Resources (are there sufficient staffing resources or will additional resources be required – financial impact will need to be provided): Human resources are provided by the Information Governance team within the CSS Directorate.
- 4.3 Equality Screening: No equality implications have been identified.
- 4.4 Assets: This report creates no demand upon Council assets.
- 4.5 Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: The IG Programme of Work aligns with the Performance pillar of the Corporate Plan 2024-2028. It will help meet the objective of: "Develop our key support services to help us achieve our goals, underpinning and enabling us to operate effectively and meet our core, statutory and regulatory obligations.
- 4.6 Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: No rural needs implications or environmental impact have been identified.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 The Information Governance Team will continue to deliver Council's information governance function and drive forward continuous improvement.



6. Recommendation or Decision

The Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee is asked to note the quarterly performance information outlined herein.

7. Appendices / Links

N/A

Council/ Committee:	Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee
Date:	18 May 2026
Report Title:	Public Consultation Briefing
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Siobhan Fisher, Assistant Director – Citizen Focus
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate and Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the public consultations in which Council is involved, namely:
- (a) those where the Council is a stakeholder and submitting a response; and
 - (b) those where the Council is responsible for conducting the consultation.

2. Background

- 2.1 Within the Corporate and Support Services directorate, the Policy, Performance & Partnership team is responsible for managing Council's responsibilities in relation to public consultations.
- 2.2 The primary aim of public consultations in Northern Ireland is to gather public opinions, feedback, and ideas on proposed policies, initiatives, or legislation to ensure decision-making is informed, transparent, and accountable to the needs of citizens and stakeholders.
- 2.3 Public consultations published by the Northern Ireland Executive are centrally recorded by the Policy, Performance & Partnership team and reviewed by the relevant service areas. Draft responses are prepared for consultations relevant to the Council and/or the Borough and are subsequently submitted to the appropriate Committee for consideration and approval by Elected Members.
- 2.4 The role of local government in responding to public consultations encompasses representing community interests, influencing policy development, contributing local knowledge, and ensuring that community needs inform the planning and delivery of local services and development.
- 2.5 The role of local government in conducting public consultations is to promote transparent, inclusive and accountable decision-making processes that are responsive to community needs. Moreover, public consultations must comply

with statutory obligations, including those set out under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 A consultation summary report is attached at Appendix 1. It provides an overview of the consultations to which the Council is responding, including the relevant committees and associated dates, as well as a summary of consultations currently being conducted by the Council for information.
- 3.2 Draft consultation responses prepared by the Corporate and Support Services directorate will be submitted to the Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee at each meeting for review by Elected Members.
- 3.3 There are no draft consultation responses prepared by the Corporate and Support Services directorate requiring approval this month.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1 Responding to relevant public consultations is essential for the Council to publicly affirm its policy positions and to actively pursue the best possible outcomes on behalf of the residents of the Borough.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. The Policy, Performance & Partnership team will present a Public Consultation report to each meeting of the Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee (CRPG).
- 5.2. On approval of Elected Members, Officers will proceed to make submissions on behalf of the Council to the relevant consultations.

6. Recommendation or Decision

It is recommended that Elected Members note the consultation summary report.

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 Consultation Summary Report



Consultation Register Summary Report Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee

18 May 2026

a) Consultations where Council is the stakeholder

Title and Closing Date	Consulting Department/Organisation	Proposed Dept and Committee
Significant Water Management Issues Deadline: 16/06/2026	DAERA	Planning Planning Committee 14/05/2026

b) Consultations being conducted by Council

Title	Consulting Department	Comments/Link to Consultation Documents
None		

Council/Committee:	Corporate Resources Policy and Governance Committee
Date:	18 May 2026
Report Title:	HR & OD Training: Six Monthly Update
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sonia Treacy, OD & Talent Manager
Approver:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director Business Support

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update members on Organisational Development (OD) and Learning & Development (L&D) activity delivered between October 2025 and March 2026 (Q3 and Q4), including progress against the OD & Learning strategic priorities.

2. Background

- 2.1. A new draft Organisational Development and Learning Strategy has been developed which is currently being consulted on with the Council's recognised Trade Unions. The new strategy will ensure that corporate organisational development and training support the Council's strategic objectives. It will include a new management development programme and aims to support both staff and line managers.
- 2.2. This report provides an update on the organisational development and training which was undertaken during the second half of 2025-26 for employees. Member development is reported separately.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

3.1. Key statistics

At a high-level:

- 2,299 individual training records were recorded
- 8,139.42 training hours were delivered across the organisation which represents 10.40 hrs per staff member (based on staff numbers plus agency staff a total of 783)

3.2. A wide range of learning was delivered across:

- Mandatory and statutory compliance
- Operational and technical skills
- Leadership and professional development
- Wellbeing and resilience

Mandatory and Statutory Training

3.3. Mandatory and statutory training continues to provide assurance in key risk areas, including:

- Health & Safety (manual handling, fire awareness, PPE, slips/trips)
- Information Governance:
 - GDPR
 - Data Breaches
 - Data Processing and Sharing
 - Access to Information
- Anti-Bribery and Fraud Prevention
- Equality, Disability and Inclusion training
- Cyber Security Awareness

Operational and Technical Skills Development

3.4. Targeted investment has been made in operational capability, particularly across frontline services skills including:

- Plant and machinery operation (360 Excavator, Dumper, Telescopic Handler)
- HGV Mechanic Upskilling - An investment of £29,999 was made in upskilling the HGV Mechanic Team
- Construction Skills Register (CSR) certification
- Driver training (C1 licence)
- First Aid and Fire Warden training

Leadership and Professional Development

3.5. Work has continued to strengthen management and professional capability:

- Recruitment and Selection training for managers
- Workplace Investigations
- Project Management (APSE programme)
- Digital skills development (including Advanced Excel)
- Core skills: communication, time management and
- Under the new OD and Learning Strategy, a new Management Development Programme is being planned to be implemented during 26-27

Wellbeing, Culture and Workforce Resilience

3.6. Members will be aware that the Council has made employee wellbeing a key priority particularly to help address our high sickness absence rates and has identified the latest management practices in this area such as trauma-informed awareness training for staff.

3.7. The following courses have been delivered:

- Mental Health Awareness
- Stress Awareness and Resilience
- Mindfulness and Managing Anxiety



- 3.8. The Council has also retained its Platinum accreditation for the Charter for Domestic Violence.
- 3.9. Planned courses in this area include:
- Mental Health First Aid training (May 2026 – 19 staff)
 - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) training (September 2026) for frontline and key service areas
 - Mental Health Literacy workshops for Managers
 - Trauma Informed Approach training roll out
 - White Ribbon NI workshops
- 3.10. Members will be aware the Council has developed a new Employee Wellbeing Strategy which will be reported to committee separately.

Organisational Development and Learning Forward Work Plan - update

- 3.11. The following areas of work are being progressed:
- The new **Organisational Development and Learning Strategy** is due to be brought to the new LCNF meeting for approval and will then be brought to CRPG for final approval.
 - **Staff Induction process:** a new streamlined staff induction guide for staff and managers has been developed. It is currently being piloted with a full roll-out planned in June 2026.
 - A new **Learning Management System**, Skillsgate, is currently in pre-launch phase with a soft launch planned for June 2026. This will provide staff and elected members access to numerous courses and training opportunities.
 - A new **Personal Development Review** process has been developed to help support staff development. An updated version following consultation with the trade unions will be brought for approval.
 - A new **Work Experience and Placement policy** has been developed and has been rolled out.
 - The OD and Talent Manager is working with the Health and Safety Manager on the development of a **mandatory training matrix** to help ensure essential training is provided.
 - Work is now underway to develop and implement the Training and Talent & Succession modules of TechOne which will help to support employee development.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications - Delivered within existing budgets with increased efficiency through digital learning, e-tenders and efficient budget management.
- 4.2. Human Resources - Delivery supported by OD & Learning and CSS Support Hub. Sustained volume of activity highlights ongoing dependency on administrative and coordination capacity.

- 4.3. Equality Screening - All L&D activity promotes equality of opportunity. Reasonable adjustments are provided where required with all strategies and policies equality screened.
- 4.4. Assets - Council facilities utilised for in-person training alongside digital delivery.
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan - Direct contribution to the Corporate Plan, particularly:
 - Workforce capability
 - Service performance
 - Organisational effectiveness
- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact - No impact identified

5. Proposed Way Forward

5.1. In Progress

- OD & Learning Strategy rollout
- Mental Health First Aid (May 2026)
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) training (September 2026)
- Trauma Informed Approach training roll-out
- Mental Health Literacy for Managers (Mindful Manager and Compassionate Conversations) (June 2026)

5.2. Next Steps

- Launch Skill gate (May 2026)
- Skillgate implementation and active promotion
- Increased use of e-learning
- Further develop and implement Year 1 OD & Learning Strategy
- Implement revised PDR framework
- Plan, procure and roll out the Management Development Programme
- Expand and develop wellbeing and mental health training in collaboration with the Wellbeing Strategy
- Planning, migration and implementation of the Training, Succession and Talent TECH1 modules

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. The Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee is asked to note the update on Organisational Development (OD) and Learning & Development (L&D) activity delivered between October 2025 and March 2026 (Q3 and Q4), including progress against the OD & Learning strategic priorities.

7. Appendices / Links

N/A

Council/Committee:	Corporate Resources Policy and Governance Committee
Date:	18 May 2026
Report Title:	Committee Chamber ICT Infrastructure Upgrade
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director - Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director - Corporate & Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report is to outline the proposed approach for a hardware refresh of the IT infrastructure used to deliver Council and Committee meetings.

2. Background

- 2.1. Members will be aware that Council and committee meetings have been experiencing technical failure affecting the running of the meetings.
- 2.2. The Council relies on IT technology to deliver Council and committee meetings, the recording of audio of council and planning meetings, the live streaming of all meetings and the capability of facilitating hybrid meetings using Microsoft teams.
- 2.3. The current hardware was purchased in 2020 following the initial pandemic requirements, at this time it was purchased in line with industry standards and availability. Typically, this uses five separate devices at the top table to manage different parts of the meeting (e.g., microphones, audio recording, live streaming, Teams and Projector Control).
- 2.4. Following the recent failures across different aspects of that setup and due to the criticality of the hardware we would like to proceed with a refresh of the infrastructure and aligning some of the components together to simplify the process for staff. External support is also relied upon at times to keep meetings running.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. The proposal is to refresh and simplify the chamber infrastructure by consolidating services and bringing the main components (webcasting, AV

control and hybrid meeting operation) into a more integrated solution with clearer support and maintenance arrangements.

- 3.2. We could also expand use of our existing supplier for audio recording to incorporate the video streaming and microphone management.
- 3.3. All of this would involve updating webcasting hardware, AV control and distribution, modern PTZ (pan tilt zoom) cameras and optional enhancements such as a Microsoft Teams Room device and an additional public gallery screen to allow easier in room management of the meetings.
- 3.4. The suppliers of the microphone system have advised the Council that the hardware does not need replaced however the software may need to be. The ICT team will look into this. The microphones have a voting functionality if members wished to avail of this.

Considerations include:

- 3.5. **Business continuity and reputational risk:** outages interrupt formal proceedings, impact public access and can lead to delayed decisions and repeat meetings.
- 3.6. **Complexity and single points of failure:** multiple devices, interfaces and cabling increase the likelihood of faults and extend recovery time when issues occur.
- 3.7. **Resilience:** a more simplified set-up is intended to reduce dependence on specialist knowledge and external support during live meetings.
- 3.8. **Supportability and maintenance:** moving to a clearer support model (including remote support and planned maintenance) should improve reliability and response times.
- 3.9. **Accessibility and transparency:** the proposed webcasting platform provides features such as transcripts/subtitles and accessibility compliance, supporting statutory expectations.

Options

Officers have considered the following options and plan to implement option Manage risk

- 3.10. We have already changed how we prepare the meeting room on the day of meetings to have additional checks on those critical services and devices. If we do nothing we could manage the risk further.

Minimal refresh of end-of-life devices

- 3.11. We would re-cable the current setup and upgrade the two teams' controllers, we would have the option to move to other web streaming services such as YouTube however that continues to create additional points of failure.

Proceed with an integrated refresh (recommended)

- 3.12. This will reduce complexity and improve resilience.

Further Meeting Management Software Improvements

- 3.13. The Democratic Services Team is also looking at meeting management software and will potentially seek to replace or refresh the current method within the next twelve months. Any new software would integrate with the new physical set-up in the Chamber to enable us to further enhance the chamber and meeting management experience in the future.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial Implications: Any recommended changes would be managed within the current ICT Budget. There was capital budget already agreed within 2026/27 for the use on the chamber. It is estimated that initial hardware costs would be £20,000. Any spend will be completed using councils' procurement channels. There is potential for savings to be made with on-site support staff to offset any additional licensing requirements.
- 4.2. Human Resources: The proposal is intended to reduce operational complexity for Democratic Services and ICT staff by simplifying the in-room set-up and reducing the number of separate devices that must be configured and monitored during live meetings. Implementation will require officer time to support a site survey, agree the final design, coordinate installation, undertake acceptance testing and provide basic staff training/hand-over.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: An Equality Screening will be completed in line with Council procedures.
- 4.4. Assets: The proposal includes replacement/refresh of core chamber ICT/AV assets. Any redundant equipment will be handled in line with ICT asset disposal procedures (including secure data wiping where applicable). A full inventory (existing and new) will be maintained following installation and hand-over.
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: Reliable, accessible and transparent Council and Committee meetings support good governance and public confidence. The proposed refresh also supports digital ways of working (including hybrid meetings), improved customer

access to information (webcasting archive), and more resilient internal services through modernised ICT infrastructure.

- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: A Rural Needs Impact Assessment will be completed, where required, in line with Council procedures. It is not anticipated to have a negative rural impact.
- 4.7. Sustainability: A Sustainability Screening will be completed in line with Council procedures.

5. Recommendation or Decision

- 5.1. It is recommended that the Corporate Resources Policy and Governance Committee:
 - notes the need for a refresh of Council Chamber hardware to enable a move to a simplified and more resilient integrated solution and that the Assistant Director of Business Support, the ICT team and Democratic Services will, as a matter of urgency, finalise a specification, procure and award within Council's procedures.

6. Appendices/Links

N/A

Council/Committee:	Corporate Resources Policy and Governance Committee
Date:	18 May 2026
Report Title:	ICT Strategy
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director - Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director - Corporate & Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report is to seek Elected Members' approval on the draft ICT Strategy 2026 - 2029.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Council relies on technology to support service delivery across multiple locations, enable secure and flexible working while protecting sensitive information.
- 2.2. Recent internal planning and assurance activity has highlighted the need to move from reactive ICT delivery to a clearer, prioritized approach that strengthens resilience, governance and value for money.
- 2.3. Members will be aware that the Council's lack of an ICT Strategy was highlighted in an outstanding audit action from an internal audit IT Governance Structure, Service Delivery, and IT Risk Management Review in 2024, commissioned by CSS Management.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

ICT Strategy

- 3.1. The Corporate & Support Services Directorate has undertaken a programme of assurance and needs assessment to understand the Council's current and emerging digital and ICT requirements and the implications for ICT capacity, resilience, cyber risk and future investment priorities. This has included an internally commissioned audit led externally by Deloitte, an Acumen Cyber assessment against the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) and complementary assessments by PwC. Collectively, these findings have informed the development of the ICT

Strategy and confirm the need for a prioritised, governed delivery plan across key technology areas.

3.2. The ICT Strategy 2026 (**Appendix 1**) sets out a structured framework for modernisation across four pillars:

- ICT Infrastructure
- Cyber Security
- Data Driven Decision Making
- Capability & Innovation

3.3. It will be delivered through an annual work programme (**Appendix 2**) aligned to organisational priorities, risk and affordability.

Developing the Council's Digital Agenda

3.4. The development of an ICT Strategy has been progressed in order to ensure that the Council has appropriate governance and structure in relation to IT.

3.5. Work is developing on a new Customer Strategy, which is subject to a separate report to Committee, which will align with the ICT Strategy.

4. General Considerations / Implications

4.1. Financial implications: Delivery of the ICT Strategy will be prioritised within existing ICT revenue and capital allocations through reprioritisation of the current portfolio, tighter control of new demand and decommissioning of redundant systems. Where additional investment is required (for example, cyber security obligations, regulatory compliance or critical infrastructure refresh), funding will be progressed through established processes and will be subject to individual business case approvals.

4.2. Human Resources: No immediate increase in establishment is proposed. However, strengthened governance, assurance activity and portfolio oversight will increase demand on senior ICT capacity. This impact will be monitored during year one and formally reviewed to confirm whether additional specialist resource is required to deliver the strategy and associated cyber certification/CAF improvement plan.

4.3. Equality Screening: Any equality implications have been identified using the Council's screening process attached. (Appendix 3)

4.4. Assets: No direct asset impact

4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan: The ICT Strategy 2026 supports delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan by

strengthening the enabling technology, data and cyber foundations required for effective, efficient and resilient services. In particular along with a wider Digital Strategy, it will improve service continuity, information governance, performance reporting and organizational capability through a controlled prioritization and governance model that aligns all technology investment to agreed priorities, risk appetite and affordability.

- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: The rural needs screening has been completed (Appendix 4)
- 4.7. Data Protection: A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been completed. (Appendix 5)
- 4.8. Sustainability - This draft strategy supports positive short term outcomes for energy use and renewables, climate adaptation and resilience, education and engagement, equity and longer term positive impacts for health and wellbeing. (Appendix 6)

5. Recommendation or Decision

- 5.1. Elected Members are asked to recommend that Council:
 - Approves the ICT Strategy 2026-2029, including the four strategic pillars (ICT Infrastructure, Cyber Security, Data Driven Decision Making, and Capability & Innovation) and the proposed governance and annual delivery approach.

6. Appendices/Links

- Appendix 1 – ICT Strategy 2026-2029
- Appendix 2 – ICT Workplan Year One
- Appendix 3 – Equality Screening
- Appendix 4 – Rural Needs Impact Assessment
- Appendix 5 – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- Appendix 6 – Sustainability Screening

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

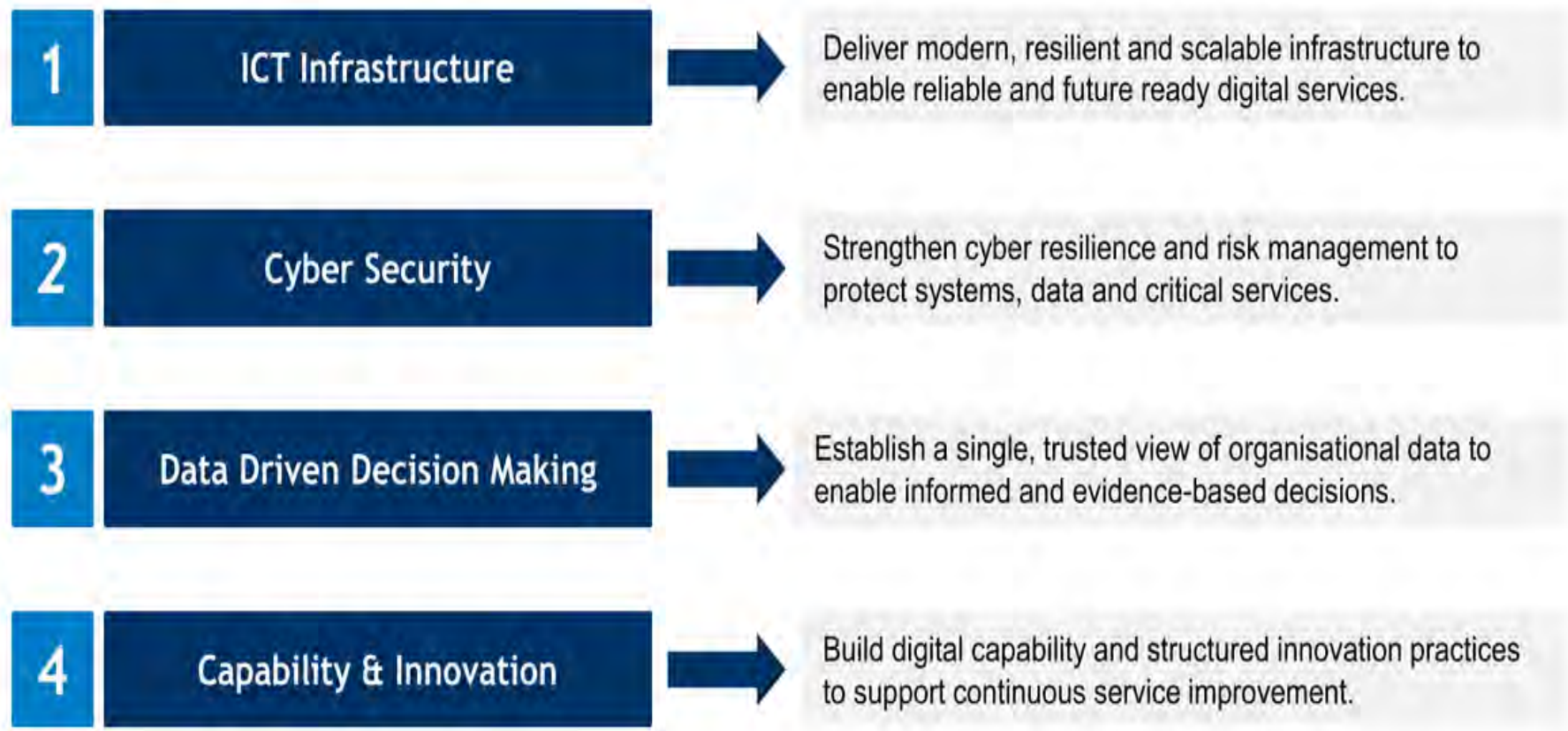
ICT Strategy *2026 to 2029*

Mission Statement

*To provide reliable, secure and efficient
ICT infrastructure that supports the
Council's goals, enhances service delivery
and promotes innovation.*

ICT Strategy Pillars

This strategy focuses on four priority areas that will modernise the Council's technology environment and enable sustainable digital transformation.





1: ICT Infrastructure

Context

The Council operates across multiple locations with a growing demand for reliable digital services and flexible working. Much of the existing infrastructure requires ongoing modernisation to remain secure, resilient and fit for purpose.

Strategic Intent

To support a growing and increasingly distributed workforce, the Council will establish a resilient, secure and scalable ICT infrastructure as the foundation for all digital services.

Over the next planning period, we will standardise the hardware estate, modernise connectivity and strengthen data centre resilience to ensure consistent performance, high availability and long-term sustainability.

Key Outcomes

- Maintain network availability of at least 99.9% across core services
- Standardise and refresh hardware on a five-year lifecycle
- Operate a resilient and secure data centre environment
- Deliver ICT support aligned to a defined internal SLA with performance reporting
- Enable secure remote and mobile working across all council locations

Key Initiatives

- Review and replace critical server and storage assets where required
- Expand immutable backup storage to strengthen resilience against cyber threats
- Expand and secure Wi Fi coverage across council offices, public buildings and key sites
- Replace edge network switches and strengthen internal technical capability through training
- Implement modern workplace tools to support hybrid and agile working



2: Cyber Security

Context Cyber threats to public authorities continue to increase in frequency and sophistication. As a custodian of sensitive data and critical services, the Council must maintain strong defences and organisational resilience.

Strategic Intent Cyber security will be treated as a critical enabler of service continuity, public trust and organisational resilience.
The Council will invest in modern security tooling, structured governance and regular resilience testing to protect systems, data and citizens.

- Key Outcomes**
- Achieve a recognised cyber security certification within 24 months
 - Build a strong cyber aware culture across the organisation
 - Strengthen incident detection, containment and response capabilities through tested processes
 - Maintain and regularly test business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements
 - Embed secure by default principles into all digital initiatives
 - Enforce strong ICT governance and compliance controls

- Key Initiatives**
- Deliver a structured 24-month plan to achieve recognised cyber certification
 - Provide and measure targeted cyber security awareness training and exercises
 - Deploy a SIEM capability to enable continuous threat monitoring and faster incident response
 - Implement a structured vulnerability management programme
 - Strengthen authentication controls, including multi factor authentication where appropriate



3: Data Driven Decision Making

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Context

The Council operates a range of systems that hold valuable information, much of which remains fragmented across departments. This limits visibility, slows reporting and reduces the ability to use data strategically. To improve performance, transparency and efficiency, information must be better integrated, governed and accessible.

Strategic Intent

To enable evidence-based decision making and responsible AI adoption, the Council will strengthen data governance, integrate core systems and create a single trusted view of key organisational data.

By modernising our data architecture and reporting capabilities, we will improve performance monitoring, increase operational efficiency and support strategic planning.

Key Outcomes

- Integrate priority systems to establish a single source of truth for core datasets
- Strengthen data governance, ownership and quality controls
- Ensure data is stored securely and flows consistently between systems to reduce duplication
- Provide accessible, role-based management reporting and corporate dashboards
- Establish the technical and governance foundations required for safe and compliant use of AI

Key Initiatives

- Expand the ERP system to support additional service areas where appropriate
- Rationalise and secure the storage architecture for council data
- Implement a secure cloud-based document management solution
- Train staff in modern reporting tools and dashboard development



4: Capability and Innovation

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Context

Technology continues to evolve rapidly, requiring ongoing investment in people, skills and culture. To maximise the value of digital services and sustain improvement, the Council must strengthen digital capability, modernise ways of working and create space for structured innovation.

Strategic Intent

Sustainable digital transformation depends on workforce capability, leadership and culture.

The Council will invest in digital skills, modern ways of working and structured innovation to ensure services continue to evolve, improve productivity and respond confidently to future challenges.

Key Outcomes

- Strengthen digital capability and confidence across all departments
- Ensure the ICT team has the expertise required to support emerging and enterprise technologies
- Increase productivity through process simplification, automation and reduction of manual tasks
- Create structured pathways for staff to propose, test and adopt digital ideas
- Embed controlled experimentation and pilot activity into service planning

Key Initiatives

- Deliver a council-wide digital skills development programme
- Establish an internal ICT forum or innovation group to explore and prioritise new ideas
- Safely pilot AI assisted workflows in targeted service areas
- Expand mobile working capabilities to reduce reliance on paper-based processes
- Modernise staff induction and digital onboarding
- Establish a cross-council ICT governance & decision panel

Delivering the ICT Strategy

This strategy will be delivered through a structured annual work-planning and reporting cycle aligned to the four strategic pillars.

Each year, ICT Team will:



Review performance, risks and organisational priorities



Identify and prioritise initiatives under each pillar



Align plans to available budget and resource capacity



Agree and approve a prioritised annual workplan



Monitor delivery and report progress quarterly

The annual workplan will be reviewed regularly and adjusted where required to respond to emerging risks, funding changes and organisational priorities

Measures of Success

Success will be measured through a balanced set of performance, resilience and capability indicators aligned to each strategic pillar.



ICT Infrastructure

Cyber Security

Data Driven Decision Making

Capability & Innovation

- Network availability maintained at or above 99.9%
- Reduction in unplanned outages
- Percentage of hardware estate within lifecycle standards

- Achievement of recognised cyber security cert
- % of staff completing annual cyber training
- Time to detect and respond to priority incidents

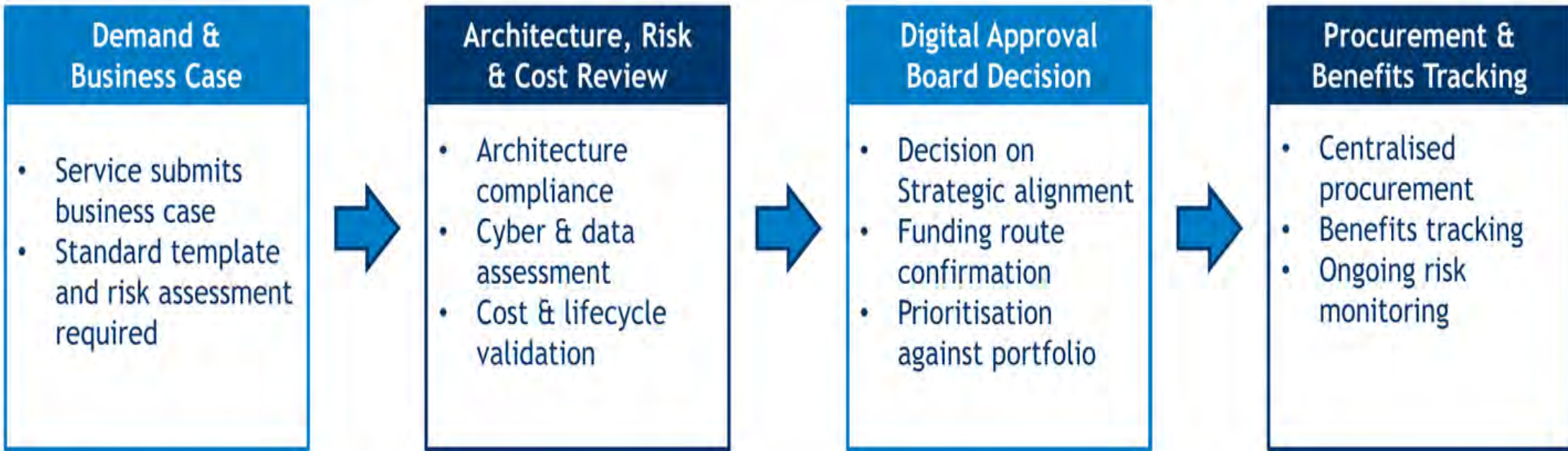
- Number of priority systems integrated
- Adoption of corporate dashboards across directorates
- Reduction in manual reporting effort

- Participation in digital skills programme
- Number of structured pilots delivered annually
- Measurable productivity improvements in selected services

Governance Process

We will implement a controlled, transparent and enforceable governance model that ensures all technology investment aligns to strategy, risk appetite and affordability.

Proposed Structure:



The Digital Approval Board will have formal authority over all technology spend above an agreed threshold. No procurement will proceed without approval. Exceptions will require documented executive sign off.

Budget

Delivery will be prioritised within existing allocations, with additional funding sought only where risk or strategic necessity demands.

Core Delivery

Delivered within existing ICT revenue and capital through:

- Reprioritisation of the current portfolio
- Tighter control of new demand
- Decommissioning of redundant systems

Additional Investment

Additional investment may be required in areas such as:

- Cyber security obligations
- Regulatory compliance
- Critical infrastructure refresh

Funding routes:

- Corporate capital processes
- External grants
- Reallocation from lower priority activity

Resource Impact

- No immediate increase in establishment is proposed
- Strengthened governance and portfolio oversight will increase demand on senior ICT capacity
- This impact will be monitored and formally reviewed after year one

Summary

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This strategy establishes a formal governance and delivery framework for ICT across the Council for 2026 to 2029.

Over the next three years, the Council will:

- Introduce **enforceable approval controls** over all significant technology investment
- Operate a **structured annual planning and prioritisation cycle** aligned to risk and affordability
- **Track measurable performance and resilience** indicators across all four strategic pillars
- **Strengthen cyber, infrastructure and data** capability within a controlled and accountable framework

This represents a shift from reactive ICT management to structured, prioritised and performance monitored digital delivery.

Delivery will be phased and reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with organisational priorities and available resources.



ICT STRATEGY 2026 – 2029

YEAR ONE PLAN

April 2026 – March 2027

Pillar 1: ICT Infrastructure

Project	Brief	Status
3 Additional Networked Locations	<p>Some frontline staff currently work in locations without a connection to the corporate network, limiting access to essential systems such as Absence Management. This project will establish full MEA network infrastructure in three identified sites, Victoria Cemetery Carrickfergus, Greenland Cemetery Larne and Ballee Cemetery Ballymena.</p> <p>We will provide secure LAN connectivity along with appropriate network hardware, telephony, and staff kiosk access.</p>	
Server and Storage Replacement	<p>The Council's current server and storage hardware is over six years old and continues to host 17 virtual servers, including the corporate file system. Replacement is required to maintain performance, resilience and capacity. This will also ensure the Council has a reliable and scalable infrastructure platform for the next five years.</p>	
Wi-Fi Expansion	<p>We will survey all current locations Wi-Fi provision with the intent of ensuring that as a minimum,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guarantee all meeting rooms have sufficient Wi-Fi - Validate all Wi-Fi is correctly configured - Establish a clear Terms and Conditions for Guest Wi-Fi - Simplify the Guest Wi-Fi method - Ensure Wi-Fi in staff office locations is safe and secure <p>Following this baseline review, we will expand Wi-Fi into additional public and staff areas to support wider operational and service needs.</p>	
Core Switch Replacement	<p>The core switch in the Council's data centre is critical to day-to-day operations. The current Cisco switch was introduced in 2015 and no longer provides the modern monitoring and reporting capabilities needed to support effective incident detection and response.</p> <p>We will replace it with a new industry-standard core switch and upskill key members of the ICT team to manage and support the platform going forward.</p>	

Pillar 2: Cyber Security

Project	Brief	Status
Device Compliance	<p>ICT will implement a device compliance programme to ensure that only devices meeting defined security standards can access Council data and services. This will include defining compliance baselines, enrolling devices into central device management and enforcing access controls to reduce the risk of unauthorised, unmanaged, or non-compliant devices connecting to Council systems.</p>	
Cyber Training and Awareness	<p>Building cyber resilience across the organisation requires staff to have a clear understanding of current threats and their role in protecting council systems and data.</p> <p>Throughout the year we will deliver a structured programme of cyber training and awareness for all ICT personnel, focusing on core security principles, threat-detection skills, secure configuration practices and incident response readiness.</p> <p>This will include formal training, practical exercises and ongoing awareness activity to ensure staff remain confident, capable, and aligned with the standards required to support the Council's Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF).</p>	
Create Spec for a SIEM	<p>A key requirement of the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) is improving the Council's ability to detect, analyse, and respond to cyber events. A Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solution brings together log data from across the ICT estate to provide centralised monitoring, threat detection, compliance reporting, and incident investigation capability.</p> <p>During the year, ICT will research available SIEM technologies, assess suitability against MEA's infrastructure and develop a detailed specification that outlines functional requirements, resource implications and integration considerations for a future procurement and implementation.</p>	

Pillar 3: Data Driven Decision Making

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Project	Brief	Status
ERP Expansion to include HR	<p>With payroll scheduled to go live in April 2026, we will maintain momentum by expanding the ERP programme to include the HR module, covering recruitment, talent management, and succession planning.</p> <p>Alongside this, we will progress further ERP enhancements across Procurement, Inventory, Forms and Health and Safety to strengthen digital processes and streamline organisational workflows.</p>	
Review of MEA SharePoint Storage	<p>To support the longer-term plan of migrating all Council files to SharePoint, we will undertake a comprehensive review of the current SharePoint environment. This will assess existing site structures, storage usage, permissions and data ownership to identify gaps, duplication, or inefficiencies.</p> <p>As part of this preparation, we will also evaluate the need for strengthened Microsoft Teams governance to prevent unnecessary site creation and ensure new sites align with an agreed information architecture. The outcome of this review will provide a clear roadmap for preparing SharePoint to host all corporate file storage in a controlled, secure and scalable way.</p>	
Develop use of reporting tools	<p>To support the creation of modern, board-ready dashboards and data insights, we will begin developing internal capability in reporting and analytics tools, including Microsoft Power BI.</p> <p>As Power BI is not currently used within the Council, this project will focus on upskilling staff, establishing reporting standards and building the foundation required to deliver consistent, high-quality management and performance reporting in future years.</p>	

Pillar 4: Capability and Innovation

Project	Brief	Status
Establish an Internal ICT Forum	<p>To strengthen collaboration and encourage innovation across the organisation, we will establish an Internal ICT Forum to act as a structured sounding board for staff and departments. The Forum will provide a space for services to bring forward ideas, challenges and improvement opportunities, while also enabling ICT to share key updates, planned changes and strategic priorities.</p> <p>Before launching the Forum, ICT will develop a clear governance framework to ensure that ideas, questions and service requests can be received, assessed and responded to consistently.</p> <p>This will support greater transparency, earlier engagement, and a more consistent approach to shaping digital and technology initiatives across the Council.</p>	
AI Policy	<p>To support the safe and responsible adoption of Artificial Intelligence across the Council, we will develop a clear AI Policy that sets out how staff can use emerging AI tools appropriately and securely. This work will begin by identifying suitable organisational use cases, assessing risks and defining the controls required to ensure compliance with data protection, security and ethical standards.</p> <p>The resulting policy will provide practical guidance for staff, establish governance for AI-related activity and create a structured pathway for evaluating and implementing future AI opportunities.</p>	
Expand mobile working capabilities	<p>To improve flexibility and support frontline services, we will review and enhance the Council's mobile working capabilities. This will involve assessing current devices, connectivity and applications used by mobile and site-based staff and identifying opportunities to streamline processes and provide more suitable equipment.</p> <p>The aim is to ensure staff can access the systems and information they need while working remotely or on the move, improving efficiency, accuracy and overall service delivery.</p>	

Section 75 Equality Screening

Part 1	Policy Scoping
Part 2	Screening Questions
Part 3	Screening Decision
Part 4	Monitoring
Part 5	Approval and Authorisation

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Part 1: Information about the policy

Information about the policy	
Name of policy	ICT Strategy.
Is this an existing, revised or new policy?	New Strategy.
What is it trying to achieve? (<i>intended aims/outcomes</i>)	ICT Strategy for 2026 - 2029 (3 years). Mission: to provide reliable, secure and efficient ICT infrastructure that supports the Councils goals, enhances service delivery and promotes innovation. The strategy is structured around four pillars: (1) ICT Infrastructure; (2) Cyber Security; (3) Data Driven Decision Making; and (4) Capability & Innovation.

<p>Are there any section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit for the intended policy? <i>If so, explain how.</i></p>	<p>The strategy will benefit all Section 75 categories by ensuring ICT infrastructure is inclusive, accessible and user friendly.</p>
<p>Policy Lead Officer <i>(who initiated or wrote the policy)</i></p>	<p>ICT Manager.</p>
<p>Who owns/implements the policy?</p>	<p>ICT Manager.</p>
<p>Implementation factors</p>	
<p>Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? No</p> <p>If yes, are they <i>(please tick as appropriate)</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> financial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> legislative <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify _____</p>	
<p>Main stakeholders affected</p>	
<p>Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? <i>(please tick as appropriate)</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users <input type="checkbox"/> Other public sector organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/community/trade unions <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p>	
<p>Other policies with a bearing on this policy</p>	
<p>Relevant policies/strategies likely to bear on the ICT Strategy include (where applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan (Council-wide) • Information Governance (Data Protection) • Cyber Security / ICT Acceptable Use / Access Control policies • Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans • Procurement policies • Records Management and retention schedules • HR policies relating to flexible / hybrid working and staff capability development <p>These sit within Corporate Services (e.g., Information Governance, HR, Procurement) with ICT accountable for ICT-specific policy and technical implementation.</p>	

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to signpost to S75 data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information																		
Religious belief	<p><u>2021 Census</u></p> <p>Protestant and other Christian religions comprise the majority of citizens within MEA Borough at 58% compared to 17% Catholic respectively.</p> <p>Citizens with a non-Christian belief comprise 1% of the Borough and citizens without a religion is represented by 24% of the Borough.</p>																		
Political opinion	<p><u>Local Government Elections - May 2023</u></p> <p>The political opinion within MEA Borough is broken down as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 1137 1027 1585"> <thead> <tr> <th>Party</th> <th>MEA Borough (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>DUP</td> <td>30.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UUP</td> <td>17.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alliance</td> <td>18.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TUV</td> <td>15.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sinn Fein</td> <td>9.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SDLP</td> <td>2.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>0.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Others</td> <td>4.7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Party	MEA Borough (%)	DUP	30.9	UUP	17.3	Alliance	18.9	TUV	15.9	Sinn Fein	9.3	SDLP	2.0	Green	0.9	Others	4.7
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Others	4.7																		
Racial group	<p><u>2021 Census</u></p> <p>The racial breakdown within MEA Borough is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 1809 1027 1977"> <thead> <tr> <th>NI Census 2021</th> <th>MEA Borough (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>97.78</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other/None recorded</td> <td>2.22</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	NI Census 2021	MEA Borough (%)	White	97.78	Other/None recorded	2.22												
NI Census 2021	MEA Borough (%)																		
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Age	<p><u>2021 Census</u></p> <p>The largest age range in MEA Borough is 40-64 at 34% followed by citizens aged between 15 and 39 at 29%.</p> <p>Over 65s make up 20% with those aged 0-14 comprise 17% of the Borough.</p>														
Marital status	<p><u>2021 Census</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="438 622 1029 958"> <thead> <tr> <th>NI Census 2021</th> <th>MEA Borough (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>33.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Married</td> <td>49.15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Civil Partnership</td> <td>0.16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Separated</td> <td>3.53</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Divorced</td> <td>6.83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Widowed</td> <td>6.91</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The number of residents who are single, in a civil partnership or divorced has risen since the 2011 Census.</p>	NI Census 2021	MEA Borough (%)	Single	33.43	Married	49.15	Civil Partnership	0.16	Separated	3.53	Divorced	6.83	Widowed	6.91
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Other Sexual orientation	0.13														
Prefer not to say	4.21														
Not stated	3.19														
Men and women generally	<p><u>2021 Census</u></p> <p>The population of the Borough is 49% male and 51% female.</p>														
Disability	<p><u>2021 Census</u></p> <p>There are 138,994 residents within Mid and East Antrim and 25% live with a limiting long term health problem or disability. However, the number of households affected by a resident or residents with a limiting long term health problem or disability totals 45% of the 58,283 households within the Borough.</p>														

	<p>Therefore, nearly half the number of households in Mid and East Antrim are affected by one of the 50,121 limiting long term health problems or disability recorded for the area.</p>								
<p>Dependants</p>	<p>2021 Census</p> <p>27.07% of MEABC households have 1 or more dependant children. This has fallen from 32.14% recorded in the 2011 census. The age breakdown of the dependant children is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="437 506 858 703"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="437 506 587 584">Age</th> <th data-bbox="587 506 858 584">MEA Borough (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="437 584 587 624">0-4</td> <td data-bbox="587 584 858 624">9.65</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="437 624 587 665">5-11</td> <td data-bbox="587 624 858 665">9.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="437 665 587 703">12-18</td> <td data-bbox="587 665 858 703">8.03</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The majority of children within households with dependant children are aged between 0 and 4.</p>	Age	MEA Borough (%)	0-4	9.65	5-11	9.39	12-18	8.03
Age	MEA Borough (%)								
0-4	9.65								
5-11	9.39								
12-18	8.03								

If you do not have enough data to tell you about potential or actual impacts you may need to conduct a pre-consultation to generate more data and to distinguish what groups are potentially affected by your policy.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Section 75 category	Details needs, experiences and priorities
Religious belief	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals of different religious beliefs.
Political opinion	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals of different political opinion.
Racial group	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals of different racial group.
Age	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals of different age groups.
Marital status	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals based on marital status.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals based on sexual orientation.
Men and women generally	There is no evidence of differing needs, experiences or priorities for individuals based on gender.
Disability	Disabled staff may require additional support to access and understand the strategy and its components.
Dependants	Staff with caring responsibilities may need greater flexibility in their working arrangements, and the strategy should accommodate this.

Part 2. Screening questions

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Positive major Positive minor None Negative major Negative minor
Religious belief	No differential impact anticipated. The strategy focuses on internal ICT capabilities, infrastructure resilience and governance; it does not change eligibility for services or access based on religious belief.	None
Political opinion	No differential impact anticipated. The strategy is organisation-wide and applies consistently irrespective of political opinion.	None
Racial group	No differential impact anticipated. The strategy's purpose is to strengthen ICT resilience, security and data capability across the Council; it does not introduce different treatment by racial group.	None
Age	No differential impact anticipated. ICT services and controls (e.g., modern workplace tools, cybersecurity training) will apply to all staff; any training will be offered in an inclusive way to support different experience levels.	None
Marital status	No differential impact anticipated. Strategy relates to ICT capability and governance and does not affect staff differently based on marital status.	None
Sexual orientation	No differential impact anticipated. Strategy applies uniformly; no changes to services or employment terms linked to sexual orientation.	None
Men and women generally	No differential impact anticipated. Strategy applies to all staff equally; governance, infrastructure and cyber controls are role-	None

	based and business-need driven rather than gender-based.	
Disability	No adverse differential impact anticipated. Implementation will include accessibility and inclusive design (e.g., accessible digital tools, appropriate assistive technology support, accessible training materials) to ensure disabled staff are not disadvantaged.	None
Dependants	No differential impact anticipated. Hybrid/remote working enablement and modern workplace tooling may support staff with caring responsibilities; however, the strategy does not change HR policy and will be implemented consistently.	None
2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious Belief		No specific additional opportunities identified beyond universal application. .
Political opinion		No specific additional opportunities identified beyond universal application.
Racial group		No specific additional opportunities identified beyond universal application.
Age	Yes - inclusive training and support can help reduce digital confidence gaps and ensure staff of all ages can use modern workplace tools.	Not applicable.
Marital Status		No specific additional opportunities identified beyond universal application.

Sexual Orientation		No specific additional opportunities identified beyond universal application.
Men and women generally		No specific additional opportunities identified beyond universal application.
Disability	Yes - ensure accessibility is built into modern workplace tools, training materials and service design; provide appropriate assistive technology support as part of device standards and support processes.	Not applicable.
Dependents	Yes - modern workplace tools and secure remote working can support flexible working for staff.	Not applicable.

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Positive major Positive minor None Negative major Negative minor
Religious belief	No impact anticipated on good relations. The strategy is focused on internal ICT operating model, security and infrastructure and does not relate to community relations.	None
Political opinion	No impact anticipated on good relations. The strategy applies consistently across the organisation and is unrelated to political opinion.	None
Racial group	No impact anticipated on good relations. The strategy relates to ICT controls and capability and does not affect relationships between racial groups.	None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons

<p>Religious belief</p>		<p>No, Strategy is internally focused and does not address community relations; no differential good relations impact anticipated.</p>
<p>Political Opinion</p>		<p>No, Strategy is internally focused ICT strategy with no anticipated good relations impact.</p>
<p>Racial Group</p>		<p>No, Strategy is internally focused ICT strategy with no anticipated good relations impact.</p>

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

No potential impacts identified.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

Not applicable.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.
Based on the information considered above, the ICT Strategy is not likely to have a significant impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for any Section 75 category. The strategy sets internal ICT priorities and governance arrangements and is intended to improve reliability, security and efficiency for all staff and service users. An Equality Impact Assessment is therefore not considered necessary at this stage.
If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.
No applicable.
If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.
Not applicable.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?
Not applicable.

If so, give the reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.
Not applicable.

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people’s daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?
If yes, please provide details.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 - 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Equality Screening undertaken by:	
Position/Job Title:	ICT Manager
Department:	ICT, Corporate Services
Date Completed:	17/4/26

Equality Screening approved by:	
Position/Job Title:	Assistant Director - Business Support
Department:	Corporate Services
Date Completed:	28/4/2026

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.



Appendix 4 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

Section 1: Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A.	Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by MEABC that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.
	ICT Strategy 2026 - 2029.

1B.	Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1A above relates to.						
	Developing a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Adopting a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Implementing a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Revising a	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Devising a Public Service	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Delivering a Public Service	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>

1C.	Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1B above.
	Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC) ICT Strategy 2026 - 2029.

1D.	Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.
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The ICT Strategy sets out how ICT will enable MEA to deliver reliable, secure and efficient ICT infrastructure that supports the Councils goals, enhances service delivery and promotes innovation. The strategy is organised around four pillars:

- ICT Infrastructure: modern, resilient and scalable infrastructure to enable reliable, future-ready digital services.
- Cyber Security: stronger cyber resilience and risk management to protect systems, data and critical services.
- Data Driven Decision Making: a single, trusted view of organisational data to support informed decision-making and safe, compliant use of AI.
- Capability & Innovation: improved digital capability, structured innovation and productivity improvements through modern tools and new ways of working.

1E. What definition of 'rural' applies in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

- Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).
- Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).
- A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

Not applicable.

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

Not applicable.

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Not applicable.





Section 2: Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A.	Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?		
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/> If the response is NO GO TO Section 2E

2B.	Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.
<p>The ICT Strategy is intended to improve the resilience, security and effectiveness of the Councils ICT and digital services across all Council locations. People in rural areas are likely to be impacted through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved reliability and availability of ICT services that support customer-facing and internal service delivery (e.g., fewer outages and improved continuity). • Secure remote and mobile working enabling staff to deliver services more flexibly. • Expanded and secured Wi-Fi coverage across Council offices, public buildings and key sites that may be used by rural residents. • Improved information management and reporting (integrated systems, secure document management, dashboards) supporting more consistent service performance monitoring and decision-making affecting all communities, including rural areas. • Stronger cyber security and resilience measures to protect data and maintain continuity of critical services relied upon by residents across the borough. 	

2C.	If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact people in rural areas more or less than people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.
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Not applicable.



2D.	Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Services is likely to primarily impact on.		
Rural Business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Jobs or Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Education or Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Broadband or Mobile Comms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Transport Services or Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Health or Social Care Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deprivation in rural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state): Rural broadband or mobile communications / digital connectivity (indirect impact through Council-enabled digital access and service delivery).			
If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A			

2E	Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.
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Not applicable.



Section 3: Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas.

3A. Has MEABC taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**

3B Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by MEABC to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods of Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources MEABC used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names or organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

Not applicable.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by MEABC?



Not applicable.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by MEABC to identify the social and economic needs of people

No specific rural-needs identification activity was undertaken for this ICT Strategy because it is an enabling/corporate strategy focused on internal ICT infrastructure, cyber security, data governance and workforce capability. It is intended to support service delivery consistently across all Council areas.

The strategy does not introduce service eligibility changes, geographic targeting, or differential service models between rural and urban areas at this stage. Rural considerations will instead be assessed at the point individual projects are defined and approved through the annual work-planning and governance process.

Section 4: Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

In delivering the ICT Strategy, the Council will consider:

- Expansion and security of Wi-Fi and connectivity in Council offices, public buildings and key sites, with attention to coverage and practical access in rural locations.
- Cyber security controls, awareness and incident response to protect services relied on by all residents, including rural communities.
- Data governance, integration and secure document management to improve service quality, reduce duplication and support consistent decision-making across all areas.
- Use of the annual work-planning and reporting cycle to review risks, funding changes and priorities, adjusting delivery where rural impacts or accessibility issues are identified.



Section 5: Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A.	Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?		
Yes	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C

5B.	Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.		
Not applicable. (see Section 5C).			

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES** GO TO Section **6A**

C.	Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.
<p>The ICT Strategy is a corporate enabling strategy focused on ICT infrastructure, cyber security, data governance and workforce capability. No rural-specific social and economic needs were identified for this strategy at the development stage.</p>	

Section 6: Documenting and Recording

6A.	Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by MEABC and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I can confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained, and relevant information compiled

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	
Position/Grade:	ICT Manager.
Department	ICT, Corporate Services.
Date:	17/4/2026

Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	
Position/Grade:	Assistant Director - Business Support
Department:	Corporate Services
Date:	28/4/2026



IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) - SCREENING QUESTIONS

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is a process to help you systematically and comprehensively analyse your personal data processing and help you identify and minimise any data protection risks of a project.

You must do a DPIA before you begin any type of personal data processing that is “likely to result in a high risk.”

This set of screening questions will help you decide whether a DPIA is necessary. Please note, if there is a change to the nature, scope, context or purposes of your processing you will be required to complete this screening template again.

You will be accountable for the screening decisions you make. Therefore, it is critical that you document via “Explanatory Notes” the screening decisions you have made, providing logical reasons regarding whether to do a DPIA or not.

Section A - Project Details	
Title of Project/Plan/Policy	ICT Strategy 2026 - 2029
Is this an existing, revised or new project?	New
<p>What is the purpose of the project, plan or policy? <i>e.g. intended aims/outcomes</i> Include any relevant background information here</p>	<p>The ICT Strategy sets out the Councils approach to modernising its technology environment and enabling sustainable digital transformation. Its mission is to provide reliable, secure and efficient ICT infrastructure that supports the Councils goals, enhances service delivery, and promotes innovation.</p> <p>The strategy is structured around four strategic pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Infrastructure - deliver modern, resilient and scalable infrastructure to enable reliable and future-ready digital services (including standardising and refreshing hardware, improving connectivity, strengthening data centre resilience, and enhancing backup and WiFi coverage). • Cyber Security -,strengthen cyber resilience and risk management to

	<p>protect systems, data and critical services (including modern security tooling, governance, security awareness, incident response capability, and progression towards a recognised cyber security certification within 24 months).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Driven Decision Making - establish a single trusted view of organisational data to enable informed and evidence-based decisions (including integration of priority systems, improved data governance and quality, rationalised secure storage, and improved reporting and dashboards). • Capability & Innovation - build digital capability and structured innovation practices to support continuous service improvement (including digital skills development, structured pilots, modern onboarding, and governance/decision panels).
Which MEABC Department owns or holds responsibility for this project, plan or policy?	ICT

Section B - Personal Data		
Does this project, plan or policy involve the processing of personal data?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<p>If the answer to this question is 'No', you do not need to conduct a DPIA.</p> <p>Please proceed straight to Section E.</p> <p>Rationale: This document is a high-level ICT strategy and governance/delivery framework. It does not itself introduce, change, or define any specific personal data processing activity. Any initiatives delivered under the strategy that involve personal data must be screened separately and, where applicable, a DPIA completed before processing begins.</p> <p>If the answer to this question is 'Yes', please proceed to Section C.</p>		

Section C: Questions 1 - 13
<i>Examples are for guidance only and should not be considered exhaustive or definitive.</i>

For questions 1 to 13, a DPIA **MUST** be carried out if the answer is **YES**. Your documentation should explain very clearly whether there are any indicators that a type of processing will likely result in ‘high risk’.

High risk means a risk that could result in a significant impact on individuals’ rights and freedoms.

For some of these questions, the answer will only be “yes” if the processing occurs in combination with criteria (see questions 14 to 22) in the Article 29 Data Protection Working Party’s European Guidelines.

Screening Questions - <u>Will the project:</u>		Yes/No	Explanatory Notes
1	Use systematic and extensive profiling or automated decision-making to make significant decisions about people? <i>e.g. using technology to analyse personal data or make decisions without human involvement.</i>		
2	Process special category data or criminal offence data on a large scale? <i>e.g. health, medical, racial/ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, trade union or political views.</i>		
3	Systematically monitor a publicly accessible place on a large scale? <i>e.g. CCTV.</i>		
4	Use innovative technologies or the novel application of existing technologies? <i>e.g. AI-driven systems, or repurposing data for new functions.</i> <i>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</i>		
5	Use profiling, automated decision-making or special category data to help make decisions on someone’s access to a product, service, opportunity or benefit? <i>e.g. use of computer systems to automatically decide, or by using sensitive data to decide whether someone can get access to a service provided by Council.</i>		
6	Carry out profiling on a large scale? <i>Profiling is using personal data to assess or predict things about a person, e.g. job performance, financial situation, interests, reliability, behaviour, location, or movements.</i> <i>To decide what constitutes 'large scale' you should consider and include information on factors such as:</i> <i>- number of individuals concerned</i> <i>- volume of data</i>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - variety of data - duration of processing - geographical extent of processing. <p>Also see examples in ICO's guidance of processing/ projects they consider to be large scale.</p>		
7	<p>Process biometric data?</p> <p>e.g. Fingerprints, facial/voice recognition.</p> <p>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</p>		
8	<p>Process genetic data?</p> <p>e.g. DNA or data from ancestry/genetic testing</p> <p>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</p>		
9	<p>Combine, compare or match personal data from multiple sources?</p> <p>e.g. proof of life enquiries, receiving information from external organisations.</p>		
10	<p>Process personal data without providing a privacy notice directly to the individual?</p> <p>Signposting to a privacy notice on the website is sufficient to satisfy this requirement.</p> <p>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</p>		
11	<p>Process personal data in a way which involves tracking individuals' online or offline location or behaviour?</p> <p>e.g. are you collecting information about where people go or what they do? [online activity or GPS].</p> <p>(Note: A DPIA is required where this processing is combined with any of the criteria from the European guidelines.)</p>		
12	<p>Process children's personal data for profiling or automated decision-making or for marketing purposes, or offer online services directly to them? e.g. running an online library service for children and using their reading history to suggest new books.</p>		
13	<p>Process personal data which could result in a risk of physical harm in the event of a security breach?</p> <p>e.g. revealing home addresses of people in a protected role.</p>		

Section D:

Article 29 Data Protection Working Party's European Guidelines

When considering if your processing is “likely to result in high risk,” you should consider the [European guidelines](#). These define **nine** criteria of processing operations likely to result in high risk. In most cases, a combination of two factors indicates the “need” for a DPIA. Although this is not a strict rule.

Therefore, if the answer to any of questions 14 to 23 is “yes” a DPIA should be “considered.”

Your documentation should explain very clearly whether there any indicators that a type of processing will likely result in high risk.

Will the project:		Yes/No	Explanatory Notes
14	Involve evaluation or scoring? <i>e.g. a recruitment panel scoring candidates against set criteria.</i>		
15	Involve automated decision-making with legal or similar significant effect? <i>e.g. an automated system decides to assign a fixed penalty notice without human review.</i>		
16	Involve systematic monitoring? <i>e.g. CCTV, use of software to monitor staff emails</i>		
17	Involve sensitive data or data of a highly personal nature? <i>e.g. processing health information or information about neighbour disputes</i>		
18	Involve data processing on a large scale? <i>e.g. electoral roll data for all residents</i>		
19	Involve matching or combining datasets? <i>e.g. matching HR records with payroll data or combining customer data from different platforms, e.g. combining someone's Te Dogs record with their planning portal application.</i>		
20	Involve processing of data concerning vulnerable data subjects? <i>Note: this does not always mean a traditionally considered vulnerability, e.g. staff may be considered to be vulnerable data subjects due to the imbalance of power between employer and employee.</i>		

21	Use innovative technological or organisational solutions? <i>e.g. AI.</i>		
22	Prevent data subjects from exercising a right or using a service or contract? <i>e.g. restricting access to an online application unless identity verification is completed, restricting someone's right of access, etc.</i>		
23	Process personal data which could result in a risk of other forms of harm (e.g. emotional, psychological, financial) in the event of a security breach? <i>e.g. details of a disciplinary investigation or complaint, bank details, etc.</i>		

Section E: Findings		
Does this screening indicate that a DPIA is required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<i>Note: Data Protection legislation and ICO guidance state that you should seek your DPO's advice when you need to do a DPIA. If this box is ticked 'yes', please complete the full Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) template on the P-drive.</i>		
Has a DPIA been recommended?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<i>You may wish to conduct a DPIA even if the screening indicates that one is not required. A DPIA is a useful tool to consider any impacts and/or risks involved in processing personal data.</i>		

Final Comments
<i>Please outline anything you feel relevant to the decision whether to conduct a DPIA or not.</i>
<p><i>On some occasions your project may require the processing of a minimal amount of personal data, e.g. for administrative purposes only. Use this space to outline any such circumstances.</i></p> <p>This screening has been completed for the ICT Strategy as a strategic, high-level policy document. The strategy sets direction and governance for ICT investment and delivery across four pillars (infrastructure, cyber security, data-driven decision making, capability & innovation) but does not, in itself, commence or materially change any personal data processing activity.</p> <p>Where individual workstreams or projects delivered under this strategy involve the processing of personal data (for example, implementation of new systems, integrations, document management solutions, security monitoring tools, or AI-assisted workflows), they must be screened separately at project initiation and a DPIA completed where required, before any processing begins.</p>

DPIA Screening completed by:

Please detail level of Council Officer completing this screening and forward for further sign off

Position:	ICT Manager		
Department:	ICT	Date:	17/04/2026

Information Governance review:

This screening can be reviewed by any member of the Information Governance team

Position:	Information Governance Officer	Date:	17/04/2026
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DPIA Screening Approval:

This should be the Information Asset Owner, which is usually the HoS/AD

Position:	Assistant Director - Business Support		
Department:	Corporate Services	Date:	28/04/2026

Date created

19/04/2026

Lead author

Organisation

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

Your report

ICT Strategy

Our Climate, Environment and Social Assessment has been designed to help make sustainable development more readily understood by examining the everyday work taking place within an organisation.

ICT Strategy

Completed by	Completion time	General result
	1 minutes	

Key

- Long term negative impact
- Short term or limited negative impact
- No known impact
- Short term or limited positive impact
- Long lasting positive impact

Tips & Advice

We've identified several factors in your assessment that could have an impact. Here are some advice and tips.

How will this work impact children and young people and address the UN Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC)?

>



**Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee
Forward Plan**

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 15 June 2026

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Social Value	For noting	Jonathan McGrandle
Performance Improvement Plan 2025/26 Year End Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Fraud Policy & Response Plan	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Notices of Motion Status Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Members Query Presentation	For noting	Sarah Williams
CRPG Terms of Reference	For approval	Sarah Williams
Modern Slavery Transparency Statement	For approval	Sarah Williams
L&D Strategy	For approval	Sarah Williams
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Quarterly Complaints Update	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Customer Strategy	For approval	Siobhan Fisher
Constitution – Annual Update	For approval	Sarah Williams
Conflicts of Interest, Gifts & Hospitality Policy (Employees)	For approval	Sarah Williams
Data Protection Policy	For approval	Sarah Williams
Health & Safety Annual Report	For noting	Steven Bailie

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 3 August 2026

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Sickness Absence Update – Six Monthly Update)	For noting	Sarah Williams
Policy Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Annual Equality Commission NI and DEARA Rural Needs Submissions	For approval	Siobhan Fisher
EDI Update Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Information Governance – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Scrutiny Review of Reception (6 monthly)	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Business Case Policy	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Travel and Subsistence policy	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
IT Cyber Security – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 14 September 2026

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Quarterly Communications Update	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Quarterly Complaints Update	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Performance Improvement Plan – Q1 Update	For approval	Siobhan Fisher
Update on National Pay Awards	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Quarterly Management Accounts – Q1	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
TechOne Programme – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
IT Cyber Security – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 19 October 2026

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Information Governance – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Update on OD & Learning and Development Q1 & Q2	For noting	Sarah Williams
Annual Complaints Report – for Publication on Corporate Website	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Public Consultation Briefing	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
It Cyber Security – Six Monthly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Reserves Policy	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Licences Agreements enacted under Scheme of Delegation April 2026 to September 2026	For noting	Sarah Williams
Debt Write-Off Report	For noting	Michelle Hegarty

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 30 November 2026

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Policy Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Quarterly Communications Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Quarterly Management Accounts – Q2	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Performance Improvement Plan Q2 Update	For approval	Siobhan Fisher
Quarterly Complaints Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Raising Concerns Policy	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Elected Member Development Charter Sub-Committee Minutes	For noting	Sarah Williams
Asset Management Plan	For approval	Siobhan Fisher

Updated List of Outside Bodies	For noting	Sarah Williams
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Planned Agenda Items Next meeting - 18 January 2027

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Performance Improvement s95 Audit Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
EDI Update Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Technology One Programme – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Workplace Charter Domestic Violence – Annual Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Notices of Motion Status Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Sickness Absence – Six Monthly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Amendment to the PQ protocol	For approval	Sarah Williams
Somme Visit	For approval	Sarah Williams

Planned agenda items for next meeting - 23 February 2027

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Performance Improvement Plan Q3 Update	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Treasury Management Annual Outturn Report	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Quarterly Management Accounts Q3	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Update on development of DRAFT Consultation & Engagement Strategy (TBC)	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Information Governance – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Wellbeing Action Plan	For noting	Sarah Williams
Quarterly Complaints Report - Q3: October - December 2025	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Scrutiny Review of Reception - Actions to Date	For noting	Siobhan Fisher

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 12 April 2027

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Policy Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Quarterly Communications Update	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
EDI Update report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
IT Cyber Security – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Bad debt policy	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Pay Award Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Updated NIE Lease	For approval	Sarah Williams
Licences/Agreements enacted under the Scheme of Delegation October 2025 - March 2026	For noting	Sarah Williams
Civic Events Programme 2026-2027	For approval	Sarah Williams
Councillor Development Charter and Elected Member Development	For approval	Sarah Williams
Proposed Sale of Surplus Land at Smyth Crescent, Portglenone		
Proposal to grant a lease of Bentra Golf Facility, Whitehead		
Sale of land at Trostan Avenue, Ballymena to Services Club		

Planned agenda items for next meeting – 17 May 2027

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Information Governance – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Bad Debt Write-Off Report	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Credit Card Policy	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Public Consultation Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
HR & OD Training: Six-Monthly Update Report	For noting	Sarah Williams
ICT Strategy	For approval	Sarah Williams
Committee Chamber ICT Infrastructure Upgrade	For approval	Sarah Williams
TechOne Programme – Quarterly Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Deed of exchange– Ballykeel Community Centre and playing fields	For approval	Steven Bailie/Ryan Black

1. Items to be Programmed

Item
Dual Language Street Naming Policy
HR Policies / Strategic projects / industrial action as required
Health and Safety Policies as required
Staff Survey
Learning and Development Policies as required
Article 55 report – update on progress (with morph into a Workforce report outstanding establishment, retention, Article 55, training)
Publication Scheme
Digital Strategy