



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council



Performance Self-Assessment Report

2017 - 2018

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1. Introduction

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (The Act) puts in place a new framework to support the continuous improvement of council services in the context of strategic objectives and issues that are important to those who receive those services.

The Act specifies that Council must make arrangements for the publication of:

- a) Its assessment of its performance during a financial year:
 - In discharging its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement.
 - In meeting its improvement objectives which are applicable to that year.
 - By reference to the statutory performance indicators and self-imposed indicators which are applicable to that year.

- b) Its assessment of its performance in exercising its functions during a financial year as compared with:
 - Its performance in previous financial years.
 - So far as is reasonably practicable, the performance during that and previous financial years of other Councils.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's assessment of its performance improvement for the year 2017-2018.

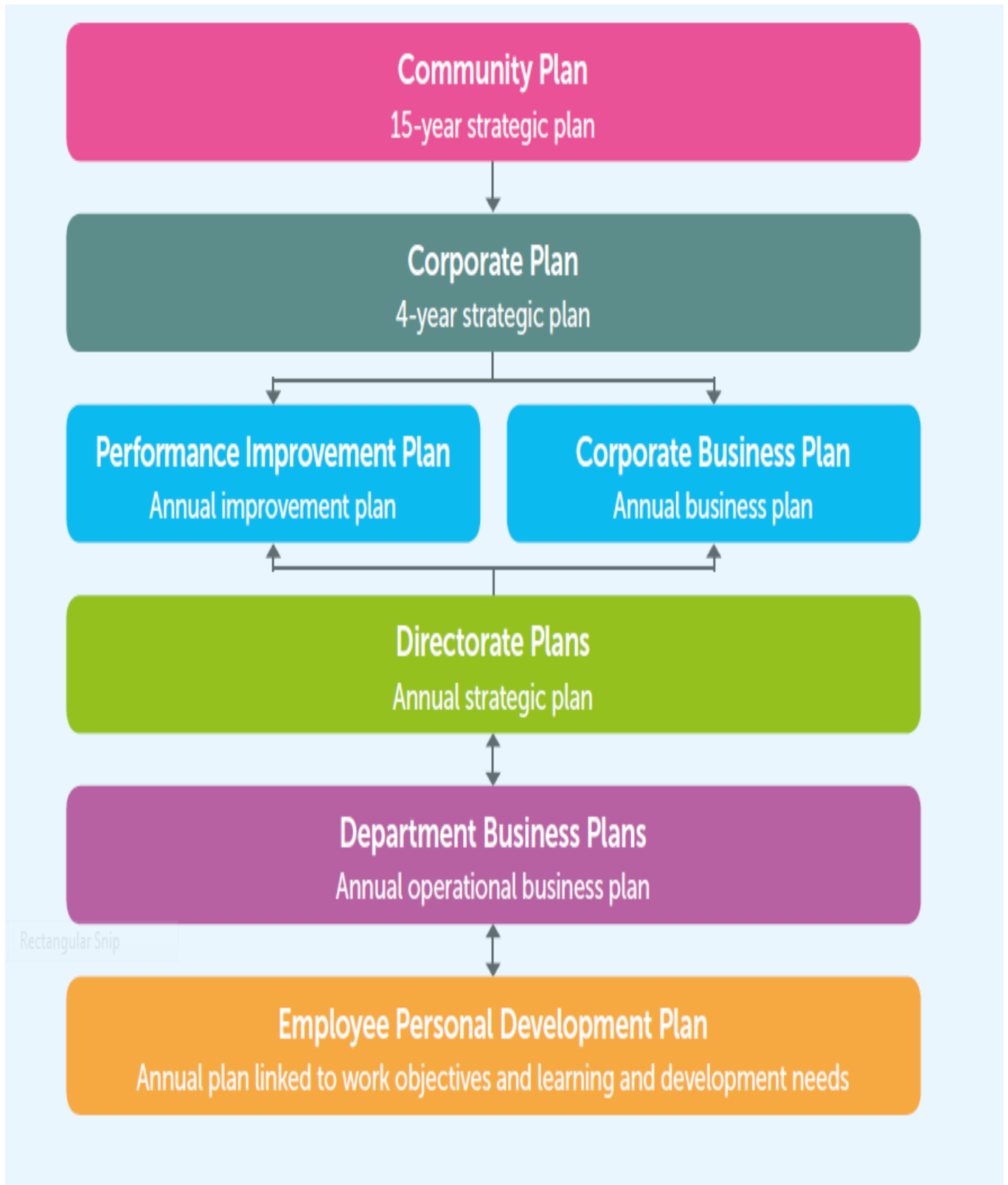
3. Arrangements to Secure Continuous Improvement

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council introduced a Performance Management Framework during 2017/18 to drive performance management and continuous improvement within the organisation. The Framework is summarised in Diagram 1 below.

The diagram illustrates that performance is measured and managed at all levels within the organisation. The Framework links directly to the corporate planning processes in place within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. It demonstrates how strategic objectives within the Community Plan and Corporate Plan are cascaded through Directorate, Departmental and ultimately individual employee work objectives.

The ongoing review and reporting schedule for the various plans is outlined within the Performance Management Framework document. This is available on request.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
Performance Management Framework



3.2 The Performance Improvement Plan

In addition to the plans and strategies outlined above, we demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement in the delivery of our services through our Performance Improvement Plan.

On 30th June each year, Council publishes a new Plan, which sets out how we will deliver improvement in at least one of the seven improvement areas, as stipulated in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014:

- Strategic Effectiveness
- Service Quality
- Service Availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

Our Improvement Objectives are developed through a process of collaboration, engagement and research. The development process commences in October with a series of workshops with senior managers and Elected Members from across Council.

Section 5 of this Self-Assessment Report details our specific Improvement Objectives for the year 2017-2018, and progress made against these. It also looks back at previous objectives that were not fully completed.

Our Governance Arrangements for the monitoring and reporting of progress are defined within the Performance Improvement plan and are discussed within Section 4 below.

A six-monthly progress update report was considered by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 27th November 2017 and the year-end report was considered on 29th May 2018.

3.3 The Mid & East Antrim Performance Management - Planning Cycle

Council's planning cycle is outlined in the table in Appendix 2. It outlines the timelines for managing performance throughout the year.

Each of the Departmental Business Plans were scrutinised by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee during the 2017-2018 financial year in line with the Committee Terms of Reference.

Going forward Directorate Business Plans will be taken to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee every 6 months in October/November and April/ May. This is in line with an internal audit recommendation, as discussed in section 5.5.1.

4. Governance for Performance Management within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

4.1 Governance Arrangements

Within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, the following governance arrangements were established to manage performance during 2017 - 2018.

The table below illustrates the governance arrangements for the Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and Business Plans.

	Reporting Cycle	Council/ Committee
Corporate Plan	6 Monthly	Council
Performance Improvement Plan	Quarterly	SMT
	Quarterly	Audit & Scrutiny
Business Plans	Annually	Audit & Scrutiny

These Governance arrangements facilitate and support transparency, accountability and improvement across the Council.

4.2 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Audit & Scrutiny Committee

The Terms of Reference for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Audit & Scrutiny Committee set out the Committees overall purpose and objectives.

The Committee has two key functions of 'Audit' and 'Scrutiny'. The area of performance improvement falls within the 'Scrutiny' function, and includes the monitoring, assessment and review of the following:

- Business Plan Performance
- Service Risk Registers
- Business Improvement and Efficiency Strategy
- Performance Improvement Plan

The Committee meets on the fourth Monday of each month, with Scrutiny Meetings taking place in January, February, April, August, October and November.

The Committee comprises of 8 Elected Members who are appointed by Council.

5. Assessment of Performance




5.1 Performance Improvement Objectives 2017-2018

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council identified Performance Improvement Objectives within each of the following 5 areas as the focus of the Performance Improvement Plan 2017/18:

- Strategic Effectiveness
- Service Quality
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

The Performance Improvement Plan 2017/18 was based on the strategic priorities agreed by Council in the Corporate Plan 2015-2019, approved in May 2015.

The tables below illustrate the progress made against each of the improvement objectives during the period April 2017-March 2018. The planned outcomes are outlined along with the progress made against them, colour coded as follows:

	Project is on track/completed
	Project has been delayed but still progressing
	Project has not been delivered/stopped

54% of the outcomes defined within the Improvement Objectives for 2017-2018 have been fully achieved. 41% are in progress and 5% have not been delivered.

Further detail on specific actions and indicators can be found within the Performance Improvement Plan for 2017/18 on our website

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance

A) Performance Improvement Plan 2017 /18

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	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
Continuing the work of the cross-functional workforce team ACHIEVE	o A Performance Management Framework, including a process for cascading corporate objectives to individual employee objectives.	<p>Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Performance Management Framework sets out the various plans across Council to demonstrate our wider commitment to continuous improvement, as required by Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. The Business Planning process has been implemented for 2017/18, in line with the Performance Management Framework. The business plans for 2018/19 were delayed due to the recent senior team alignment. Following a successful pilot in Waste Services, the Personal Development Planning (PDP) process is being rolled out to the wider organisation.
	o Staff working to the core competencies to enable high performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The target to roll-out Personal Development Planning (PDP) to 30% of staff by March 2018 was not achieved due to a change in staffing, particularly within the HR & OD Department. SMT and OMT are currently developing their PDPs, after which the process will be rolled out to all staff during 2018/19. Training has been provided for line management and staff as part of the process.
	o Managers who are clear about what good performance looks like and able to have critical conversations in a positive way (links to all 3 work streams)	<p>Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of factors impact on delivery of this element of the ACHIEVE project, for example: Line Managers are encouraged to engage staff through team meetings, 1-1 meetings, by regular updates to keep staff informed about the wider issues happening across Council as well as those within their own departments. This happens regularly throughout the

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	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
		<p>organisation. The Chief Executive visits staff to keep them informed through a series of roadshows throughout the year. In addition, the Midpoint magazine keeps staff informed 3 times a year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Staff communication survey was designed and launched in April 2017. The results indicated that approximately 60% of staff are content with communication within the organisation. • Following on from the survey, a draft internal communications strategy has been developed and, once agreed, implementation is planned for 2018/19.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communication and Engagement processes to ensure staff are motivated, well-informed and dedicated. 	<p><u>Engagement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive Engagement Research and Best Practice visits have been undertaken. • A Staff Engagement Survey, IIP40 online assessment has been rolled out to all staff during March 2018. Focus groups with staff were organised and results were shared with staff in August 2018. The Achieve team has met and is in the processing of compiling a workplan to improve staff engagement. This will continue to be delivered during 2018/19. In addition a staff intranet is being piloted and will be rolled out to all staff following evaluation.

How we will measure success?	Target	Actual
Improved customer satisfaction levels.	Baseline to be established during 2017/18.	Council agreed on 5 th February 2018 to undertake a customer satisfaction household survey that is planned for September 2018.

A Performance Management Framework in place to enable continuous improvement and support staff in relation to their personal performance.	Framework to be further implemented during 2017/18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% Directorate business plans in place - PDPs for staff. 	100% business plans in place for 2017/18. PDPs not progressed as planned (see below).
Staff with PDPs in place.	30% by March 2018.	Target has not been met due to a change in staffing.
Increased staff satisfaction levels - engagement survey.	Baseline to be established during 2017/18.	The IIP40 online assessment provided a baseline for staff satisfaction across a range of areas. Results indicate that 80% of staff agree that their work is interesting whereas only 40% of staff agree that they are appropriately recognised for the work they do.
Staff satisfaction with communication and engagement.	Baseline to be established during 2017/18.	60% of staff indicated that they were happy with internal communications.

Improvement Objective 2: Digitally Supported Environmental Innovation Centre 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 by December 2022.

We will do this by	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
<p>Redeveloping the Council owned ECOS centre as a Digitally Supported Environmental Innovation Centre.</p> <p>Securing an innovative partnership arrangement with Catalyst Inc., as credible advisors to the knowledge economy and government.</p>	Up to 125 knowledge economy jobs by December 2022.	80% of the Innovation workspace was let prior to the official launch of the project. 6 companies currently occupy space within the premises bringing 66 high value jobs to date. The project is on track to achieve target of 125 jobs by 2022.
	<p>Optimal space utilisation with an overall increase in 'lettable' space, including meeting and conference space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High specification fit-out, supporting an open innovation business model • State-of-the-art telecommunications. 	The refurbishment of the ECOS centre has been completed using a high specification fit-out and state-of-the-art telecommunications. This has resulted in additional 'lettable' space, including meeting and conference space.
	A business model to test for a further planned extension of the project in due course.	A Phase II Expansion for a Digital Innovation Centre is being pursued as part of the Belfast Region City Deal Investment. This is currently at Outline Business Case stage.

How we will measure success?	Target	Actual
New jobs created.	125 by 2022	66 jobs to date and currently on target to achieve 125 jobs by 2022.
Increased Lettable Space.	From 12,718 - 19,924 square feet.	19,924 square feet achieved.
Increased Rental Income.	Up to £115,000.	On target to achieve this figure.

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	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
<p>Supporting the structural repair, refurbishment and re-use of up to thirty target properties within the Carrickfergus conservation area.</p> <p>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.</p>	By March 2018, a Townscape Heritage Initiative education programme to include:	
	1. Education officer in post	Education officer in post since August 2017.
	2. Applications assessed	Work to support applications from owners and tenants of eligible THI properties continues to be progressed but there have been several delays due to the personal circumstance of these potential applicants and also due to complexities of planning, building control and owners securing private match-funding. Hence, while 5 applicants are currently working towards a submission none of them were able to submit a formal applications to the THI Project Board for assessment by end of March 2018. The first THI grant award was issued to the property owner in July 2018. A further 4 THI property schemes are at an advanced stage of pre-development in readiness to submit a THI application.
	3. Approved scheme commenced	Following on from the delay in assessing applications, while it had been anticipated 2-3 approved schemes would have commenced works on site in the 2017/18 financial year, none of the schemes have yet commenced.
	4. Education programme agreed	The Education programme was developed and approved by the Townscape Heritage Initiative Project Board on 8 November 2017 and has been endorsed by the Heritage Lottery Fund.
5. Education programme elements delivered	Education activity that has taken place to the end of March 2018, includes the first of several workshops on built heritage, research scheme at Dobbins Hotel plus development work on producing a scale model of the town from the sixteenth century.	

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	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
How we will measure success?	Target	Actual
Education Officer in post	1 by 1 st August 2017	In post from August 2017 as per target
Applications assessed & awarded	5 by March 2018	0 - progressing but schedule delayed
Letters of Offer issued	3 by March 2018	0 -progressing but schedule delayed
Education Programme details	By October 2017	Education Programme agreed by Board 8/11/17
Education Programme items delivered	3 by 31 st March 2018	3 delivered

Improvement Objective 4: Reduction of Food Waste through Healthier Eating - Changing shopping, storing and food preparation behaviours.

We will do this by	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
<p>Promoting a change in behaviours that lead to food waste.</p> <p>Developing and promoting literature and workshops which highlight the range of benefits from eating healthily.</p>	<p>A Food Waste Policy, supported by Healthy-Eating literature and workshops which highlight the financial and health related benefits of healthy eating.</p>	<p>Increasing awareness of food waste across all sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed through communication campaign to all households in the Borough in April 2017 and again in March 2018. Ongoing social media messages and press releases throughout the year. <p>Promoting the benefits of reducing food waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed through educational visits to schools and community groups and Green Living Fair, promoting sustainable living with an eco marketplace. <p>Highlighting practical measures to manage food waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Slow Energy Efficient event was held 7th September 2017. In addition the Education officer highlights practical measures to reduce food waste and use leftovers in talks to schools and community groups. <p>Reconnecting people with food, nurturing an understanding of its importance to the sustainable development of the entire community -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Workshops completed during the year.
	<p>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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly food waste collections are in place for 2500 households in disadvantaged areas. Store cupboard packs were delivered to vulnerable clients. Environmental Health Officers distributed literature such as Leftovers booklet alongside a Slow Energy efficient toolkit at talks and events.

Improvement Objective 4: Reduction of Food Waste through Healthier Eating - Changing shopping, storing and food preparation behaviours.

We will do this by	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?	
	Council's duties under section 75, Northern Ireland Act (1998)		
How we will measure success		Target	Actual
Improved customer satisfaction levels.		Baseline to be established in 2017/18	A Waste survey was completed in March 2018 through Council's Connections magazine and the website. 374 households completed the survey. Results show 78% are satisfied or very satisfied with fortnightly food collections. 71% agree that Council make it easy to recycle, 87% are satisfied with black bin waste collection and 66% were satisfied with blue bin/kerbside boxes. 82% are satisfied with the service at Household Recycling Centres.
Reduce levels of Food Waste		10%	Food waste in residual waste bins reduced by 4537 tonnes during 2017/18, compared to the same period in 2016/17. This is an 18% reduction.
Increased participation in the Food Waste Collection Scheme		1000 caddies distributed	During April-June 2017, 7543 caddies were distributed.

Improvement Objective 5: Deliver excellence in our citizen experience through Digital Transformation and improved Citizen Engagement and Choice.

We will do this by	By March 2018 we will deliver:	What progress have we made (April 2017 - March 2018)?
<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; and • Creating a digitally literate organisation with enhanced customer service skills 	Develop a Digital Transformation Project Initiation Document.	<p>During the course of the year, it became evident that the nature of the project outcome required amendment. As a result the project outcome was amended on 22nd January 2018 from 'Business Transformation Framework' to focus on the Digital Transformation element.</p> <p>A Digital Transformation Strategy was approved by Council on 9th April 2018.</p> <p>A list of projects to be delivered under this strategy has now been scoped.</p>
	Digital transformation of 2 Council business workflows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making an Enquiry - Making a Complaint 	Completed for all general enquiries and complaints received by Council.
	Scoping of Council transactions to identify digitisation opportunities on relevant processes.	Scoping of digital transformation and benchmarking with other organisations is ongoing within Council to inform future developments.
	Digitisation of 1 traditional Council transaction process based on Scoping Results.	The initial scoping process of Council transactions to identify digitisation opportunities is now completed.
		Design has been completed with respect to Waste Services transactions being converted to enable digital purchase of items previously only available manually. Implementation of this process is due to be rolled out during 2018/19.

How we will measure success	Target	Actual
Increased customer satisfaction levels.	Baseline to be established during 2017/18	Customer satisfaction household survey planned for September 2018.
Improved efficiency and effectiveness of Council-delivered services which have been digitally transformed.	Indicators and baselines to be established by March 2018	Work in progress - baselines have not yet been established.
Digital transformation of 2 Council business workflows	2	2
Digitisation of 1 traditional Council transaction process based on Scoping Results.	1	In progress - See above regarding Waste Services transactions.

5.2 Review of outstanding actions from 2016/17 and 2017/18 Improvement Objectives

The table below provides a progress update on previous Improvement objectives that have not been fully completed for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years.

3 Improvement Objectives were carried forward from 2017/18 into 2018/19. Outstanding actions remain for the ACHIEVE objective. This objective is still being progressed within Council and will be completed during 2018/19.

Year	Project Objective	Project Outcome	Status
2016/17	A consistent and fair Leisure Service Pricing Policy which promotes access to leisure services across the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure Services Pricing Policy for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council which will be used to cost charges and fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following feedback from Councillors the original project was expanded to include a Corporate Pricing Policy Framework covering many pricing policies across various Council Departments. One pricing policy is outstanding and a Draft was agreed by Council in April 2018 to proceed to public consultation until 4th July 2018. <i>Civic Spaces (Larne Town Hall and Market Yard) and Community Centres</i>. Further consultation took place with Elected Members on 9th August 2018 with agreed changes to be implemented from April 2019.
	High level of Customer Satisfaction based on standards which are well communicated to both service users and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Customer Service Charter establishing key corporate services standards expected across all services. Following completion of a Scoping Exercise, appropriate awards determined that Council may apply for to improve standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Customer Service Charter was launched in June 2017 that outlines the basic commitments expected from all staff for Customer Service. A Scoping Exercise was presented to SMT for consideration and approval of awards. ISO 14001 has been selected as a standard to be rolled out to the entire Council and this is planned to be achieved by March 2019. To further develop Council's wider customer service approach, external expertise has undertaken a review of telephony and other aspects of customer service including

			linkage with the Digital Transformation Objective.
	Effective implementation of the Northern Ireland Executive's policy on prompt payments, improving business cash flow and supporting our local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved control environment - complete audit trail from raising of order, approval and invoice clearance. • Prompt payment targets met. • Authorisation of orders across a multi-site organisation. • Full visibility of status of purchase orders at all times • Good customer/supplier relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 30-day target for 2017/18 was 80%, with Quarter 4 performance of 84%. • Following implementation of the Electronic Purchase Ordering System, which was implemented in April 2018, it is planned to introduce an App which will allow officers to raise, deliver or authorise orders from their mobile device thus further increasing efficiency.
2017/18	To achieve a culture of high performance which will support the provision of first class frontline services, which make a positive impact on the quality of life for all our citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACHIEVE Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Personal Development Planning (PDP) is being rolled out across the entire organisation. This has been delayed due to reorganisation of the senior team and several senior management vacancies. • An Employee Engagement survey has been delivered, focus groups held and results have been communicated to staff. This project will continue to be delivered in 2018/19. • An internal communications strategy has been developed and will be implemented during 2018/19.







5.3 Statutory Performance Indicators

The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out statutory performance indicators and standards for Councils. Standards are set for each Council within Northern Ireland.



For 2017/18, these were set in the functional areas of Planning, Economic Development and Waste Management.

The information is currently collated by the Department for Infrastructure, Invest NI and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) respectively. Once released to Council, this information is published for citizens and other stakeholders to assess Council's performance in these areas.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's 2017/18 performance against these indicators is outlined in the tables below.

Status		Trend	
	On track and progressing as planned		Performance had improved since the previous year
	Progressing but may be delayed		Performance is similar to the previous year
	Not progressing/stopped		Performance has declined since the previous year

Economic Development

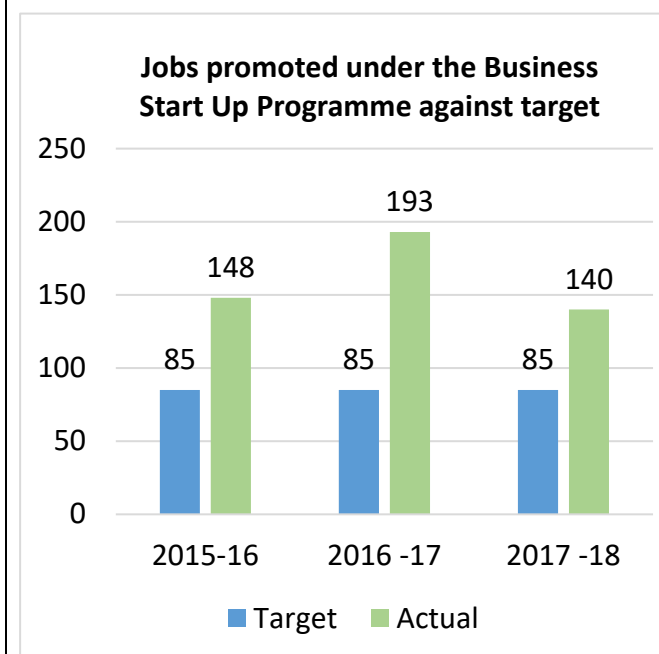
Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard	Year End Result 2016/17	NI Average 2016/17	Year End Result 2017/18	Ranking against other Councils 2017/18	Status	% over target	Trend
ED1	The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity.	85	193	208	140	1st		165%	

Comments

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council area has experienced a number of significant job losses across the Borough over the last few years with the closure of large firms including JTI Gallaher and Michelin. Council has worked closely with its partners in Ballymena Business Centre, Carrickfergus Enterprise and LEDCOM to promote the start-up support to those who find themselves looking for new career paths and for those who have aspirations to start their own business.

Figures for jobs promoted under the Go for It Programme show Mid and East Antrim as the number one Council in Northern Ireland for over-performance on job targets, creating 140 jobs against a target of 85. (165% over the target) This follows on from 2016/17 when the Council created 193 jobs against a target of 85 (227%) and 148 against a target of 85 in 2015/16 (174%)

In each of the last three years Mid and East Antrim has been the top or joint top performing Council for over-performance on job targets for business start-up (see table in appendix 5).



Planning

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard	Year End Result 2016/17	NI Average 2016/17	Year End Result 2017/18	Ranking against other Councils 2017/18	Status	Trend
P1	The average processing time of major planning applications.	30 weeks	67.8 weeks	68.6 weeks	29.0 weeks	1 st		
P2	The average processing time of local planning applications	15 weeks	9.0 weeks	16.2 weeks	9.6 weeks	1 st		
P3	The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.	70%	88.1%	80.7%	86.0%	2 nd		

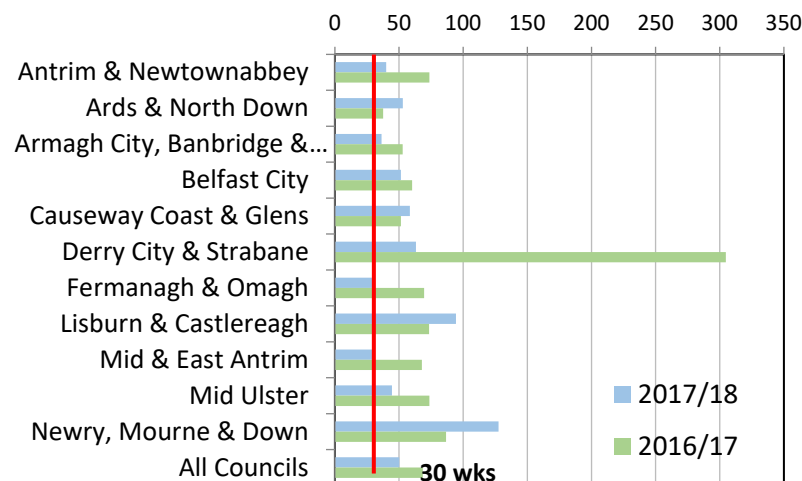
Comments

Major Planning Applications

Mid and East Antrim is the only one of the 11 Councils in Northern Ireland to meet the target of processing major planning applications within 30 weeks.

The Scheme of Delegation which is reviewed every year, enables the Planning Committee to concentrate on major Planning Applications, allowing Council to meet its targets.

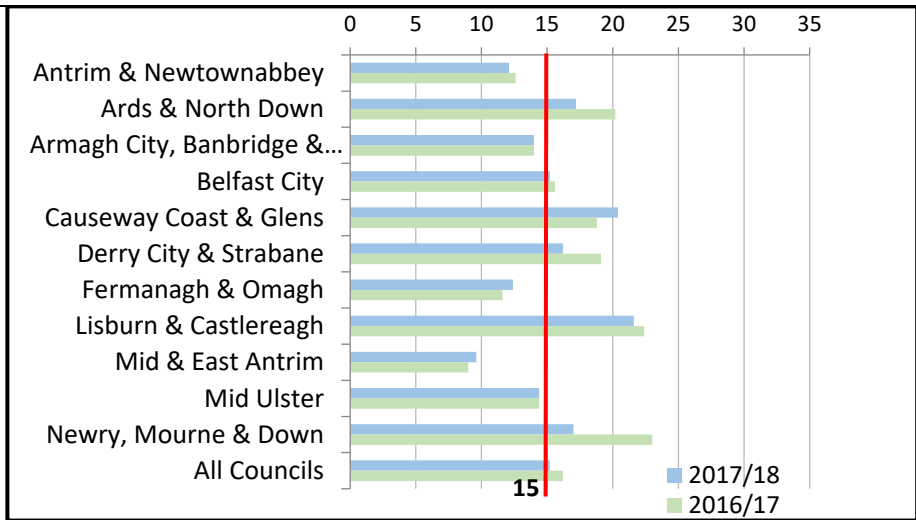
2016/17 saw the Council ranked 5th in the same indicator. There is a proviso with the previous year's figures in that they may be skewed by the inclusion of applications from the legacy Councils, so their usefulness in trend analysis may be limited.



P1 Major development applications received, decided and withdrawn, and average processing times by Council

Local Planning Applications

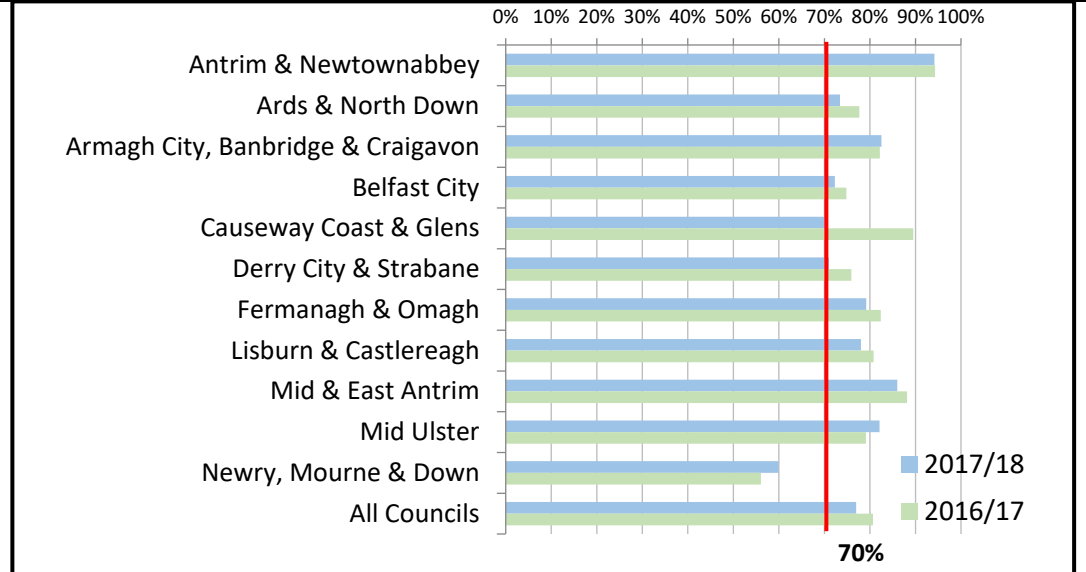
Council maintained its position as the top performing Council in processing local applications within 15 weeks. For 2017/18, Mid and East Antrim Borough were well within the target of 15 weeks, processing applications within 9.6 weeks.



P2 Local development applications received, decided and withdrawn, and average processing times by Council







Enforcement Cases

The third indicator, that is the percentage of enforcement actions concluded within 39 weeks, saw Mid and East Antrim Borough Council improve from 3rd to 2nd in the league table with 86% of cases being concluded in 39 weeks against the target of 70% during 2017/18.



P3 Enforcement cases opened, closed and concluded and 70% conclusion times by Council

Waste

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard	Year End Result 2016/17	NI Average 2016/17	Year End Result 2017/18	Ranking against other Councils 2017/18	Status	Trend
W1	The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling.	50% by 2020	45.22%	40% by 2016 standard	52.69%*	2 nd *		
W2	The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.	18515	19,167 tonnes	N/A	14,221 tonnes*	N/A		
W3	The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arising.	No standard	75,187 tonnes	N/A	72,404 tonnes*	N/A		

* The 2017-2018 figures for Waste Service will be audited and publicly released by NIEA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency) on 1st December 2018. The figures contained in the report are provisional and a strong indicator of performance. They are unlikely to change, but cannot be published anywhere in advance of their release by NIEA.

Comments

The 2017/18 figures for the three indicators for Waste Management are to date not audited and confirmed by the NIEA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency). However, on the basis of the draft year-end figures, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have moved from 6th place to 2nd place amongst Councils in Northern Ireland in relation to the percentage of household waste sent for recycling.

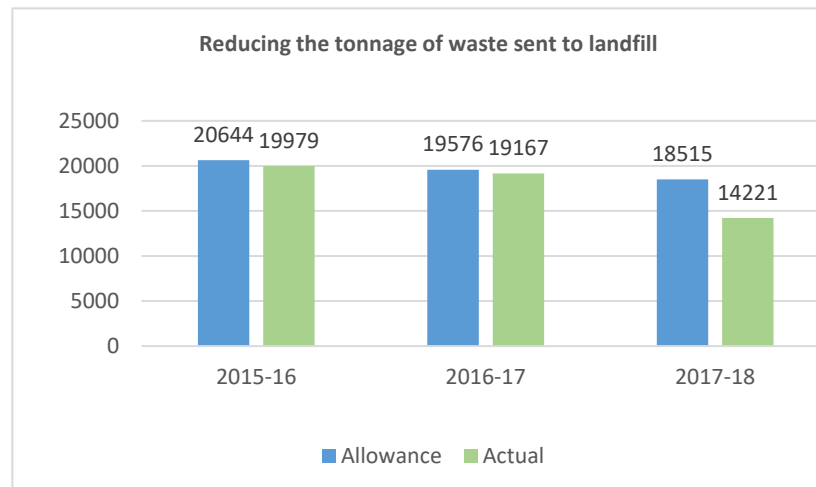
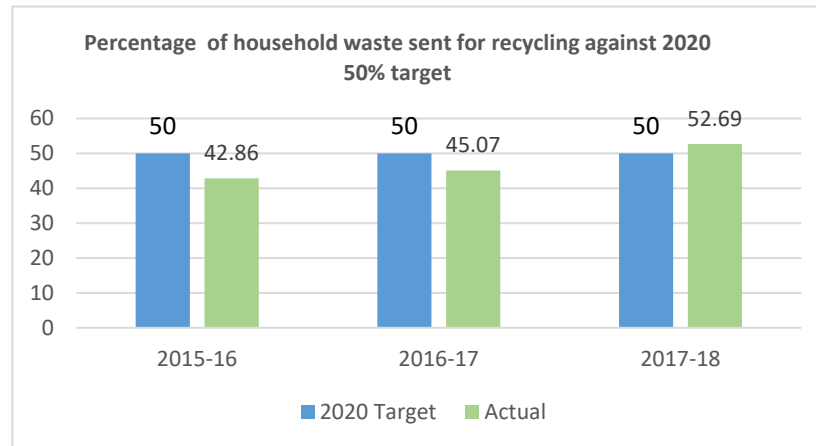
Waste that is recycled

Council's recycling rate increased significantly during 2017/18. This is in part due to increased participation in the brown bin/food waste recycling scheme as well as the education programme that was introduced as one of the 2017/18 Improvement Objectives. The Council Waste team delivered an innovative communications campaign as part of the project that brought about a significant behavioural change to recycling across the Borough and resulted in Council recording the highest recycling rate among NI Councils during July-September 2017 at 57.5%, an improvement of 8.4% on the same period in the previous year.

Waste sent to landfill

During 2017, the operational improvements and educational work in Council's Household recycling Centres achieved a 5% increase in recycling performance and an 18% reduction in material landfilled, saving £85,000 in waste disposal costs.

In the tonnage of waste sent to landfill, the Council has, in the last three years, collected less than the allowance set by the Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance's scheme (NILAS). The introduction of brown bin/ food waste collection meant that the Council used 76% of its allocated landfill allowance, compared to 97% of its allowance in 2016/17.

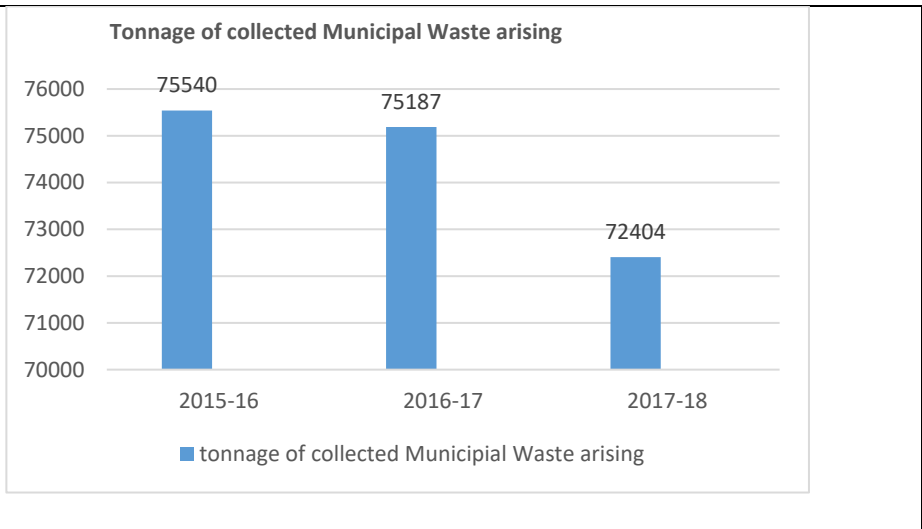


Municipal Waste Arising

Municipal Waste Arising has dropped significantly from previous years to 72,404 tonnes.

Customer service within Waste Services has improved as well as householder's understanding of the environmental and economic benefits of re-use and recycling.

In Summary, Council remains well within target in all the Waste Performance indicators.



5.4 Self Imposed Performance Indicators

For the year 2017/18, in addition to the statutory indicators, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council measured its performance using self-imposed indicators as discussed below.

5.4.1 Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out the strategic priorities and key objectives required in order for Council to achieve its vision.





The Corporate Plan outlines 5 strategic Priorities, and within those, 25 key objectives for the period 2015-2019. A year-end report on progress made towards achieving those objectives for the period April 2017-March 2018 was brought to Council in June 2018. This can be viewed at the following weblink:

<https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/council/policies-and-documents/corporate-plan>

Overall, the report shows good progress. A significant range of actions have been completed to enable delivery of the strategic priorities and key objectives. The report also illustrates that the majority of Corporate Performance Indicators are on track. A number of the indicators are linked to Community Plan outcomes and are, therefore, longer term with no recent data at this point.



- Of the 22 indicators, there are **2 Amber flags** around the allocation of grant funding and a reduction in the number of Health & Safety accidents.
- There is **1 Red flag** around the processing of complaints. To address this issue, the processing of first stage complaints has been digitally transformed and is therefore more straightforward to measure in terms of delivery. The next stage of this project will be to look at digitally transforming the other stages of the process. Our current system does not support measurement of complaints delivery and in order to resolve this issue, a new system will be considered.
- The Absenteeism figure was not available at the time of publishing the year-end report but is now available.

The tables below illustrate some of the key actions that have been progressed, as well as progress towards achieving the Corporate Performance Indicators. The achievements do not cover everything that the Council has delivered, rather a selection of the significant actions.

Corporate Status.	Indicator	R/A/G	
			 On track and progressing as planned
			 Progressing but may be delayed
			 Not progressing/stopped
			 Target not defined

Strategic Priority 1: Grow the Economy



Key Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract Jobs & Investment to the Mid and East Antrim area through an innovative and dynamic approach to economic development and regeneration. • Build strong effective integrated partnerships to address issues of identified economic need. • Use our planning responsibilities to maximise impact on economic development. • Maximise investment through effective lobbying of central government and private investors. • Identify and secure funding from European Union and other sources, to deliver sustainable economic development and regeneration projects. 	
Key Achievements	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council led the development of the Amplify Integrated Economic Development Strategy and successfully launched an ambitious economic vision for the Borough for 2018-2030. • Council has led the establishment of a Manufacturing Task Force for the region to redress job losses in the Borough and has 100 employers engaged in developing solutions to support the future growth of the advanced manufacturing sector in the Borough. • Council are leading on the development of the Local Development Plan for the Borough. Mid and East Antrim Preferred Options Paper (POP) public consultation was launched in June 2017 for 12 weeks. Following this, a Public Consultation Report was issued in November 2017. • Council has been successful in partnering with 5 other Councils and are collectively working to secure a circa £1billion City Deal investment for the region to support infrastructure, innovation, tourism, digital and skills interventions. • 228 people attended 27 Rural Development Programme grant-funding workshops for potential applicants in 2017/18. This resulted in £242,487 of grant funding offers to local businesses and a further £149,517 to local Community Groups in 2017/18. 	

Indicator	Target	Baseline 2016/17	2017/18	RAG Status	Explanatory Notes
Number of Jobs Promoted through business start-up activity	85 jobs	193	140		See commentary in section 5.3 above.
Number of Integrated Partnerships with third party organisations to deliver economic benefit to the Mid & East Antrim area	4 key partnerships	-	4		Partnerships established - Mid & East Antrim Manufacturing Taskforce, Belfast Region City Deal, St Patrick's Barracks, and Glenarm Regeneration Plan Steering Group.
The average processing time of major planning applications*	30 weeks	67.8 weeks	29 weeks		See commentary in section 5.3 above.
The average processing time of local planning applications*	15 weeks	9 weeks	9.6 weeks		See commentary in section 5.3 above.
The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.*	70%	88.1 %	86%		See commentary in section 5.3 above.


Strategic Priority 2: Developing our Tourism Potential

Key Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build our brand and make Mid and East Antrim Borough a “go to” destination. • Work in partnership with Tourism NI to shape a Regional Tourism Strategy reflective of our area’s tourism objectives. • Make it easy for the visitor to get to and around the Mid and East Antrim area through improved access, transport links and signage. • Actively involve our local businesses and communities in developing and delivering tourism products. • Safeguard our tourism assets including the natural and built environment. 	
Key Achievements	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A marketing agency has been appointed to proceed with branding, a website and a marketing and social media plan for Mid and East Antrim. Mid and East Antrim was promoted at key trade and consumer shows in Germany, USA, Scotland and Northern Ireland. • Council’s Tourism Strategy and Action Plan was effective from 1st April 2017. • Three business clusters were launched to support tourism assets in the Glens, the Gobbins and the Ballymena areas. Toast The Coast and Ulster Scots Tours have been developed through the cluster groups and with Council support. • The Gobbins Cliff Path reopened on 30th June 2017 with 9,350 visitors in its first 3 months. Further extensive physical regeneration works were completed over the 2017/18 winter period and the attraction re-opened to visitors on 28th April 2018. 	







Performance Indicators





Indicator	Target	Baseline 2016/17	2017/18	RAG Status	Explanatory Notes
The number of overnight visitor trips	To increase the number of visitor trips.	301,768 in 2016	Reported Annually - figures not yet available.		Figures not yet confirmed for 2017.
Number of business-led clusters developed	2 business clusters established around key tourism assets	N/A	3		3 clusters established to support the Glens, the Gobbins and Ballymena areas.

Strategic Priority 3: Building stronger, safe and healthy communities

Key Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Community Plan ensure greater integration of public services at a local level driven through partnership, collaboration and effective local working. • Improve and support the health and wellbeing of our people and communities through our services. • Protect and enhance an attractive, safe and sustainable environment. • Increase the capability and confidence of the community sector to become more self-sustainable. • Promote equality of opportunity, good relations and social inclusion to support a better quality of life for all. 	
Key Achievements	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Putting People First', the first Community Plan for Mid and East Antrim area was launched on 6th June 2017. • 3,500 participants took part in the Every Body Active programme which specifically targets women/girls, people with a disability and those living in areas of high social need. • 10 parks were awarded Green Flag status. • 602 grant applications were processed from April 2017 - March 2018, with £646,426 of grant funding awarded. • Almost £500,000 funding was secured from Peace IV to deliver a project entitled 'Your Place - Our Space'. The key purpose of the project is to deliver inter-generational environmental initiatives using parks and open spaces to promote community wellbeing. • Council continues to deliver its Good Relations and PCSP action plans. 	

Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Baseline	2017/18	RAG Status	Explanatory Notes
Childhood obesity rate of P1 pupils	-	4.9% in 2012/13 - 14/15 for P1 pupils and 28.2% in 2012/13 - 14/15 for Year 8 pupils**	5.2% in 2013/14-15/16 for P1 and 29.3% in 2013/14-15/16 for Year 8 pupils**.		These indicators are Community Plan related and are longer term in nature. There are therefore no targets set within the Corporate Plan.
The proportion of the over 65 population reporting they are in good health	-	In 2011, 80.2% of people stated their general health was either good or very good (Census 2011)	Reported every 10 years.		
Gap in life expectancy between the most deprived areas in the Borough and the Borough as a whole. data only available approximately every 5 years	-	3.3 years for males in 2012-14 and 3.2 years for females in 2012-14**	4.0 years for males 3.8 years for females in 2014-16**.		
Number of parks and green spaces awarded Green Flag status.	8	In 2016, 7 parks and green spaces were awarded Green Flag status (KNIB)	10		Eight Green Flags were awarded covering 10 parks and open spaces across the Borough.
The percentage of household waste collected by Council that is sent for recycling	50% household recycling by 2020	2016/17 45.3%	52.69%		See commentary in section 5.3 above.
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected	18,515 tonnes	2016/17 19,161 tonnes	14,221 tonnes		See commentary in section 5.3 above.

Municipal Waste that is landfilled.					
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings.*	No target	2016/17 75,188	72,404 tonnes		See commentary in section 5.3 above.
Grant Support Scheme: % of the funding awarded in Grant claims to be drawn down by applicants.	90% to be drawn down by March 2018****	82% of awarded funding drawn down during 2015/16	86.4%		This is a 12 month rolling target. There has been an improvement since last year but the target may need reviewed.
The percentage of people who feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.	-	86.1% felt a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood in 3 year average 2013 - 2015 *****	86.3% 2014-2016*****		These indicators are Community Plan related and are longer term in nature. There are therefore no targets set within the Corporate Plan.
The number of hate crime incidents recorded	143 incidents in 2015/16 (PSNI)	160 incidents reported 2016/17 (PSNI)	156 incidents reported 2017/18 (PSNI)		

* Statutory Indicator with no standard set.


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

*** Note: the 2017-2018 figures are provisional until verified by DAERA in mid-June 2018. Final Waste figures will be audited and publicly released by NIEA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency) on 1st December 2018. They can be used as a strong indicator of performance but cannot be published anywhere in advance of their release by NIEA.


****Indicator amended to 12 month rolling target.

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


Strategic Priority 4: Delivering Excellent Services

Key Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish measurable service standards which will demonstrate our commitment to the provision of high quality, effective yet value-for-money services. • Listen and learn from our customers to identify service priorities. • Embed effective governance arrangements which support open and transparent decision-making. • Develop a joined-up approach to service delivery across the organisation where the provision of excellent service is the responsibility of all. • Work with other service providers to design and deliver services which can be delivered in partnership and avoid duplication of public resources. 	
Key Achievements	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council participated in APSE NI Benchmarking Project and supplied data from a range of service areas for the 2016/17 year. • Council's Customer Charter was published in June 2017 and is available on Council's website. • In February 2018, Council approved a Resident's satisfaction survey to gauge customer satisfaction and to identify areas of focus for the new Corporate Plan. This will be rolled out in the autumn of 2018. • A Waste Services satisfaction survey was carried out in March 2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 71% of respondents said that Council makes it easy for them to recycle; 87% said that they were satisfied with black bin waste collection; 66% were satisfied with blue bin/kerbside boxes; ○ 82% were satisfied with the service at the Household Recycling Centres. • Following a collaboration between Regulatory Services and Parks and Open Spaces departments, January 2018 saw the launch of the MEA Smoke Free Play Campaign in Larne Town Park. The Scheme makes MEA the first Council in NI to have all 69 of its play parks smoke free. • Council led the Energy Detectives project which was rolled out to 14 schools and almost 400 pupils. This initiative aims to raise awareness on how to save energy and money by being more energy efficient within the home. Council were nominated as a finalist for an APSE award for this project. 	





Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Baseline 2016/17	2017/18	RAG Status	Explanatory Notes
% of formal complaints responded to, in line with MEA complaints policy, to ensure concerns are dealt with promptly	100% complaints responded to within the timescales specified in the policy	53%	50%		

Strategic Priority 5: Developing a high performing Council

Key Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be recognised as a leading council in all areas of service provision, both regionally and nationally. Invest in the people who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership. Establish performance management systems which will track performance and support the reporting of the Performance Improvement Plan and statutory performance indicators. Undertake baseline studies which will benchmark the Council's current performance levels and will inform future targets and measures. Maintain the financial health of the Council with robust mechanisms to support the effective and efficient use of resources. 	
Key Achievements	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council was awarded Platinum status in the Annual Environmental Benchmarking Survey. During April-December 2017, recycling food waste resulted in black bin waste falling by 18%, a reduction in landfill tonnage of 3972 tonnes and a 21% increase in brown bin organic waste of 1,945 tonnes, compared to the previous year. This has resulted in savings of over £150,000. A Personal Development Planning process has been introduced to support staff development. The process is being rolled out across the organisation. A new electronic purchase order processing system has been rolled out to improve financial controls around the purchasing process. A staff engagement survey was rolled out during March 2018. This highlighted strengths and areas for improvement with regard to improving staff satisfaction. A new performance management system has been introduced which will facilitate improved performance monitoring, reporting and management. 	

Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Baseline 2016/17	2017/18	RAG Status	Explanatory Notes
Absenteeism levels	16 days	18.32 days	17.08 days		An Absence Reduction project team has been established to address key areas within Council and to focus on delivery of best practice policy and procedures to closely manage the interface between employees and health related issues.
Health & Safety Accidents	5% decrease on accidents from 16/17 - 54 target	57	56		Health and Safety accidents have decreased from the baseline set in 2016/17. During the last 12 months there has been an increased focus on areas with the highest risk and more has been achieved with regards to education and awareness.
% of invoices paid within 30 working days	80% of invoices paid within 30 working days	88.1%	84.1%		Council have introduced a new system for electronic purchase ordering that has caused a temporary downward spike in our progress. However, this will improve now that the system is fully operational.
General (District) Fund Balance of Council within required range	5 - 7.5% of net operating expenditure	7.1%	Final figure is not yet available.		A figure will be available once the financial accounts are audited. It is forecast to be within target range.

5.4.2 Performance Improvement Plan

Within the Performance Improvement Plan 2017/18, specific performance indicators were defined against each of the Improvement Objectives. Progress has been made against achieving the objectives and relevant indicators, as outlined in section 5.1. It has been noted that not all indicators, such as customer satisfaction, were directly measurable during the year. Project Initiation Documents for the 2018/19 Improvement Objectives ensure that indicators are clearly defined for measuring progress against outcomes, as outlined in section 6.

5.4.3 Business Plans

Indicators were defined within Directorate and Department Business Plans across each service area and used to drive continuous improvement in all areas. Each Department Business Plan was scrutinised by the Audit & Scrutiny committee in a phased approach throughout the year.

On an ongoing basis, progress against outcomes and self-imposed indicators defined within business plans occurs at least every 6 months using R/A/G status updates in order to provide clarity. In addition, business plan updates are provided to relevant committees, where relevant. It has been noted that not all business plans were fully completed with clearly defined performance indicators. This has improved from previous years but is still an area for improvement going forward.

As outlined in section 3, a Performance Management Framework was developed during 2016/17. This Framework contains a business planning template that has been used for Directorate and Departmental business planning for the last 2 years (see Figure 1 below). Within the business planning template, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are defined against outcomes at every level of business planning.

Figure 1: Business Planning Template

Corporate Objective....					
Outcome	Action	Indicators	Targets	Lead Officer	Progress narrative Status: R/ A/ G

This template ensures that business planning has been linked directly to the 5 strategic priorities contained within Council's Corporate Plan. This ensures a consistent approach to strategic planning across the organisation and ultimately to delivery of the Corporate Plan.

The Performance Management Framework also enables the cascade of strategic priorities to employee individual work objectives. This is planned to be fully rolled out to all employees by March 2019.

5.4.4 Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have signed up with APSE on the 'NI Benchmarking Project', alongside 8 other Northern Ireland Councils. Benchmarking supports the development of a culture of continuous improvement, allowing us to compare our performance with other Councils within Northern Ireland and throughout the UK. Data collection templates have been developed for eleven service areas.

For the period 2015/16, Council contributed data from 5 service areas, and in 2016/17 increased this to 8 service areas.

Council contributed information from the following 10 service areas, for the period 2017/18:

- Environmental Health
- Parks, Open Spaces and Horticultural Services
- Cemetery and Crematorium Services
- Leisure Services (facility specific)
- Planning
- Economic Development
- Waste
- Arts and Heritage
- Community Development
- Corporate Services (OD/HR, ICT, Registration Services, Training & Learning, Finance & Financial Services, legal Services, Democratic Services, Cost of Services)

The data provided for 2017/18 will, as in previous years, be validated by APSE in accordance with their parameters. The APSE report is expected to be available from September 2018. However, it is recommended that data is used with caution, particularly as some indicators have been changed from previous years, reducing the opportunity for trend analysis. The APSE NI benchmarking project is now in its third year, and there have been minor amendments to the agreed indicators over that time. As the project develops, the data will become more useful for both year on year trend analysis and benchmarking against other Councils.

5.4.5 Best Practice Research

In addition to participation in the APSE Northern Ireland Benchmarking project, Mid and East Antrim Council staff across a range of service areas, alongside Elected Members, undertook a range of visits to look at best practice in other Councils areas.

These included:

- Visits to East Cheshire and Waverley Councils to look at models of delivering leisure services.
- Visits to neighbouring Councils to look at issues such as payroll systems and grants monitoring.
- Parks and Open Spaces staff participation in a Northern Ireland wide best practice forum which allows them to share and gain inspiration from staff across Northern Ireland.

A comprehensive list of best practice visits is included in Appendix 6.

5.5 Performance Audits

5.5.1 Internal Audit - 2017

ASM were appointed to conduct an internal audit review of Performance Improvement within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council during June 2017.

The objective of the review was to provide Council with an independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the control framework established by the Council.

The report was completed in September 2017. The audit highlighted that there was a gap at Directorate level in relation to Business Plans. This was addressed within the Performance Management Framework for 2017/18. Going forward Directorate Business Plans will be scrutinised at Audit & Scrutiny Committee every 6 months.

The audit also highlighted that not all Corporate Indicators had targets or baselines, and some Business Plans were not fully completed. These points of learning were factored into the business planning process for 2018/19, with improvements noted. All Corporate Indicators have baselines and targets apart from those that relate to the Community Plan and are longer term in nature. Due to a realignment of the senior team within Council, business plans for 2018/19 were delayed due to senior officers having new responsibilities.

An update on the management response to the recommendations of both the NIAO and internal audit was taken in a report to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 25th March 2018. This is included within Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

5.5.2 Northern Ireland Audit Office - External Audit 2017

Council's continuous improvement approach is subject to statutory external audit by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO).

The key issues raised by the NIAO in their audit of the 2016/17 Performance Improvement Plan were addressed in the 2017/18 Plan.

As a result of the audit that took place during June - September 2017, the NIAO concluded that:

- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has discharged its duties in connection with (1) improvement planning and (2) publication of improvement information in accordance with section 92 the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently.
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has, as far as possible, discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently.

A summary of the key actions taken by Council in response to the NIAO audit recommendations are outlined in Appendix 3, as discussed above.

6. Performance Improvement Objectives 2018-2019

In developing the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19 and its subsequent Improvement Objectives, the following process was undertaken by Council.

(i) Development of criteria for selecting Improvement Objectives

The NIAO Audit of the Performance Improvement Plan 2017/18 indicated the need for projects to be citizen-focused and of benefit to ratepayers. The Improvement Objectives were initially developed through a process of collaboration between the Operational Management Team and officers in the Corporate Performance & Improvement team within Council. The objectives were further developed with the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and Elected Members, before the launch of a public consultation.

Workshops held with the Senior Management Team and Elected Members in October and December agreed criteria for the selection of projects for 2018/19. The criteria are detailed in full within the Performance Improvement Plan, specifically in the section entitled 'Criteria for Selecting Improvement Projects' on pages 16 and 17 and published on the Council website

<https://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/pipplan>

(ii) Consultation Process

The 8-week public consultation conducted during March- April 2018 included specific consultation with young people, local business and community partners.

A summary of the comprehensive consultation process for the year 2018/19, including details of changes made to the Performance Improvement Plan as a result of feedback received, is detailed in the report taken to Council on 4th June 2018. It is published alongside the final Performance Improvement Plan and also published on the website.

<https://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/pipreport>

(iii) Publication of Performance Improvement Plan

The following Improvement Objectives have been agreed for the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19

	Improvement Objective	What we will do	By when
1	Grow the economy and create jobs within Mid and East Antrim Borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the 'Go For It' programme with the promotion of 85 jobs annually. • Lead the growth of new industry sectors in the Mid and East Antrim Borough, through the creation of 125 high tech jobs by March 2022. • Deliver an efficient and effective Planning Service. 	March 2022
2	Contribute to the sustainability of our local economy and to support the communities that live and work in the historic conservation area of Carrickfergus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support town centre regeneration through the structural repair, refurbishment and re-use of up to thirty target properties within the Carrickfergus conservation area. • Offer grant assistance to owners of targeted properties to undertake repair works in line with conservation architecture standards. 	October 2021
3	Improve customer engagement and service delivery by enhancing our use of information technology.	<p>Deliver our agreed Digital Transformation Strategy with the aim of achieving the following outcomes by 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAAA status - access to All citizens to services from Anywhere, at Any time on Any device; • A digitally literate workforce supported by IT resources and a culture of innovation; • Evidence-based decision making with real-time dashboard reporting; • Reliable, resilient, digitally inclusive IT infrastructure and services supported by trained staff. 	March 2021
4	Our older people are active, supported and respected in their community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the Dementia Friendly programme that is already implemented in Larne, into the Carrickfergus area of the Borough and expanding it into broader Age Friendly programmes. 	March 2019
5	To improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in local villages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek Rural Development Programme funding and manage the delivery of infrastructure improvement projects in three local villages. 	March 2019

On reviewing the improvement objectives against the agreed selection criteria and chosen improvement areas, we believe that they are:

- Legitimate
- Clear
- Robust
- Deliverable
- Demonstrable

The Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19 was approved by Council on 4th June 2018 and subsequently published on 30th June 2018.

7. Self-Assessment Summary

Area	Strengths	Areas for improvement
<p>Arrangements to secure continuous improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Performance Management Framework continues to be embedded to drive performance management and continuous improvement; • Governance arrangements for Performance Management are clearly defined within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council; Audit & Scrutiny Committee now receive quarterly updates regarding progress with Improvement Objectives and statutory indicators; • A new Performance Management System has been introduced which will improve performance monitoring, reporting and management throughout the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Personal Development Planning process needs to be fully implemented across the whole organisation; • Improvement Objectives need to continue to be closely monitored through the use of Project Initiation Documents to ensure continued relevance and progress of projects. • The use of the Performance Management System will continue to be further explored and developed to ensure strategic alignment through the planning process and the effective use of performance data to drive improvement.
<p>Assessment of Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement Objectives - Statutory indicators - Self-imposed indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54% of the outcomes from the Improvement Objectives for 2017/18 have been fully completed with 41% in progress; • All statutory indicators have exceeded the standards set; • Corporate Indicators have been implemented from 1st April 2017 and Council have received 2 progress update reports since that time. Both these reports show good progress with achievement of the corporate objectives and indicators. • Self-imposed indicators continue to be defined within Directorate and Departmental business plans. These are reported on every 6 months and monitored using RAG status analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Improvement Objectives continue to have outstanding actions. These need to be completed in order to fully realise the anticipated outcomes. • Timeliness for development of business plans continues to be an area for improvement; • The corporate indicators will be reviewed for relevance during the development process for the new Corporate Plan 2019-2023.
<p>Comparisons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To previous financial years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory performance indicators have year on year figures that are used to manage performance within the relevant Departments; • Mid and East Antrim Borough Council are the top performing Council for the statutory performance indicators in the areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The APSE 'Northern Ireland Benchmarking Project' is still in its infancy and many indicators have been rationalised and re-defined for 2017/18 financial year.

<p>- With Councils</p>	<p>other</p> <p>of Economic Development and Planning and anticipated 2nd top Council in Waste Management;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Indicators have baselines and targets, where appropriate, to provide trend analysis; • Mid and East Antrim Borough Council are participating in the APSE 'Northern Ireland Benchmarking Project'. This provides the basis for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council to compare its performance with 8 of the 11 other Councils across Northern Ireland. • Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has conducted best practice visits and reviews with other organisations in specific service areas to learn improved ways of delivering services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The corporate approach to benchmarking will continue to develop throughout 2018/19.
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8. Conclusions

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (The Act) requires Council to make arrangements for the publication of its assessment of its performance.

Council are required to publish a self-assessment report on performance by 30 September each year. This is the second year that Councils have been required to publish a self-assessment report in order to fulfil statutory requirements.

This Performance Self-Assessment report for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council covers the following areas relating to performance during 2017-2018:

- Arrangements to Secure Continuous Improvement
- Governance Arrangements for Performance Management
- Assessment of Performance
- Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19
- Self-Assessment summary

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have taken a wide range of actions throughout 2017/18 in order to further embed arrangements for continuous improvement. These include further embedding the Performance Management Framework, introduction of corporate indicators and procurement of an electronic Performance Management System which has become operational from 1 July 2018.

Council continues to perform above the Northern Ireland average with regard to the Statutory Performance Indicators. Progress towards meeting the Corporate Plan objectives is well on track.

Areas for improvement have been identified as a result of this self-assessment process which includes further development and embedding of existing arrangements for continuous improvement, particularly around the timeliness of business plans. Outstanding actions relating to our Performance Improvement Objectives need to be completed to fully realise the planned outcomes.

Abbreviations:

NIAO Northern Ireland Audit Office

OMT Operational Management Team

SMT Senior Management Team

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Performance Management Framework - Summary of plans

Appendix 2 Annual Planning cycle

Appendix 3 Management Response to NIAO recommendations

Appendix 4 Management Response to internal audit recommendations

Appendix 5 NI Business Start-Up programme 2017/18

Appendix 6 Benchmarking/Best Practice visits 2017/18

Appendix 1

The table below provides a brief summary of the plans illustrated within the Performance Management Framework:

Plan	Purpose
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Community Plan was launched on 1st April 2017. It is a long-term plan that sets a 15 year vision for improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Mid and East Antrim Borough. The development of the Community Plan is led by the Council in partnership with the public, voluntary and private sectors that work alongside the community to develop the plan; - The Community Plan has identified 5 strategic priorities and outlines 19 outcomes that the Partnership want to achieve over the lifetime of the plan. These priorities and outcomes will therefore provide the strategic direction for Council over the next 15 years.
Corporate Plan and Annual Corporate Business Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Corporate Plan was launched in April 2015 and is a 4-year strategic plan set by the Council. It identifies 5 strategic priorities and 22 objectives to be delivered within the period 2015-2019. - From 1st April 2017, Council have implemented corporate key performance indicators to measure the achievement of the corporate objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan. - Going forward, an annual Corporate Plan update will be produced to define how the Corporate Plan is being delivered on an annual basis and to measure progress against delivery. - The Performance Management system will allow for continuous monitoring of progress against the individual key performance indicators.
Directorate Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directorate Plans were introduced in April 2017. They are developed annually by each of the Directors in consideration of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan strategic priorities. - These Plans set the direction for the 4 Directorates and outline key performance indicators in line with best practice. They also ensure the flow upwards and downwards is visible and that objectives across Directorates are complementary.
Department Business Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department Business Plans set direction at a Department level by each of the Heads of Service and identify objectives to be achieved throughout the year. They explain how the Department helps to achieve the Directorate objectives and KPI's. They are used as a tool to manage performance consistently across the Departments. - During 2017 - 2018, staff involvement in developing Department Business Plans increased so that there is a more joined up approach, with contributions from both staff and management.
Employee Personal Development Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Personal Development Planning (PDP) process has been drafted, and piloted within the Waste Management Service. It is being rolled out to the entire organisation so that all staff objectives and development activities will be fully aligned with the Corporate Plan, and ultimately the Community Plan. The process ensures that staff are supported and developed to perform to the best of their ability, thereby enhancing the overall performance of the organisation.

Appendix 2

The table below illustrates the typical annual cycle for planning and review (excluding the Community Plan) for key elements within the Performance Management Framework.

The exact dates may vary depending on operational circumstances.

Milestone	Who	When
Review of Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and Business Plans	SMT/OMT	December
Business Planning template issued	Corporate Performance and & Improvement Department	October
Directorate and Department Business Plans drafted (including Team Planning days)	SMT/OMT	October - January
Draft Performance Improvement plan launched for consultation	Corporate Performance & Improvement Department	February - March
Directorate Business Plan to SMT/Committee	SMT	February
Department Business Plans to Director	OMT	January
PDPs agreed, including IWO and Competency Requirements (draft)	Line Managers/ Employees	April - May
Performance Improvement Plan published on website	Corporate Performance & Improvement Department	30 th June
6 -monthly updates on Directorate and Department Business Plans	SMT/OMT	6 - monthly
PDPs reviewed	Line Managers/ Employees	September - October

Appendix 3

Management Response to NIAO recommendations for improvement

1. General duty to improve

Recommendation	Update
Prioritise the implementation of Councils new performance management system to enable the performance of all its functions and services to be measured, to support the identification of those areas which would benefit most from improvement	The new Performance Management System was procured and initial training for senior staff took place on for 22 nd March 2018. Further training took place on 11 th and 12 th June for additional staff, and the system went live on 2nd July 2018. The KPI's and targets will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they remain apposite.

2. Governance arrangements

Recommendation	Update
Following the findings of the Internal Audit review the Council needs to be satisfied that its Audit and Scrutiny Committee (or other delegated committee), is subjecting the Council's improvement priorities, improvement objectives, activities, projects, risks and performance to appropriate scrutiny, challenge and evaluation on a regular basis. To this end, officers must provide the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the full Council with appropriate and timely information in relation to the delivery of its performance improvement responsibilities.	Audit and Scrutiny Committee now receive Performance Improvement Plan updates on a quarterly basis. Directorate Business Plans are reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

3. Improvement objectives

Recommendation	Update
<p>The Council should avoid improvement objectives that are excessively broad, aspirational and open-ended as they may lack the capability to inform effective action and accountability. Objectives should ideally both describe the overall purpose and the scope of action to deliver it (for example “we will provide more and better opportunities for citizens to engage in physical activity”).</p>	<p>All objectives within the 2018/19 Performance Improvement Plan have been drafted in line with this recommendation.</p>
<p>The Council should ensure that each improvement objective and its underlying projects are focused on outcomes for citizens in relation to improved functions and/or services. The outcome(s) should always be clearly stated so that citizens can understand how they will benefit</p>	<p>This is a key criteria for the selection of performance improvement objectives.</p> <p>All objectives within the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19 have been drafted in line with this recommendation. Following public consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Plan, some Improvement Objectives were reworded to make them more easily understood.</p>
<p>The Council should ensure that improvement can be demonstrated at the objective level and, where possible, measured through the use of meaningful performance indicators and data collection and/or other qualitative methods. Where possible and relevant, the Council should use and publish baseline performance data/information (and set standards which they hope to achieve) against which future improvement can be demonstrated.</p>	<p>All improvement objectives have Project Initiation Documents that outline expected improvements and performance indicators.</p> <p>However, the nature of some improvement objectives are that they are long term in nature and improvement will take longer than one year to demonstrate.</p> <p>Baseline data will be collected through the household survey to be undertaken in September 2018 as part of the approach to developing the new Corporate Plan.</p>

	<p>A household survey will take place in Q2 of 2018-19. In addition, a resident's survey in relation to waste management was issued in Q4 of 2017 - 18.</p> <p>A number of service area specific surveys will also be rolled out via Connections magazine going forward and the data used for benchmarking purposes.</p>
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4. Consultation

Recommendation	Update
<p>It is the Council's responsibility to promote and encourage its citizens and stakeholders to engage with it.</p>	<p>The Performance Improvement Plan for 2018/19 was subject to a comprehensive public consultation and engagement programme. This incorporated 3 public meetings, a Council Schools Youth Council event with approximately 130 young people, an article promoting the Consultation in Connections, the Borough wide magazine in March 2018 and on the Council website. In addition over 80 local groups were invited by email to respond to the Consultation, as well as local businesses and Council staff. A total of 79 responses were submitted either online or at public events.</p> <p>The household survey, and service area specific surveys across the Borough will provide opportunities for citizens and stakeholders to engage with the Council in relation to the services we provide and drive improvement.</p>

5. Improvement Plan

Recommendation	Update
<p>Whilst the plan is transparent in respect of its improvement objectives and includes a commitment to continuous improvement, it does not have a clear description of its arrangements to meet its continuous improvement duty.</p>	<p>The Council's arrangements to improve were provided in a diagrammatic form, illustrating how the various strategic plans interlink. This diagram includes our annual business planning process which drives continuous improvement within the organisation.</p> <p>The Performance Management Framework is outlined within the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19, with a narrative as to how our Framework is used to drive our commitment to continuous improvement.</p>

<p>In addition, whilst there is a list of the statutory indicators and standards that the Council is required to meet, it does not always describe its arrangements to meet these (as required by section 92(4) of the 2014 Act). Without additional clarity in its future plans, the Council is at risk of not being fully compliant with the legislation.</p>	<p>It is unclear from the DfC guidance what level of detail is expected regarding the description of Council's arrangements to meet the statutory indicators. Further clarity has been requested from NIAO and DfC. Councils provide statutory services and these are unlikely to change year on year, therefore, it does not seem reasonable to provide a description every year.</p> <p>The regional Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, formed a multi-stakeholder group with the Department for Communities and the NIAO. This multi-stakeholder group is addressing issues raised by local Councils in relation to the legislation, guidance and audit process.</p> <p>Our improvement objectives are linked directly to achieving the standards set for the statutory performance indicators, as far as possible, and a description of our arrangements to meet these standards is included within the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19.</p>
<p>Good practice suggests that the Council should provide a rationale within its improvement plan for any prior year improvement objectives which have not been brought forward and which have not been achieved. The Council should also continue to monitor any ongoing improvement delivered by prior year short-term improvement objectives (that is those lasting only one year) as part of its duty to continuously improve.</p>	<p>The Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19 contains updates on the 2016/17 and 2017/18 projects that were still not fully implemented by the end of the year to which they related and were not carried forward into the subsequent year's Performance Improvement Plan. The projects are all still being progressed within Council, with the majority having now been fully implemented.</p>

6. Arrangements to improve

Recommendation	Update
<p>While arrangements are in place to deliver the current year improvement objectives, we are not yet able to determine the extent of any improvement which will be delivered because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council's performance improvement arrangements are not yet fully established or embedded corporately; • some improvement objectives are broad, open-ended and set at a highly strategic level, and are not always outcome-based; • a number of improvement projects are at early stages of development and unlikely to deliver improvement in the short term; and • outcomes are not always well defined and there is an absence of baselines and standards from which to measure improvement. 	<p>Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will continue to fully embed performance improvement arrangements.</p> <p>The new Performance Management System was procured and initial training for senior staff took place on for 22nd March 2018. Further training took place on 11th and 12th June for additional staff, and the system went live on 2nd July 2018.</p> <p>All of the improvement objectives within the Performance Improvement Plan 2018/19 have been drafted in line with these recommendations. Council Officers will review how improvement objectives are structured so measurable outcomes for citizens are clear.</p>

7. Performance Reporting

Recommendation	Update
<p>Performance Information :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to any local indicators and standards relating specifically to improvement objectives, the Council should select a range of local indicators and standards to enable it to measure and monitor improvement across its full range of functions, as part of its general duty arrangements to continuously improve. This information should be included in the published Performance Improvement Plan and Performance Self-Assessment Report and provide year on year comparisons 	<p>Corporate indicators were introduced from 1st April 2017. The first 6-month report on progress was taken to Council in December 2017.</p> <p>However, it is unclear how many indicators and what level of detail is required to be published within the Performance Improvement Plan for the 'full range of functions' of a Council, which are extensive. Further clarification is being sought from DfC and NIAO.14</p> <p>Performance indicators across the full range of functions are included within directorate and departmental business plans.</p> <p>The multi-stakeholder group highlighted above will address issues raised by local Councils in relation to the legislation, guidance and audit process.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council should ensure that the performance management framework reflects the performance improvement responsibilities, is finalised and embedded across all of its functions 	<p>The Performance Management Framework continues to be embedded within the organisation.</p> <p>All staff are scheduled to have Personal Development Plans (PDPs) by March 2019.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council should continue working with other councils and the Department to agree a suite of self-imposed indicators and standards. This will enable meaningful 	<p>This work is being taken forward by the regional Local Government Performance Improvement Sub Group, currently chaired by the Chief Executive of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.</p>

comparisons to be made and published in line with its statutory responsibility	
<i>Publication of Performance Information :</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment reports must include a section on performance in relation to its general duty to improve as required under the legislation. 	This self-assessment report contains further information in relation to the general duty to improve, including the progress made in relation to the Corporate Indicators.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessments should not focus solely on the underlying projects, but also include an assessment of the Council's progress in delivering its improvement objectives. 	Incorporated into this self-assessment report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report should include an assessment of performance against local (non-statutory) indicators. 	Incorporated into this self-assessment report.

Appendix 5

Table of jobs promoted through the Business Start-up Programme 2017/18

Council Area	Total BPA's Delivered (April 2017 to Mar 2018)	Target Jobs	Target jobs promoted	Balance of jobs to be promoted	% Jobs Achieved Vs Statutory Target
Antrim and Newtownabbey	124	80	83	-3	103%
Armagh, Banbridge Craigavon	276	165	185	-20	112%
Belfast	361	325	249	76	77%
Causeway Coast and Glens	267	125	185	-60	148%
Derry and Strabane	213	140	139	1	99%
Fermanagh and Omagh	281	170	193	-23	113%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	146	85	96	-11	113%
Mid and East Antrim	205	85	140	-55	165%
Mid Ulster	326	210	223	-13	106%
Newry, Mourne and Down	245	155	168	-13	109%
Ards and North Down	138	85	92	-7	108%
Total	2,582	1,625	1,752	-127	107.8%

Appendix 6

Visits by MEA Staff / Elected Members in relation to Benchmarking / Best Practice

Location / Council	Dates	Department	Area of Service / Purpose of Visit	Staff involved	Follow up from visit / lessons learnt / actions taken
Manchester Inside Government Seminary – Income generation	28 th March 2018	Strategic Finance	Reviewing case studies from across England of innovative and alternative income generation	Ian Eagleson, Head of Strategic Finance	Report to Chief Executive with areas recommended for further scoping and planning
London - iESE event on Transformation called “Innovation Club	6/7 th March 2018	Corporate Performance and Improvement	A range of projects were showcased in relation to transformation – Transformation through Technology (Milton Keynes), Reinventing local services (Broxbourne BC leisure) Poll Manager and Horsham District Council – Immericare – Virtual Reality for Health	Siobhan Fisher, Head of Corporate Performance and Improvement and Cllr Audrey Wales	Follow up report for SMT and OMT 11.04.18 and meeting with Peter Kilkenny 14.05.18, with further discussion planned.
Dublin - Holidayworld Dublin Exhibition Field Trip with local tourism and hospitality industry	Saturday 27 th January 2018	Tourism	The intention of the field trip was to highlight to local tourism and hospitality businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what the show is about, with a talk provided by the show organiser outlining the show’s success and benefits to businesses; - how the Mid and East Antrim Borough stand operates alongside other Council stands; and scope for developing presence at this and other trade shows - the potential for expansion of the stand and participation by trade partners for the following year. 	5 staff from Council Tourism team and 35 representatives from local businesses	This provided an excellent opportunity for networking, generated realistic expectations of exhibitions and identified future trade opportunities. Follow up exhibition skills training for consumer shows was arranged as part of the Spring 2018 industry training programme. Cluster chairs and Council staff are now reviewing plans for exhibition attendance and participation in 2018.
Seamus Heaney Birthplace, Mid Ulster Council	13 th March 2018	Tourism – Visitor Information and retail	Attended training by Tourism NI and offered a tour of facilities. Look at retail offer, local crafters and displays, stock management and information literature.	Visitor Services Officer and Visitor Services Advisor	Ideas taken back to be implemented in Visitor Information Centres in Larne, Ballymena and Carrickfergus.

Giants Causeway, National Trust	17 th May 2018	Tourism – Visitor Information and retail	Recommended by Tourism NI to comprehend the level of local crafters, merchandising and display and the role of the visitor information within the centre.	Visitor Services Officer and Tourism Development Officer	Potential to stock similar crafters, staff to be sent on visit to understand displays, merchandising and role of retail within a VIC.
Derry and Strabane City Council	18 th May 2018	Finance	Visit to Foyle Arena to view Legends Front of House Booking System	Philip McKinney / Shane Moore	With business Area for decision / planning on MEA Solution. Business area were able to speak to staff currently using to here both positive and negative thoughts prior to planning MEA Procurement
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council (ANBC)	24 th May 2018	Finance	Purchase Ledger – View systems and processes	Margaret McIlfratrick, Karen Boyd, Colette Montgomery	Systems in MEA can be improved which would lead to increase Prompt Payments stats and possibly reduce staffing requirements. Processes seem to be on par with ANBC until their advanced system streamlines while MEA revert to Manual process. Invested in TotalMobile consultant to visit (8th June) and implement new portlets to improve system.
Belfast City Council	15 th Feb 2018	Finance	To review Belfast City Council's processes and procedures for Grants Monitoring through the Grants Management Software System	Grants Officers	New ways of process refinement - (paper to digital) to be considered by management.
Cheshire East Council	October 2917	Leisure	To view new Leisure centre	Mayor, Cllr Audrey Wales, Trevor Kyle, Philip Thompson	Arranged visit to Waveney as well, on recommendation.
Waveney Council , West Sussex	Jan 18	Leisure	To look at new Leisure Centre, but also model of operation	As above, also Sandra Cole, Bernie Candlish and Karen Hargan	Learning around appointment of strategic partner for leisure, operation of leisure services using a Trust model and delivery of improved services using limited resources.
Cardiff, Wales	21/22 nd November 2017	Regulatory Services and Economic Development	Day 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information on current structures, priorities & challenges for Environmental Day 1 Share information on current structures, priorities & challenges for 	Patricia Allen, Head of regulatory Services, Elaine Thompson, PEHO (Business	Day 1 – Excellent networking opportunity and good contacts established. Experiences of Welsh councils so beneficial as they are on a comparative scale to councils in NI. Particularly helpful to hear what peers thought was critical for success and also hear

			<p>Environmental Health Service to support business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and compare Welsh food business support models operating nationally (Primary Authority) and within Denbighshire, Monmouthshire, Merthyr Tydfil & Caerphilly • To explore the extent to which economic development resources can be utilised for business support in the food sector • To receive an update on the Wales Position on “Regulating our Future” <p>Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain knowledge of the Nationality Checking Service operated by Cardiff City Council – this service is not provided by any council in NI currently • To explore the resources required to establish and deliver this service with a view to scoping income generation potential within the MEA Registration Service • Health Service to support business • Discuss and compare Welsh food business support models operating nationally (Primary Authority) and within Denbighshire, Monmouthshire, Merthyr Tydfil & Caerphilly • To explore the extent to which economic development resources can be utilised for business support in the food sector • To receive an update on the Wales Position on “Regulating our Future” 	<p>Support & Improvement) and Eva Cassidy,</p>	<p>what did not work well. Information shared verbally with EHNI (11 council regional group for EH) and own staff teams upon return. Successful collaboration with Economic Development has continued and further joint visits researched.</p> <p>Day 2 – Verbal report to P Thompson (Director). Legal and financial concerns have meant that any proposal for replication of nationality checking service within MEA is not feasible at present.</p>
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Causeway Coast & Glens Council (Megaw Park, Ballymoney and Diversity Park, Portstewart)	19/12/2017	Parks and Open Spaces	To examine play provision in 2 parks frequently cited by members of the public as examples of best practice during consultation events	S Daye, C Duddy, A Diver and D McVeigh	Visit informed the Play Strategy for the Borough, business cases for new play provision (inclusive play especially) and a funding bid to Fields in Trust for a Trim Trail for People's Park
Belfast City Council - Connswater Greenway	19/06/2018	Parks and Open Spaces	To examine best practice and learning from one of NI's most successful greenway projects	C Duddy & N Curneen	Will inform detailed Feasibility Study which is currently being completed for the Glens of Antrim Greenway in partnership with Causeway Coast and Glens Council
NWP (Natural World Products) processing plant	02/02/2018	Parks and Open Spaces	To examine play provision in 2 parks frequently cited by members of the public as examples of best practice during consultation events	A Carmichael, P Mawhinney, N Robinson and M Gattineau	NWP compost now used in parks and flower beds across the Borough, important for sustainable development as well as cost effective
Eden Allotment Gardens	23/03/2018	Parks and Open Spaces	Best practice in managing allotment gardens, Council staff from across NI invited to attend APSE training day on site. 15 attendees	A Diver and M Gattineau	Council allotment staff in touch re: allotment management via informal networking
Visited: Various including Cave Hill Country Park (Belfast), Dungannon Park (Dungannon), Castle Park (Lisburn). Hosted: 8 MEA sites	Ongoing	Parks and Open Spaces	Best practice in Parks and Open Spaces. Scheme allows peers to visit judge sites and score based on Green Flag criteria - A welcoming place/Healthy, safe and secure/Clean and well maintained/Sustainability/Conservation and heritage/Community involvement/Marketing/Management	A Diver	Opportunities for networking and gaining inspiration and knowledge from colleagues across NI. MEA Council currently has 8 Green Flag standard sites. Site visits influence MEA management of sites
Various	Ongoing	Parks and Open Spaces	The meetings bring officers and 'in bloom' volunteers together to share good practice, funding advice, networking and building supportive networks for those involved in improving their local areas. Meetings are moved around the Borough to showcase all towns and villages. Best practice visits have included bus trip to award winning towns/villages in the Borough and to sites of horticultural excellence, e.g. Kilcoan Gardens, Islandmagee	A Diver	Improvements made in own service. Community volunteers inspired and supported. New members joining partnership. Borough improved overall for residents and visitors

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	14/02/2018	Parks and Open Spaces	View a remote controlled ride on mower re: Health & Safety benefits	Alex Carmichael and Stephen Galvin	
Antrim and Newtownabbey	22/03/2018	Parks and Open Spaces	Best practice visit to Steeple Men's Shed in Antrim (part of Action Mental Health) to show Men's Sheds groups from within Mid and East Antrim a good example of a Men's Shed project.	Susan Lynn	These Men's Shed groups really enjoyed the visit, made good contacts and saw what could be achieved. They asked the Steeple participants plenty of interesting questions about how they got established and how they got over the teething problems. The groups also all met each other, strengthening connections amongst the Men's Shed groups within the Borough

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