

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

13 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of the Ards and North Down Borough Corporate Services Committee which will be held remotely via Zoom on **Tuesday, 13 October 2020 at 7pm.**

Yours faithfully

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
- 2.1 Declarations of Interest
- 2.2 Presentation from the NI Housing Executive – Housing Investment Plan (Copy plan and Information Paper attached)
3. ANDBC Project Management Policy (Report attached)
4. Update on Performance Reporting (Report attached)
5. Quarterly Report on Equality and Good Relations (s75 of the NI Act 1998) 1 July – 30 September 2020 (Report attached)
6. Request to Light up Council Buildings by Beyond the Battlefield (Report attached)
7. Notices of Motion
- 7.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman M Smith

'Following the decision from the Infrastructure Minister announcing the roll out of a part-time 20mph speed limit schemes at 100 schools across Northern Ireland which is welcomed. However, it is difficult to understand why North Down has not had one school included in her list. I propose that as a Council we write to the Minister asking

her to review or amend her list and that schools in Ards and North Down are seen as a priority with our children given the same effort to make our roads safer outside school gates.'

7.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor MacArthur:

'That this Council Writes to The Minister of Infrastructure expressing concern that Ards and North Down has received the lowest Roads investment budget for the second consecutive year and requests an increase in funding for roads investment and repairs to take place on the roads so desperately in need of attention across our Borough as a matter of urgency.'

8. Any Other Notified Business

Circulated for Information

- (a) Department of Infrastructure - Part time speed limits at Primary Schools in the North Down and Ards Council area (Copy letter dated 30th September attached)

ITEMS 9 – 12 *IN CONFIDENCE*****

- 9. Request from NI Water to purchase land at Upper Crescent Comber (Report attached)
- 10. Renewal of the Tenancy Agreement for the Gate Lodge, Abbey Street (Report attached)
- 11. Station Road Craigavad, Right of Way (To follow)
- 12. Closure of Alleged PROW (Report attached)

MEMBERSHIP OF CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE (16 Members)

Alderman Keery	Councillor Dunlop
Alderman Gibson (Vice-Chairman)	Councillor Egan
Alderman Girvan	Councillor Greer
Alderman Irvine	Councillor Gilmour
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor Mathison
Councillor Blaney	Councillor McKimm
Councillor Chambers (Chairman)	Councillor T Smith
Councillor Cooper	Councillor P Smith

ITEM 3**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	13 October 2020
Responsible Director	Director of Finance and Performance
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Strategic Capital Development
Date of Report	30 September 2020
File Reference	Not applicable
Legislation	Not applicable
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject	ANDBC Project Management Policy
Attachments	Appendix 1 Project Management Policy and 2 accompanying Project Management Handbook

Ards and North Down Borough Council (the Council) delivers many capitals projects. In order to ensure that these projects are delivered consistently, efficiently and within an effective governance framework, the new Project Management Policy and its supporting Project Management Handbook (the Handbook), provide the basic principles for project management to be undertaken within the Council. This Policy and its supporting Handbook primarily addresses capital project management, but the model can be applied to any project type, size or nature, by adapting the level of detail, documentation and reporting, relevant to the complexity of a given project.

The approach encapsulated in the new Policy is based on established and recognised project management processes e.g. PRINCE2, Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) and The Royal Institute of British Architects' (RIBA's) The Project Management Lifecycle.

This Policy applies to the delivery of all capital projects.

The Policy is to be used in combination with the recently updated PM Handbook which will be made available to all staff on the Council intranet.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council agrees the Project Management Policy.

POLICY COVER SHEET

Policy Title	Project Management Policy
Policy/File Reference	Project Management Policy
Version	0.2
Policy Summary	This Policy with its supporting Project Management Handbook establishes a delivery process and a robust governance framework for the consistent, efficient and effective management of capital projects within Ards and North Down Borough.
Responsible Officer(s)	Head of Strategic Capital Development
Date of Equality Screening	
Date of consultation with Consultative Panel	N/A
Date of consultation with Unions	N/A
Date of Council approval	
Implementation date	
Appendices attached	
Next review date	

Revision History:

Version	Changes made by	Date	Reason for change
0.2	Corporate Project Officer B MacSorley	March 2020	Policy development
0.1	Corporate Project Officer B MacSorley	February 2018	Policy development

Project Management Policy

Contents

Project Management Policy	3
Introduction	3
Definition.....	3
Purpose	3
Scope	3
Project Management Handbook.....	3
Objectives.....	4
Who does this apply to.....	4
Roles and responsibilities	4
Approach	5
Benefits.....	5

Project Management Policy

Introduction Ards and North Down Borough Council (the Council) delivers many capitals projects. In order to ensure that these projects are delivered consistently, efficiently and within an effective governance framework, this Policy and its supporting Project Management Handbook (the Handbook), provide the basic principles for project management to be undertaken within the Council. This Policy and its supporting Handbook primarily addresses capital project management but the model can be applied to any project type, size or nature, by adapting the level of detail, documentation and reporting, relevant to the complexity of a given project.

Definition **A project** is defined as an activity distinct from business-as-usual action. It has: a clearly defined business case; a defined start and end; defined scope and resources; defined and measurable outcomes, and is intended to accomplish a specific goal.

Project Management is defined as the application of processes, methods, knowledge, skills and experience to achieve the project objectives.

Purpose To provide a consistent, process-based approach to the project governance and project management approach adopted by the Council. This Policy is underpinned by a Project Management Handbook, and is best read in conjunction with that document.

Scope This Policy applies to the delivery of all capital projects. The extent of detail required will vary in accordance with the size and nature of individual projects.

The Project Management Handbook It is this Council's Policy that all capital projects will follow the principles outlined within the Handbook.

The Handbook has been written primarily in consideration of the management of capital projects, however, its principles offer a model which can be tailored and applied to any type, size or nature of project.

Project Management Policy, Continued

The Project Management Handbook, continued

The Handbook details the stages involved in the project management lifecycle, and outlines the guiding principles, processes, roles and responsibilities that will define the establishment, management and control of an entire project in order to achieve its stated objectives and the performance targets set.

Objectives

- To agree a consistent, process-based approach for the governance and management of capital projects.
 - To meet Audit requirements.
-

Who does this apply to

Council employees, temporary and agency staff involved in the management, delivery or control of capital projects.

Roles and responsibilities

The Council requires that:

- an effective governance framework is in place for the management and delivery of its capital projects;
- it is suitably informed regarding Capital Plan estimates, which may impact the District Rate setting;
- Council is made aware of the risks which may impact upon the delivery of the organisation's plans;

Descriptions of individual roles and responsibilities can be found in the Project Management Handbook.

Continued on next page

Project Management Policy, Continued

Approach

The approach is based on established and recognised project management processes e.g. PRINCE2, Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) and The Royal Institute of British Architects' (RIBA's) The Project Management Lifecycle.

The process controls each project's lifecycle through four key stages:



A detailed description of each stage is provided in the Project Management Handbook.

Benefits

The main benefits for Council from adopting the approach set out in this Policy and attendant Project Management Handbook are:

- Reassurance that project management within the Council is based on recognised and excellent practice used worldwide;
 - Clear, consistent and structured approach to Council's project management;
 - The demonstration of good project governance;
 - Improved and consistent approach to the training of all project-handling staff within the Council;
 - Mitigation of risks associated with project overruns on time and cost;
 - Realisation of project savings through increasingly efficient project management;
 - Achievement of Audit recommendations through improved Project Management processes.
-

Project Management Handbook

V1.0

Project and Capital Unit

Version Control

Version	Dated	Modification
1.0	November 14, 2019	Released

Index

1. Introduction to the handbook

2. The Basics

3. Stage 1 – Define Stage (RIBA 0)

- 3.1 Pre-project Trigger
- 3.2 Project Brief
- 3.3 Completing the Project Brief
 - 3.3.1 Designing the Project Team
 - 3.3.2 Project Governance
 - 3.3.3 Lessons
- 3.4 Equality, Rural-Proofing & Sustainability Screening
- 3.5 Approval to proceed to the next stage

4. Stage 2 - Discovery Stage (RIBA 1)

- 4.1 Rationale
- 4.2 Feasibility Study
- 4.3 Produce the PID and Business Case
 - 4.3.1 Section 1: Project Overview
 - 4.3.2 Section 2: Project Organisation
 - 4.3.3 Section 3: Project Processes and Controls
- 4.4 Equality, Rural Proofing and Sustainability screening
- 4.5 PID Approval
- 4.6 Next Stage Approval

5. Stage 3 – Design Stage (RIBA 2-4)

- 5.1 Rationale
- 5.2 Procure and appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT)
- 5.3 Site Surveys & Site Information Report
- 5.4 Develop the Concept Design
 - 5.4.1 Next stage approval
- 5.5 Changes/Variations
- 5.6 Developed Design
 - 5.6.1 Next stage approval
- 5.7 Technical Design
- 5.8 Complete Full Business Case
 - 5.8.1 Next stage approval
- 5.9 Procure and appoint the Contractor
 - 5.9.1 Appointment of Main Contractor Approval

6. Stage 4 - Delivery Stage (RIBA 5-7)

- 6.1 Rationale
- 6.2 Pre-Start meeting
- 6.3 Health and Safety
- 6.4 Contractor Mobilisation
- 6.5 Construction through to Practical Completion
- 6.6 Commissioning and Handover:
- 6.7 Completion of Defects and Payment of Retention
- 6.8 Post Project Evaluation

Index continued

7. Appendices (documents to follow)

- Appendix A. Project Brief Template
- Appendix B. Roles & Responsibilities
- Appendix C. Project Governance Structure
- Appendix D. Project Initiation Document
- Appendix E. Exception Report Template
- Appendix F. Project Status Report Template
- Appendix G. Risk Register
- Appendix H. Risk Prompt List
- Appendix I. Risk Matrix
- Appendix J. Risk Action Table
- Appendix K. Risk Response Table
- Appendix L. Post Project Evaluation Template

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK

- 1.1 The Project Management Handbook (the Handbook) underpins the Project Management Policy (the Policy) adopted by Ards and North Down Borough Council (the Council) and its principles are to be followed for the development, management and delivery of all projects.
- 1.2 The Handbook has been produced by the Project and Capital Unit to provide a project management framework based on best-practice models and recognised international standards e.g. PRINCE2, Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) and The Royal Institute of British Architects' (RIBA's) The Project Management Lifecycle.
- 1.3 The Handbook primarily addresses capital project management but the model can be applied to any project type, size or nature, by adapting the level of detail, documentation and reporting, relevant to the complexity of a given project.
- 1.4 The Handbook outlines the Project Management Lifecycle and provides a set of guiding principles, processes, roles and responsibilities that define the establishment, management and control of the project to achieve its stated objectives and performance targets.
- 1.5 It recognises that project management involves three processes. One is concerned with determining and effecting the desired change – The Project. The second is concerned with managing the impact of changes effected, and aiding with transition – The Process. The third involves handover of the finished project for its ongoing maintenance and operation – The Handover. All three must be considered in a holistic approach to project management.

1.6 Target Audience

Any member of staff employed, seconded by or contracted to Council and playing a key role in projects will need to familiarise themselves with the information and guidance in the Handbook. It is written in a way that assumes no previous project management experience.

1.7 The Project and Capital Unit (PCU)

The PCU is a central service, offering experience and assistance in capital project management. Requests for their support can be made formally through the monthly CPPB meetings. The level of support will be agreed, based on need and staff availability. For general guidance and information email: PCU@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk.

2. THE BASICS

- 2.1** The Handbook takes a phased approach to the day-to-day management and control of projects undertaken within the Council. The four stages in the project management lifecycle are illustrated below:



2.2 Define Stage – determines what needs to be accomplished

The Define Stage is to agree firm foundations on which a project can be initiated. A Project Brief document is produced to confirm, for all stakeholders, an initial view on why the project is required, what it needs to achieve, who needs to be involved, key project elements and the steps required to reach identified objectives. At the end of this stage a decision is taken on whether the project will progress to the next stage.

2.3 Discover Stage – determines successful project outcomes

The Discovery Stage is an opportunity to assess in detail the practicality of the concept by carrying out a Feasibility Study if necessary. This stage can better inform the design stage by considering best practice lessons, refining the requirements/needs, analyzing demographics etc. and estimating project costs. A Project Initiation Document is created upon which Council takes a formal initial investment decision, marking this Stage's end.

2.4 Design Stage – develops the concept

The purpose of the Design Stage is to develop the initial concept design ideas into Specifications and Drawings (if applicable) which can be used to obtain a detailed Cost Plan, translate the project design into Tender Documentation, and ultimately, to issue a Contract to execute the works.

2.5 Delivery Stage – construction, testing & evaluation to fully meet objectives

During this long and involved stage, onsite construction takes place in accordance with the Contractor's Construction Programme; design queries and issues from site are resolved as they arise. Commissioning, completion and handover ensue with testing, inspection and acceptance of works, conclusion of the building contract, and updating of as-constructed Information. Once handed over, the Client progresses staff training, transition and operation of the project. The Delivery stage also includes tasks associated with the defects liability period, issue of the Final Certificate and completion of a Post Project Evaluation. Other project types e.g. Business Technology may follow different delivery routes.

- 2.6** These Stages are more fully detailed in the following sections, each with a summary of actions required provided at the end of each Section.

3. Stage 1 – Define Stage (RIBA 0)

3.1 Pre-project Trigger

Within Council, projects are triggered when a Service Unit or Council Member identifies an idea or a need resulting from: exercises to set the Rate, requirements to better align with Service Unit or Corporate objectives, via a Notice of Motion raised at a Council meeting, or in response to the emergence of an external funding opportunity.

Once identified, the concept is to be discussed with the Sponsoring Directorate (SD) who, if the concept is considered feasible, has responsibility for completing a Project Brief (template at Appendix A).

Whilst responsibility for this remains with the SD, it is recommended that the Project & Capital Unit (PCU) and Finance Unit are informed of the project at this early stage and used to provide advice and guidance as required.

3.2 Project Brief

Baseline information is required to determine whether the proposed project is viable and it is the responsibility of the SD to complete a Project Brief, providing a strategic outline case, which will inform project assessment and a decision from the Sponsoring Directorate's Parent Committee on whether to proceed and include the potential scheme in Council's Capital Programme.

A Project Brief template is provided at Appendix A. This can be used as the basis for the SD's initial brainstorming session with stakeholders. This meeting often gives the first opportunity for structured thinking about project fundamentals.

The completed Project Brief provides the SD with an agreed, commonly-understood and well-defined outline strategy and rationale for starting a project. It offers an initial view on project scope, confirms key requirements and stakeholders, and identifies the steps required to reach the project's objectives.

The completed Project Brief is also used at the start of the Discovery Stage (Stage 2), forming the basis for a Project Initiation Documentation (PID). The PID then supersedes the Project Brief to become the working document for managing and directing project development.

3.3 Completing the Project Brief

The Project Brief template provided at Appendix A is more or less self-explanatory in terms of the information to be considered and recorded, however, a few additional pointers and suggestions are included below.

3.3.1 Designing the Project Team

Projects need the right people in place with the right skills, authority, responsibility and knowledge to make timely decisions. The project management team needs to reflect the interests of all parties involved, including client, user and supplier.

The SD along with input from the Project and Capital Unit (PCU) team will identify the right people and expertise for the project team. To begin designing the team, complete the project team section of the project brief document. Before completing this section refer to the Roles & Responsibilities document (Appendix B), the roles found within a project team together with the general responsibilities associated with each role are outlined in this document. If required, the responsibilities can be amended to suit a particular project.

3.3.2 Project Governance

When considering the project's governance structure, make sure that the suitable people are included to ensure:

- appropriate information flow between all stakeholders
- key issues are given adequate consideration
- decisions can be taken at appropriate level and times
- guidance is given throughout the project to enable success

The structure should be in line with the Project Governance Structure that can be referenced in Appendix C.

3.3.3 Lessons

It is beneficial at this early stage to start the process of reviewing previous lessons. Several lessons may have been learned by other similar projects about weaknesses or strengths of the processes, procedures, techniques and tools used, when they were used, how they were used, and by whom.

It may be useful to hold a workshop as a means to capture this information. Attendees would include interested parties and people who have worked on previous similar projects. If a similar type of project has not been done before internally, it may be helpful to include people external to the organisation with relevant experience, who have worked on, or delivered similar projects.

The PCU's Lessons Learned database, which is updated and held by the PCU should also be reviewed at this point.

3.4 Equality, Rural-Proofing & Sustainability Screening

The SD undertakes screening with the Compliance Officer to identify the project's likely impact on:

- Equality of Opportunity and/or Good Relations
- Economic, Environmental and Social Sustainability.

Screening is one of the key tools by which Public Authorities can monitor their statutory obligations and can incorporate Section 75 equality and good relations duties into policy development and service delivery. It applies to all services, policies, procedures, practices and decisions.

It is useful to introduce screening at development of the project concept, and this could eliminate waste of effort. As the project develops it will be subject to further screening.

3.5 Approval to Proceed to the Next Stage

With the Project Brief and Screening complete, the SD is responsible for introducing the project at the Corporate Project Portfolio Board (CPPB) meeting for review and a decision on whether to add it to the Corporate Projects Portfolio (CPP) as a concept project.

If agreed, the Project and Capital Manager appoints a Corporate Projects Officer (CPO) from PCU to act as Council's project manager, liaising closely with the SD.

Minutes of CPPB meetings are reported to the Corporate Services Committee in due course, however, it remains the responsibility of the SD to report to their next relevant Parent Committee for formal approval of project scope and final permission to proceed to the next stage, subject to its position on the project prioritisation list.

It is also the SD's responsibility to notify stakeholders of the outcome of Define Stage – either that the project will proceed to the next stage or that it has been dropped. If the project is recommended to proceed, the SD confirms for the CPO whether or not a Feasibility Study is required at Discovery stage, based upon the amount and quality of detailed information already available.

4.Stage 2 - Discovery Stage (RIBA 1)

The Discovery Stage is an opportunity to assess in detail the practicality of the concept by carrying out a Feasibility Study if necessary. This stage better informs the design stage by considering best practice lessons, refining the requirements/needs, analysis of demographics etc. and estimating project costs. A Project Initiation Document is created upon which Council takes a formal initial investment decision, marking the Stage's end.

4.1 Rationale

If it is determined in the Define Stage that the need for the project seems viable this stage will further assess in detail the practicality of the proposed project. Where deemed necessary and on the recommendation of the Parent Committee at the end of the Define stage, a Feasibility Study may need to be carried out within this stage, this is based upon the amount and quality of detailed information already available.

This stage should better inform design through learning from best practice, definition of requirements/needs, relevant analysis e.g. demographics. It is key within this stage to focus on pinning down parameters, timelines and costs. Areas that were focused on in the Define Stage should also be reviewed, further developed where necessary and inserted in the Project Initiation Document (PID) that is initiated at this stage.

At the end of this stage there should be more precise and detailed information to present to Council to allow them to make a formal investment decision at the end of this stage through consideration of a Business Case.

4.2 Feasibility Study

If decided at the end of the Define stage by the Parent Committee that there is a requirement to proceed with a Feasibility Study, an External Specialist Consultant will be appointed to conduct the study. The SD will be responsible for commissioning this appointment. As part of this study surveys may be carried out where considered appropriate. The estimated fees for this piece of work will determine if and what procurement exercise needs to be completed in line with the current Procurement Control Limits.

Once the study is complete, the SD should report the findings to the Parent Committee. If the study is deemed feasible approval to proceed to 4.2 below will be given by the Parent Committee. However, Council may decide to cease the project at this stage.

(NB: On the occasions when a feasibility study is not required (this is based upon the amount and quality of detailed information that is already available), proceed straight to point 4.2 below)

4.3 Produce the PID and Business Case

The CPO will be responsible for completing the initial draft of the PID (Appendix D) and updating the document throughout the project lifecycle. The completed Project Brief will form the basis for an initial draft of the PID and its components. However, its contents are extended and refined into the PID, which is the working document for managing and directing the Project. The PID should clearly demonstrate an understanding of the project and how it will be managed.

The Business Case document will form part of the PID however depending it will be developed separately to the PID.

The PID template provided at Appendix D is more or less self-explanatory in terms of the information to be considered and recorded, however, a few additional pointers and suggestions are included below.

4.3.1 Section 1: Project Overview

Scope

Insert the information produced for the Project Brief, however it is important at this stage to further refine the scope. This should be informed with by discussion with all relevant officers and, if required, other stakeholders. For example, a project to construct a new building should involve officers from the 'client' Service; Finance; Organisational Development and Administration where it impacts on staff; Assets and Property regarding specification and maintenance needs; the PCU; and any other relevant disciplines.

If a Feasibility Study is carried out as per point 2.1 above this information will also feed into the refinement of the scope. Following these exercises, a good level of design should be established allowing more accurate costs to be determined.

Budget (Capital and Revenue)

At this stage the initial budget outlined in the Project brief will be reviewed and refined. It is important to remember that the overall budget allocated to a project will be made up of both project costs and risk budget. It should be noted that assessment of the Business Case must consider whole-life costs and benefits (typically operating costs) which go beyond the initial project costs.

The project team must refine and develop the project cost by carrying out the following actions:

1. Liaise with colleagues and finance representative assigned to the project team
2. Review previous similar projects budget setting
3. Seek benchmarking costs for similar projects

The Project team must consider and allocate budget where necessary (and not limited) to the following list of expenditure headings:

- Professional Services
- Land Purchases
- Surveys (i.e. topographical and geotechnical surveys)
- Report fees (Economic Appraisals, Specialist Consultant reports etc.)
- Main Contract
- Legal fees
- Utility suppliers (NIE/BT/PNG connection charges)
- Statutory fees (Planning Applications, Building Control etc.)
- Fixtures, furniture and equipment
- Communications
- Signage (local, and 'town general directional' (TNI)

Note that not all project costs are capable of being capitalised and it may therefore be necessary to ensure that sufficient revenue budgets are available for some projects. The finance representative for each project will be able to provide further guidance and assistance with this.

This risk budget is set aside to fund the implementation of risk mitigation plans as and when required. This money must be included in the total budget. Depending on the project type the appropriate person within the finance service unit will be assigned to the project and will be responsible for assisting in the management of the risk budget. *Both a client and contract contingency allowance figure should be determined and will be informed by assessment of risks.*

When setting the risk budget, the example expected monetary value technique below should be used:

Risk ID	Likelihood (%)	Impact (£)	Expected Value (£)
1	60	20,000	12,000
2	30	13,000	3,900
			Total: 15,900

Note: Revisions of Project Total Budgets

The total budget for the project is further refined and should be more accurate when the Business Case is completed however at certain key stages of the project the budget may need to be reassessed when more accurate or actual figures are determined. Decisions are to be taken in line with the tolerance levels outlined in 4.2.3 Project Controls section below, if anything is expected to exceed these levels Council should be notified quickly through an exception report to the Parent Committee. If a budget is revised, an updated Business Case may be required to ensure that the project is still viable.

4.3.2 Section 2: Project Organisation

Project Team

Insert the information produced for the Project Brief; review, develop and refine if necessary.

Project Governance Structure

As set out in Appendix C.

4.3.3 Section 3: Project Processes and Controls

Project Controls

The Project Board assumes overall responsibility for the control of the project. The Project Board receives information from the Project Sponsor and has control over whether the project continues, stops or changes direction or scope.

Controls for the Project are:

ANDBC Project Board meetings- will be held to discuss progress to date, achievements in the current period and achievements expected in the next period, details of actual or potential problems and suggestions for their resolution. Timing and frequency of these meetings should be agreed at this stage and noted in this section. The CPO will be responsible for minuting these meetings. For internal only Project Boards, the CPO will complete a Project Status report. This report will give a good indication of any problem areas, they are easy to read and include a RAG review summary on quality, time and budget allowing focus immediately on any issues. The Project Status report template referenced in Appendix F should be used

Tolerance limits/Exception Reports- notification by the Project Manager to the Council that the plan will deviate outside time and cost tolerance limits noted below. The report will detail the problem, outlines the available options and identifies the recommended option. Council will review the report and decide whether to proceed. Exception Report template referenced in Appendix E should be used.

Time: if the times goes 10% above the target completion dates

Cost: if the costs goes 10% above the planned budget

It is also important to note that in exceptional circumstances decisions may be made which exceed these levels of authority and approval will need to be sought retrospectively for example in order to protect the health and safety of the public in the capital scheme or statutory body enforcements.

Steering groups- will be set up depending on the size and scale of the project. The steering group on major projects will be appointed by the Project Board and will comprise of representatives from the wider group of stakeholders who have an interest or who may be affected by the project. The frequency of their meetings will be determined by the Project Board.

Project Initiation Document (PID)- is a live active management document, regularly updated, to be used as a control and performance measurement tool.

Note: The Integrated Consultancy Team will have their own control measures as defined within the procurement procedures.

Risk Management

Risk management is the planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of risk. By managing our risk process effectively, we will be in a better position to safeguard against potential threats and exploit potential opportunities to improve services and provide better value for money. The objective of risk management is to secure the assets and reputation of the Council and to ensure continued financial and organisational well-being. Within this stage of the project, risk registers (Appendix G) should be established and the risk identification approach outlined below should be followed to identify and capture risks in the appropriate register.

Identify Risks

The risk identified in the Define Stage should be reviewed at this point and added to the risk register if necessary.

Techniques recommended to identify risks are:

Review Lessons– Review lessons learned logs for similar project profiles to determine where uncertainties lay and see what threats and opportunities impacted them.

Risk Prompt List – Examine the Risk Prompt List (Appendix H) in the context of the project to determine if any of the defined areas of risk may be applicable. This detail known risk types which should be considered when determining the risk to the project.

Workshops– Where necessary utilise group sessions to identify potential risks which may not be recognised by an individual. Utilise groups to provide alternative views of risks, for example user groups, development groups, finance and project related personnel.

Early Warning Indicators–There are several early warning indicators, which should be monitored during the life of the project, some examples are: shortfall in the accomplishment of planned work, approvals obtained behind schedule, increase in the number of issues being raised and increase in the number of defects captured etc.

Following the identification of risks, they should then be detailed in the risk register template in **Appendix G** which will identify the risk owner and the steps being taken to mitigate the risk.

Risk Assessment

The risk identified in the Define Stage should be reviewed at this point and updated where necessary.

To ensure resources are focused on the most significant risks, the Council's approach to risk management is to assess the risks identified in terms of both the potential likelihood and impact so that actions can be prioritised.

The risk management process requires each risk to be assessed twice – gross and net risk levels.

The first assessment (the 'gross' risk level) is taken on the basis that there is no action being taken to manage the identified risk and/or any existing actions are not operating effectively. In other words, the worst-case scenario if the risk were to occur. To ensure that a consistent scoring mechanism is in place across the Council, risks are assessed using the agreed criteria for likelihood and impact detailed in Appendix I.

When assessing the risk, the highest measure identified in each table is the score taken to plot the risk level on the risk matrix in Appendix I. Where the likelihood and impact crosses, determines the risk level. The matrix uses a “traffic light” approach to show high (red), medium (amber) and low (green) risks. The risk score identified should be updated in the risk register (Appendix G) and the Risk Action Table in Appendix J should be referred to determine if any action is required.

Risk Responses

The response(s) to a given risk should reflect the risk type, criticality and the organisation’s attitude to risk. There are several possible responses to risks and as risks can be threats or opportunities these include responses that are suitable for potential opportunities. The responses are summarised in the Risk Response table in Appendix K. When the risk response is agreed, this should be updated in the risk register template in Appendix G.

Implement

The risk register completed in the Define Stage should be reviewed at this point and updated where necessary.

The primary objective of this step is to ensure the planned risk responses are implemented, their effectiveness monitored and corrective action taken where responses do not provide effective solutions.

To ensure this is carried out efficiently, there will be a sole Risk Owner. This is a named individual who is responsible for the management, monitoring and control of all aspects of a particular risk.

There may be a Risk Actionee responsible for carrying out the required response action for a risk or set of risks. The Risk Actionee should perform under the direction of the Risk Owner. The Risk Owner and Risk Actionee may be the same person. The appointed Risk Owner and Risk Actionee will be detailed in the risk register.

Risk Reporting

Risks will be communicated outwards as part of: Project Status Reports - minimum of monthly (Appendix F).

Inward communications of risks, in particular new perceived risks should go to the PCU for assessment, ad-hoc and are openly welcomed.

4.3.3 Section 4: Business Case

The Business Case document will form part of the PID however it will be developed separately to the PID and inserted into the document.

The Business Case is an essential part of the process and is required in all cases to provide justification for incurring expenditure, with an emphasis on ensuring that value for money is achieved. It is a systematic process for examining alternative uses of resources, focusing on assessment of needs, objectives, options, costs, benefits, risks, funding, affordability and other factors relevant to decisions.

If it a low value project the SD should complete the business case. If an external Specialist Consultant is required to carry out the Business Case this should be commissioned by the SD and the estimated fees for this piece of work will determine if and what procurement exercise needs to be completed for this in line with the current Procurement Control Limits. Business Cases must comply strictly to the NI Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation [NI Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation](#), these key areas must be addressed to some degree when preparing the Business Case but the principle of proportionate effort should be applied depending on the scale and nature of the project.

The Business Case should assess the whole-life costs of a project i.e. the costs and benefits over the anticipated life of the resulting asset/service, not just the initial project costs. It is also important that impacted services are made aware of potential budgetary impacts e.g. staffing or maintenance costs.

For projects that have received Central Government funding their Business Case requirements should be followed.

4.4 Equality, Rural Proofing and Sustainability screening

Please refer to and follow the same process as outlined in point 1.4 in Chapter 1.

4.5 PID Approval

The SD will be responsible for reviewing and approving the PID.

4.6 Next Stage Approval

Once the PID is approved by the SD the Business Case must be reported to the Parent Committee by the end of this stage to formally seek agreement to include the project in the financial plan, to move onto design stage and if required to appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT). If agreed the project would move onto the 'in development' group of schemes on the CPP. Finance will also add the project to the financial plan.

5. Stage 3 – Design Stage (RIBA 2-4)

5.1 Rationale

The Design stage is a step-by-step process during which design ideas are developed into drawings and specifications that can be used as a means of obtaining a detailed cost plan, securing statutory approvals, communicating the design of a project in the tender documentation, and ultimately, to issue a Delivery Agreement to the Contractor to execute the works.

5.2 Procure and appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT)

Depending on the scale and type of project and the availability of skills, the services of architects, engineers and other specialists will usually be required; and if they cannot be resourced from in-house resources, they will need to be acquired externally. If an external ICT is required, the estimated fees for this piece of work will determine if and what procurement exercise needs to be completed in line with the current Procurement Control Limits.

The CPO and SD will work closely together on this procurement exercise along with direction and agreement from the Procurement Team throughout the process. Listed below are key activities that they will carry out:

- Make a decision if a separate Integrated Management Team is required
- Selection of an appropriate form of contract, procurement procedure and award criteria
- Responding to any clarifications relating to the procurement process
- Evaluating competition and contract documentation returns
- Preparing a report for the Council recommending or otherwise the appointment of the ICT

Following completion of the procurement exercise the SD should report the recommended selection at the next relevant Parent Committee to formally agree the appointment. If the recommendation to appoint is accepted, proceed to step 3.2 below.

5.3 Site Surveys & Site Information Report

Site surveys are inspections of an area where work is proposed, to gather information for a design or an estimate to complete the initial tasks required for this. It can determine a precise location, access, best orientation for the site and the location of obstacles. The type of site survey and the best practices required depend on the nature of the project. If surveys were carried out at the Feasibility Study stage these should be provided to the ICT.

The ICT will be responsible for advising the appropriate site information to be collected through inspection, investigations, tests and surveys, interpret the results and make recommendations. Site surveys might be carried out by the ICT if they have the required skills, or might be commissioned from specialists. Work on collecting this site information should begin prior to or parallel to the Concept Design Stage below.

5.4 Develop the Concept Design

Within this stage the concept design is developed to meet the requirements set out in the scope section within the PID. This stage also involves making initial contact with the planning authorities.

Through a series of design review meetings, the ICT will work with the SD to develop, understand and accommodate their needs. The CPO will be responsible for setting up, facilitating and attending the design review meetings. Where there is a strong element of community focus embedded within the project it is recommended to consult a range of community groups at this stage and keep them involved and informed throughout the project. The CPO will be responsible for setting up and facilitating Consultation events and the SD and ICT will take the lead in running these sessions.

Following these sessions, the ICT will produce a series of concept drawings. These initial drawings are based on what they have learned about the SDs needs and are informed by the existing site conditions and restrictions. It is the ICT's responsibility to ensure that the designs are fully integrated and are tested throughout the stage against budgets and that the designs fully comply with all Statutory requirements or Regulations including, but not confined to requirements concerning Health and Safety, Planning, Fire, Building Control and take any action necessary to rectify deficiencies. It is rare that a perfect design is realised at the very beginning of this stage and it usually takes several revisions until there is an agreed design concept that meets all requirements.

The ICT will also uphold management of risk, value, cost and H&S during this stage.

All members of the project team will be responsible for reviewing the communications plan and initiating any actions assigned to them for this stage.

Throughout this stage, where appropriate it will be the responsibility of the PCU to update and maintain the PID.

5.4.1 Next stage approval

At the point a design concept that meets all the requirements is agreed, the SD should formally sign this off. At this stage the design will be frozen and the project moves onto the Developed Design Stage.

5.5 Changes/Variations

All changes and variations to the scope of the project are required to be recorded after the Concept Design stage. At this point the project is normally accepted to be frozen and no changes should be made. In order to control any changes, the ICT should complete a change control register to record the change and its implications.

Only once the full extent of the implications of the change are known i.e. cost and all knock-on effects, and formal approval is granted by the CPO to the ICT, can the design team or contractor incorporate the changes in the Project. The project budget/cost allocations require to be updated to reflect this change.

5.6 Developed Design

This stage enables the ICT to finalise proportions, explore different materials, develop structural schemes and take the design to a more complete level on with every aspect of the design is looked at carefully.

At the beginning of this stage it may be necessary to hold further design review meetings and third-party consultations to finalise details however changes in the scope or objectives of the project should not be made unless completely necessary. Change Control Procedures in line with the agreed tolerance levels should be implemented to ensure that any changes to the Concept Design are properly considered and signed off. If changes are to be made, the cost implications and the effects on the timing and delivery of the project should be fully appraised.

The ICT will also uphold management of risk, value, cost and H&S during this stage.

All members of the project team will be responsible for reviewing the communications plan and initiating any actions assigned to them for this stage.

Throughout this stage, where appropriate it will be the responsibility of the CPO to implement update and maintain the PID. The CPO along with support from the SD will be responsible for setting up and facilitating design review meetings and consultations.

By the end of the Developed Design Phase, an application for detailed planning permission will be submitted, documentation will be prepared for building control approval and the designs will firmly be place ready to create the final working drawings and specifications.

5.6.1 Next stage approval

The SD should formally sign this off and the project moves onto the Technical Design Stage.

5.7 Technical Design

Within this stage the ICT will prepare the project for construction by drafting the tender documents. The drawings, specifications, and schedules developed should comprehensively and accurately define the scope of the project and are in such detail that a Contractor can proceed to construct the works efficiently without concern of being interrupted by excessive changes or by lack of design information.

Throughout this stage, where appropriate it will be the responsibility of the CPO to update and maintain the PID. The CPO along with support from the SD will be responsible for implementing the communication strategy within this stage.

5.8 Complete Full Business Case

Following the completion of the technical design a full business case should be completed. Note that this will only be required if there have been significant changes to the original Business Case.

5.8.1 Next stage approval

A summary of the final agreed design along with drawings and if applicable the full business case should be reported to Council at this stage with approval being sought to procure a contractor.

5.9 Procure and appoint the Contractor

The estimated fees for this piece of work will determine if and what procurement exercise needs to be completed in line with the current Procurement Control Limits. An initial meeting and regular updates throughout regarding the procurement exercise should be held with the Procurement Team.

The ICT will carry out the key activities below associated with the contractor procurement exercise:

- Selection of an appropriate form of contract, procurement procedure and award criteria
- Preparation of tender documentation
- Responding to any clarifications relating to the procurement process
- Evaluating competition and contract documentation returns

The SD, Procurement Team and PCU will all be involved in the following activities:

- Reviewing proposed form of contract, procurement procedure and award criteria
- Assessing competition and contract documentation returns
- Preparing a report for the Council recommending or otherwise the appointment of the Contractor

5.9.1 Appointment of Main Contractor Approval

Following completion of the procurement exercise the SD should report the recommended selection at the next Council meeting to formally agree the appointment. If the recommendation to appoint is accepted, project moves to 'In Delivery' on CPP and proceed to the Delivery Stage in Section 6.

6. Stage 4 - Delivery Stage (RIBA 5-7)

6.1 Rationale

During this stage, offsite manufacturing and onsite construction take place in accordance with the construction programme, and design queries from site are resolved as they arise.

Then follows handover of the building and conclusion of building contract, including updating as-constructed drawings, commissioning, inspection and training activities, leading to acceptance of the project by the end user.

This stage also includes tasks associated with the defects liability period, issuing the Final Certificate and Post Project Evaluation.

6.2 Pre-Start meeting

Once the Contractor has been appointed, the PO, in conjunction with the lead consultant, quickly arranges a Pre-Start meeting, to facilitate the Client, Design and Contractor teams formally meeting to ensure the Contractor is fully briefed on the following items before works start:

- Contractual Arrangements
- Health and Safety Management: as outlined in section 4.2
- Change Management: as outlined in section 3.4
- Risk Management: as outlined in section 2.2.3
- Quality Management
- Programme
- Budget
- Handover Procedures

6.3 Health and Safety

The ICT's Principal Designer follows and ensures that CDM Regulations are met; progress on this is measured at regular Site Meetings.

6.4 Contractor Mobilisation

The Contractor will often mobilise in the weeks prior to construction operations commencing, to set up the site with welfare facilities etc. The Lead Consultant is responsible for reviewing the Main Contractor's proposed methodology.

6.5 Construction through to Practical Completion

During this lengthy and complex stage, the Contractor constructs the building on site in accordance with their Construction Programme and any revisions agreed.

The SD is not involved daily for much of the construction phase. Responsibility and actions lie with the ICT, and the CPO who will regularly visit the construction site to review progress. The ICT is responsible for responding to design queries. Design amendments during construction are to be avoided as these inevitably cause delay and incur additional cost. An agreed Change Control mechanism (section 3.4, page 18) is implemented for all change requests and variations.

Project Board (chaired by the SRO) and regular site meetings (chaired by ICT's PM) are the methods of directing, controlling and reviewing progress. The Lead Consultant generates progress update reports, providing visibility on project status; progress against programme, budget expenditure versus forecast, and current versus approved scope. It ensures corrective actions can be identified at an early stage.

The ICT ensures that the works are being executed safely and in line with the Contractor Health and Safety Plan.

Contractor payments will be managed in accordance with the Contract requirements. The ICT, PCU and Capital Accountant will monitor spend and ensure that the payments are made in a timely fashion.

If a Communications Plan is stipulated, this will be complied with by the Contractor for the purpose of neighbourhood awareness.

6.6 Commissioning and Handover:

Commissioning needs to be considered from the very early stages of the project and the Contractor is required to produce a Commissioning Plan and make adequate allowances in his Programme for same.

As Construction works near completion and Handover of the project to the Client is imminent, commissioning will be progressed. The primary purpose of the commissioning and testing of systems is to verify that installations meet the design requirements and are operating in a safe manner. If undertaken in time, it also allows faults to be identified and corrected prior to planned handover. It is critical that full and complete operation and maintenance documentation on all aspects of the project are pursued early by the CPO, and are subsequently received by Handover so that the Client is equipped to fulfill all obligations under the Health and Safety Regulations and trained to operate all systems. The ICT is responsible for managing the commissioning process. The ICT co-ordinates and acts as interface between Main Contractor and Client. Typically, the following items are actioned:

- The Contractor prepares a testing and commissioning method statement and a detailed commissioning programme, indicating when each test will occur and inviting the client to attend.
- The Contractor advises the Client /ICT when areas of the building will be available for their snagging inspection.
- The Contractor arranges for a Building Control inspection to be conducted.

Generally, the facility will not be accepted for Handover unless the above are complete with relevant documents available (i.e. electrical certificates, fire alarm tests). However, the building may be handed over with a list of minor defects outstanding at the discretion of the SD. The main parameter being that the building is deemed to be 'Practically Complete' and is capable of being occupied and operated as designed.

Site Handover takes place once the Lead Consultant/PM confirms the works, as defined in the Contract, are practically complete. However, it should be planned well in advance, including any special requirements contained within the appointment documents and contracts. Handover may take place at a handover meeting following a final site inspection.

During handover, the Client is issued with:

- Keys, fobs and transmitter controls for the project
- The health and safety file
- Operation and Maintenance Manuals (O&Ms)
- Up to date testing and commissioning data
- All certificates and warranties in respect of the works
- As-built drawings from consultants and specialist suppliers and contractors (or as manufactured and installed).
- Copies of statutory approvals, waivers, consents and conditions
- Equipment test certificates for lifts, escalators, boilers etc...
- Licences such as licences to store chemicals and gases

- If building information modelling (BIM) was being used, the common data environment may be transferred to the employer, including the final published information and the archive which provides a record of all activities in the common data environment during the project
- Certificate of Practical Completion

In addition:

- A defects reporting procedure needs to be agreed
- Access arrangements are to be arranged for the contractor to remedy defects
- The Contractor's insurance cover ceases upon Practical Completion and a Council policy for full cover needs to be in place for Handover
- The Contractor's security responsibilities end, and the client needs to implement security arrangements
- As Council's facilities management team takes over running of plant and equipment, meters and fuel consumption need to be checked and recorded, and any tools or spares issued or sourced
- Legal agreements such as adoption of roads or lease agreements need to be signed
- Outsourced maintenance contracts need to be implemented
- If the soft landings framework has been adopted, there may be additional requirements to ensure a smooth transition from construction to occupation, such as aftercare services and the provision of a technical guide. These additional services would be included in appointment documents and contracts.

6.7 Completion of Defects and Payment of Retention

A procedure must be agreed with the ICT and Contractor at Handover for the communication, validation and rectification of defects (normally to be managed and driven by the ICT's PM). All reported defects need to be logged and their rectification monitored on a regular basis.

The QS and Main Contractor agree settlement of the Final Account and the CPO will ensure that Finance is kept fully informed.

Following expiry of the contract defects liability period, (normally 12 months), a final inspection of works is undertaken, arranged by the Lead Consultant. If all defects have been made good at the end of the agreed period, the Lead Consultant certifies same and the outstanding retention owing to the Contractor is released: CPO to liaise with Finance.

6.8 Post Project Evaluation

The Post Project Evaluation (PPE) is an assessment of project results, activities, and processes. It is an essential tool to show that the project objectives have been met and, in terms of public accountability, to demonstrate what has been achieved with the investment of public funds. It also facilitates recognition of project achievements and to acknowledge people's work. This phase is also used to capture any learnings gained from the project while the memory of any issues encountered are still recent.

The PPE primarily evaluates:

- If the benefits, scope and deliverables of the project, as stated in the PID, have been met
- The performance of the building/facility;
- Lessons to be learned from the experience which may help future projects

The CPO will initiate the PPE post-construction yet it will be service led as their scope goes beyond project delivery (but includes this) and the PPE is more about achievement of wider objectives. A PPE template is provided at Appendix L. Once the PPE is completed it should be reviewed and signed off by the relevant Director, then reported to CPPB for agreement to be removed of the project portfolio register. It is the responsibility of the SD to report the findings of the PPE at their next relevant Parent Committee

The PCU's Lessons Learned database, will be updated by the CPO following the evaluation.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate
Date of Meeting	13 October 2020
Responsible Director	Director of Finance and Performance
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance
Date of Report	28 September 2020
File Reference	260501 - Performance Management
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Update on performance reporting
Attachments	

Context

Members will be aware that Council is required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions and to publish a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) by 30 June each year.

Officers previously advised Members that the Department for Communities had indicated, but did not explicitly state, that they did not expect Councils to publish a performance plan by 30 June 2020 for the current financial year in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic. Further clarification was sought on our obligations regarding the PIP and DfC have now confirmed that a decision has been made to set aside the requirement for Councils to publish a plan for the 2020/2021 year.

The Department are considering what arrangements should be put in place for Councils with regard to performance improvement going forward; we are awaiting further guidance and a report will be brought back in due course.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report is noted.

ITEM 5**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Sevices Committee
Date of Meeting	13 October 2020
Responsible Director	Director of Organisational Development and Administration
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	23 September 2020
File Reference	EQ 33
Legislation	Section 75 The Northern Ireland Act 1998; Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Quarterly Report on Equality and Good Relations (Section 75 of The N.I. Act 1998) 1 July 2020 - 30 September 2020
Attachments	N/A

In accordance with the Council's Equality Scheme, a progress report is required to be submitted on a quarterly basis to the Council's Corporate Services Committee. This ensures the Council complies with its obligations to meet its equality and good relations duties and responsibilities, as identified in Section 75 of The Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This report lists the actions of Council officers to meet the statutory duties since 1 July 2020. Due to the various restrictions placed across the province there have been no face to face meetings, events or trainings. However, the responsibilities and duties of the legislation is embedded within the Council and all decisions required consideration of their potential and actual impact on all Section 75 dimensions of residents, employees and visitors to the Borough.

Consultative Panel

The Equality and Good Relations External Consultative Panel (the Panel) has not met since February 2020 due to the ongoing situation. A virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams has been arranged for 1 October 2020. The agenda for this meeting will include an update on how the Council has adapted to the needs of the community from March 2020 in a meaningful manner and John Kremer will facilitate a challenge workshop to ensure the commitments of the Council continue to be met. A total of 12 Section 75 and rural screening outcomes will be considered. Unfortunately, two panel members have had to leave for personal reasons. It is not considered appropriate to source new members at this time until the future arrangements and role of the Consultative Panel is more definite. There is still a total of 16 external members. Comments in relation to Section 75 issues from the consultative panel will be reported to the Council and to the Internal Screening Group.

Screening of Council policies

Council officers from across the council directorates continue to screen Council policies as an integral part of the policy development process. A meeting did not take place in June 2020 but papers were circulated enable comments to be received and addressed. It is considered important that this forum continues as their scrutiny and learning across the Council is beneficial in ensuring any potential adverse impact is identified at the earliest opportunity and shared across all Directorates.

Quarterly Consultations

The Council has a requirement within the Equality Scheme to publish the outcome of screened policies quarterly. A quarterly report was uploaded onto the Council's website on 7th July 2020 and included 6 screening outcomes. The next agreed table and forms will be uploaded to the Council's website and circulated to all consultees on Tuesday 6 October 2020. At the time of writing this report there will be 5 completed screening forms to be made available on the Council website.

Equality Action Plan

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) has continued to report on the outstanding and completed actions in the Council's Equality Action Plan. This is through the Quarterly Reports to Corporate Services Committee and ECNI Annual Report. To ensure the reporting is accurate the Action Plan is the subject of scrutiny by the Internal Screening Group and discussed with the Consultative Panel at their meetings.

A new Equality Action Plan was required from April 2020 however, when it was drafted and to be reported to Council Committee for circulation and consultation it was considered not a priority at that time for the Council or consultees and we may have received a low response and were unable to have public meetings with individuals or groups. It is planned that this document will be presented in a report to the November Corporate Services Committee meeting and ratified by the November Council meeting. The 12-week consultation period will then be available from Monday 30 November 2020 and close on Friday 19 February 2021 at 4.00pm. The final document will be presented to the Corporate Services in April 2021.

Equality Scheme update

Following the 5 year review an updated Equality Scheme is required to be produced by the Council. The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) has updated the current scheme as an integral part of the 5-year review. The Scheme, which was approved by ECNI on 25 March 2015 does not have to be the subject of consultation but the ECNI and all consultees were informed of the updated Equality Scheme following its approval by Ards and North Down Borough Council. This was the subject of a report that was approved by the Chief Executive in June 2020 under Delegated Authority and the final document has been placed on the Council's website along with a summary document and the document has been submitted to ECNI.

5-year review of Equality Action Plan

The Equality Scheme is required to be reviewed every 5 years and reported to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI). This review has been approved by the Chief Executive through Delegated Authority in June 2020. The review has been forwarded to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

Disability Forum

The Disability Forum had not met due to the ongoing situation and had postponed their March meeting. Officers have maintained regular communication with members to ensure those who may be vulnerable or responsible for individuals who may be vulnerable were signposted appropriately to relevant services. This has been appreciated by all members as a source of support, advice and signposting. On the request of a number of the members of The Disability Forum a meeting was arranged using Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 1 September 2020. The agenda included:

- An update on changes to services from March 2020 (and how the Council services were opening up again)
- The awareness raising of the Hidden Disabilities emblem
- Community Plan Big Survey - encouraging those on the Forum to engage as individuals and through the groups they represent.

All who were able to attend found this to be a productive meeting as many have experienced isolation during the period of uncertainty and were delighted to know the Council continue to provide advice and hold meetings. The Chair of the meeting, Councillor Eddie Thompson agreed that the Disability Forum should meet every two months during this ongoing period to enable issues to be addressed and information to be shared.

AccessAble

The audit for 2020 has included an audit of two coastal walking routes in the Borough. Guidance on good practice was followed throughout this audit and as the audit was outdoors the arrangements progressed. The two areas were Donaghadee seafront and Groomsport harbour and beach area to encourage the use of the accessible beach equipment and changing places facility. This information will be added to the website following quality control and all details being agreed and signed off as accurate.

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) and Assistant Compliance Officer met the relevant officer in July at a virtual meeting to discuss if the audit could go ahead and the arrangements to review the 400 premises already on the database. To ensure Ards and North Down Borough Council had a value for money review additional information, not always in relation to disability was added to relevant premises across the Borough. This includes premises registered on the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Breast Feeding Aware programme and premises that are accredited as Safe Places.

This information is invaluable to residents of and visitors to the Borough. As premises reopen the use of this breadth of information has been identified as giving confidence to residents and visitors to visit the Borough. It also demonstrates the value of this facility to all users and to the Council to promote a breadth of services provided by many partners across the Council area.

Disability Action Plan

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) continues to work to deliver the Disability Action Plan. This is reported through the Internal Screening Group and Consultative Panel as well as the Disability Forum. At these meetings, any identified concerns may be added to the Plan to ensure appropriate actions are identified and undertaken in a timely manner to enable the Council to remain compliant with the relevant legislation.

The final Disability Action Plan was agreed at the Corporate Services Committee on 11 August 2020 and ratified at the Council meeting of 26 August 2020. The documents have been circulated as per the Councils commitment to meaningful consultation and keeping all interested parties informed. The Disability Action Plan was also forwarded to the ECNI and made available on the Councils website, to the HOST and SUM groups and available on ANDi to enable officers to refer to their responsibilities and ensure these are met in a timely manner.

Complaints

During the period of this report no complaints have been received.

IMTAC (The Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee)

IMTAC information is circulated to relevant sources to ensure the information they produce to sign post and assist is widely known. During this period IMTAC has provided a range of useful information and any queries raised in relation to services have been addressed to ensure those with a disability were not discriminated against. The availability of this information was discussed at the Disability Forum meeting and circulated widely across the Council services and on social media.

Community Planning

The Community Planning Manager and Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) continue to work together to ensure all people in Ards and North Down Brough Council area benefit from the delivery of the Community Plan (through the Big Plan). A meeting with officers responsible for the Age Friendly Strategy and Elected Member Age Champions was held on Thursday 20 August 2020 by Microsoft Teams to discuss initiatives that are currently being supported, working with the relevant partners and some of the initiatives of the last few months and how this experience is invaluable to ensure services are relevant and meaningful.

Everyone was reminded that the Age Friendly Strategy includes all ages and that actions and information is often relevant to many individuals and groups, irrespective of their Section 75 dimensions. The Disability Forum members and Consultative Panel members have been invited to take part in the Big Survey and a virtual meeting with some groups has been arranged to support groups who prefer to respond in person.

Dementia Friendly Initiative

This initiative continues to be delivered across the range of council services in many formats including through the Age Friendly Local Dementia Friendly Development Steering Group of which the Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) is a member. There have been no meetings during the period of this report. Any queries from service users or service providers who have or represent those with dementia are addressed or signposted as required. This has demonstrated the value of this group as individuals in a range of service areas are identified. No meetings have taken place from March 2020 to the date of writing this report.

Safeguarding

From 1 April 2020 to the date of this report safeguarding concerns identified by a range of employees have been referred to the appropriate services. The needs identified across the Council area in the period after lockdown was broad and some have been upsetting for the officers dealing with the information/situation. Identified needs were, and continue to be met as promptly as possible, and where permission to refer is not granted the officers record the information for any future concerns raised or take appropriate action dependent on each situation.

A breadth of support services is Checked available from providers and these may be encouraged when an individual would prefer not to use the formal structures of PSNI or Social Services. Information on these services are provided to relevant officers and these are regularly updated as new services become available in response to the identified needs across the province.

The range of needs over this period has been immense and statutory and charitable organisations have had to develop a breadth of support mechanisms to deal with the calls and concerns.

It Takes Allsorts October 2020

As this event has been popular as a learning platform from 2015 in relation to Equality, Disability and Good Relations employees had expressed interest in this continuing this year. The relevant officers have met and are planning the following arrangements. Four online sessions – one each month in October, November, December and January 2021 with the potential of a concluding session in February 2021. The sessions will be virtual this year and will have an invited speaker on each of the four topics of mental health, dementia, the 100 years history of Ireland and experiences of living in Northern Ireland when you have parents living with their different culture. More information, including booking arrangements will be made available to Elected Members and employees through Yammer and internal communications. This year the only cost will be for some speakers and this funding is available through the Good Relations budget.

Mental Health Code of Conduct

The council has continued to provide a breadth of support to individuals and signposted employees and service users to professional support services where a need was identified. The current situation has had an impact on individuals and advice and support has been made available in a range of formats and through many sources so it may be sourced by individuals on a confidential basis if preferred. The mental health champions offer support and signposting to colleagues when required with the charter clearly stating the support employees can expect to receive and how to avail of this.

Access and Inclusion Grants

The Council worked with the Department for Communities to advertise and award capital grants to the value of £30,000 to improve physical features and enhance the individual's experience. The programme provides capital grant funding through local Councils and the Northern Ireland Museums Council, aimed at promoting a more inclusive society by enabling disabled people to participate more fully in arts, cultural and active recreation activities and thus reduce the isolation many experience. There were four grant applications received by the closing date of 9 September 2020 from four groups within the borough. The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) was asked to be part of the panel to assess the applications. The recommendations of the panel of three officers was forwarded to the Department of Communities for their consideration and action.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report is noted.

ITEM 6**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services
Date of Meeting	13 October 2020
Responsible Director	Director of Organisational Development and Administration
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	28 September 2020
File Reference	LP37
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Request to light up the Town Hall and Arts Centre in Conway Square by Beyond the Battlefield
Attachments	

The Council has received a request on behalf of the local charity “Beyond the Battlefield” to light up the Town Hall and Arts Centre in Conway Square green and black being the colours of the Royal Irish Regiment during the early hours of Sunday 25th October 2020.

The Charity are organising a sponsored walk during the early hours of 25th October called “Out of the Darkness” to raise awareness of mental health. The walk will be in Newtownards and is to raise money in honour of a former member of the Royal Irish Regiment who took his own life after suffering post- traumatic stress disorder. They have asked if the Town Hall and Arts Centre could be illuminated when they are doing the walk.

There is already a lighting up scheduled for the evening of 24th October, but the lights are switched off at midnight and it has been confirmed that there is the facility to programme a further light up after midnight.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council retrospectively accedes to the request and lights up the Town Hall and Arts Centre during the early hours of Sunday 25th October.