



Performance Improvement Plan

2017 - 2018

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**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council



Performance Improvement Plan

2017 - 2018

If you would like a copy of any of our documents in an alternative format, we are happy to provide this service on request.

Contact:

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Introduction

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council was established on 1 April 2015 as part of the programme for local government reform, the most significant change to local government in over 40 years.

The purpose of the reform process is to produce “a thriving, dynamic, local government that creates vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe and sustainable communities that meets the needs of the citizens”, and aims to deliver improved services and long-term cost savings.

For Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, this provides a once in a political lifetime opportunity to do things differently and do different things.

Our focus is always to improve the quality of life for our citizens, and one of the ways Council can deliver this is through the Performance Improvement Plan.

In this Plan, Council has set out an ambitious, yet achievable, set of improvement objectives to be delivered during 2017 - 2018.

We are always keen to hear your views about how we are performing and delivering services and improvements. If you would like to feed back to us, please get in touch at:

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Our Vision

“Mid and East Antrim - Working together to create a better future for all”

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council’s Corporate Plan (2015 - 2019) presents a clear and compelling Vision for our people and place, tying together a number of plans and strategies that will enable us to deliver our Vision, and is closely aligned with our Community Plan.

Our first Community Plan was published on 1 April 2017, bringing together Council’s corporate priorities and the key priorities of all public services across the area to ensure that public money is used to best effect, and in line with citizen need.

Our Strategic Priorities are set out within the Corporate Plan, and to support their delivery, each member of Council’s Operational Management Team has developed a Business Plan which sets out how we will deliver within our allocated resources.

Our Integrated Economic Growth and Development Strategy and Local Development Plan are also key to realising our Strategic Priorities, as both represent opportunities for Council to grow the local economy.

Diagram 1 below outlines how these plans link together:



Strategic Priorities

To deliver our Vision, Council has agreed five integrated Strategic Priorities within our Corporate Plan:



Duty to Improve

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 put in place a framework to support continuous improvement in the delivery of council services.

Improvement in the context of the Act means more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or in the internal effectiveness of the Council.

Improvement for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council focuses on the issues that are important to our citizens and customers. Improvement for us means doing things that will enhance the sustainable quality of life and environment for our citizens, thereby helping us to achieve our Vision of Creating a better future for all.

In addition to the plans and strategies outlined earlier, we will demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement in the delivery of our services through the development and implementation of an annual Performance Improvement Plan.

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 sets out the areas within which Councils must deliver improvement in at least one of these seven improvement areas:

Service Quality

Service Availability

Fairness

Sustainability

Efficiency

Innovation

How we identified our improvement objectives

Mid and East Antrim Community Plan - Priority Themes

The Community Plan for Mid and East Antrim drives and informs our Performance Improvement Plan.

Through an extensive consultation exercise, the Community Plan established three priority areas that our citizens identified as being most important to them and where improvement will have the maximum impact.

These priorities are built around five Themes and a number of Outcomes, as summarised in Diagram 2.



Diagram 2 - Mid and East Antrim Community Plan - Priority Themes

Criteria for Selection of Improvement Projects

Following the annual inspection of our Performance Improvement Plan (2016 - 2017) by the Northern Ireland Audit Office, the following criteria were developed and applied to help Council select the projects for inclusion within the 2017 - 2018 Plan:

1. Will it support the achievement of at least one of the six Community Planning Themes?
2. Will it support delivery of at least one of Council's Strategic Priorities?
3. Will it demonstrate improvement in at least one of the seven improvement areas detailed on page 11?
4. Are Outcomes S.M.A.R.T - (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound)?
5. Are Resources in place or committed - (Budget, Capacity, Leadership, Skills/Knowledge) in order to successfully deliver the project?

On reviewing the improvement areas stipulated within the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Council agreed to prioritise the following five improvement areas for the year 2017 - 2018:

Strategic Effectiveness

Service Quality

Sustainability

Efficiency

Innovation

By reviewing each of the five Improvement Objectives against the above criteria and our priority improvement areas, we believe our Objectives are:

Legitimate

Making a demonstrable contribution to at least one of the improvement areas.

Clear

Setting out the visible improvement that citizens can expect.

Robust

With defined terms of success.

Deliverable

With established links to individual service programmes and budgets.

Demonstrable

Capable of being supported by objective evidence.

Statutory Performance Indicators

In addition to the improvement areas we have identified, the Department for Communities also sets targets for Councils in the functional areas of Planning, Economic Development and Waste. Within each of these areas, a number of Performance Indicators have been set, as follows:

Planning

- The average processing time of major planning applications.
- The average processing time of local planning applications.
- The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.

Economic Development

- Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity.

(Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client led Business Plans under the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's Regional Start Initiative or its successor programmes).

Waste

- The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse).
- The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.
- The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings.

Council will publish its performance results against these indicators on our website:
www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance





Consultation

The specific projects to enable improvement that will support the delivery of our Community Plan outcomes were initially developed through a process of collaboration between the Operational Management Team and Community Planning staff.

The draft objectives were further developed and agreed with the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team before being approved by Council to be consulted upon.

At this stage, we were ready to seek the views of our citizens. we did this by publicly consulting on the draft improvement objectives at a series of Community Planning events across the Borough.

Consultation Process

In developing the Performance Improvement Plan for 2017 – 2018, we undertook the following consultation approach:

- A Desktop Review of the key themes emerging from Community Plan Public Engagement exercises.
- An Operational Management Team Workshop (November 2016).
- An Elected Members and Senior Management Team Workshop (December 2016).
- An 8 week Public Consultation process including:
 - ◊ 3 Public Consultation events in Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus, aligned with consultation on the draft Community Plan.
 - ◊ An on-line Survey on Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's website.
 - ◊ An email to all employees and staff requesting their views via the online survey.

The consultation closed on 31st March 2017.

Consultation Response

In order to support the analysis, the data gleaned from questionnaires completed at the public consultation events was manually input into the online survey. The responses included:

- 12 questionnaires completed at public consultation events
- 29 surveys completed online

When asked ‘*Have we got this Improvement Project right?*’, the following responses were given:

	Improvement Objective	Yes	No	I don't know
1	ACHIEVE - High Performing Culture	87.5%	2.5%	10%
2	Digitally Supported Environmental Innovation Centre	80%	5%	15%
3	Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative	68.3%	2.4%	29.3%
4	Reduction of Food Waste through Healthier Eating - Changing shopping, storing and food preparation behaviours	62.5%	22.5%	15%
5	Deliver Excellence in our Citizen Experience, through Digital Transformation and improved Citizen Engagement and Choice	85%	5%	10%

Consultation Summary

The consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Plan 2017 – 2018 demonstrated significant support for the improvement projects identified, and therefore at the end of the consultation phase, it was recommended that these remain as the basis of the plan.

Comments received indicated that further clarification may be required as to the expected outcomes of the projects and how they relate to the project itself.

In response to this, and other issues raised during the consultation, Council amended the improvement objectives to reflect the suggested recommendations.



Our Improvement Objectives



Improvement Objective 1

To achieve a culture of high performance which will support the provision of first-class frontline services, making a positive impact on the quality of life for all our citizens.

We will do this by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing the work of the cross-functional workforce team ACHIEVE.
Why are we doing this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create a culture of high performance within Council in order to deliver efficient and effective services in line with citizen need. To define Performance, Communication and Engagement processes that support the development of staff at all levels, ensuring we have the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to continually improve customer satisfaction.
We will deliver:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Performance Management Framework, including a process for cascading corporate objectives to individual employee objectives. Communication and Engagement processes to ensure staff are motivated, well-informed and dedicated. Staff working to Core Competencies to enable high performance. Managers who are clear about what good performance looks like and able to have critical conversations in a positive way.
When:	Start: November 2015 Duration: March 2019

How we will measure success

Expected Improvement Outcomes

- Improved Customer Satisfaction levels
- A Performance Management Framework in place to enable continuous improvement and support staff in relation to their personal performance

Community Plan linkage	Strategic Priority linkage	Performance Improvement Area
Good Health and Wellbeing - Our workspaces are for health as well as wealth	Delivering Excellent Services	Strategic Effectiveness
	Developing a High Performing Council	Service Quality
		Efficiency

Improvement Objective 2

Digitally Supported Environmental Innovation Centre to lead the growth and development of new industry sectors in the Mid & East Antrim Borough Council area through the creation of 125 knowledge economy jobs by December 2022.

We will do this by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redeveloping Council owned ECOS centre (Ballymena) as a Digitally Supported Environmental Innovation Centre. Securing an innovative partnership arrangement with Catalyst Inc., formally the Northern Ireland Science Park (NISP), as credible advisors to the knowledge economy and government.
Why are we doing this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist with the long-term development of the economy in Mid & East Antrim by acting as a catalyst for change and enhancing opportunities for wealth creation. To encourage the establishment of environmental focused, digitally supported business and entrepreneurship. To be the Centre of Excellence for start-ups, spin outs and social economy businesses within the environmental sector. To raise awareness and promote STEM activities in schools, and Further and Higher Education sectors to encourage growth of jobs in the knowledge economy. To be a demonstrator site for the commercial development of university environmental research and strengthen the links between business and Northern Ireland's two universities. Council's focus is tied into the Northern Ireland Science Park's original objective that it would operate a Hub and Spoke model; Titanic Quarter being the Hub and Spokes throughout the NI regions. The opportunity for Council, as the only Council in NI to have secured ECOS as the 2nd element of this Hub and Spoke model is truly innovative and will create a platform for further growth and creation of high-value jobs in our economy.

We will deliver:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimal space utilisation, with an overall increase in 'lettable' space (including meeting and conference space). High specification fit-out, supporting an open innovation businesses model. State-of-the-art telecommunications. Continued focus on attracting the public to ECOS through the café and interpretation and marketing of the meeting/conference facility. A business model to test for a further planned extension of the project in due course.
When:	Start: April 2017 Duration: December 2022

How we will measure success

Expected Improvement Outcomes

- ◇ New Jobs Created
- ◇ Increased Rental Income
- ◇ Number of New Tenants

Community Plan linkage	Strategic Priority linkage	Performance Improvement Area
Sustainable Jobs and Tourism - Mid and East Antrim is a leading and competitive place to start and grow business	Growing our Economy	Innovation
		Strategic Effectiveness
		Sustainability

Improvement Objective 3

Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative -

Contribute to the sustainability of our local economy and support the communities that live and work in the historic conservation area of Carrickfergus.

We will do this by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting the structural repair, refurbishment and re-use of up to thirty target properties within the Carrickfergus conservation area. (Re-use could involve vacant floor space changing from commercial to town centre residential apartments).Offering grant assistance to owners of targeted properties to undertake repair works in line with conservation architecture standards, such as historic shopfronts and choice of traditional building materials and techniques.
Why are we doing this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Carrickfergus is one of the oldest towns in Ulster, dating back to the 12th Century and the arrival of the Anglo-Normans who built the castle; a key landmark for Northern Ireland and a popular visitor attraction.The traditional town centre economy has declined over recent decades, arising from significant local factory closures, the emergence of out-of-town shopping centres and the towns' proximity to Belfast (a key NI retail centre). Changes in buying habits, such as the growth of online retailing, are also impacting the town centre economy.With the exception of Public Realm Works in 2013 costing £2.4m and funded by the Department of Regional Development, there has been minimal recent investment in the town centre and in the historic fabric of the medieval town centre.Supported by a £1.7m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and match funding from Council of £550K, the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) will restore up to thirty buildings of historic and architectural interest, including several that are currently at an advanced stage of dereliction.Grant rates will average between 45% and 75%, depending on the nature of the works required. It is anticipated that the property owners themselves will provide the majority of the match funding required.

We will deliver:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Refurbishment of 18-20 buildings (60% of target buildings), given that several property owners may not wish to participate / possess match funding to participate.A Townscape Initiative education programme, highlighting the role of built heritage in supporting town centre regeneration and providing local residents with a higher degree of ownership of their town's historic pedigree.Facilitate a better future for all through increased inward investment and local employment opportunities, related both directly and indirectly to heritage and tourism.
When:	Start: October 2016 Duration: October 2021

How we will measure success

Expected Improvement Outcomes

- Lower levels of town centre vacancy (as measured by the town centres health-check monitor). Carrickfergus currently has one of the highest vacancy rates of any provincial town in Northern Ireland.
- Increased square footage of floor space of retail, commercial or residential use. (Monitored by following up applicant baseline details).
- Increased levels of town centre footfall arising from the THI investment and upgrade and reuse of buildings, as well as impacts from other complimentary town centre, public realm, tourism and recreation initiatives. (Measured via deploying footfall counters and street surveys).
- Increased market value of property. (Monitored through year on year improvements).
- Increased number of new businesses. (Monitored through an annual audit within the wider town centre, i.e. within walls).

Community Plan linkage	Strategic Priority linkage	Performance Improvement Area
Sustainable Jobs and Tourism - Our Borough is a destination of choice with increased visitor numbers and spend on first class facilities and attractions.	Growing our Economy	Strategic Effectiveness
Our Environment		Sustainability

Improvement Objective 4

Reduction of Food Waste through Healthier Eating -
Changing shopping, storing and food preparation behaviours.

We will do this by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting a change in behaviours that lead to food waste. Developing and promoting literature and workshops which highlight the range of benefits from eating healthily.
Why are we doing this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research suggests that adopting a healthy-eating regime can lead to significant improvements in health and wellbeing, including increased longevity. There are significant benefits for service delivery providers, including a reduction in food waste.
We will deliver:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Food Waste Policy, supported by Healthy-Eating literature and workshops which highlight the financial and health related benefits of healthy eating. Within the Policy, agree a support package for those people living in disadvantaged areas, which supports the Council's strategic priorities and is in line with the Council's duties under Section 75, Northern Ireland Act (1998).
When:	Start: April 2017 Duration: March 2018

How we will measure success

Expected Improvement Outcomes

- ◇ Increased Customer Satisfaction levels (survey, complaints/compliments received)
- ◇ Reduced Levels of Food Waste
- ◇ Increased Participation in the Food Waste Collection Scheme

Community Plan linkage	Strategic Priority linkage	Performance Improvement Area
Our Environment	Building Stronger, Safe and Healthy Communities	Sustainability
Good Health & Wellbeing		

Improvement Objective 5

Deliver excellence in our citizen experience through Digital Transformation and Improved Citizen Engagement and Choice.

Improvement Objective 5

We will do this by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping our customer lifecycle and lifetime engagement with Council services. Completing an ICT systems audit and consolidate systems to drive efficiencies. Developing and implementing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system containing business workflows and citizen profiles. Enabling online transactions and encouraging citizen self-service to provide a choice in service delivery. Joining up offline and online citizen (customer) journeys. Building the 'MyMEA' citizen app and supporting enhanced citizen engagement. Developing an organisational information strategy, including business intelligence and analytics. Designing real-time 'dashboard' reporting. Creating a digitally literate organisation with enhanced customer service skills.
Why are we doing this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deliver excellent public services, improving customer service and satisfaction. To improve efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery, offering better value for money for the ratepayer. To provide improved insight and management reporting, supporting better and more informed decision-making. To develop a high performing Council and be recognised as leading citizen experience in NI local government through digital transformation.

We will deliver:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Business Transformation Strategy for Council, including Digital Transformation, Information and Customer Strategies. Baseline data on the current citizen experience. Digital transformation of two Council business workflows e.g. 'Making an Enquiry' and 'Making a Complaint' to improve citizen experience within the first 12 months of the project. Online transaction developments based on volume or cost of interactions.
When:	Start: April 2017 Duration: March 2020

How we will measure success

Expected Improvement Outcomes

- Increased Customer Satisfaction levels (survey, feedback/complaints/compliments received)
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness of Council-delivered services which have been digitally transformed

Community Plan linkage	Strategic Priority linkage	Performance Improvement Area
Our Environment	Delivering Excellent Services	Strategic Effectiveness
Sustainable Jobs and Tourism	Developing a High Performing Council	Service Quality
		Efficiency

Performance Improvement Plan - Programme Management

Diagram 3 below sets out the Council's governance arrangements for the monitoring and reporting of progress against the Performance Improvement Plan in 2017 - 2018.

We will publish an annual Self-Assessment Report detailing improvement for our citizens, service users and stakeholders.

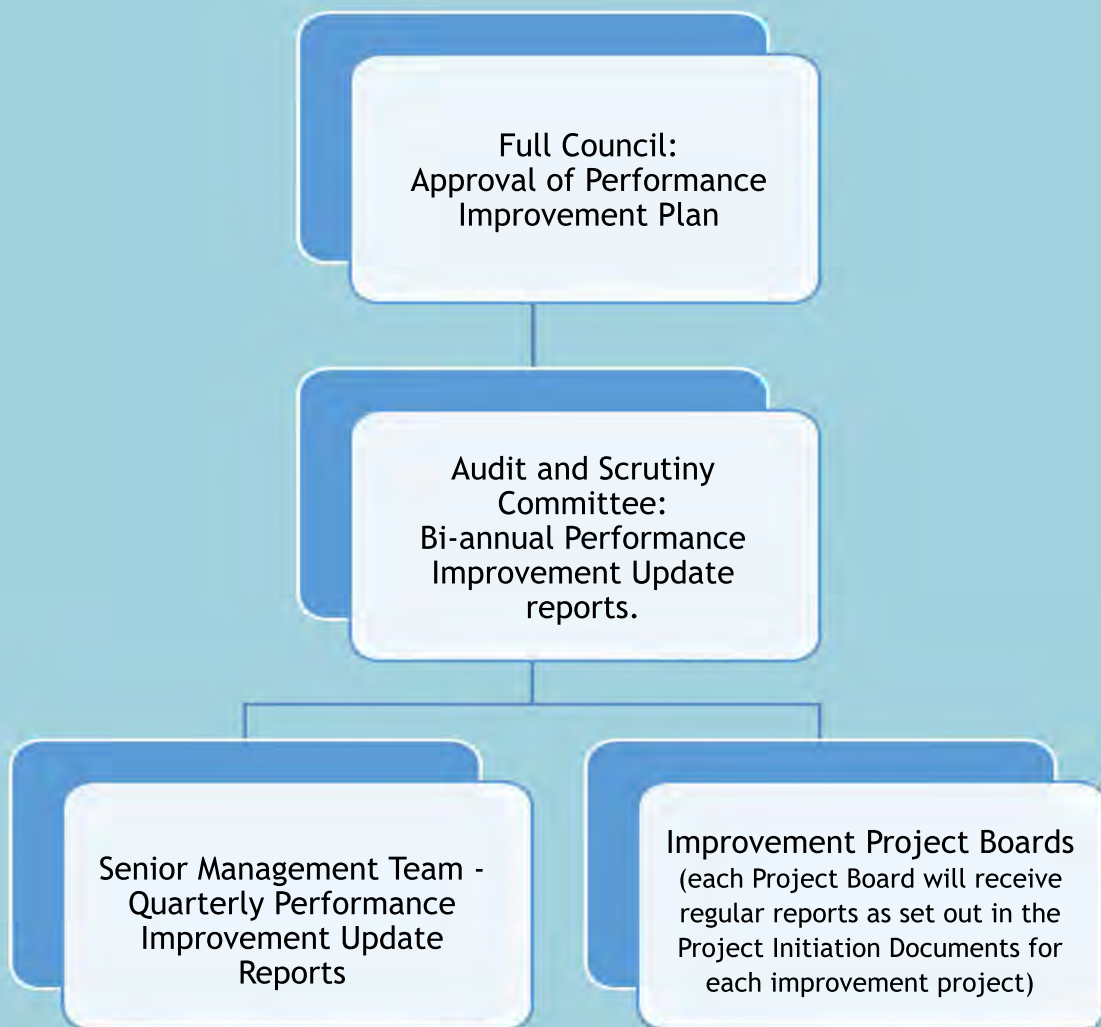


Diagram 3
Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

Overview of the Performance Improvement Projects 2017 - 2018

(1) Improvement Project	(2) Community Plan Theme	(3) Council Strategic Priority	(4) Improvement Area ¹		(5) Improvement Objective ²	(6) Completion Date	(7) Outcomes
ACHIEVE	Good Health and Wellbeing	Delivering Excellent Services	Strategic Effectiveness		To achieve a culture of high performance which will support the provision of first-class frontline services, making a positive impact on the quality of life for all our citizens.	March 2019	Improved customer satisfaction levels
		Developing a High Performing Council	Service Quality				A Performance Management Framework in place to enable continuous improvement and support staff in relation to their personal performance.
			Efficiency				
Digitally Supported Environmental Innovation Centre	Sustainable Jobs and Tourism	Growing our Economy	Innovation		To lead the growth and development of new industry sectors in the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council area through the creation of 125 knowledge economy jobs.	December 2022	Up to 125 new high-value jobs created by December 2022
			Strategic Effectiveness				Increased rental income to ECOS
			Sustainability				Increased number of new tenants
Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative	Sustainable Jobs and Tourism	Growing our Economy	Strategic Effectiveness		To contribute to the sustainability of our local economy and support the communities that live and work in the historic conservation area of Carrickfergus.	October 2021	Lower levels of town centre vacancy
	Our Environment		Sustainability				Increased square footage of floor space of retail, commercial or residential use
							Increased levels of town centre footfall
							Increased market value of property
							Increased number of new businesses
Reduction of Food Waste through Healthier Eating - Changing shopping, storing and food preparation behaviours	Good Health and Wellbeing	Building Stronger, Safe and Healthy Communities	Sustainability		Promoting a change in behaviours that lead to food waste, and developing and promoting literature and workshops which highlight the range of benefits from eating healthily.	March 2018	Increased customer satisfaction levels
	Our Environment						Reduction in food waste
							Increased participation in the Food Waste Collection Scheme
Deliver excellence in our citizen experience through Digital Transformation and Improved Citizen Engagement and Choice	Our Environment	Delivering Excellent Services	Strategic Effectiveness		To improve the citizen experience through the development of a Business Transformation Strategy for Council, including Digital Transformation, Information and Customer Strategies.	March 2020	Increased customer satisfaction levels
	Sustainable Jobs and Tourism	Developing a High Performing Council	Service Quality				Improved efficiency and effectiveness of Council-delivered services which have been digitally transformed
			Efficiency				

(1) As defined by s.85 (3) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

(1) A number of these projects extend beyond March 2018. We plan to continue to implement these projects through the same process until completion.

Mid and East Antrim - Working together to create a better future for all.



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Please submit any comments to:

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www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance

We would
love to hear
from you!