ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

9 April 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of the Corporate Services Committee of Ards and North Down Borough in the Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards, on **Tuesday 16 April 2024 commencing at 7pm**.

Yours faithfully
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest

3. Deputation – Sustainable NI

Reports for Approval:

4. Annual Service Plans:
   a) Community Planning (Report attached)
   b) Corporate Communications (Report attached)
   c) Finance (Report attached)
   d) Strategic Transformation and Performance (Report attached)
   e) Administration (Report attached)
   f) Human Resources (Report attached)

5. Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 - Monitoring Return for the period 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 (Report attached)

6. The Climate Adaptation Plan (Report attached)

7. Updated Business Continuity Policy and Plan (Report attached)

Reports for Noting:

8. ANDBC Digital Strategy (Report attached)

9. Any other notified business

ITEMS 10 – 16 ***IN CONFIDENCE***

Reports for Approval

10.   Printing Service Contract Extension (Report attached)

11.   Request for permission to install a defibrillator at Spafield (Report attached

12.   Renewal of Lease to Community Advice Ards and North Down - premises at Hamilton Hub (Report attached)

13.   Request from NI Water to purchase land at Clanbrassil (Report attached)

14.   Request to issue legal proceedings for unauthorised use of Council Land at Manor Street Car Park, Donaghadee

15.   Land request for Ward Park, Bangor. (Report to follow)

Reports for Noting

16.   STEP Board Report update March 2024 (Report attached)

Alderman Brooks	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman Graham	Councillor S Irvine
Alderman McAlpine	Councillor W Irvine
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor Irwin
Alderman Smith	Councillor MacArthur (Vice Chair)
Councillor Chambers	Councillor McCracken
Councillor Cochrane	Councillor McRandal
Councillor Gilmour	Councillor Moore (Chairman)

Unclassified

ITEM 4

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	16 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Community Planning Manager Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing Head of Finance Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance Head of Administration Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Date of Report	04 April 2024
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ☐ No ☐ Other ☐ If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Annual Service Plans
Attachments	Appendix 4a Community Planning Appendix 4b Corporate Communications and Marketing Appendix 4c Finance Appendix 4d Strategic Transformation and Performance Appendix 4e Administration Appendix 4f Human Resources

Not Applicable

Since 2017/18 Service Plans have been produced by each Service in accordance with the Council's Performance Management policy.

Plans are intended to:
- Encourage compliance with the new legal, audit and operational context
- Provide focus on direction
- Facilitate alignment between Corporate, Service and Individual plans and activities
- Motivate and develop staff
- Promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice.
- Encourage transparency of performance outcomes
- Better enable us to recognise success and address under performance.

Draft Service Plans for 2024/25 year are attached for the following Services:
- Community Planning
- Corporate Communications and Marketing
- Finance
  Strategic Transformation and Performance
- Administration
- Human Resources

The plans have been developed to align with the outcomes of the Big Plan for Ards and North Down and with our draft Corporate Plan 2024-28, 'Towards a Sustainable Borough'.

The Service Plans highlight where the services contribute to the Corporate Priorities as set out in the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 Towards a Sustainable Borough and, where this is the case, sets out the objectives of the service for the 2024/25 year. It further identifies the performance measures used to illustrate the level of achievement of each objective, and the targets that the Service will try to attain along with key actions required to do so.

The Service Plans also identify key risks to the services along with analysis of these and necessary actions to mitigate/manage risks. Key risks impacting the services are mapped to the Corporate Risk Register.

The plans are based on the agreed budget for 2024/25. It should be noted that, should there be significant changes in-year (e.g., due to Council decisions, budget revisions or changes to the community planning legislation) the plans may need to be revised.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council adopts the attached Service Plans.

Item 4a

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

12 JANUARY 2024

Ards and North Down
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Patricia Mackey	Stephen Daye	Stephen Reid
For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.	For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.	For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.
Community Planning Manager	Head of Parks and Cemetries	Chief Executive
12/01/2024	15/02/2023	08/04/2024

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1. Introduction to Service

Name of Service	*Community Planning*
Directorate	*Chief Executive's Department*
Introduction and Reflection	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires Ards and North Down Borough Council to initiate, maintain, facilitate and participate in community planning for our district. The Council is the lead partner and is required to put in place a process where we work with bodies (both named statutory and non-statutory) to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting well-being, increasing community cohesion and improving the quality of life of our citizens.

The Community Planning Service works across the whole of the borough and on a range of issues that often fall outside the remit of the Council. The Service is responsible for working with Community Planning Partners, support organisations, government departments and all Council directorates to ensure the community plan is embraced, implemented and reported on in accordance with the legislation.

The Community Planning Service:
- facilitates and manages the community planning process including putting in place appropriate governance structures.
- ensures that the commitments set out in the Council's equality scheme are applied in the development and implementation, monitoring and review of the community plan.
- collates and manages a statistical evidence base to inform the community planning process and to support other council services.
- monitors the whole population impact of community planning via an agreed suite of indicators and the production of Performance Update Reports.
- facilitates partners being able to collaborate with each other to implement and report on shared priority activities where the community planning process adds value
- ensures that community involvement and engagement is an integral part of the full community planning process.

The purpose and priority of the Community Planning Service is to work with both internal and external partners to progress the aspirations and commitments made within the Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032 and updated Big Plan Part II | Our Big Priorities.

The strapline of the Big Plan is *'Better Outcomes for Everyone'* and via a Community Planning Partnership, this is the mission of the Community Planning Service. Progress on the Big Plan is reported to a Strategic CP Partnership and an annual Progress Update Report is used to help measure the collective impact of the Partnership.

The Council's new Corporate Plan aligns with the outcomes of the Big Plan, buts its priorities, outcomes and commitments are more specific to the remit of the Council.

Measurable achievements from previous service planning cycles:

2016/17 – Publication of the Big Plan for Ards and North Down

2017/18 – Endorsement of three delivery plans containing actions to implement the Big Plan and progress towards its five aspirational outcomes

2018/19 – Turning the Curve reports and Performance Scorecards written for all delivery plan actions and database and Performance Update Report templates set up to monitor the effectiveness of community planning delivery

2019/20 – Publication of the first Statement of Progress and initiation of a review progress to make community planning more tangible

2020/21 – Covid-19 Pandemic
Community planning Service quickly moved from delivering against the aspirations of the Big Plan to co-ordinating the Council's Community Support Plan and delivery 15,000 food parcels to people who found themselves vulnerable. The Service also established the Community Covid Recovery Steering Group to co-ordinate ongoing efforts by Council colleagues and other Community Planning Partners to identify need and put in place services to mitigate against long-term social damage caused by the pandemic.

2021-22 – The Big Conversation Panel, publication of the 2nd Statement of Progress (Together we Made a Difference), publication of outcome of Big Plan review (Our Big Priorities), publication of updated Assessment of Wellbeing and review of Big Plan indicators.

2022-23 – Establishment of the Borough's first Social Supermarket. Project to collect more local information on poverty initiated. Membership of regional groups to consider the design and implementation of a new Integrated Care System for NI. Roll out and marketing of the Here2Help app to raise awareness across the borough. Development of the Big Guide to Age Friendly and the use of our network of partners to distribute it. Development of WARM Spaces campaign and collation of information on whether residents can find heat over the winter. Establishment of Over 50s Council as a mechanism to better engage with our residents. Selection of Ards and North Down, by PHA, as the first Early Adopter Site to implement a 'whole systems approach to obesity' initiative.

2023-24 Achievement

As part of our work on a WSA to Obesity we produced a Phase II evidence-based report to build the local picture. This report has been used to identify a sub-system as well as a geographical focus.

Alongside our CP Partner the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, we initiated a consultation exercise within the South Eastern Area with people living with dementia and their carers to help develop a Dementia Friendly Regional and Local Action Plan.

We used the Over 50s Council to review the actions within the Age Friendly Strategy and produced a new Strategy for 2023-2027.

We undertook a comprehensive research initiative to try and understand poverty and deprivation within Ards and North Down. This report will be used to inform the development of a local anti-poverty action plan.

2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Insert a brief narrative on the external issues, including current and anticipated, impacting upon the service – consideration of PESTLE factors may be useful.

Political	- Government stability and lack of NI Executive - Financial vulnerability regarding how funding is distributed to statutory community planning partners - Legislative backlog and need for new/updated policies to make regional progress on issues identified in the Big Plan (e.g., poverty, obesity etc)
Economical	- Financial vulnerability regarding how funding is distributed to statutory community planning partners - Aspirations and evidence-based need of the Big Plan potentially exceed the money available to implement actions to enable real change
Social	- Lack of engagement with a broad demographic that represents all public opinion (only loudest voice is heard) - Hidden inequalities are masked by the distribution of where people live and the mixed socio-economic groups within defined boundaries (i.e., Wards, Super Output Areas etc) - Ageing population and increase in people classified as living with a disability or health issue within the 2021 Census
Technological	- Social media and challenges with communication - Increase scams and phishing may make communicating about issues more challenging as additional safeguards regarding QR codes need to be implemented
Legal	- Legislation around community planning is not robust - Legislation relating to other issues e.g., new Integrated Care System may pull partner focus from community planning requirements - Governance requirements take resources away from deliver of the Big Plan and facilitation of the Big Plan workstreams
Environmental	- Impact of climate change and the cost of adaptation and recovery to climate related incidents may impact ability of partners to deliver other Big Plan priorities

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Insert a brief narrative/ list of the challenges which your services will face over the period of the plan. This should, where relevant, reference external issues highlighted above. A SWOT analysis may be useful for completing this section.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Established Community Planning Service - The Big Plan Part 1 and 2 published and adopted - An established Strategic Community Planning Partnership - Data and evidence analyst as part of the CP Service team - Strong relationship with other council services to help deliver the Big Plan priorities - Lots of examples of successful initiatives that arose from community planning	- Turn-over of membership of the SCPP - Lower levels of partner engagement since covid - Small team with no backup - Large impact on team when staff change happen inc. loss of knowledge and loss of established relationships with CP Partners and other networks - No other funding apart from ANDBC to cover administrative costs of the service - Aspirations of partners outweigh resources for delivery - Insufficient communication has taken place on what CP has achieved
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Reestablished 3rd Sector Forum with new and former members actively willing to participate - New members on the CP Partnership provides an opportunity for new ideas - Awareness of CP continues to grow, and more examples of its positive impact are available to demonstrate its value	- Team absence from sickness or moving to other employment opportunities - Funding pressures on other partners - CP Manager's time taken up with other (non-community planning) tasks - Large number of priority issues can threaten focus - Other Council service units not integrating CP priority issues within their service or workplans.

3. Service Improvement

The "**Service development/ improvement**" element should identify areas of the service that require development/ improvement along with any new, innovative ideas for future improvements. **Please state clearly in the "Rationale" section why the improvement is being undertaken and what evidence there is to support the decision.**

Only Service improvement activities should be included in this section, 'business as usual' activities should be detailed in Section 6.

Please ensure KPIs are included in Section 6 to measure Service development/ improvement(s) outlined below.

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Re-engage external community planning partners	Strategic Effectiveness	Covid had a negative impact on the engagement of partners. Turn-over of individuals involved has also had a negative impact. Work is needed to re-build the partnership and increase buy-in across strategic, operational and community partners.	Community Planning Manager	Community Planning Partners (External - All) Community and Culture, Corporate Services and Prosperity Directorates (Internal – All)
Communication activities on the achievements of community planning	Innovation	Many achievements have been made across community planning workstreams, but these have not been promoted as being aligned with the Big Plan. We need to innovatively improve how we tell people about the achievements of the Community Planning Partnership.	Community Planning Manager	Community Planning Partners (External - All) Communications and Marketing (Internal)

4. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Standing Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service
Team Meeting	Monthly	Head of Service
Strategic Community Planning Partnership	**Annual**	**Head of Service**

5. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed. **Yes**

6. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD **End of Q3**	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Economic – Economic growth to focus on attracting more businesses and jobs	97.95%	95%	95.7%	95%	95%	95%	Fixed
% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	100%	95%		95%	95%	95%	Fixed
% of completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	Year-end	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	100%	100%	0	100%	0	100%	Fixed

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Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
EX.02.CP02.001 Facilitate/participation in 20 meetings of Big Plan Priority Workstreams	Service Led	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	20	20	15	20	10	10	Fixed (20 in total)
ALL.01.CP01.002 1 Performance Update Report per annum (all priorities)	Mandatory	Year-end	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	1	1	1	1	0	1	Fixed (1 in total)
EX.02.CP01.001 3 Strategic Partnership Meetings per annum	Mandatory	Year-end	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	3	3	2	3	1	2	Fixed (3 in total)
EX.01.CP03.001 2 3rd Sector Community Planning Forum meetings per annum	Service Led	Year-end	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	0	2	0	1	1	1	Fixed (2 in total)
8 statistical updates (1 of which is LMP)	Service Led	6 monthly	7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	8	8	6	8	4	4	Fixed (8 in total)
1 Research Report per annum (2023/24 poverty)	Service Led	Year-end	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	n/a	1	0	1	0	1	Fixed (1 in total)

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
2 Events (Real Lives, Anti-Poverty and 3rd Sector Networking &WSA) – **linked to service improvement (engagement)**	Service Led	6 monthly	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	1	2	2	2	1	1	Fixed (2 in total)
2 Promotional campaigns associated with Big Plan priority issues (Dementia and impact of Community Planning) – **linked to service improvement (communication)**	Service Led	6 monthly	1. We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	n/a	2	2	2	1	1	Fixed (2 in total)
Participation in external groups with an impact on wellbeing	KPI by Type		7. Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation	Social – Social inclusion and reduced inequalities	n/a	20	15	20	10	10	Fixed (20 in total)

7. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
e.g., EX.01.TO08.001 Number of attendants at large scale event	*Activity not planned for the coming year*	*£5000.00*	*None – alternative activity planned*	*None – alternative activity planned*	*Staff time reallocated to other activity*
ALL.01.CP01.001 1 set of Performance Scorecards	These are now incorporated into the Progress Update Report rather than a separate activity	None	None	None	None – work to collect information still being undertaken
EX.01.CP06.001 1 Statement of Progress (Bi-annual)	Activity not planned for the coming year. Next statement due November 2025 (to be included in 2025/26 service plan)	None	None	None	Staff time reallocated to other activity
1 Whole systems map to obesity/healthier weight	One off activity as part of the WSA to Obesity project	None	None	None	None

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COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

20 FEBRUARY 2024

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

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APPROVALS

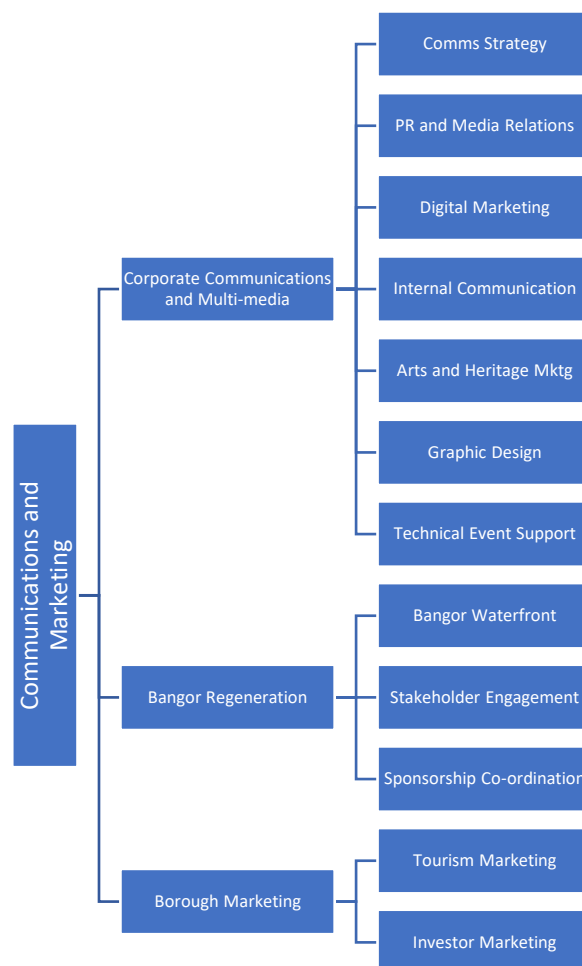| Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Claire Jackson	Alison Curtis	Stephen Reid
For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.	For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.	
Head of Communications and Marketing	Head of Administration	Chief Executive
30/01/2024	08/03/2024	25/03/2024

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Contents

1.1   Introduction to Service

The Communications and Marketing Service sits within the Chief Executive's Office. It aims to:

- Promote Council activities through effective engagement and communication.
- Protect and enhance the Council's reputation by challenging negative perceptions.
- Promote the Borough as an appealing destination to visit and invest in.

```
Communications and Marketing
├── Corporate Communications and Multi-media
│   ├── Comms Strategy
│   ├── PR and Media Relations
│   ├── Digital Marketing
│   ├── Internal Communication
│   ├── Arts and Heritage Mktg
│   ├── Graphic Design
│   └── Technical Event Support
├── Bangor Regeneration
│   ├── Bangor Waterfront
│   ├── Stakeholder Engagement
│   └── Sponsorship Co-ordination
└── Borough Marketing
    ├── Tourism Marketing
    └── Investor Marketing
```

At present leisure marketing is not centralised and is delivered by staff reporting to the Operations Manager for Leisure.

The Service comprises 13 staff and sits within the Chief Executive's Office.

Under the Local Government Act 1972 councils have a statutory duty to share necessary information with stakeholders and under the 2014 Act, with the addition of community planning, to consult and engage in an effective manner.

1.2   Corporate Communications and Multi-Media

Staff	The Corporate Communications and Multi-Media Manager is supported by 1 Officer and 6 Assistants. The team works across all service areas in Council.
Purpose	To promote Council activities through effective engagement and communication and to protect and enhance the Council's reputation by challenging negative perceptions.
Key Achievements	In the last year the Corporate Communications and Multimedia team has: Processed: • Over 1,000 social media posts • 180 media enquiries • Over 800 Multi-Media jobs as well as providing event support for Tourism, Civic, Arts and Heritage, as well as Grant Aided and internal events. Delivered: • Procurement of a new digital platform for Council to support the digital strategy and delivery of the first associated project – migration of the .gov.uk website • 4 integrated communications and marketing campaigns re Waste and Recycling; Sustainability; Support Local; Labour Market Partnership • 125 media releases • 28% increase in followers and a 21% increase in reach across corporate social media channels • Resident Satisfaction Survey – 83% overall satisfaction • 26 editions of NEWS AND INFO Facilitated: • Social Media coordination group • Social media training sessions including; Creating Video Content on a Smartphone; Facebook Groups Training; Social Media Governance; Facebook Advertising Introduced: • Top 5 Team Brief for Staff in September (6 issued) • Fortnightly Member Brief in July (20 issued) • Chief Executive Monthly Message
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	**Resource Management:** Prioritising messaging based on available resources is essential. We allocate resources wisely to ensure impactful communication, this however is not always understood across the organisation as service areas don't always appreciate the bigger Council picture. **Prioritisation:** Sometimes, certain messages take precedence. Our team consider urgency, importance, and audience when prioritising communication efforts, again this is not always accepted across the organisation. **Planning Processes:** Integrate communication planning into overall organisational planning. Service areas should involve the Communications team early to align strategies/ messaging and to avoid duplication of effort. A 'One Council approach' needs embedded more firmly in the organisation's culture.

1.3   Borough Marketing

Staff	The Borough Marketing Manager is supported by Marketing and Asst. Marketing officers, and works in close collaboration with the Tourism, Economic Development and Regeneration service areas.
Purpose	To convey clear propositions to a) present Ards and North Down as an appealing visitor destination targeting potential visitors and b) as an appealing inward investment proposition for a strong place to do business.
Key Achievements	In the last year the Borough Marketing team has: Delivered 18 fully integrated comms and marketing campaigns – targeting visitors, investors and encouraging residents to support local. - Promotion of council-run events programme including Merry May Day Holywood, Pipe Band Championships, Sea Bangor Festival, Taste Summer Food Festival, Comber Earlies Food Festival, Taste Autumn Food Festival, Tide, AND Turf- Portavogie, and Christmas switch ons. - Marketing support for event fund grant-aided initiatives. - Taste Ards and North Down local food and drink promotion. - Suite of visitor and investor print/ digital publications showcasing the Borough as an appealing place to visit and invest. - Visit Belfast Regional Marketing Partnership annual agreement. 70 tourism e-zines published (average open rate 50%). 28% growth of tourism consumer database. 37% VisitAND social media audience growth. - Market testing brochure for Holywood Innovation Hub. Facilitated: - Directors' attendance at UKReiff investor event
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	- The 'always on' nature of digital communications requires a high level of resource to develop engaging content and manage appropriate online responses. - Reactive marketing support requests continue to increase in both number and complexity. These requests are impacting on resources with already full workloads. - Marketing requirements are often urgent or timebound and therefore the team must deal with multiple priorities. Templates and timelines have been developed to help manage incoming programming information more efficiently. It is important that partner services adhere to timelines and effectively plan programmes that require communications and marketing support to ensure that priority projects are effectively supported. - UK GDPR legislation and implications for permissions, protection, and use of images/ personal data is of critical importance and a key consideration when developing promotional materials.

1.4   Bangor Regeneration

Staff	The Bangor Regeneration Manager works as part of the Communications and Marketing Service Unit.
Purpose	To deliver communications and marketing support for regeneration projects in Bangor.
Key Achievements	In the last year Bangor Regeneration has focussed on engaging and relationship building with the public and stakeholders in Bangor. Delivered • Subscriber email address for updates on the BWF Redevelopment – email promoted using social, web banner and outdoor banners. • Ezine designed and two editions issued • Refreshed BWF web information to include comprehensive FAQs • BWF Presentation designed Facilitated • 6 public information sessions to stakeholders including Marina and Harbour users, Kingsland residents and Bangor CAG. Attended • SERC Freshers Fair to engage with students. Introduced • Citizen Lab – new engagement platform
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	• The BWF project is ten-year programme of works. At present the focus is upon procurement activities and as such there is little 'new' information to share. This presents challenges as it leaves long periods of time without anything tangible to update the public on and despite advising of the timelines, can make it appear that the project has not progressed. • BWF is a complex project with a wide range of partners – both internal and external to Council. Maintaining good lines of communication with all and ensuring that, on occasion, different priorities and messages are managed effectively is key to the smooth presentation of the project.

2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Political	Yet to achieve fully integrated or 'one Borough' identity politically. Cynicism about regional political situation, negatively impacting views of local politics. More regional/ partnership working providing additional profile opportunities but also additional demands on communications channels.
Economic	Failure across internal services to plan/ budget for communications element of their service plans. Cost of living crisis/ rates increase resulting in increased scrutiny of council spend. Requirement to demonstrate value for money across all services. Perception (incorrect) that digital/ social media is a 'no cost' service.
Social	Increasing calls for more openness and transparency across all Council activities. Growing public interest in more structured consultation and engagement. Growth in audience numbers on all Council social media and web platforms/ challenges of managing levels of negativity and abuse. Increasing expectation of 24/7 and instant multi-media-based comms. Increasing need for more flexibility in work patterns to be able to respond. Increasingly older local population but necessity to engage with youth – extremes of the comms channels.
Technical	Opportunities to use technology to support new ways of consulting (Citizen Lab). Opportunities arising from the new digital strategy – single entry point for customers/ better use of analytics and data in decision making/ better collaboration across Council. Increasing relevance of digital influencers.
Legal	Code of conduct. Increasing ethical standards around transparency and openness. Copyright.
Environmental	Silo thinking continues cross Council limiting shared learning, duplicating effort/mixed messages to customers. Lack of understanding of the service/ service pressures making difficult to manage work requests.

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ The Service has knowledgeable, resilient and capable staff who are motivated to deliver for the Council and the Borough. ▪ Restructuring comms and marketing together has brought new skills into the existing team and provided additional support systems for collaboration and idea generation. ▪ The team has a strong knowledge base, supported by relevant and up-to-date training (e.g. social/ digital media). ▪ Benefit from opportunities to work with all Council directorates and so have a unique insight into the full remit of the organisation and a strong understanding of the political and social environment. ▪ The team enjoys good working relationships internally and externally.	▪ The team delivers work under significant deadline pressures and in a media/ social media environment that essentially operates 24/7. It can be difficult to meet this need, as the Council does not work in this way. ▪ Tourism and Culture have a dedicated officer resource, and this provides benefits in terms of better understanding of the operational service. ▪ Confirmation of information when responding to issues raised in press/ social media is not always readily available/ approved by senior officers – perception that it is ultimately Comms responsibility as opposed to the Service Unit's. ▪ It is recognised that other members of the team need to engage more regularly and be more visible within a range of Council service areas – opportunities for this will be explored in this financial year.
Opportunities	**Threats**
▪ New digital platforms (GOSS and Citizen Lab) offer opportunity to enhance services and increased engagement for residents. ▪ Access to a large, engaged audience across council social media channels. ▪ Corporate priority re engagement ▪ New approach to advertising and sponsorship to contribute to corporate commercialisation objective.	▪ The biggest threat to the service comes from internal and external stakeholders not being willing to work in partnership – either by deciding to deliver marcomms activity themselves with no reference to the central team or alternatively by trying to present any type of engagement for their project as the responsibility of Communications and Marketing. ▪ The reactive nature of some projects and in particular many media requests can make planning more challenging. ▪ Ongoing challenge of tackling negative commentary on social media.

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3. Strategic Objectives and Collaboration

The table below reflects the key projects that will be undertaken by the Communications and Marketing Service over the next 12 months, and the key services that will be collaborated with as part of the process. It should be noted that the team works closely with all services areas throughout the year in relation to core activities including PR/ Digital Communications/ Graphic Design/ Consultations.

Strategic Objective	Collaboration Required
Corporate Communications and Multi-Media	
Digital Borough Magazine	Service wide collaboration, to ensure topical information is covered in each edition.
Brand Ambassadors	Internal and external stakeholders, Elected Members, staff and targeted groups.
Borough Marketing	
PR plans (in conjunction with Corp Comms)	Tourism service and external stakeholders collaboration with Visit Belfast, Tourism Ireland and Tourism NI.
UK Reiff	Belfast City Region Partnership, Economic Development officers.
Marketing	
Engagement framework	In partnership with Community Planning and Transformation. HR to assist with training programme.
Advertising/sponsorship Income	Review of Council-wide sponsorship and advertising opportunities across the Borough to commence. New policy and media pack to be drafted. Work with relevant services (Parks, Leisure, Waste, Community, NET), review any existing policies. Aim is to drive income to Council.

4. Service Improvement

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Brand Ambassadors	Strategic Effectiveness	Engage a series of brand ambassadors (advocates) for the Council and its key priorities and projects. Seek to align these to the new corporate priorities to promote key themes. This is an effort to introduce new and, in some cases, expert voices to engage on issues. Considered that it may be particularly helpful to challenge misconceptions and provide useful insights for social media/ PR opportunities.	BMM	HOST/ external partners
Launch Engagement Framework with associated training for staff/support mechanisms	Service Quality	Work has been done to develop a draft engagement framework based on the Scottish National Standards. This needs to be further refined and a programme of training developed for officers, councillors and the public on council standards and procedures.	BRM	CLT/HOST/SUMs Esp Community Planning/ Community and Transformation
Borough Magazine	Sustainability/ Digital	Need to build trust and provide a consistent 'drip feed' of info outside of existing social/ media channels. Reintroduce the BM as a primarily digital publication issued to subscribers (database in development) and, in the first 2 years, with a small print run (5,000) that will be distributed to community groups/ hubs/ council properties/ on request etc. Use hard copy publication to promote move to digital version so print reduced/ eliminated over time. NB: *86% supportive of a Council magazine being sent to all households in the Borough (2023 Resident's Survey)*	CMM	HOST/SUMs

5. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Standing Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meeting	Fortnightly	Head of Service and SUMs

6. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed.
Yes

7. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

	Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
						2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
1	% spend against budget	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	95%	100%	96%	100%			F
2	% staff attendance	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	98%	93%	93%	95%			F
3	% completed appraisals (Sept '23 to Mar '25)	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	100%	100%	50%	100%			F
4	% client satisfaction	Service Led	Year End	7	Economic	90%	90%	93%	95%			F
5	% resident awareness of Council services	Service Led	Year End	7	Social	70%	75%	72%	75%			F
6	% resident satisfaction with comms	Service Led	Year End	7	Social	75%	77%	78%	80%			F
7	% satisfaction with Council website	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Social	89%	90%	90%	90%			F
8	% employee satisfaction with engagement	Service Led	Year End	7	Social	72%	75%	75%	80%			F
9	Reduce advertising spend/ increase sponsorship	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	-£10k	-£7k	-£30k			C
10	Recruit ambassadors re outcomes of corporate plan	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	7			C
12	Launch Engagement Framework	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Social	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%			F
13	Roll out of training on CE Policy	Service Led	Year End	7	Social	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%			F
14	% households signed up for digital Borough Magazine	Service Led	Annual	7	Social	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%			C
15	% households engaged with kerbside collection scheme changes	Service Led	Annual	2	Enviro	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%			C
16	% increase in signs ups to the Bangor Waterfront ezine	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%			C

Agenda (b) / Item 4b - Communications and Marketing Service Plan 2024-25....

Back to Agenda

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8. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
N/A					

FINANCE

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

14 MARCH 2024

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Stephen Grieve	Steph Denny	Michael Steele
For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.	For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.	
Head of Finance	Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance	Director of Corporate Services
05/03/2024	06/03/2024	03/04/2024

Contents

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1. Introduction to Service

a.   Introduction

The role of the Finance Service is to support all other Council services by **delivering efficient and effective stewardship** of Council funds by providing **leadership and excellence** in strategic and operational financial matters.

Fulfilling this role will result in high quality financial services that are compliant with legislation and good practice and that facilitate managers achieving their corporate objectives.
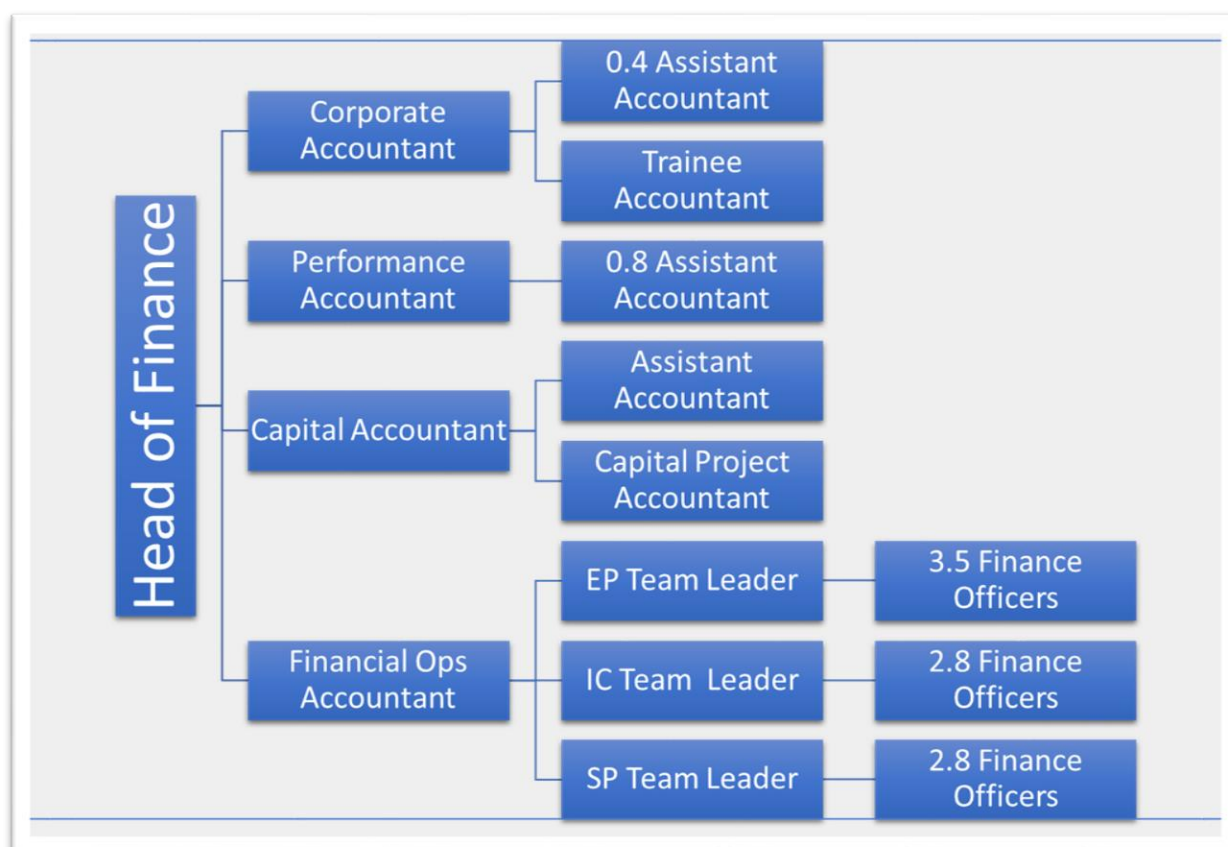
b.   Reflection

As a Service the implementation of development initiatives has proved problematic due to other pressures, although significant progress has been made in respect of policy development with five new policies being agreed, leaving a further two for the next financial year. Core transactional services perform well, and monthly reporting deadlines have been met all through the 2023/24 year to date. In addition, the financial statements were published by the statutory deadline with a clean audit opinion. This years' Service review also provided a satisfactory opinion.

As part of the 2023/24 service planning cycle a medium-term Finance Development Plan was put in place to assist with longer term planning. This is set out below.

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Commence FMS implementation	Complete FMS implementation	Consider additional modules for FMS
Engage with services to improve purchase order compliance for FMS implementation	Start to realise savings from FMS	Maximise savings from FMS and restructuring
Engage with services to improve income returns process in advance of electronic bank reconciliation in new FMS	Be completely paperless	
Engage with services to monitor major expenditure drivers in advance of introduction of formal business partnering	Commence phased restructuring with introduction of business partnering	Complete restructuring – roll out business partnering
Engage with Services to improve Core compliance	Build team skills, resilience and succession planning	Build team skills, resilience and succession planning
Complete transfer of network files to SharePoint		

2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

Insert a brief narrative on the external issues, including current and anticipated, impacting upon the service – consideration of PESTLE factors may be useful.

Political	- Council desire for transformation of services to improve efficiency and effectiveness and release resources for the attainment of corporate objectives.
Economic	- Long-term decline of non-domestic tax base. - Restrictions on carrying central government funding between financial years. - Higher than usual levels of inflation, particularly in payroll and utility costs, including higher pension contributions and implementation of holiday pay adjustment case law. - Implementation of new finance policies, including Asset Management, Charging and Income, Reserves, Budgeting, Purchasing and Payments and Inventories Policies.
Social	- Continued significant homeworking - No clearly defined career path through the Service and lack of succession planning.

5

Technological	- Ongoing compliance issues with new integrated employee payments and human resource software. - Use of paper-based processes and out of date technology particularly in relation to financial management. - Inconsistent skills base within Finance and across the organisation.

Legal	- Potential update of Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 in respect of payments to Councillors.
	- The main statutes that the Finance Service delivers its functions under are:
	  o Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 (LGFA)
	  o Rates (NI) Order 1977 (as amended) (RO)
	  o Rates Regulations (NI) 1997 (RR)
	  o Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (NI) 2015 (LGAAR)
	  o Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (NI) 2011(LGCFAR)
	  o Local Government (Payment to Councillors) Regulations (NI) 2019
	  o HMRC PAYE and VAT Regulations
	- There are a number of other codes with quasi-legal standing which the Council is obliged to comply with:
	  o CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK
	  o CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance
	  o CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management
	  o CIPFA Financial Management Code
	- In addition, the Council must comply with requests under the Freedom of Information Act, or from the Department for Communities.

Environmental	- Implications of Pathway to Sustainability initiative - Climate Change Act implementation

Insert a brief narrative/ list of the challenges which your services will face over the period of the plan. This should, where relevant, reference external issues highlighted above. A SWOT analysis may be useful for completing this section.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Knowledgeable and committed staff	Outdated financial system
Well respected by Members	Skills deficiencies
Good quality core services	Capacity to develop use of technology to improve efficiency.
10-year capital plan in place	Still using some legacy policies and procedures

3-year medium term financial plan in place	Unsuitable IT equipment for hybrid working.
Statutory financial accountability structures	Poor prioritisation of core finance work due to overly ambitious Council aspirations; increasing complexity of accounting requirements and increasing complexity of partnership arrangements
Consistently clean external audit reports	Over reliance on key individuals; lack of succession planning
Satisfactory internal audit reports	Implementation of new finance policies.
Four new finance policies in place	Configuration of office space and ICT assets
Largely paperless	
Opportunities	**Threats**
New Employee Payments software systems and business processes	Volume and complexity of work impacting on staff wellbeing.
More efficient processes release resources for closer working with all Services	Change fatigue both within the finance service and across the whole organisation – especially in connection with new financial system
The transformation and efficiency agenda	Aging profile of the service
Performance management agenda	'Bureaucratic' perception by some outward facing services.
New financial system preparation being a catalyst for wider changes.	
New role introduced to finance service to promote succession planning – trainee accountant.	

3. Strategic Objectives and Collaboration

The table below reflects the key projects that will be undertaken by the Finance Service over the next 12 months, and the key Services that will be collaborated with as part of the process.

Strategic Objective	Collaboration Required
Introduce interim electronic purchase ordering system	• STaP • Assets and Property • Parks and Cemeteries • Leisure Services • Waste Collection • Administration • Communications and Marketing • Community and Culture
Improvement in lodgement returns process	• All Services submitting income returns • STaP
Improvement in quality of Core sign-off	• All Core sign-off managers • Organisational Development • Digital Services
Commence implementation of new financial management system	• All Services – Budget holders
Transfer all live network files to SharePoint	• STaP
Implementation of Asset Management Policy	• Leisure Services • Parks and Cemeteries
Implementation of Charging and Income Policy	• Leisure Services • Waste and Cleansing • Regulatory Services • Planning
Implementation of Budgeting Policy	• All Services – Budget holders
Implementation of Purchasing and Payments Policy	• All Services
Implementation of Inventories Policy	• Assets and Property • Leisure Services • Tourism, • Waste and Cleansing • Community and Culture
Develop Travel and Subsistence Policy	• SCC • Human Resources and Organisation Development • Trades Unions

Strategic Objective	Collaboration Required
Develop Employee Payments Policy	• SCC • Human Resources and Organisation Development • Trades Unions

4. Service Improvement

The "**Service development/ improvement**" element should identify areas of the service that require development/ improvement along with any new, innovative ideas for future improvements. **Please state clearly in the "Rationale" section why the improvement is being undertaken and what evidence there is to support the decision.**

Only Service improvement activities should be included in this section, 'business as usual' activities should be detailed in Section 6.

Please ensure KPIs are included in Section 6 to measure Service development/ improvement(s) outlined below.

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Introduce interim electronic purchase ordering system	Innovation	The new financial management system will have an electronic purchase to pay system. This is an interim step to assist with the cultural change in the organisation and therefore improve medium term outcomes.	FMS Project Team	Transformation Service Digital Services Procurement Service Unit
Improvement in lodgement returns process	Efficiency	The new financial management system will have an electronic bank reconciliation module. This is preparatory work to more closely align how information is received by Finance in order to allow for automatic reconciliation processes to be introduced.	FMS Project Team	All Services submitting income returns Transformation Service Digital Services
Improvement in quality of Core sign-off	Efficiency	Poor quality information requires detailed review by Employee Payments team, reducing efficiency and the ability to carry out other valued added work.	Finance Operations Accountant	All Core sign-off managers Organisational Development Service Unit Digital Services
Commence implementation of new financial management system	Innovation	Current system is coming to the end of its life. This implementation process will take up to 18 months to complete.	Head of Finance	Transformation Service Digital Services Procurement Service Unit

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Transfer all live network files to SharePoint	Efficiency	This will improve information accessibility and functionality.	Service Unit Managers	Digital Services
Implementation of Asset Management Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Implementation will improve internal controls and processes in line with good practice	Capital Accountant	Leisure and Parks & Cemetery Services
Implementation of Charging and Income Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Implementation will improve internal controls and processes in line with good practice	Financial Operations and Performance Accountants	Leisure, Waste & Cleansing, Regulatory Services, Planning
Implementation of Budgeting Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Implementation will improve internal controls and processes in line with good practice	Performance and Capital Accountants	All Services
Implementation of Purchasing and Payments Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Implementation will improve internal controls and processes in line with good practice	Financial Operations Accountant	All Services
Implementation of Inventories Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Implementation will improve internal controls and processes in line with good practice	Corporate Accountant	Assets and Property, Leisure, Tourism, Waste & Cleansing
Develop Travel and Subsistence Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Development will review and improve current internal controls and processes and also improve efficiency	Head of Finance	All Services, SCC and Trades Unions to be consulted
Develop Employee Payments Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	Development will review and improve current internal controls and processes and improve efficiency	Head of Finance	All Services, SCC and Trades Unions to be consulted

5. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Corporate Services Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meeting	Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs

6. Service Risks Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed. **Yes**

7. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	85%	95%	12%	95%			**Cum**
% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	93%	95%	96.4%	95%			**Fixed**
% of completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	6 monthly	7	Economic	42%	100%	0%	100%			**Fixed**
% Statutory deadlines met	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	88%	100%	95%	100%			**Fixed**
To pay employees on time	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	99.7%	100%	99.8%	100%			**Fixed**
% Debtors payments received within 30 days of invoice date	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	79%	75%	77%	75%			**Fixed**
% Creditors paid within 30 calendar days	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	98%	95%	97%	95%			**Fixed**
To issue monthly budgetary control reports in a timely fashion (in working days)	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	20	9	9	8			**Fixed**
To complete monthly account reconciliations within a timely fashion (working days)	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	12	9	33	8			**Fixed**
Commence Financial Management System design	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	-	-	-	31/03/25			**Fixed**
Introduce interim electronic purchase ordering system	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	-	-	-	30/09/24			**Fixed**
Improvement in lodgement returns process	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	-	-	-	31/12/24			**Fixed**
Improvement in quality of Core sign-off	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	-	-	-	31/12/24			**Fixed**
Transfer all network files to SharePoint	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	-	31/03/24	started	30/09/24			**Fixed**

8. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Paper purchase orders	Moving to electronic system	£2k (interim solution will be more expensive but will eventually replaced by the new FMS)	Improved • Internal controls • Management information	Requirement for suppliers to quote PO number on invoices	Additional training required and review of internal Service procedures

Item 4d

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION AND PERFORMANCE (CORPORATE SERVICES)

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

13 FEBRUARY 2024

Ards and North Down
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Steph Denny	Steve Grieve	Michael Steele
Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance	Head of Finance	Director of Corporate Services
13/02/24	06/03/24	06/03/24

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1. Introduction to Service

1.1 Strategic Transformation and Performance

The Strategic Transformation and Performance Service sits within the Corporate Services Directorate and incorporates:

- Transformation;
- Digital Services; and
- Procurement.
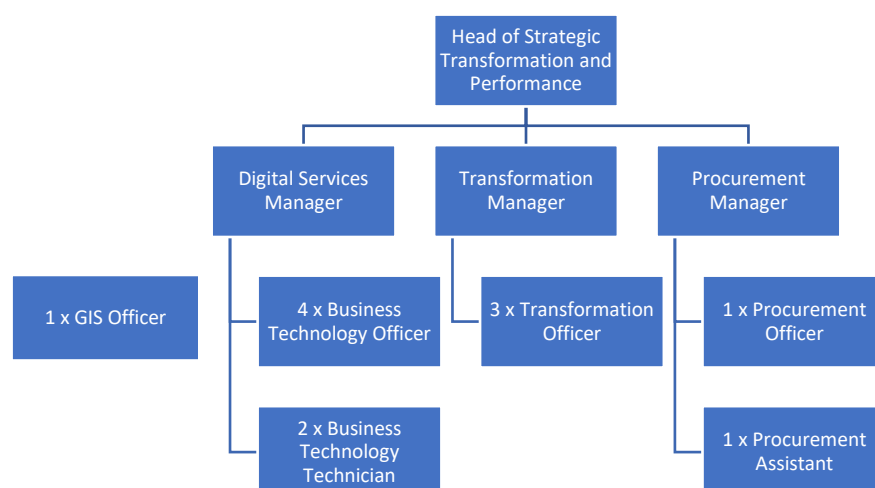
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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  Head of Strategic      │
                    │  Transformation and     │
                    │  Performance            │
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  ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
  │  Digital     │   │ Transformation│  │ Procurement  │
  │  Services    │   │  Manager      │  │  Manager     │
  │  Manager     │   │               │  │              │
  └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘
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Digital Services Manager	Transformation Manager	Procurement Manager
1 x GIS Officer	4 x Business Technology Officer	3 x Transformation Officer	1 x Procurement Officer
	2 x Business Technology Technician		1 x Procurement Assistant

As a service, we aim to support the Council to be a high performing organisation through the provision of knowledge, skills, expertise, good practice and resources. Specifically, we seek to provide support to other Services:

- With their service planning, ensuring alignment with the Corporate Plan.
- In the delivery of the Council's Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme.
- To develop the digital capabilities of their workforce.
- To ensure Council meets its statutory obligations with regard to the General Duty for Improvement.
- To support council operationally through good procurement management practices.

Our Service led on the development of the new Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028, which will serve as the Council's strategic framework for the next four years, setting out our values, priorities and commitments to work towards our vision to be A Sustainable Borough.

The Plan will be driven by three strategic priorities: economic, environmental and social. The work of our Service will have a focus on meeting the economic priority.

Seven outcomes have been identified to drive the three priorities and the activities of our Service will be aligned to Outcome 7 - Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation. Our Service will know we have been successful in meeting this outcome if we have contributed to:

- Developing a digital strategy to facilitate digital connectivity and delivery across all Council services.
- Reviewing our organisational design to ensure our services are delivered in an effective and efficient way.
- Right sizing the Council's estate to have the right number of staff and buildings to work effectively.

1.2   Transformation

Staff	The Transformation Manager is supported by three Transformation Officers.
Purpose	Transformation is responsible for: • Delivering the Council's Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme; • Supporting individual services with service-specific projects aligned to key strategic transformation priorities and continuous improvement; and • All aspects of Council's statutory commitments relating to Performance Improvement including the Performance Improvement Plan and Self-Assessment Report.

Key Achievements	Since being established in September 2023 the Service has:
	• Developed a Business Continuity Plan for the Council.
	• Completed a review of the performance management process and designed a new service plan template for the Council (and supported the annual service planning process).
	• Developed the 2023/24 Performance Improvement Plan and completed the 2022/23 Self-Assessment Report.
	• Completed a Post Project Evaluation for the Core2 Project with lessons learned being considered and implemented in future projects.
	• Supported Digital Services in the development of a Digital Strategy which will provide a roadmap for implementation to commence in 2024/25.
	• Supported Corporate Communications in the development of a new Corporate Website/ Platform which will go live in April 2024.
	• Worked in partnership with a number of Services across Council in the delivery of 10 transformation and efficiency projects, currently underway:
	   - Corporate Grants Policy and Process Review
	   - Leisure Staff Restructure
	   - Development of Leisure Strategy
	   - Leisure Benchmarking Review
	   - Migration of Council telephone system
	   - Mobile Phone Transitioning
	   - Review of legal services
	   - Community Centre/ Halls Review
	   - Relocation of South Street staff (part of Office Rationalisation project)
	   - Events Strategy Review.
	• Collaborated and engaged with all services across Council to promote the support and service that the Transformation team can provide.
	• Developed and implemented project governance structures and documentation across the portfolio of transformational projects.
	• There are currently a further 3 projects in the pipeline due to commence 2024/25:
	   - New corporate financial management system.
	   - Review of options for KPI Reporting System.
	   - Relocation of Parks and Cemeteries staff.

Challenges/ Lessons Learned	• Further promotion of the Transformation Programme across Council (Team, budget etc). • Further alignment of our internal processes. • Improved and more efficient KPI Reporting tool.

1.3   Digital Services

Staff	The Digital Services Manager is supported by four officers, two technicians and a GIS Officer.
Purpose	Digital Services is responsible for: • Managing the Council's existing ICT systems and infrastructure; • Planning and facilitating future investment in technology; and • Supporting the Council in developing and delivering its Digital Strategy.

Key Achievements	• Systems and network uptime is 99%.
	• 96% of service calls are satisfactorily addressed within timescales.
	• Office 365 Backup in place.
	• IT Disaster Recovery Plan developed.
	• Review of the Council's telephony estate underway.
	• Review of Mobile Estate underway:
	  - Upgrade of Elected Members devices commenced; and
	  - 59% of organisation migrated to mobile devices (laptops).
	• Wide Area Network (WAN) project implementation underway.
	• Leading the development of the Council's Digital Strategy (currently in draft), in collaboration with our external specialists, BT.
	• Involved in the development and implementation of the online appraisal system.
	• Involved in the development of the new Council website.
	• Significant work has been undertaken to progress recommendations from our cyber security review:
	  - A Managed Incident Cyber Response contract is now in place; and
	  - Raised awareness on cyber-attacks across the organisation.
	• Reduced redundant estate e.g. printers.
	• Geographic Information System (GIS) service developed:
	  - 18 GIS Web Editors in place;
	  - 6 GIS projects complete and 3 in pipeline;
	  - 2 public facing GIS projects completed; and
	  - 13,500 views on GIS Portal since February 2023 reflecting increased self-service.

Challenges/ Lessons Learned	• Further awareness raising required with regard to services provided i.e. GIS, network security. • Greater collaborative working should be achieved with Finance/ Transformation • All new staff should receive a 'Digital Services' induction. • Monitoring of network assets is vital. • Need to assist users on applications. • Appropriate management of projects.

1.4   Procurement

Staff	The Procurement Manager is supported by a Procurement Officer and a Procurement Assistant.
Purpose	The Procurement Service Unit (PSU) is responsible for facilitating the Council's contract tendering process to ensure legislative compliance.
Key Achievements	• Procurement savings for the Council are over target for the year to date (£155,756 versus £125,000). * • There have been zero procurement challenges. • Approximately 50 procurements have been completed in the last 12 months with a reduced team capacity (the average, historically, has been 25). • A number of the procurements have been complex and under additional scrutiny. • More than 50 staff members have received tender evaluation training
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	• Historically, over the last 5 years, the PSU (with a full team of 3 staff: Procurement Manager; Procurement Officer; and Procurement Assistant) managed an average of 25 tender exercises per year. • Circa 43 tender exercises were programmed for the year 2023. • There are approximately 45 procurement exercises already identified for 2024. • This represents an increase in tenders of circa 80% for the PSU with no associated increase in staffing. • Over the last 12 months the Unit has only had a full staff complement for a period of two months (June and July 2023). • The current structure (FTE 3) does not have the capacity to address the increased workload nor to identify corporate tenders which can achieve significant efficiencies across the organisation both in terms of monetary savings and also process/ transactional savings. • Resourcing of Procurement roles has continually proved unsuccessful, and a fundamental review of the Unit is now required. • There is a new Procurement Act due to be implemented in October 2024. • It is important that procurement staff develop and maintain a central database of learning outcomes for individual tenders.

*Although the savings are not directly attributed to the PSU, ultimately savings achieved benefit the Council and Ratepayer. The PSU has considerable control and influence, using its professional expertise and innovative solutions, to advise clients when running tender competitions. A procurement strategy is considered for each spend requirement.

Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

1.5   External

Political	• Conflicting political interests and priorities across Council.
Economical	• Increased supply costs in terms of ICT equipment due to inflation. • Failure to review Council spend is not delivering procurement efficiencies.
Social	• Social Value Policy to be implemented and considered in all future procurements.
Technological	• A Digital Strategy has now been developed for implementation.
Legal	• From a procurement perspective, Council is undertaking a review of its Legal provision and considering various options on how it will be managed. This may include bringing some of the areas of law "in-house", which could generate cost efficiencies. • Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 to publish a Performance Improvement Plan and Self-Assessment Report annually. • There are a number of high-value, complex procurements to be delivered (Marina Operator, Bangor Waterfront Development) which bring a higher risk of potential challenge. • New Procurement Act due to be implemented in October 2024.
Environmental	• The Council corporately has made a commitment to sustainability and the new Corporate Plan has a strong focus on sustainability. All functions within the Council will continue to endeavour to be as sustainable as possible, but there must be a realism in relation to potential for increased costs in the short term for some of these actions. • One of the initiatives arising from the Digital Strategy will be the reduction in the use of paper which will be implemented across Council.

2.2 Internal

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Knowledge of staff (systems and organisation) • Skilled workforce • Length of service of staff • High attendance levels • Good reputation • Integrity • Adaptability (hybrid-working) • Collaborative working	• Lack of standardised solutions • Reactive rather than proactive • Succession planning • User awareness • Lack of investment in IT infrastructure • Multiple locations • Lack of skilled procurement resources • Length of service of staff
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Transformation projects • Transformation fund • Digital Strategy • Develop Standard Operating Procedures • Drive efficiencies within budget set • Cloud-based computing • Continuous performance improvements • Restructuring • New ways to recruit (apprenticeships)	• Resourcing, particularly within procurement • Cyber attacks • User awareness • Restructuring

2. Strategic Objectives and Collaboration

The table below reflects the key projects that will be undertaken by the Strategic Transformation and Performance Service over the next 12 months, and the key Services that will be collaborated with as part of the process.

Strategic Objective	Collaboration Required
Procurement	
Implement a Social Value in Procurement Policy	N/A
Implement the out workings of the new Procurement Act	N/A
Review the structure and function of the PSU	Transformation
Transformation	
Corporate Grants Policy and Process Review	• Community Development • Tourism • Economic Development • Regeneration • Leisure Services • Finance • Administration • Parks and Cemeteries
Online Grants System	As above and Digital Services
Leisure Transformation	Leisure Services
• Community Centre/ Halls Review	Community Centres and Halls
Legal Services Review	Administration
Office Rationalisation Sub-projects	• Community and Culture • Parks and Cemeteries • Finance
Events Strategy Review	Tourism
Review the structure and function of the PSU	Procurement
Digital Services	
Digital Strategy Sub-projects	• Procurement • Administration • HR and OD • Finance • Communications and Marketing • Transformation • External consultants
Procurement of Security Operations Centre (SOC) and Security Incident and Event Management (SIEM)	• Procurement
Implementation of new Finance System	• Transformation • Finance
Migration of Council telephone system	• Transformation

3. Service Improvement

Service development/ improvement 2024/25?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Implement A Social Value in Procurement Policy	Service Quality	• Scoring of social value in central government contracts was implemented on 1 June 2022. Although this applies to central government contracts only, following an internal review, the Council should implement this policy to all contracts where appropriate. • Furthermore, the PSU continues to receive queries from Members and suppliers regarding Social Value in contracts.	Procurement Manager	N/A
SOC/ SIEM	Strategic Effectiveness	• SOC/ SIEM implementation is in response to a Priority 1 recommendation in the Cyber Security Review carried out in 2019/2020. The SIEM provides centralised log management, real-time threat detection and analytics that can proactively defend against emerging threats and minimise incident response times. • The SOC will provide a managed service that will provide Council with a 24/7 service to monitor, prevent, detect, investigate and respond to cyber threats the Council are exposed to.	Digital Services Manager	External Partner

4. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Corporate Services Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meetings	Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs

5. Service Risk Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan, you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed. **Yes**

6. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

	Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
						2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
1	% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	100%	93.86%	100%			
2	% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	98.23%	93%	96.91%	95%			
3	% Completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	100%	50%	100%			
4	% Service calls satisfactorily addressed within timescales	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	96%	97%	95.26%	97%			
5	% Systems and network uptime	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	99%	99%	99%	99%			
6	Implement high priority technical projects identified in Digital Strategy	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	4			
7	Implement SOC/SIEM	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	31/03/25			
8	No. of successful Procurement Challenges	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	0	0	0	0			
9	Implement Social Value in Procurement Policy	Service Led	Annual	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	31/03/25			
10	Procurement Contract Savings	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	270k	125k	155k	250k			
11	Attendance at Economic Development organised SME training events	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	1	1			
12	Develop annual Performance Improvement Plan by statutory deadline	Statutory	Annual	7	Economic	✓	30/09/23	✓	30/06/24			
13	Develop annual Self-Assessment Report by statutory deadline	Statutory	Annual	7	Economic	✓	30/09/23	✓	30/09/24			
14	Support the delivery of 10 Transformational Projects across Council	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	5	5	10			
15	Develop and implement an Engagement Plan to further promote the Transformation Programme Council-wide	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	N/A	Achieve			

7. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping/ changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
N/A					

Item 4e

ADMINISTRATION (CORPORATE SERVICES)

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

01 MARCH 2024

Ards and North Down Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Alison Curtis	Claire Jackson	Michael Steele
Head of Administration	Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing	Director of Corporate Services
27/03/24	12.03.24	28.03.24

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Contents

1. Introduction to Service

1.1 Administration

The Administration Service sits within the Corporate Services Directorate and includes:

- Compliance
- Customer Service including Registration
- Democratic Services
- Risk Management
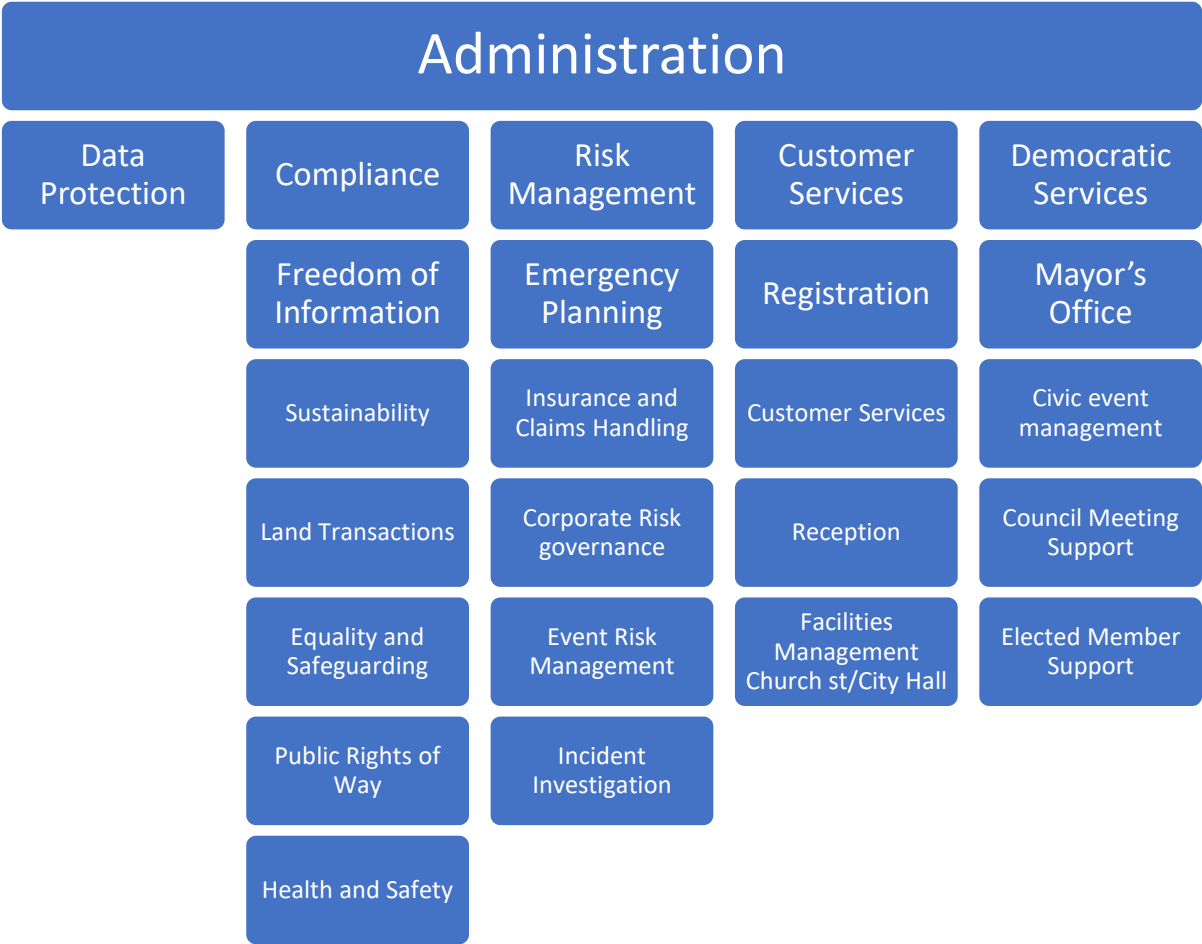
Administration				
Data Protection	Compliance	Risk Management	Customer Services	Democratic Services
	Freedom of Information	Emergency Planning	Registration	Mayor's Office
	Sustainability	Insurance and Claims Handling	Customer Services	Civic event management
	Land Transactions	Corporate Risk governance	Reception	Council Meeting Support
	Equality and Safeguarding	Event Risk Management	Facilities Management Church st/City Hall	Elected Member Support
	Public Rights of Way	Incident Investigation		
	Health and Safety			

As a service, we aim to support the Council to be a high performing organisation through the provision of knowledge, skills, expertise, good practice and resources. Specifically, we seek to provide support to other Services to ensure governance with legislation and statuary obligations.

The Corporate Plan will be driven by three strategic priorities: economic, environmental and social. The work of our Service will have a focus on meeting the environmental priority whilst also supporting services that focus on economic and social priorities.

The activities of our Service will be aligned to Outcomes:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

1.2   Compliance (including Data Protection)

Staff	The Compliance Manager is supported by 9 Officers and 1 assistant.
Purpose	Including Investigating and asserting Public Rights of Way and complying with all statutory requirements relating to Public Rights of Way. Information Management – Records Management, Data Protection, Freedom of information, Environmental Information •
Key Achievements	In the last year the Compliance team have: Processed: • 600 FOI requests (99% responded within statutory timeframe) • 300 requests to use Council Land • 90 DSARs (99% responded within statutory timeframe) Delivered 200 Health and Safety training sessions on: • Risk Assessment Awareness • Manual Handling, • Personal Safety • Incident and Accident reporting Facilitated: • Climate Action and Sustainability Champions • EMS Team Meetings • Sustainable Food Places Steering Group • Corporate H&S Committee • Corporate Directorate H&S • Internal Screening Panel • Disability Forum • Consultative Panel • Supported Capital Projects including Bangor Waterfront, Queens Parade, Whitespots, Greenways and Cemeteries. • Diversity Ambassadors programme • SEHSCT Carers event Retained • EMS accreditation • Fairtrade accreditation And • Completed a title reconciliation exercise for Legacy Ards Borough Council Land and Property Assets • Reviewed and updated of the Council's Land and Property policy • Asserted 1 Public Right of Way, reviewed authorities for Public Rights of Way in Borough and created a public facing map of Public Rights of Way in Borough • Screened 30 policies • Attained Disability Confident Scheme status • Updated 44 Council owned public facilities to be Stoma Friendly • Delivered 10 sessions of Safeguarding Training module 2 for staff

Challenges/ Lessons Learned	- Information requests are continuing to increase in both number and complexity. These requests are significantly impacting on resources with already full workloads. - Public expectation is high and often the service needs to obtain legal and, where appropriate, valuation advice before action therefore it can be seen as operating slowly when in fact it is necessary to ensure due diligence. - The service is very reactive and often has to deal with complex conflicting priorities, there are clear timelines established in the lands policy and it is important that the Council adheres to timelines to ensure that every transaction is treated fairly to prevent undue criticism. - Climate Change is high on the agenda and we are not resourced for it. - Safeguarding Children, Young people and Adults at Risk obligations are increasing, therefore a review of Safeguarding roles, responsibilities and policy is needed. Funding for further training and possible mitigation measures will be required in order to ensure our services are meeting statutory obligations.

1.3   Risk Management

Staff	The Risk Manager is supported by 3 officers and 2 administrative supports.
Purpose	Proactively broadening our community, business and stakeholder engagement approach to include co-design and participation where appropriate and Objective 2 where we have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming through:
Key Achievements	In the last year the Risk Management team have: Processed 325 investigations. Delivered an Emergency Planning Civil Contingencies exercise, Emergency Support Centre training and participated in Oil Pollution Response training and an AND OPRC exercise. Contributed to: 31 Multi agency partner group meetings (including AND EPIG) 47 Internal AND Meetings (Including events and debriefs) 25 Multi agency partner training events - Two Risk Strategy workshops developing the Risk Appetite and Corporate Risk Register. Advised on: 40 Weather related events relevant in AND - Maintained watching brief on other weather warnings Facilitated: 2 Emergency support centre (ESC) activations 1 workshop on Risk Management for community/3rd party groups Currently processing 80 live liability claims 29 live motor vehicle claims 60 claims under heads of insurance & legacy claims Supported 3rd party community run/Council events in terms of risk advice.
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	Risk remains misunderstood and often seen as a barrier rather than a vehicle to support good business planning, partnership working and decision making. Officers continue to work with others to ensure due diligence and taking cognisance of greater liabilities held by Council. The cost of insurance continues to rise therefore it is imperative that mitigation is made where possible within the organisation to provide assurance.

1.4   Customer Services

Staff	The Customer Services Manager is supported by 11 Attendants/Drivers, 7 Registration staff and 16 administrative staff.
Purpose	The Customer Services Service Unit, in the delivery of its various functions, contributes to Objective 7 in the Corporate Plan that the Council is a high performing organisation. It contributes to the overarching, cross- cutting ambition the Council's Big Plan 'to have empowered resilient individuals and communities, to reduce inequality, to promote good relations and sustainability and to improve the accessibility of all public services'. The section supports a customer centric culture throughout the organisation. Corporate Customer Relations General administration and Reception Registrations of births. Deaths, marriages and civil partnerships Operation of City Hall, Bangor and Council Offices Newtownards
Key Achievements	In the last year the Customer Services team have: Processed: • 73,000 Reception calls • 5000 HRC booking (approx. since Sept 2023) • 7200 Service Requests • 4400 Email enquiries • 194 Complaints. Trained: • 457 staff existing and new on the use of the current CRM system in place to enable • 900 staff on the new Complaints procedure, by face-to-face sessions or by new online learning platform. Introduced: • A new Complaints Handling Procedure – First official report due in April 2024. • A new file allocation procedure where files are digital by default. Town Hall Attendants facilitated: • 70 Council and committee meetings • 7 Civic Events • 123 Other events • Supported 5 Remembrance Services Registration Services facilitated: • 1600 Death registrations • 1250 Birth registrations • 600 Marriage notices

	Comprehensive review of existing paper files held by Council is currently in progress.
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	The introduction of the Complaints Handling Procedure has been very challenging with many services having service specific arrangements in the past but having to align going forward. The rigid nature of the new CHP has meant that the first few months have been spent trying to work out the most effect manner for dealing with many complex issues. Review of paper files has been a time-consuming process with a significant amount of work remaining to ensure a transition to an Electronic Document Records Management System is as easy as possible.

1.5   Democratic Services

Staff	The Democratic Services Manager is supported by a Mayor's Secretary and 4 Officers.
Purpose	The Democratic Services Service Unit is responsible for the management and recording of Council and Committee meetings and for the dissemination of Council decisions internally and externally. It also manages the Mayor's Office, organises Civic Events and provides Elected Member Support. •
Key Achievements	In the last year the Democratic Services team have: • Facilitated 600 Mayoral events • Administered 70 Council and Committee meetings • Managed 7 Civic Events • Supported 14 Remembrance Services
Challenges/ Lessons Learned	The hybrid committee and Council meetings remains a challenge in terms of administration, particularly in Church Street where the room is very cluttered and blocking sight to officers, Councillors and those administering the meeting. The number of civic event requests has increased and with the budget reduced it is difficult to offer large events to all.

2. Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

2.1 External

Political	• Conflicting political interests and priorities across Council. • This service area responds to many requests from political representatives and ensures that any matters are dealt with in compliance with Council Policies.
Economical	• The service area ensures that the programme of activity has allocated budget and ensures due diligence in terms of spending of this budget. The service is aware of the pressures on personal finances and endeavours to deliver services in as cost effective way as possible.
Social	• The Council's ratepayers are the primary audience for what this service area delivers. Rationalisation of Civic event takes cognisance of the cost of living crisis.
Technological	• The service area relies on many aspects of technology. It is always looking at ways to improve efficiencies and modernise the service to make it more user friendly and accessible to all. • The service is working closely with the Digital Transformation programme and an EDRMS has been identified as a high priority in the Digital Strategy.
Legal	• Some aspects of this service rely heavily on legal support which often impacts on expected timeframes. • The service area works within the legislative context at all times, ensuring that Council are compliant.
Environmental	• The Council corporately has made a commitment to sustainability and the new Corporate Plan has a strong focus on sustainability. All functions within the Council will continue to endeavour to be as sustainable as possible, but there must be a realism in relation to potential for increased costs in the short term for some of these actions. • One of the initiatives arising from the Digital Strategy will be the reduction in the use of paper which will be implemented across Council which will also empower service users when dealing with the Council. • The service area leads the sustainability agenda ensuring that consideration for the environment is made in all aspects of corporate activity.

2.2   Internal

Strengths	Weaknesses
The Service enjoys the opportunity to reach across all services of the Council and so has a lot of knowledge of the organisation. The service encourages collaborative working at the beginning of processes to ensure expectations can be met from the outset.	Whilst the Administration Service team have oversight of compliance issues the compliance elements should be addressed by all Services. The Administration service needs to be both proactive and reactive. In some services there is little appetite for change or for contribution to the corporate agenda/responsibilities. There is a skills gap in some areas.
Opportunities	**Threats**
The opportunities available to this service are endless but require Council to prioritise so that limited resources are correctly targeted. The Digital Strategy offers great opportunities but requires both finance and resources to implement the changes as prioritised. Responding to Climate Change and the Climate Change Act NI will present opportunities for a green economy, skills development, and improvement in our natural environment.	The threats to this service are lack of buy-in from other service areas as they perceive the responsibility as being 'corporate'. A lack of consideration of risk and governance in service planning across Council limits support opportunities which may support risk reduction and the identification of opportunities. Climate Change – how well are we prepared. Statutory obligations in relation to Safeguarding are not being met. Record management throughout the organisation needs to be addressed.

3. Strategic Objectives and Collaboration

The table below reflects the key projects that will be undertaken by the Administration Service over the next 12 months, and the key Services that will be collaborated with as part of the process.

Strategic Objective	Collaboration Required
Compliance	
Consistent application of Sustainability & Climate Change Policy	All Directorates
Consistent application of the Lands Policy	Place /Environment
Continued progress and attainment of ISO14001	All Directorates
Progressing Title Reconciliation Exercise	Place/Environment
Review of Safeguarding roles, responsibilities, and policy.	Community and Wellbeing
Review of Roadmap to Sustainability	All Directorates
Consistent application of the Public Rights of Way Policy	Community and Wellbeing /Environment
Customer Services	
Implementation of an EDRMS	• Transformation • Communications and Marketing • External consultants
Consistent application of the Complaints Handling Procedure	All Directorates
Democratic Services	
Implementation of new Civic Events Policy	• Elected Members • Corporate Leadership Team
Risk Management	
Management of Corporate Risks	All Directorates

4. Service Improvement

Service development/ improvement 2024/25	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
100% Compliance with the Complaints Handling Procedure	Strategic Effectiveness	Statutory Obligation	Customer Services Manager	All Staff
Implementation of an EDRMS to all Directorates by March 2025	Strategic Effectiveness	Records Management is increasingly important and must be retained in a way that is easily accessible when required as well as fit for future retention should records be required.	Customer Services Manager	Transformation Comms&Marketing External consultants
Implementation of Civic Events Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	To reduce the number of Civic Events and to align the Council's response to the level of achievement.	Democratic Services Manager	Elected Members CLT
Review of Roadmap to Sustainability	Sustainability	The Roadmap has been in place for a few years now and is due for review. SMART targets are required to identify why some actions haven't progressed. It is timely to review in light of the Climate Act.	Compliance Manager	All directorates
Implementation of Climate Adaptation Plan	Sustainability	Council has committed to implementing Climate Adaptation Plans by 2024. Cross-Directorate workshops have been carried out to determine risks/vulnerabilities. The action plan will be developed in line with the Corporate Risk Registers	Compliance Manager	All directorates

5. Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Corporate Services Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meetings	Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs

6. Service Risk Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan, you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed. **Yes**

7. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
					22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	23/24 YTD End of Q3	24/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
1 % Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	100%	94%	100%			
2 % Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	98%	93%	97%	93%			
3 % Completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	100%	50%	100%			
4 100% of complaints dealt in line with CHP.	Statutory	6 Monthly	7	Social	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%			
5 Achievement of ISO14001	Statutory	Annual	2	Environmental	100%	100%	100%	100%			
6 Implement EDRMS to all services by March 2025	Service Led	Annual	7	Environmental	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%			
7 Completion of Title Reconciliation Exercise	Service Led	Annual	7	Economic	N/A	N/A	30%	100%			
8 100% of new policies screened for Rural needs and S75	Service led	Annual	1	Social	100%	100%	100%	100%			
9 EAP and DAP reviewed and agreed by 2025	Service led	Annual	1	Social	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%			
10 Paper Postage reduced by 50%	Service Led	Annual	2	Environmental	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%			
11 Review Roadmap to sustainability by March 2025	Service Led	Annual	2	Environmental	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%			
12 Confer 1 Freedom of the Borough this year	Service Led	Annual	7	Economic	0	0	0	1			

8. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping/ changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Paper Files being created (unless paper is required)	Digital only	unknown	More efficient	Savings	More efficient

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CORPORATE SERVICES)

Service Plan: 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

31 MARCH 2024

Ards and North Down
Borough Council

APPROVALS

Prepared By	Peer Reviewed By	Approved By
Rosemary McCullough	Alison Curtis	Michael Steele
Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	Head of Administration	Director of Corporate Services
31.3.24	31.3.24	31.3.24

APPROVALS

Contents

1. Introduction to Service

Name of Service	Human Resources and Organisational Development
Included Service Units	Employee Resourcing Employee Relations Organisational Development
Directorate	Corporate Services
Purpose of Service	To provide a range of professional support, advice and training for the Council's employees, managers, and elected members, and to develop our organisation through our people to be the best we can be. Our goal is to support the Council to become recognised as a high performing organisation.
Activities of HR and OD Service aligned to outcomes of Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan will be driven by three strategic priorities: Economic, Environmental and Social. The activities of the HR and OD Service will be aligned to the following outcomes: 6 – We have active and healthy people 7 - High performing organisation
Key customers/ stakeholders and their needs	**External:** Potential Employees within and outside the Borough, Recognised Trade Unions, External bodies e.g. NI Audit office, Equality Commission **Internal:** The Mayor, The Council, Committees, Elected Members, Corporate Leadership Team, Council Managers/ Employees/Agency Workers/Contractors **Professional advisors:** Solicitors, Local Government Staff Commission, Northern Ireland Audit Office
Key Achievements	In the last year the HR and OD team have: • Completed the Recruitment and Selection process for 114 posts and 11 Council trawls • Organised and planned all mandatory Corporate Health and Safety training • Secured funding for two projects (Skills Audit and Succession planning review) • Reviewed OD Strategy, Learning and Development Policy and People Plan • Organised Member Training for new elected members • Achieved 20/23 targets in the 5th year of the People Plan • Launched 6 E-Learning modules • Delivered Biennial Road shows for all staff • Organised and delivered a Long Service Awards Event for staff • Introduced tax fee Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme for employees • Conducted 275 Absence meetings • Carried out 39 Disciplinary investigations • Dealt with 2 Dignity at Work cases and 4 Grievances • Introduced an Absence Action Plan and Dashboard following APSE Review • Introduced an Absence Score Card • Internal audit of Absence Procedures

	- Implemented CORE II training module - Introduced a formal Agile Working Policy following successful consultation with staff and Trade Unions. - Awarded Council Charter Plus Accreditation under the Councillor Development Charter which involved over 30 officers and elected members being interviewed as part of the assessment. - Agency Tender and Legal Tender process completed - Formal Redundancy Policy has been introduced following consultation with Trade Unions and Staff - Launch of new Digital Staff Review and Development Scheme. Existing scheme was reviewed and updated and is in line with the Council's aim to be more sustainable. All staff review and development can now take place online and is much less time consuming than the previous version - Worked together with the Communications team to produce a Social Media Policy - Continued to work towards being a more sustainable service Facilitated: - Staff Consultative Committee - Staff/Union Forum Meetings - HR and OD have continued to maintain a working relationship with the recognised Trade Unions and Management meet regularly with the Regional and local officials at the Joint Forum where any new policies/procedures or transformation plans are discussed and negotiated. The HR and OD Service strives to have a positive relationship with the Trade Unions, despite at times having conflicting points of view - Member Training Steering Group - PPMA meetings Retained - IIP Silver Accreditation and commenced year 1 of Going for Gold
Challenges/Lessons Learnt	The main lessons learnt by HR and OD in the last few years is that the service must be reactive at all times to changing situations and circumstances. This has always been the case for HR, however, never before have we experienced the need to react so quickly to change than we have had to do since the onset of the pandemic in 2020. Lessons learnt are that HR and OD have been able to adapt to change extremely quickly. It became apparent early on that Covid 19 had a huge impact of the HR and OD service and that our top priority was to look after the well-being of our employees. We have learnt that many of the services we provide can be carried out online and that we can provide our services using much less paper than we did in the past. Also, we have learnt that our team are very adaptable to change and can rise to whatever challenges are presented. We have also learnt over the past few years, just how flexible the Council's workforce can be when the need arises and how well many staff adapted to a change in role and a change in their working conditions.

Therefore, HR want to take some of the important lessons that have been learnt forward to the future and to incorporate these into the new Workforce Strategy being developed.

There have also been many challenges faced by the HR and OD service following the introduction of the new Core II computer system. The HR team are working closely with the Strategic Transformation team to ensure that this system is fully functional and being used in a way that ensures the Council is utilising the technology it has to continually improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Ever increasing absenteeism rates are a challenge faced by the organisation. For the HR and OD Service, the challenge is to ensure that the HR team fully support and provide guidance to managers to assist them with implementing the Absence Policy effectively.

2.   Context, Challenges and Key Assumptions

2.1   External

Political	• Conflicting political interests and priorities across Council. • Ensure any requests from political representatives are dealt with in compliance with Council policies.
Economical	• Inflation and rising cost of living costs will lead to demands from Trade Unions for higher pay for employees • Due to rising external costs, the service must prioritise its objectives and ensure efficiency and value for money to its customers
Social	• Provide a service to schools and colleges e.g. provide Apprenticeship Schemes and Work placements to assist people in our Borough find employment and assist with giving life-long learning opportunities to our communities. • Attend Career Days at local schools and colleges
Technological	• Develop digital transformation within HR and OD in line with the Council's Digital Strategy • Develop the CORE II system to ensure it is being utilised to its full potential • Ensure that legal timeframes are complied with for return of e.g. Annual Monitoring Return.
Legal	• It is vital that the HR and OD service are up to date with Employment legislation to avoid legal cases being taken against the Council from employees or applicants for employment.
Environmental	• The Council corporately has made a commitment to sustainability and the new Corporate Plan has a strong focus on sustainability. HR and OD will continue to endeavour to be as sustainable as possible • Continue to look at ways to reduce the use of paper within HR and OD

2.2 Internal

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Wide knowledge of all services in the organisation • Skilled workforce • Good working relationship with Trade Unions • Good working relationship with line managers and elected members • High attendance levels • Good reputation • Integrity • Adaptability (hybrid-working) • Collaborative working	• Reactive rather than proactive due to high workload • Lack of Succession planning • Struggling with the complexities of the CORE II computer system
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Development of a Workforce Plan, including Succession Planning • Use technology more efficiently • Digital training for HR staff to enable them to use the technology the Council has in place to its full potential	• Loss of knowledge workers • Managers in other services not complying with staff policies/procedures • Lack of buy in from Managers on Corporate issues e.g. Absence Management • Lack of support from Trade Unions

3. Strategic Objectives and Collaboration

The table below reflects the key projects that will be undertaken by the Human Resources and Organisational Development Service over the next 12 months, and the key Services that will be collaborated with as part of the process.

Strategic Objective	Collaboration Required
Implement a formal 5 year Workforce Strategy which sets out the Council's formal status and objectives and objectives for recruitment, retention, training and development of staff in line with the Corporate Plan	Trade Unions Staff Elected Members All Directorates Corporate Leadership Team
Deliver a project to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the HR and OD Service with regard to the CORE II computer system	All Directorates HR team Transformation Team Head of Service Team Corporate Leadership Team Trade Unions
Assist relevant Heads of Service with the implementation of the transformation of the Parks and Cemeteries Service and Leisure Service.	Parks and Cemeteries Staff Leisure Staff Trade Unions
Assist with any organisational re-organisation following the appointment of a new Chief Executive	Trade Unions Staff
Carry out a Skills Audit	Staff Consultant from Nereo All Directorates
Draft a Succession Planning Policy and implement	Staff Constant from Nereo All Directorates Elected Members
Develop a Corporate Induction Scheme to enhance the departmental Induction Scheme	Trade Unions Corporate Leadership Team Heads of Service Team Elected Members
Continue to work towards IIP Gold Accreditation	Corporate Leadership Team Heads of Service Team Elected Members All Staff All Directorates
Implement year 6 of the People Plan	All Directorates Corporate Leadership Team Heads of Service Team
Interim Review of Absence Policy and Procedures	All Directorates Corporate Leadership Team Heads of Service Team
Continue to Work in partnership with Environmental Health in delivering the Mental Health Charter	Environmental Health Well being officers

4. Service Improvement

Service development/ improvement 2024/25	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Responsible Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal and/ or External partners) Please specify
Implement a formal 5 year Workforce Strategy	Strategic Effectiveness Efficiency	To have a whole Council co-ordinated approach to Workforce Planning with regard to recruitment/retention/succession planning	Head of HR and OD	All staff Trade Unions Elected Members
Deliver a project to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of CORE II	Strategic Effectiveness	Now that the CORE II system has been embedded, look at ways of making it more efficient and effective so that it is utilised to its full potential	Head of HR and OD	HR Staff All Directorates
Develop a Corporate Induction Policy	Strategic Effectiveness	To make new employees feel valued and part of the organisation more quickly and enable them to be productive and efficient in a more timely manner	Head of HR and OD Employee Resourcing Manager	CLT/HOST/Trade Unions
Deliver an interim review of the Absence policy and procedures	Strategic Effectiveness	To ensure the organisation is taking all action possible to decrease absenteeism	Head of HR and OD/Employe e Relations Manager	CLT/HOST Trade Unions

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5.   Monitoring and Review

Provide detail below how this plan will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
Corporate Services Committee	6 Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs
Team Meetings	Monthly	Head of Service and SUMs

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6. Service Risk Register

Service Risk Register should align with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

When completing your Service Plan, you must review and consider your current Service Risk Register. Please confirm this has been completed. **Yes**

7. Key Activities (KPIs) for 2024/25

Please ensure Service development/ improvements detailed above are included as KPIs.

KPIs should be aligned to the 7 Outcomes detailed below:

1	We have an engaged Borough with citizens and businesses who have opportunities to influence the delivery of services, plans and investment
2	We are an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero carbon targets
3	We have a thriving and sustainable economy
4	We have a vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors
5	We have socially sustainable communities that are safe and welcoming
6	We have active and healthy people
7	Ards and North Down Borough Council is a high performing organisation

In addition to the outcomes the KPI should align with the Corporate Priority:

Corporate Priority 1	Economic
Corporate Priority 2	Social
Corporate Priority 3	Environmental

	Performance Measures Should include improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures both existing and new.	Is the KPI Mandatory/ Statutory/ Service led	Reporting frequency (6 Monthly/ Year-end)	Outcome	Corporate Priority	2024/25 Reporting						
						2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 YTD End of Q3	2024/25 Target	Reporting end of Q2	Reporting end of Q4	Cumulative or Fixed
1	% Spend against budget	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	104.53%	100%	93.85%	100%			
2	% Staff attendance	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	92.74%	100%	97.6%	95%			
3	% Completed Employee Appraisals in the period September 2023 to March 2025	Mandatory	6 Monthly	7	Economic	N/A	NA	25%	85%			
4	Days lost per employee across the Council	Mandatory		6		14	14	15.5	12			
5.	% of Recruitment exercises completed within 6 weeks from advertisement to recommended for appointment	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	60%	95%	96%	95%			
6.	% of candidates not shortlisted to be informed within 2 weeks from date of shortlisting	Service Led	6 Monthly	7	Economic	100%	100%	100%	100%			
7.	% of candidates at interview to be notified of result within 2 weeks of interview	Service Led	6 monthly	7	Economic	100%	100%	100%	100%			

8. What Services/ Activities will be stopped

Please add detail of KPI's that have previously been monitored that will no longer be reported on for 2024/25.

What service/ activities will we be stopping/ changing in 2024/2025	Reason for stopping/ changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
N/A					

Unclassified

ITEM 5

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	16 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Organisational Development and Administration
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	19 March 2024
File Reference	RA 2
Legislation	The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ☒ No ☐ Other ☐ If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 - Monitoring Return for the period 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Monitoring Return - 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

As Members will be aware, section 1 of the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 places a duty on public authorities, including Councils, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans, and when designing and delivering public services. In carrying out this duty and in line with guidance issued by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Council carries out rural screening exercises on its policies. These screening exercises are carried out simultaneously by officers when completing section 75 screening of policies.

The 2016 Act places a further obligation on public authorities to compile information on the exercise of its functions under section 1 of the Act (i.e., information on completed screening exercises), and to report this annually to DAERA.

Agenda 5. / Item 5 - Rural Needs Act NI 2016 - Monitoring Return April 23...

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DAERA has produced a template for public authorities to complete when compiling the information for their annual return. DAERA then collates all the returns it receives and produces an annual Rural Needs Monitoring Report.

The Council's draft return for 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 is attached to this report at Appendix 1 and provides detail on the rural screening exercises completed during this period.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council agrees to submit the Rural Needs monitoring return for 2023/24 (Appendix 1) to DAERA.

A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities
(Revised) April 2018

Appendix 2 - Template for Information to be Compiled

Information to be compiled by Public Authorities under Section 3(1)(a) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

(To be completed and included in public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report).

Name of Public Authority: *Ards and North Down Borough Council*

Reporting Period: April   20 | 23 | to   March   20 | 24 |

The following information should be compiled in respect of each policy, strategy and plan which has been developed, adopted, implemented or revised and each public service which has been designed or delivered by the public authority during the reporting period.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016[1].	*The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to[2].*	*Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service[3].*
Developing the Charter of the Columbian Way	Rural Tourism	The Charter is a declaration of intent to help support and promote pilgrimage, cultural and scientific activities relating to Saint Columbanus and those of his followers, including Gall, in all the regions and countries where their memory remains alive. The policy will include rural areas and possibly create tourism opportunities
Adopting a Learning and Development Strategy	Internal	No Rural Needs Identified.
Developing an Events Programme 2023 - 2024	Crosscutting	The aim of the fund is to provide grant aid for events and festivals which can demonstrate a positive economic and/or social impact within the Borough of Ards and North Down both urban and rural.
Revising an Appraisal Scheme	Internal	No Rural Needs Identified
Revising a Organisational Development	Internal	No rural needs identified

Strategy, Action and People plan		
Developing Ards and North Down Borough Council Coaching Community Framework	Internal	No Rural Needs identified
Revising the Food and Drink plan	Cross Cutting	Revised food and drink development plan, 2023-2027, "To establish Ards and North Down Borough as a leading Food and Drink destination which will be locally and nationally recognised". This involves businesses and jobs and employment within both the local rural and urban landscapes, bringing social and economic benefits.
Implementing the 2023 2024 Policing and Community Safety Partnership Action Plan	Rural Crime and Community Safety	The PCSP operates in line with a 3-year Strategy (2022-2025) and an Annual Action Plan in order to receive approval for the proposed programme and to draw down funding from the Joint Committee made up of the Department of Justice (DoJ) and Northern Ireland Policing Board. This action plan will positively impact on Rural Crime and Community Safety.
Developing an Electric Car Policy	Internal	This interim policy is needed due to the continued use of legacy travel policies and the fact that neither make any provision for payment of mileage allowances for electric vehicles. Positive financial and sustainable benefit to those who drive electric vehicles and live rurally.
Developing a Complaints Handling Procedure	Internal	No Rural needs identified
Adopting an Agile Working Policy	Internal	Ards and North Down Borough Council values the retention of skilled and experienced employees. The Council recognises that agile working can increase staff retention and improve staff morale and can reduce absenteeism and allows employees to adapt to service needs and to improve their work-life balance. This benefits rural dwelling employees economic needs due to the reduction of commuting.
Adopting a Redundancy Policy	Internal	No rural Needs identified
Revising access to Household recycling centers.	Cross Cutting	Revised Policy to include Pre Booking system to enable Borough Householders to enter Household Recycling Centres in the Borough by pre booking on line or on the telephone. Benefits to rural areas include 1. Better traffic management 2. Reduced pollution 3. Improved access to local residential and business

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		properties 4. Improved access to the waste facilities for council refuse freighters and other council users 5. Financial savings
Developing a Whole Systems Approach to Obesity	Cross Cutting	The policy was not influenced by rural needs. The area for the early adopter site is in the urban area of Newtownards. The rural area of the peninsula was considered but a decision making matrix ruled it out from the initial early adopter site project. Within the Peninsula DEA, multiple indicators of deprivation at SOA were considered. This included reviewing information on income deprivation, health deprivation, disability deprivation. While Newtownards is the initial focus of the project, it is anticipated that some interventions within the action plan could be implemented borough wide.
Revising Kerbside Household Waste Collections	Cross Cutting	The policy sets out how the Council provides its kerbside waste collection services to homes, the conditions of use and, defines what types of waste the householder is permitted to place in each designated bin. Rural Areas may not have the provisions to leave a bin on a pavement, due to no pavements being in existence, however, less people will be using rural roads to travel along so the need for a pavement is non existent. It should also be noted that rural areas do not have good broadband provisions, if a campaign is decided it should be available in hard copy as well as online. This may need to be advertised in local newspapers.
Revising Community Centres and Halls section Pricing	Cross Cutting	This revised policy suggests a price increase in hiring community halls. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers. It is widely accepted that in a similar way to people in larger towns and villages, customers and residents in our rural areas need access to a Community Centre for physical, social, and mentally beneficial activities. Economically, NISRA demonstrates some useful information in terms of deprivation in addition to usage and income figures from Centres and Halls in rural areas that indicate that the pricing policy is

		appropriate.
Revising Local Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2021- 23	Cross Cutting	The Labour Market Partnership is made up of representatives from all sectors and interests and one of the full members of the Partnership represents the Rural Down Network. As such, this member advises of issues pertinent to the rural areas of the Ards and North Down area and the barriers faced by potential participants so that it can be taken into consideration in the design and content of the programmes proposed by the Action Plan 23/24.
Developing a Growth Events Fund	Cross Cutting	The Growth Events Fund aim is to provide monetary aid for events which can demonstrate a positive economic impact within and showcase the assets of the Borough of Ards and North Down. In rural areas this will Create a positive and measurable impact on the local economy Promote of a positive image of the Borough Demonstrate a positive economic impact within the borough.
Adopting a Budgeting Policy	Internal	No Rural Needs Identified
Developing an Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy	Internal	No rural needs were identified
Developing an Elected Member Learning, Training and Development Policy	Internal	No rural needs were identified
Implementing a Business Continuity Plan	Cross Cutting	The Business Continuity Plan (BCP, the Plan) provides overall guidance to Ards and North Down Borough Council (ANDBC, the Council) Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Heads of Service Team (HoST) and Service Unit Managers (SUMs) to build resilience so that the Council can: · Respond to a disruptive incident; · Maintain delivery of critical activities/services during an incident; and · Recover from and return to 'business as usual' in a timely manner. During an emergency response situation the Emergency Response and Emergency Management Teams will be mindful that emergency services will take longer to reach rural areas.
Adopting a Social Media Policy	Internal	The Council is active on social media with more than 46,000 followers across its main corporate channels and growing numbers on its service specific channels This policy is required to protect both workers and the

		organisation from social media risks. Social media has no impact on rural needs - It must be remembered that Council must use other means to communicate emergency information e.g. weather warnings, health information, etc ▪ services changes and updates ▪ news and events ▪ public consultations ▪ council meetings and decisions ▪ elections and democracy
Revising - Notice of Motion That this Council notes the importance of this Borough as the birthplace of the Ulster-Scots community	Cross Cutting	The aim is to develop a budget to ensure and encourage participation in future Ulster Scots Language Weeks; and to develop an action plan, with advice from the Ulster-Scots Agency, to develop all aspects of the Borough's rich Ulster-Scots heritage The policy will not impact those in rural communities different than urban areas.
Revising - Notice of Motion Ards and North Down Borough Council Flag Policy 2021	Internal	A Notice of Motion was received to revise the current Ards and North Down Borough Council Flag Policy to include - That this Council amends its flag policy to include the flying of the Union Flag at every war memorial all year round. The policy and relating procedure will impact on individuals from both rural and urban areas as they will see the flags on display. Some of the areas identified to fly the Union flag are smaller settlements which would also be considered rural under the definition. However the viewpoints of individuals living in both rural and urban areas will be considered as part of the overall consultation process.
Adopting a new Ards and North Down Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024-2028	Cross Cutting	This is a Strategic Document that takes a whole population approach. It does not contain a specific level of detail regarding any projects, services or activities that will be undertaken. Additional rural screening may be needed to implement activities to deliver the commitments included and work towards the outcomes.
Adopting a Purchasing and Payment Policy	Internal	No rural needs Identified
Adopting an Inventories Policy	Internal	No rural needs identified
Implementing a Good Relations Action Plan 24/25	Cross Cutting	This is the annual good relations action plan. The plan involves consultation with rural stakeholders. The numbers and background of participants for the action plan will be reflected by the demographics of

		the area and schools engaged and based on an increase in pre covid figures. Programmers will include those from a rural area, such as Millisle, Ballygowan, Ballyhalbert and Portavogie
Proposal to rename Bangor Marine Garden to Queen Elizabeth II Marine Gardens	Internal	No Rural needs identified as this relates specifically to Bangor.
Proposal that Council in recognition of the late her Majesty Queen Elizabeth ll considers the erection of a permanent memorial at the redeveloped marine gardens.	Internal	No Rural needs identified as this relates specifically to Bangor.

NOTES

1. This information should normally be contained in section 1B of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.

2. This information should normally be contained in section 2D of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.

3. The information contained in sections 3D, 4A & 5B of the RNIA Template should be considered when completing this section.

Unclassified

ITEM 6

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Council Meeting
Date of Meeting	16 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Adminstration
Date of Report	27 March 2024
File Reference	Sus 1
Legislation	Climate Change Act Northern Ireland
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ☒ No ☐ Other ☐ If other, please add comment below:
Subject	The Climate Adaptation Plan
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Draft AND Climate Adaptation Plan

Background

Northern Ireland's second Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP2) was published in September 2019 and it covers the period 2019-2024. The programme contains the NI Civil Service response to the risks and opportunities relevant to Northern Ireland as identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017, setting out the policies and strategies to deliver against the priority areas.

NICCAP2 also contains a chapter which sits outside government, titled '*Civil Society and Local Government Adapts'*. The chapter is written by Climate NI, in conjunction with stakeholders outside government, and was the first of its kind in the UK. Recognising that central government cannot act alone, this chapter was the first attempt to report on how Civil Society and Local Government sectors contribute to the national priority areas for action on climate risk and adaptation.

Not Applicable

SOLACE supported two actions in the NICCAP2 for local government which are now due for an update on progress. One of these actions is to:

Work with local councils to embed the adaptation cycle across local council planning with the aim of encouraging councils to complete a minimum of step 1 by 2021 and step 4 by 2024.

Local Government Adapts: Adaptation Actions

Step 1
Getting Started

Step 2
Understand your vulnerability

Step 3
Identify and prioritise actions

Step 4
Take action

Step 5
Monitor, review and evaluate

Figure 1: Adaptation Cycle[29]

Step 1 Getting Started

(Define objectives, assemble team and put in place any required procedures

Step 2 Understand your vulnerability

(Consider your vulnerability to past weather event and projected climate)

Step 3 Identify and prioritise actions

Step 4 Take action

Step 5 Monitor, review and evaluate

Since the development of NICCAP, the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 ('the Act') received Royal Assent on 6th June 2022.

The Act will 'confer power to impose climate change reporting duties on public bodies'. This includes 'progress made in implementing Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programmes.'

As part of the Councils Roadmap to Sustainability, Action 17, is to 'Develop a Climate Adaptation Plan for the Council and Borough.'

Climate NI has been supporting Ards and North Down Borough Council in preparing our own Adaptation Plan. The development of this Adaptation Plan will allow council to meet its commitments to NICCAP, future reporting duty requirements within the Climate Change Act NI and our own Roadmap to Sustainability.

A draft of this Climate Adaptation Plan is attached in Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approve the draft Climate Adaptation Plan as presented in Appendix 1.

ARDS **AND** NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Climate Adaptation Plan

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

Chief Executive Foreword:

Climate Change is called many things - 'the greatest threat we have faced in thousands of years', a 'manmade disaster on a global scale', an 'existential threat to the financial system', the 'greatest threat to human rights in the 21st century'.

This global threat has and will continue to have a local impact. All of us, in every aspect of our lives have a role to play in minimising our impact on the environment and on climate change.

The last few years have shown just how important our natural environment is to us. It's the air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink. Managed well it can greatly improve our quality of life.

By protecting nature and restoring our eco systems we can reduce our vulnerabilities and improve our resilience to the effects of climate change.

In 2019, Ards and North Down Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to making a positive contribution in the fight against climate change. Our Corporate Plan, Towards a Sustainable Borough 2024-2028, has made transitioning to net zero one of our key priorities.

Recent years have seen an increase in the frequency of more erratic weather events. Both locally and regionally high temperature records are being broken, stronger winds are being recorded, storm events are having a greater impact on all of us and, with 115 miles of coastline, we are more exposed than most to rising sea levels.

These events are only going to become more frequent. Through our carbon reduction plans we can try and mitigate these impacts and try to prevent even higher temperatures and more challenging climatic conditions, but we also need to plan ahead and adapt to the consequences that we cannot prevent.

Through the development of this Climate Adaptation Plan we have, across all services, identified our risks and vulnerabilities and have begun to address them. Whether this is altering our mowing practices, planting appropriately, protecting our staff, 'climate proofing' our developments, business continuity planning or retrofitting our buildings, consideration of climate change has been considered and accounted for across the Council.

This is not a 'one off', we will continue to review and address our actions as scenarios change and more data becomes available.

The introduction of the Climate Change Act NI in June 2022 has reinforced the need to change. We must address both our impact on, and protection of our environment. By doing so we will be better prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of Climate Change.

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council

Executive Summary

Greenhouse gas emissions cause the Earth's atmosphere to hold more radiation from the sun which increases the overall temperature of the planet. This change in temperature is altering our climate and causing one of the greatest threats of our time.

Human activity has caused global warming. Global surface temperatures are now 1.1°C higher (2011-2020) than they were 1850-1900.

With continued unsustainable energy use, land use and land use change, lifestyles and patterns of consumption and production, greenhouse gas emissions will continue to rise.

In Northern Ireland, this means we will experience warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. However, cold snaps, drier winters and wet summers will occur, therefore we need to be prepared for a much greater range of extremes. We are already experiencing increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, and this trend is expected to continue for years to come. These changes pose considerable challenges to the everyday working and asset management of large organisations.

Climate Change is, and will continue, to affect council services and our response to increasingly extreme weather scenarios. Some action has already been taken and more will need to be taken if we are to pro-actively address the need for climate adaptation. By addressing and reflecting on recent events and assessing future climatic changes and predictions we can better plan how council services can 'adapt' to meet the ever-changing impact of our variable weather. Early preventative actions are significantly more cost effective than reactive disaster response efforts.

We recognise this by firstly 'getting our own house in order' and secondly 'leading by example'.

This Climate Adaptation Plan has been developed with the full input of all Directorates, it has been assessed alongside an NI wide Risk Assessment methodology and aligns with the Council's own Corporate Risk Assessment. This plan will not sit alone but it will be reflected in many council wide plans and strategies.

This plan will also recognise the co-benefits of green infrastructure to health and well-being for citizens, council staff and biodiversity.

'Our children will not forgive us if we leave them a world of withering heat and devastating storms where sea level rises and extreme temperatures force millions to move because their countries are no longer habitable. None of us can avoid our responsibility. Delay is not an option.'

Prime Minister, Lord Deben, Chair, Climate Change Committee - Response to Climate Change Committees 2023 Progress Report

Global, UK and Northern Ireland Context

Global Context

Human activity has caused the atmosphere, and our oceans and land to warm. Evidence shows that the average temperature at the earth's surface has risen 1.1°C since the pre industrial period. A 1.0°C rise may not seem much but the impact is great.

- More frequent and intense extreme weather

- Rapid melting of glaciers and ice sheets, contributing to sea level rise

- Huge declines in arctic sea ice

- Ocean warming and marine heatwaves
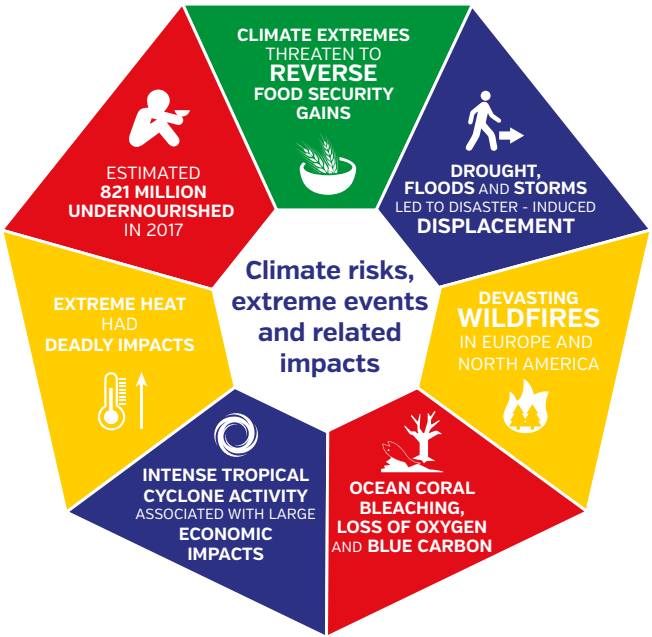
These are not only environmental impacts but social and economic ones as well. Millions more will be at risk of severe hunger and extreme weather has caused trillions of dollars of economic damage in recent decades.

What has caused this?

2023 has been confirmed as the warmest on record. This has been driven by human-caused climate change and boosted by the natural El Nino weather event. Sea temperatures have also smashed previous highs.

These global records are bringing the world closer to breaching key international climate targets.

- burning fossil fuels for energy

- changes in land use and deforestation which reduces the numbers of trees available to absorb carbon dioxide

- agricultural production which releases greenhouse gasses from energy use, from the number of livestock and the amount of fertiliser applied to land

- manufacture of cement, chemicals and metals, which releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere

We are already experiencing the effects of climate change:

- risk to water supplies

- localised flooding and flooding in coastal regions

- damage to marine ecosystems and associated failure of fisheries

- loss of biodiversity

- heat stresses affecting human health and habitability

- increased risk of wild fires

- food insecurity as growing conditions fluctuate and impact of pests increase

More information on global impact of climate change can be found here - https://wmo.int/publication-series/provisional-state-of-global-climate-2023

UK Context

The record-breaking temperatures seen in summer 2022 brought unprecedented numbers of heat-related deaths, wildfire incidents and significant infrastructure disruption. These, and impacts from other events, highlight the UK's critical exposure and vulnerability to extreme weather even today.

All 10 of the warmest years in the UK have occurred since 2003. 2022 was the UKs hottest year on record - 40.3°C was recorded.

UK Climate Risk released their most recent Climate Risk Independent Assessment (CCRA3) in June 2021 - https://www.ukclimaterisk.org/publications/technical-report-ccra3-ia/ .

It summarised the following:

- The UK is projected to experience ongoing increases in temperature until the middle of the 21st Century. This will become more frequent and more severe.

- Winter extreme rainfall is projected to be 40% more intense than earlier predictions with future winters becoming warmer and wetter overall.

- New estimates of global sea-level rise indicate an additional 5 – 1°Cm rise by 2100 compared with earlier estimates. This is due to improvements in modelling as opposed to greater warming.

Northern Ireland Context

Northern Ireland has experienced its warmest year on record, with an average temperature of 10.17°C in 2023. The previous record was 9.83°C, with records going back to 1884.

The most recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) - Adapting to Climate Change – Progress in NI – was released in April 2023 - https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/adapting-to-climate-change-progress-in-northern-ireland/ .

It summarised the following:

- 7 of the 10 warmest years have occurred since 2000.

- experienced its warmest year on record in 2022 with its highest temperature reaching 31.3°C in Castlederg in 2021.

- average annual land temperature in the decade 2010-2019 was 0.7°C warmer that the period from mid-1970s to mid-2010s.

- the 21st century has so far been warmer overall than any of the previous three centuries.

- Winter 2019 was the third warmest winter since 1884.

- there has been a small observed increase in annual mean rainfall in recent decades. In Northern Ireland between the period of the mid-1970s to mid-2010s and 2010-2019 there was an increase of 6.4%, from an average of 1099mm per year to 1169mm per year.

Projections are warmer, wetter winters. Summers will be hotter and drier – projections are a decrease of rainfall of 11% by the middle of the century. When rainfall does come it will be more intense. Sea levels will continue to rise – estimates for Belfast are a 15cm rise by 2050.

Regional Context

Ards and North Down's geographical area is nearly 228m2 with approximately 115 miles of coastline. The area is known for its rich diversity of scenic countryside and extends from Holywood on the shores of Belfast Lough to Portaferry on the southern tip of the Ards Peninsula and Killinchy to the west of Strangford Lough.

Strangford Lough, which is of global environmental importance, forms the central geographical and landscape feature of the area. This island-studded Lough is part of the Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and was the first Marine Nature Reserve in Northern Ireland. It is also an Area of Special Scientific Interest and a RAMSAR site due to it being a wetland of international importance.

The largest population centres are Bangor and Newtownards followed by Comber, Holywood and Donaghadee. There is also a vibrant network of villages, each with their own plans and ideas on how they can improve the physical and social attributes of their communities.

Ards and North Down is served by 1,152km of public roads, containing 4.5% of the total Northern Ireland network. Within the borough there are 27km of dual carriage A-roads; 137km of single carriage A-roads; 58km of B-roads; 165km of C-roads; with the remaining unclassified roads totalling 766km.

Public services are dependent on a stable environment where the effects of climate change, flooding, coastal erosion, and changes in biodiversity are kept in check by mitigation and adaptation measures. Without planned resilience to these changes, delivery of services and personal wellbeing is at risk. Delivery of the Big Plan needs to consider the implications of changes to the environment and factor these into the design and delivery of future services and infrastructure.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Non-Statutory Context

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC)

The IPCC is a scientific body of the United Nations. It was created in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It is the UN body for assessing the science of climate change. The IPCC provides policy makers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications, and potential future risks. It also provides options for adaptation and mitigation. These reports are relevant to policy, but they are politically neutral and not prescriptive.

IPPC Assessment Reports

IPCC Assessment Reports are released on a, roughly, 7-year cycle.

The IPPC assessments are seen as the most accurate view on the science of climate change. It has 195 members of which the UK is one and all are involved in every major step.

The IPPCs reports are highly influential and informed the creation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol (an international treaty which extended the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that commits state parties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, based on the scientific consensus that global warming is occurring and that human-made CO_2 emissions are driving it). They were also the driving force behind the Paris Agreement to limit temperatures to well below 2°C whilst pursuing efforts to keep it below 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015.

This has been followed in 2021 by the Glasgow Pact with an agreement to further cut carbon emissions.

The latest climate science suggests that the effects of climate change on daily extreme rainfall events are only just beginning to emerge. However, the evidence of extreme maximum summer temperatures is becoming clearer, as reflected by how many of the UK's record extreme monthly temperatures have been set in the most recent decade along with a tendency for more heatwaves in recent years.

Observed sea level rise is also difficult to determine for each country. A UK-wide sea level index suggests that sea level has risen by between 1.2 and 1.6mm per year since 1901. National variations are predicted in future as outlined in the following section.

The changes in climate that we are already experiencing are projected to continue and intensify. In the second half of the century, the amount of change that occurs will depend strongly on how successful we are in reducing greenhouse gas emissions globally.

As global temperatures rise the impact locally will vary both on our ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Mitigation) and on our ability to adapt to them (Adaptation).

Action cannot be delayed further. To do so will lock in more damaging impacts and threaten the delivery of other key Government objectives, such as Net Zero.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Statutory Context

Sustainable Development Duty

Since the introduction of the Statutory Duty on Sustainable Development in 2006, as a result of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 (Section 25), councils have a statutory duty to 'carry out their functions in a way that contributes to sustainable development'.

Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 ('the Act') received Royal Assent on 6th June 2022.

The Act will:

- Set targets for net zero for the years 2050, 2040 and 2030 for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions:

  - This target excludes methane emissions which only need to be reduced to 46% against the baseline by 2050);

  - a reduction of at least 48% in GHG emissions against the baseline by 2030;

  - a GHG emissions target for 2040 (to be confirmed within 24 months of this Act coming into force) that is in line with the 2050 target.

- Contain some information on plans to meet the emissions targets for the following sectors (sectoral plans); Energy; Renewable electricity consumption – at least 80% of Northern Ireland's electricity consumption must be from renewable sources by 2030; Infrastructure; Industrial processes; Waste management – at least 70% of the waste in Northern Ireland needs to be recycled by 2030; Agriculture; Fisheries; Transport; Active travel.

- Set out a carbon budgeting framework (Carbon budget is a term used to refer to the maximum amount of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions allowed over a period of time, to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

- Provide for reporting and statements against those targets and budgets.

- Part 3 also includes 'Just Transition' clauses – this includes the establishment of a Just Transition Commission (JTC) which will have an oversight and advisory role in relation to the 'just transition' elements of the Act. The Act requires JTC membership to be significantly representative of Northern Ireland society, but otherwise leaves the functioning, constitution and financial aspects of the JTC to secondary legislation.

- Confer power to impose climate change reporting duties on public bodies;

- Establish a Northern Ireland Climate Change Commission and appoint a Climate Change Commissioner to oversee and report on the operations of the Act. There is also a commitment to developing a climate action plan within 2 years of the Act receiving Royal Assent.

Under the Climate Change Act Northern Ireland, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) has been designated responsibility to assess progress on climate change in two ways: assessment of Northern Ireland's carbon budgets and emissions reduction targets, and assessment of progress in implementing Northern Ireland's Climate Change Adaptation Programmes. The Committee must provide progress reports for the NICCAP cycles, no later than three years into the five-year cycle.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Committments

The Council has a range of high-level strategies containing commitments and actions that will contribute to its long term sustainability and response to climate change.

Corporate Plan

Our Vision is to be a Sustainable Borough.

A Sustainable Borough is one where economic, environmental and social well-being are interdependent and decisions that are taken are well balanced and equitable.

Putting sustainability at the core of our Corporate Plan means considering the implications of a changing climate alongside shifting economic and social needs.

The identification of priorities, outcomes, commitments, and measures of success are based on putting in place the conditions needed to become a sustainable Borough.

Environmental

Economic

Social
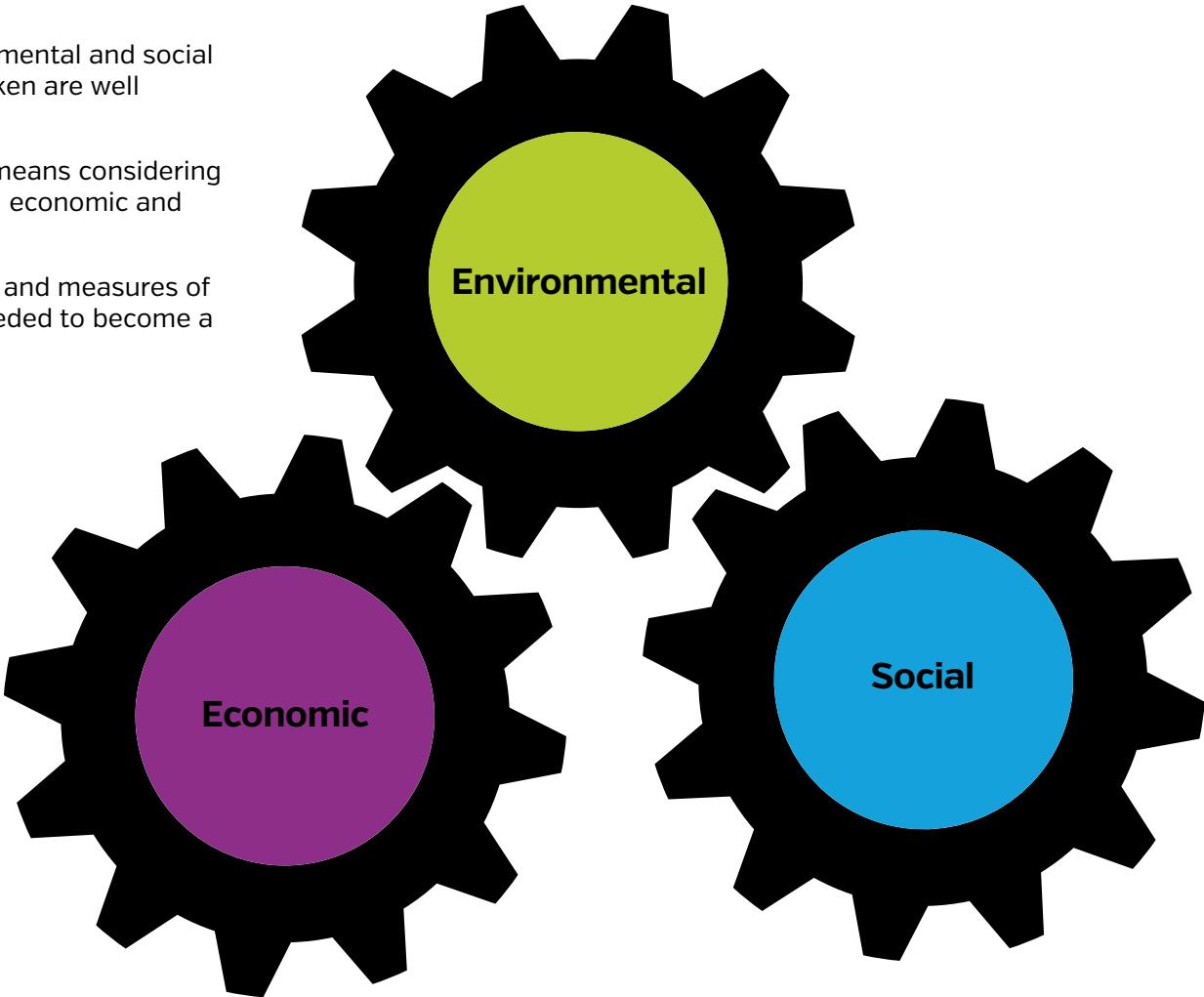
Roadmap to Sustainability

The Roadmap to Sustainability formalises the Council's commitment to becoming more sustainable, in one document. The Council, through its implementation of other key strategies and partnerships, such as The Big Plan and ongoing initiatives to improve waste management practices within the Borough, has been steadily improving its sustainability performance.

Innovation and building resilience will be key to moving forward to achieve real, long-term sustainability. This must be a 'just' transition – ensuring a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no-one behind.

It is within this document and its commitments that the Council has committed to the development of a Climate Adaptation Plan.

The Council's Roadmap to Sustainability can be viewed here.

Sustainability & Climate Change Policy

This Sustainability and Climate Change Policy gives a commitment that the Council will:

- endeavour to reduce its impact on the local and global environment by demonstrating clear leadership, providing high quality services, whilst preventing pollution, reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions and saving energy and water.

- strive towards compliance with all sustainability, environmental and climate change legislation, guidance and best practice principles to fulfil its statutory responsibilities

- follow an informed approach in protecting the environment and our outstanding natural surroundings, including many internationally recognised designated sites, eg ASSIs, SPAs and SACs.

- reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and improve our resilience to current and future climate impacts.

- conserve natural resources, enhance biodiversity and further improve the quality of life and the sense of well-being for all our residents.

- do this by initially looking internally within the organisation to mitigate and adapt the Council's practices, in order to reduce our environmental footprint and promote sustainability

- working constructively with our external partners to further sustainable development by ensuring the integration and balancing of social, economic and environmental factors when plan-making and decision-taking, in order to support the long-term public interest.

Full policy can be viewed here.

Environmental Management System

Ards and North Down Borough Council is committed to environmental stewardship demonstrated through the accreditation of an ISO 14001 Environmental Management System. We work to enhance our local environment, improve the health and well-being of our local community and reduce the negative impact our activities could have on the environment.

Environmental management

We use an environmental management system to manage our environmental performance. By implementing our environmental management system, we set measurable objectives and targets to ensure continual improvement in environmental performance.

Environmental commitments

Our environmental statement sets out our commitments as an organisation:

- to reduce, reuse and recycle our waste

- to introduce measures to ensure best practice and responsible use of water, fuel and energy

- to investigate and introduce, where possible, measures to minimise the release of pollutants which cause damage to land, air and water due to our activities

- to reduce the environmental impact of goods we buy and encourage suppliers and contracted services to improve their environmental performance

nqa.

ISO 14001

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Weather Timeline

Our long coastline and low lying ground puts our Borough at particular risk to climate change including sea level rises, coastal flooding and storm events. This has resulted in a change in impact on our coastlines, has altered costline processes and accelerated change.

Until recently there has been limited and insufficient data available.

The the Northern Ireland Coastal Forum and associated working group, DAERA has been addressing this shortfall of scientifically robust data on how our coastline is changing. To disseminate their data the Northern Ireland Coastal Observatory has been created. It aims to:

- Improve the evidence base of coastal change along the Northern Ireland coastline

- Improve the awareness of coastal change in Northern Ireland and the impacts of our changing climate

- Empower stakeholders with information to help improve the management of coastal change in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Coastal Forum is a collaborative organisation which is made up of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Chief Executives of Local Authorities with a coastal remit and the National Trust. The Forum is currently co-chaired by DAERA and DfI Permanent Secretaries and it is the agreed mechanism through which members work collaboratively in progressing coastal management issues in Northern Ireland.

Climate Central – a US non profit organisation has produced a 'Coastal Screening Tool' which maps areas exposed to sea levels rises and flooding in the years ahead for specific areas of our borough, map below as an example:

Lower Penninsula (Kircubbin across to Portavogie) by 2030, & 2100

2030

2100
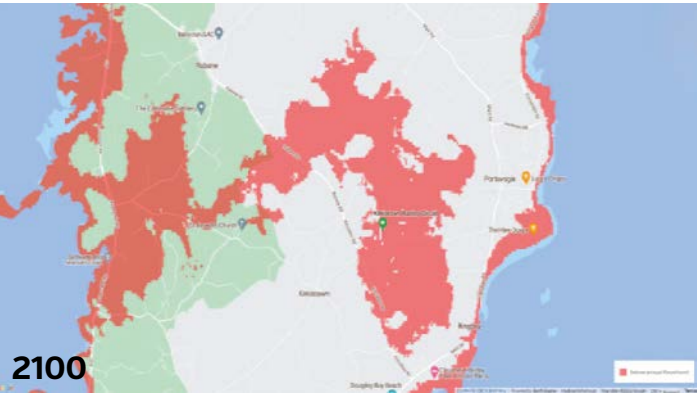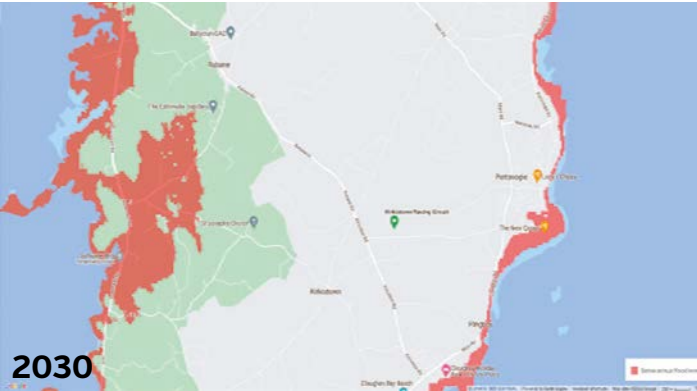
Flood areas highlighted red denotes the water level at the shoreline that local coastal floods exceed on average once per year. Areas lower than the selected water level and with an unobstructed path to the ocean are shaded red.

The severity of these impacts are still not being fully realised. We are at the beginning of a curve towards more severe and variable weather for which we must be better prepared. We need to build our resilience to these events and support our communities in doing the same.

Recent Weather in Ards and North Down

In Ards and North Down we have seen a gradual increase in severe weather events in recent years.

These events have been captured in the following timeline:

Evidence

5 January

High tides strong wind, flooding, Portaferry Road closed, sandbags distributed. Holywood Esplanade closed & Strangford Ferry suspended

1 July

Heatwave – hottest day since 2006 – 36.7°C registered at Heathrow

January

Storm Gertrude strong winds, power cuts, trees down

21 June

Highest June temperature since 1976 – 34.5°C registered at Heathrow

April

'Beast from the East' Rain and strong winds

April

Easter Sunday saw record temperatures – 21°C at Helens Bay

9 February

Storm Ciara – strong winds & rain.

13 February

Storm Dennis – Flooding at Donaghadee, strong winds, high tides (see photos, Andrew White).

29 February

Storm Jorge – wind speeds of 72mph recorded at Orlock

February

Extreme rainfall – Kiltonga (Top photo) and Ward Park

July

Record temperature of 31.3°C recorded at Castlederg

November

Storm Arwen – winds speeds at Orlock reached 87mph, traffic disruption, events cancelled, sever damage to Aurora Leisure complex – whole site closed for a number of days. Leisure Waters closed for 8 months – costs to repair in the region of £0.5 million, loss of income

February

3 storms in 1 week – Dudley, Eunice & Franklin – brough strong winds, trees down & snowfall

19 August

Storm Betty – wind speeds at Orlock reached 53 mph. Boat washed ashore at Ballywaticock.

Early September

Heatwaves – Castlederg reached 28°C – a September record – putting the elderly/vulnerable at risk.

October 2023

Seaweed on promenade, reaching houses on the other side.

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

14 August

Ex hurricane Bertha capsized 20 vessels at GP15 world championships on Strangford Lough requiring emergency response
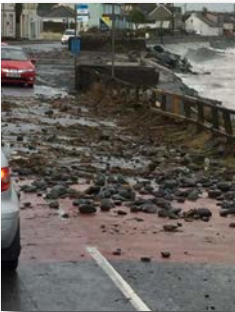
17 October

Storm Ophelia – wind speeds of 71mph recorded at Orlock, power loss, Ards Peninsula severely hit, strong winds in Donaghadee, lighting pole down at Holywood Rugby Club, scaffolding de-stabilised on High Street, Bangor resulting in street closure

December

Record temperatures for the UK for December – 18.7°C

August

Storm Ellen – strong winds & rain.

Storm Francis – severe flooding in Newcastle County Down.

31 October

Storm Aiden – strong winds, coastal gales, trees down, travel disruption, power cuts

December

Storm Bella – Strong winds

December

Storm Barra – wind speeds of 76mph recorded at Orlock, rain & snow fall, power cuts, high tides/storm events (Donaghadee) severe damage to Ballywalter Harbour – loss of access and income to local business and cost to repair £90k

The Pitch and Put green at Donaghadee commons, sumberged in water. Boulders on road, high waves

July

Record heatwave – UK recorded 40.3°C in Colinsby, Lincolnshire

12 November

Storm Debi Amber wind warning.

9-10 December

Storm Elin & Fergus – windy and wet weather

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Climate Action

Climate Action

Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities and countries dearly today and even more tomorrow.

Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economies. The pace of change is quickening as more people are turning to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emissions and increase adaptation efforts.

Key benefits for councils of developing climate resilience

Supporting Economic Growth

Protecting & Enhancing The Natural Environmental

Climate resilience delivers multiple benefits

Avoiding Costs & Making Savings

Safeguarding Vulnerable Residents
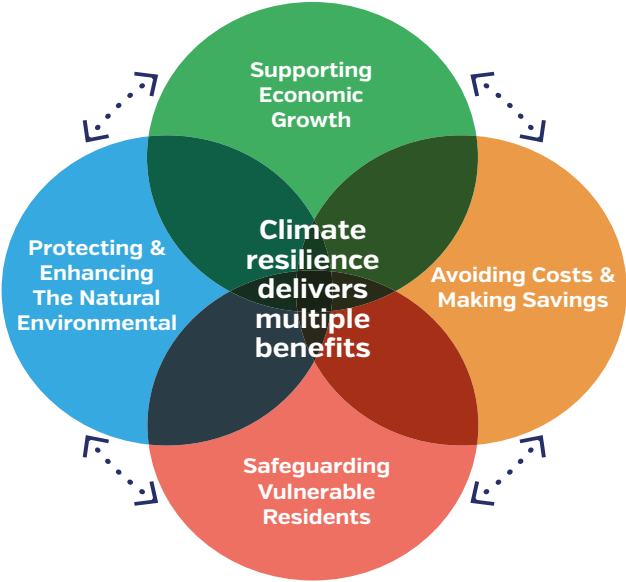
These actions fall into one of two broad categories: climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation.

Climate change mitigation means avoiding and reducing emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere to prevent the planet from warming to more extreme temperatures. Climate change adaptation means altering our behaviours and systems to protect our families, our economies, and the environment in which we live from the

impacts of climate change. The more we reduce emissions right now, the easier it will be to adapt to the changes we can no longer avoid.

Mitigation actions will take decades to affect rising temperatures, so we must adapt now to the change that is already upon us–and will continue to affect us in the foreseeable future.
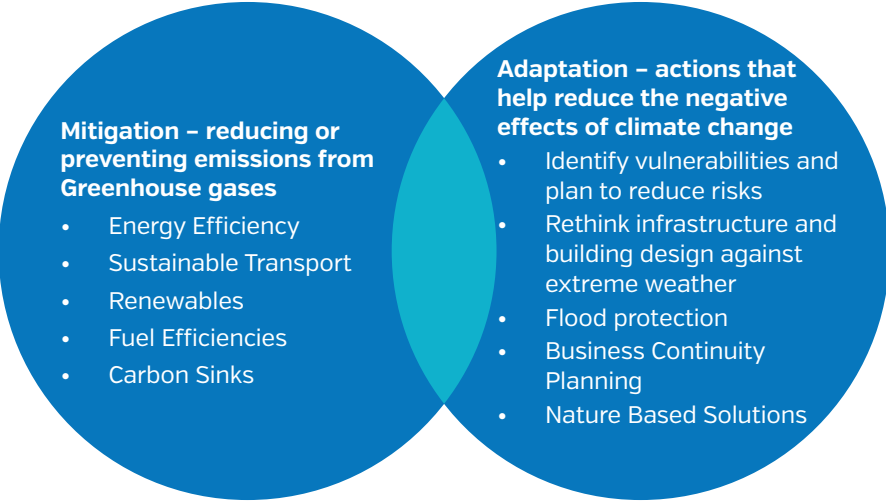
Mitigation – reducing or preventing emissions from Greenhouse gases
- Energy Efficiency
- Sustainable Transport
- Renewables
- Fuel Efficiencies
- Carbon Sinks

Adaptation – actions that help reduce the negative effects of climate change
- Identify vulnerabilities and plan to reduce risks
- Rethink infrastructure and building design against extreme weather
- Flood protection
- Business Continuity Planning
- Nature Based Solutions

Climate Adaptation Planning

Ards and North Down Borough Council has worked in partnership with Climate NI and other councils across NI to develop their Climate Adaptation Plan using the NIAdapts Planning Toolkit.

The toolkit aims to support organisations to undertake a methodological approach to 'adaptation' with the overall aim of enabling NI to build resilience to the potential negative impacts of climate change, whilst allowing us to take advantage of any possible opportunities.

Councils have a significant role to play in preparing their regions for the impacts of climate change. This toolkit enables councils to explore the potential shocks and stresses facing their organisation and assets. It also recognises the co-benefits of green infrastructure to health and well-being for citizens, council staff and biodiversity.

The 5 steps of Planning Adaptation:

Step 1
Getting Started

Step 2
Understand your vulnerability

Step 3
Identify and prioritise actions

Step 4
Take action

Step 5
Monitor, review and evaluate
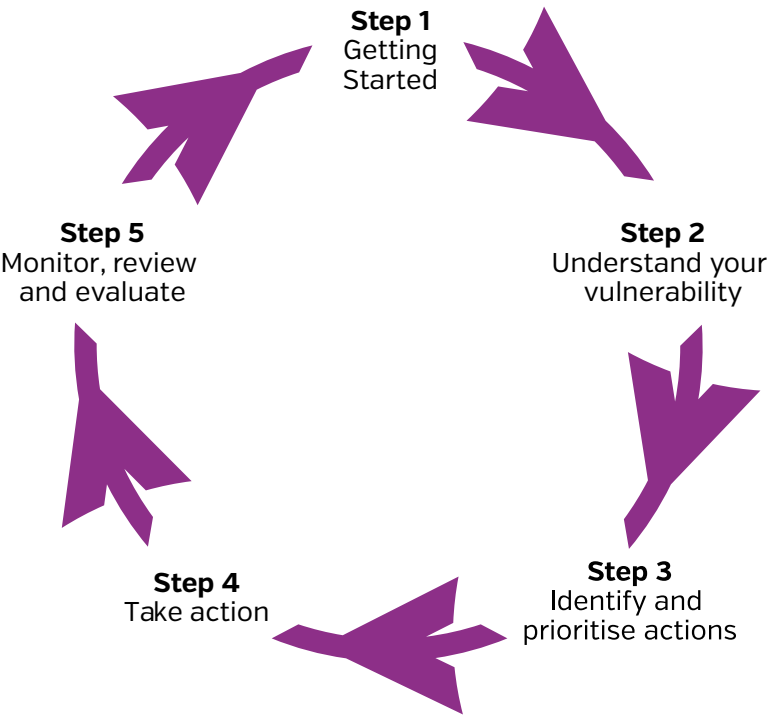
Our Approach

Several workshops were held across all service areas within the council to capture and discuss the impacts of climate change on Ards and North Down.

Representatives from across all key Service Units were brought together based on their knowledge and experience:

Waste	Assets & Property	Parks	Environmental Health	Community Halls
Leisure	Planning	Regeneration	Planning	Tourism & events
Risk	Administration	Finance	Strategic Capital Development	Economic Development
Communications	Community	Community Planning		

Through a series of workshops climate related consequences were identified based on 4 key weather-related events:

    a. Flooding (High Rainfall, River, and Coastal Floods)

    b. High Temperatures

    c. Storms and High Winds

    d. Extreme Cold

Consequences were identified on council functions, services, buildings, staff and on our businesses and communities.

Workshop discussions highlighted a variety of possible impacts:

- Increased flooding of the council estate
- Increased impact and costs to respond to extreme weather incidences across the borough
- Increase in sea levels affecting current & future assets
- Increased risk to local/vulnerable communities
- Disruption to service delivery during extreme weather events

- Storm impact on council buildings
- Tree fall/damage in local parks and green spaces
- High temperatures increasing risk to vulnerable groups
- Increased water demand to maintain green spaces

The council already has several policies, plans and strategies in place that through our normal business is working to address some of these challenges. However, Climate Adaptation Planning goes above and beyond 'Business as Usual'.

As a result, this information was consolidated into a Climate Adaptation Risk Register. From this a series of themes were identified. Details of these themes can be found in the next chapter.

Climate Adaptation Risk Register - Risk Matrix:

Impact		Likelihood				
		May occur only in exceptional circumstances	Might conceivably occur at some time	Could occur at some time	Will probably occur in most circumstances	Is expected to occur in most circumstances
		1 low	2 low-medium	3 medium	4 medium - high	5 high
No damage/injury; Financial loss< £1,000; No impact on achievement of objectives; Minimal damage to reputation	1 – low	Very Low 1	Very Low 2	Low 3	Low 4	Medium 5
Minor damage/injury; Financial loss £1,000 to £10,000; Minor impact on achievement of objectives; Some Localised press coverage	2 low-medium	Very Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	Medium 8	High 10
Moderate damage requiring repair/ Injury requiring medical treatment; Financial loss £10,000 to £100,000; Medium impact on achievement of objectives; Significant localised press coverage	3 - medium	Low 3	Medium 6	Medium 9	High 12	Critical 15
Serious damage to property/ Serious injury; Financial loss £100,000 to £500,000; Failure of key service; NI Media coverage	4 – medium - high	Low 4	Medium 8	High 12	Critical 16	Critical 20
Property destroyed or not safe for use/Fatality or multiple injuries; Financial loss >£500,000; Failure of key objectives; National media coverage;	5 - high	Medium 5	High 10	Critical 15	Critical 20	Critical 25

This type of matrix shows the probability of the threat (vertical) and the result of the risk (horizontal).

Climate Adaptation Plan

Adaptation is a long-term strategic challenge; it is therefore key that we align our plan with the Councils core objectives.

As part of cross-Directorate workshops a vision of our Climate Adaptation Plan and a number of key aims were agreed.

Vision:

Ards and North Down Borough Council will embed climate action at the heart of all corporate planning and show innovative leadership in preparing for the impacts of climate change, building a resilient and sustainable community.

Aims:

- Leadership – Demonstrate proactive leadership to ensure climate action is our 'business as usual' approach to planning and decision making (this must in internal, external and with our Elected Members)

- Finance - to ensure we have adequate resources to build a climate ready council/borough

- Communication
  - Understand what the impacts of climate change are on our borough and people
  - Raise awareness on climate change to empower people to take responsible action
  - Engage our communities and customers with how we are collaborating to build a climate resilient place

- Operations – Ensure our operational services and our assets (lands, buildings and staff) are prepared, robust and resilient

- Work with key partners and local communities to ensure a collaborative and effective strategic approach to climate change and adaptation

Themes for Adaptation Actions

The Themes were categorised into (1) Cross-cutting and (2) Functional. These themes provide a full framework for delivery of the climate adaptation actions.

Cross Cutting Themes

Cross-cutting themes show those strategic, cross directorate topics that influence and direct how we operate as an organisation.

Leadership, Governance & Planning	Finance & Procurement	Communications & Training	Partnerships	Data Gathering & Monitoring

Functional Themes

Functional themes reflect the services and responsibilities of Council, directly, linked to climate adaptation.

Green Infrastructure

Energy & Buildings

Operations
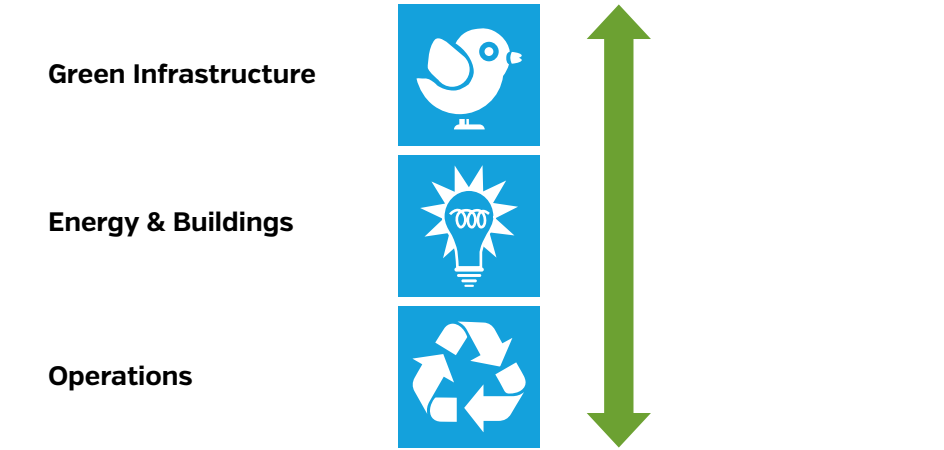
All these themes are addressed in the following chapter and within the Climate Adaptation Action Plan

Cross Cutting Themes

Leadership, Governance & Planning

'Demonstrate proactive leadership to ensure climate action is our 'business as usual' approach to planning and decision making (this must in internal, external and with our Elected Members)'

Effective **leadership** inspires, motivates, and guides individuals and groups toward common goals. Governance ensures that systems and institutions operate fairly, transparently, and in the best interest of the people. Together, they play a pivotal role in fostering a flourishing society.

Local **Government** plays an important role in shaping local places and providing essential services. Northern Irelands' local councils have a range of roles and responsibilities across their geographical areas, from economic development and park management, through to emergency planning and waste services. They are being increasingly seen as key actors in climate change adaptation and in building resilience to climate change.

Reducing carbon emissions as we transition to net zero has been highlighted as one of our three priorities to help archive our vision of a Sustainable Borough. This priority is supported by an outcome to be an environmentally sustainable and resilient Council and Borough meeting our net zero obligations and adapting to climate change.

There is a direct requirement of the Climate Change Act NI that all public bodies must report on adaptation and mitigation. The frequency of this is yet to be regulated.

Sustainable Development lies at the heart of the **planning** system – a key challenge of which is mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Regional Strategic Policy (RSP)

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035, sets out a key aim to 'Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change.' It states that:

'It is recognised that climate change is one of the most serious problems facing the world. We are all contributors to global warming and need to play our part to reduce and offset our impact on the environment. We need to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions to help reduce the threat of climate change and promote sustainable construction, consumption and production. We should aim to prevent waste and deal with it in line with the revised Waste Framework Directive. Everyone should contribute to reducing the Region's carbon footprint.'

Furthermore, Regional Guidance 9 of the RDS sets out that we should 'Reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality.'

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

The SPPS sets out that it fulfils a central government commitment 'to identify and implement opportunities to build resilience into the built and natural environment and to develop and implement sustainable strategies to explore, address and manage significant flood risk'.

Paragraph 3.13 states that:

'The planning system should therefore help to mitigate and adapt to climate change'. More information can be found here (https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/infrastructure/SPPS.pdf) :

Local Development Plan (LDP)

The main purpose of the LDP is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, service providers, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will implement the strategic objectives of the RDS and the LDP objectives and guide decisions on planning applications for development in the Borough. The LDP shall set out a Spatial Growth Strategy. This gives opportunity to concentrate growth in those areas of the Borough which benefit most from high connectivity and good accessibility.

Through the LDP the Council shall identify and allocate development sites for housing, employment and mixed uses (at Local Policies Plan stage) where integration with public transport, cycling, walking and the responsible use of the private car can best be achieved. The LDP can also contribute to reducing emissions through encouraging sustainable patterns of development and the integration of land use with active travel links and sustainable transportation.

The draft Plan Strategy shall also set out the Council's approach and consult upon updated operational planning policies that supports the overall strategic approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation. including- the coast, flooding and drainage, protecting and enhancing open space, and positively facilitating the potential for generation of renewable and low carbon energy development, among others.

Emergency Planning plays a role in NI's current and future climate resilience and considers the impacts of climate change on society within the NI Civil Contingencies Framework.

Emergency Planning groups continue to embed consideration of climate hazards into all multi agency plans. Some of the potential climate impacts relevant to emergency planning, in a multi-agency environment in Northern Ireland are:

• Disruption and damage to current public infrastructure (buildings, roads, including those used for emergency shelters etc.), local council services and utilities from extreme weather and gradual climatic changes.

• Increase of costs and pressure on resources in preparing, responding, and recovering from emergencies

• Increasing frequency and magnitude of weather events and gradual climatic changes, increasing risk to public health, consistent with climate change (flood risks, heat waves, storms etc.) which can impact local communities and businesses:

• Wider disruption to production of goods, supply chains and distribution networks i.e. food shortages and price inflation.

Consideration of climate change impacts within emergency plans is integral to the resilience of local council regions and NI. It enables Ards and North Down Borough Council to better anticipate climate risks, appropriately respond and effectively recover.

It is imperative that Ards and North Down Borough Council consider the impacts of climate change, and plan and implement suitable preventive measures to ensure that health, safety, and welfare standards are maintained throughout the council. This includes appropriate mitigation for staff working in extreme weather conditions, heat both indoors and outdoors, exposure to sun for longer periods, impact on those with respiratory conditions and reduced productivity due to more extreme conditions.

Finance & Procurement

'To ensure we have adequate resources to build a climate ready council & borough'.

Every council requires money **to finance** the resources it needs to provide local public services. The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 (Sec 1) states that "A council shall make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs".

The 3rd UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) highlighted the high economic costs of climate change but also the high economic, societal, benefits of adaptation – highlighting this type of investment can be effective and efficient.

Finances will be affected by climate change through the cost of damage to assets and property, disruption, costs of responses/repairs/retrofitting and loss of income through closures. It may also find itself vulnerable with insurers.

However, a finance gap remains between amount needed for adaptation versus what is being spent.

Integrating climate change into standard business processes is essential.

The draft Corporate Plan 2024-2028 has increased economic growth as one of its 3 priority areas. However, it recognises that this must be a sustainable economy, reducing poverty, increased living standards, increased employment opportunities and better economic security overall. It must also be a thriving economy, encouraging investment by businesses in the borough. This will all, in turn, improve our investment in a low carbon economy and other social and environmental commitments.

Given its central position in public spending, **procurement** can be a lever to implement a whole-of-economy approach to climate change, by aligning purchasing decisions with sustainability and climate goals, engaging with suppliers to drive positive change, and promoting innovation and transparency throughout the supply chain.

With the correct approach, Ards and North Down Borough Council can ensure efficient and effective procurement which also embeds climate resilience in the local region.

Communication & Training

'Communication can help build trust. Building trust can inspire citizens to become more engaged and more involved in their communities.'

The aims of strong **communications** and training are to:

• Understand what the impacts of climate change are on our borough and people

• Raise awareness on climate change to empower people to take responsible action

• Engage our communities and customers with how we are collaborating to build a climate resilient place

Ards and North Down Borough Council must build trust and confidence, and while doing so, strengthen relationships with citizens, stakeholders, and staff. This requires strong strategic communications.

Communication has been a key theme through the development of this Climate Adaptation Plan. The process of developing a shared understanding of climate change and its potential impacts on our borough has strengthened discussions across council. Teams recognise their responsibilities to climate change and climate adaptation and are beginning to build this into Service Planning. Cross service working groups open conversations for a shared, partnership approach.

As a council we will lead by example and support our ratepayers in doing the same. Raising awareness across council and with local communities is vital to the delivery of climate adaptation. This includes raising awareness and understanding climate change impact and adaptation requirements within local communities and industry sectors.

We will ensure staff and members are appropriately briefed and **trained** to understand their role. Through our internal training team and use of external/3rd sector partners to deliver on specific knowledge we can build that knowledge basis, giving staff and members the confidence to deliver on climate change decision making.

Partnerships

'Having strong partnerships whilst tackling climate change can promote positive, solution driven approaches. By working more closely together communities, local and central government, businesses and 3rd sector organisations can deliver a greener future, whilst creating opportunity.'

Ards and North Down Borough Council have committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals – 17 global actions for Sustainable Development. These range from improved health and education to reducing inequalities to climate action. Goal 17 is about revitalizing the global **partnership** for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda is universal and calls for action by all countries – developed and developing – to ensure no one is left behind. It requires partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society. More detail is available within the Councils Roadmap to Sustainability.

The Council is committed to improving social inclusion and reducing inequalities (Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5 & 11) this will only increase community preparedness for the unavoidable consequences of a changing climate.

We will continue to develop strong cross sector partnerships to increase capacity, improve our knowledge base, develop new skills, utilise additional funding, develop solutions and drive innovation.

Data Gathering & Monitoring

'What gets measured, gets managed.'

We collect **data** daily. It is collected in a variety of ways from surveys, energy records, budget sheets, bin weights, maps etc. It can be recorded for financial decision making, service improvement, meeting legislative requirements, project impact measuring etc.

The Climate Change Act Northern Ireland has set a clear target of net zero carbon by 2050. To understand and plan how we will achieve this we must understand where we are now!

By collating relevant data, we can determine our current baseline. With a net zero target by 2050 we have a clear and definitive end goal. How we get there will be guided by interim targets and action plans.

We will improve how we collect data and record information in relation to climate change and retain this in a centralised way, allowing access for all. We need to understand what the impacts are at a local level and what the response could and should be.

Only by achieving this can we respond to climate change with meaningful adaptation planning.

Functional Themes

Green Infrastructure

'Nature Based Solutions have a vitally important role to play in addressing both the causes and consequences of climate change'.

The key features of **green infrastructure** are that it is a network of integrated spaces and features, not just individual elements; and that it is 'multi-functional' – it provides multiple benefits simultaneously.

These can be to:

• support people's mental and physical health	• reduce water run-off during flash flooding
• encourage active travel	• carbon storage
• cool urban areas during heat waves	• provide sustainable drainage

Within our remit of development, we should be striving to include Nature Based Solutions within our design and specifications. Nature Based Solutions are defined by the EU as 'solutions that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost effective, simultaneously providing environmental, social and economic benefits whilst building resilience'. This means using natures own resource, soil, water, and vegetation, in place of 'grey' infrastructure.

Nature Based interventions can deliver carbon reductions at a fraction of the cost of engineered solutions and when delivered effectively can enhance the stocks of natural assets and the ecosystem services they provide (UK Natural Capital Committee. April 2020).

'Nature Based Solutions with safeguards are estimated to provide 7% of climate change mitigation until 2030 needed to meet the goal of keeping climate warming below 2°C, with likely co-benefits for biodiversity' (IPBES Global Assessment Report).

Ards and North Down Borough Council has and will continue to develop several projects under the umbrella of Green Infrastructure – Tree & Woodland Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plan, Growing Strategy, Greenways, Nature Networks etc. More information can be found on our Council website here.

Energy & Buildings

We must ensure we protect councils' assets, property and infrastructure.

The Council will ensure that its assets and **buildings** are resilient to the effects of climate change. Buildings vary from small community centres to offices to large Leisure Facilities of varying age, build type and location. They will need to be healthy and comfortable places to visit and work all year round – cool in summer, warm in winter whilst resilient to the effects of other climate hazards such as flooding. Buildings should:

- not overheat during heatwaves
- be prepared for flooding
- be designed for climate resilience

Council assets and buildings also extend to our heritage sites and museum collections.

The museum collection is held in the B+ listed building in Bangor Castle. The increased frequency of storms, and subsequent high winds and flooding, extremes in temperature and shifts in huimidity have increased the risk to the museum collection. The heightened risk of flooding, damage to the building and leaking have increased costs as more repairs and more frequent monitoring are required yearly to ensure the building remains fit for purpose. Additional staff resources and equipment are being deployed to help prevent damage and to maintain a safe and stable environment for the collection. Collection salvage and rescue plans are in place to ensure staff respond quickly to emergency situations caused by extreme weather events.

Within the wider borough of Ards and North Down there are 759 recorded Sites and Monuments, including 122 Scheduled Monuments and 14 State Care Monuments. There are 671 listed buildings, including 18 listed Grade A, 17 Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes and 3 Conservation Areas (Holywood, Portaferry and Donaghadee). These sites and monuments represent all historic eras.

Climate change is one of the most significant challenges for the management of these historic sites and artefacts. The growing intensity and frequency of climate hazards require increasing resources to both investigate and respond to these risks. Some effects, such as rising sea levels and increased intensity of rainfall in storms are clear to see. Others are less visible but cause changes in climate that can have huge effects to the longevity and preservation of the historic environment.

Transformation of **energy** systems to meet net zero creates opportunity to improve the resilience of these systems.

Risks to energy mostly come from higher temperatures in summer and increased intensity of heatwaves which contribute to energy generation and transmission losses, faults from overheating components and increase in demand to meet cooling requirements. Increased rainfall and intensity of rainfall could impact energy loss with inundation of flood water. Snow and ice are also important causes of weather-related power disruption.

Access to reliable energy provision is essential to continued service provision. As digitalisation of our operations continues this reliance will increase.

Operations

'Ensure council services not only continue but that they are adaptable to face the challenges of a changing climate.'

As part of maintaining NI's built infrastructure, Ards and North Down Borough Council deliver waste and cleansing services to keep spaces free from waste and refuse collected on a regular basis. Our dependency and interaction with the built environment, makes waste and street cleansing one of the most visible services the council delivers.

Climate change is likely to create short and longer-term implications for effective delivery of refuse collection and street cleansing. These may include disruption to schedules. H&S issues, capacity shortage, additional costs, increased waste decomposition in extreme heat etc.

Undertaking adaptation planning and action offers councils the opportunity to save on costs, maintain the quality of the service, and manage the efficient use of resources. Some examples could include strong communications to manage expectations or action plans to mitigate impacts.

Changes in climate will continue to raise numerous issues for the parks maintenance and management services. Without Ards and North Down Borough Council undertaking appropriate planning and adaptation action, these impacts are likely to exert considerable pressures on resources. Some impacts could include more weeding & mowing, increase spread of pests and disease, damage to green spaces and increased costs.

Adaptation planning can offer opportunities to alter maintenance schedules to meet demands, incorporate watering programs and tree management into plans, use climate resilient planting and integrate blue-green infrastructure planning.

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Ards and North Down Borough Council

Adaptation Plan

Adaptation Action Plan

To summarise the data gathered during workshops and follow up meetings an Adaptation Action Plan has been developed.

This Action Plan will address priority risks and allocate them under a relevant theme with a lead department to take this action forward. This will include any internal partners and external stakeholders required for successful delivery.

Leadership, Governance & Planning						
Priority	Demonstrate proactive leadership to ensure climate action is our 'business as usual' approach to planning and decision making (this must in internal, external and with our Elected Members)					
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**		
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Ensure local Emergency Planning Response includes extreme weather .	Keep out of hours provision under review to meet future needs. Current information does not reflect a need now for formal on call but this will remain under review.	Administration/HR	Assets & Property, Community Halls, Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Identify staff with transferable skills to be utilised in an emergency and work with HR to recruit volunteers.	Administration/HR	All council departments	✓			
	Continue to review of local weather records to ensure Emergency Planning response to extreme weather is appropriate	Administration - (Risk)	RCRG/all council depratments/ Regional Flood Group	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review of staff well-being during extreme weather - ongoing	Assess conditions for safe working practices (eg driving, litter picking, grave digging etc) and review PPE required - H&S handbook updated	Administration (H&S)	Parks & Cemeteries, Waste & Cleansing, Assets & Property	✓			
	Continue to review and were necessary integrate climate change considerations into flexible working policies & staff travel during extreme weather.	HR	all service units	✓	✓		

Leadership, Governance & Planning (continued)						
Priority	Demonstrate proactive leadership to ensure climate action is our 'business as usual' approach to planning and decision making (this must in internal, external and with our Elected Members)					
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**		
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Take a precautionary approach to development of the Local Development Plan	Introduce a policy on use of SUDs which includes promotion of and awareness of their use and benefits	Planning	Assets & Property/ Sustainability/Parks & Cemeteries/relevent statutory bodies	✓			
	Consideration of coastal erosion during planning policy development and applications	Planning	Assets & Property/ Sustainability/relevent statutory bodies	✓	✓		
	Work with DfI and other statutory bodies to develop and approach to developing plans and policies towards development and climate change including building within tidal zones, inclusion of SUDs & green infrastructure and inclusion of new technoligies for flood prevention, supporting the Loiving with Water capaign.	Planning	all service units/relevant statutory bodies	✓	✓		
Climate risk assess all Capital & Regen Projects	Develop Climate adaptation checklist / screening for all Council development and projects	Administration (Sustainability)	all service units	✓			
	Build ongoing operation and management into budgets by including life cycle costings in all projects, eg landscaping, planting, energy management	All council departments	all service units	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop a sustainability checklist for Capital & Regen projects	Strategic Capital Projects	all service units	✓			
	Build extreme weather alterations into contractors specifications	Strategic Capital Projects/Regeneration/ Asset & Property	Contractors	✓	✓	✓	✓

Finance & Procurement						
Priority	To ensure we have adequate resources to build a climate resilient council and borough					
Objectives	Action	Lead Department / Team	Partners	Timeframe (years)			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Review of Insurance to include extreme weather damage	Review of historical weather related claims and incidents and review practices and insurance.	Administration (Risk)	Assets & Property	✓	✓		
Review of financial capacity to deal with climate change	Review past costs to repair due to extreme weather and calculate any increase frequency of maintenance due to changing weather and costs/ loses from closures.	Finance	all service units	✓			
	Record, monitor and review costs to council of emergency response through appropriate coding of hours, equipment needed, clear up costs etc. Build in to future budget planning and business cases	Finance	all service units	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure future budget planning includes any savings made and additional expenditure to climate proof assets	Finance	all service units	✓	✓	✓	✓
Keep under review of weather related contracts, eg PPE, maintenance, salting	Calculate the estimated increased in budget required to provide funding/ grants to impacted communities	Environmental Health	DfC	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Review of contracts such as PPE & response contracts, eg salting, maintenance to ensure climate change and extreme weather events are considered and contracts are fit for purpose to ensure all staff and equipped for extreme weather.	Procurement	Parks & Cemeteries/ Waste & Cleansing/other frontline service units	✓	✓		

Finance & Procurement (continued)						
Priority	To ensure we have adequate resources to build a climate resilient council and borough					
Objectives	Action	Lead Department / Team	Partners	Timeframe (years)			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Continue to identify and apply for funding/grant opportunities to support understanding of climate change and potential solutions	Funding to remain as a standing item on the Climate Working Group	Administration - (Sustainability)	all service units	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Investigate opportunities for technological solutions to support adaptation	Administration - (Sustainability)	all service units	✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication & Training							
Priority	**Understand what the impacts of climate change are on our borough and people** **Raise awareness on climate change to empower people to take responsible action** **Engage our communities and customers with how we are collaborating to build a climate resilient place**						
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Increase training to internal staff and Elected Members	OD to build climate change training into online and face to face training for staff and elected members	OD	all service units	✓			
Develop Sustainability & Climate Change Communications Campaign	Develop internal & external campaign to align with current messages & projects to support staff and the general public in being more sustainable and climate aware	Corporate Communications	Sustainability/external partners eg KNIB	✓			

Partnerships						
Priority	**Work with key partners and local communities to ensure a collaborative and effective strategic approach to climate change**					
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**		
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Continue to work in partnership with internal & external agencies to address the impacts of climate change	'Map' the network of statutory and community bodies who have supported council used in the past to aid extreme weather responses and define roles and responsibilities going forward. IS comments Multi agency partnerships all listed with plans.	Administration - (Sustainability)	Community Planning/ Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful	✓	✓		
	Develop a Community Resilience Plan including building knowledge and understanding of climate change and opportunities for community to respond with their own ideas.	Administration - (Sustainability)	Community Planning/ Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful	✓	✓		
	Continue to work with key stakeholders on vulnerable individuals/communities to add any support as and when required.	Administration - (Risk)	SEHSCT/NIWater	✓	✓	✓	✓

Data Gathering & Monitoring						
Priority						
Objectives	Action	Lead Department / Team	Partners	Timeframe (years)			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Develop an evidence base for climate change risks within the borough.	Continue to use flood information available through Rivers Agency and information through flood incident line. Continue to review flooding hotspots each quarter by the EPG Flooding & Extreme Weather group with opportunities for remidial action being consider.	Administration - (Risk)	HOST/CLT/EPG Flooding & Extreme Weather Group	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Map areas identified as vulnerable to climate change including those at risk of flooding and/or storm surges, coastal erosion, heat maps to identify areas for cooling and areas exposed to high winds, ensure preventative and adaptive measures are put in place to ensure continuation of services.	Administration - (Sustainability)	Risk/GIS	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop a structured way to capture and map local knowledge and understanding of areas vulnerable to the effects of climate change within ANDBC	Administration - (Sustainability)	Risk/GIS	✓	✓	✓	✓

Data Gathering & Monitoring (continued)						
Priority						
Objectives	Action	Lead Department / Team	Partners	Timeframe (years)			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Improve understanding of potential adaptation costs and benefits.	Develop a blue/green infrastructure plan that will establish areas best suited for climate change adaptation through flood eleviation and sustainable drainage	Administration - (Sustainability)	Parks & Cemeteries/ Planning/Capital/ Regeneration	✓	✓		
	Increase knowledge and understand from good practice examples, working in partnership with others to develop ideas.	Administration - (Sustainability)	all service units	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continue to keep a record of extreme weather events and the councils response to them and impact on the community	Maintain a record of the type and scale of event and cost of response and repairs	Administration - (Sustainability)	Risk/Assets & Property	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continue to record Environmental Health emergency response information	Keep headline records of areas requesting emergency support and amount of payment requested. This will reinforce mapping of vulnerable areas - domestic and commercial - and resourcing.	Environmental Health	Sustainability/GIS/ Finance	✓	✓	✓	✓

Operations							
Priority							
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Strengthen the resilience of the Council by mainstreaming adaptation considerations into operations and service delivery	Continue to review tourism and events planning in terms of extreme weather being included in risk assessments	Tourism	Risk/Assets & Property/ Sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Review halls, leisure spaces - internal and external to include risk assessment for extreme weather, prioritisation of sites and protocol for cancelations - extreme weather included in risk assessment	Leisure & Amenities	Risk/Assets & Property/ Parks & Cemeteries/ Sustainability	✓			
	Review maintenance schedules to include more preventative measures, eg clearing drains more often particularly at times of leaf fall, sandbag provision in advance, raising boilers at risk of flood waters	Assets & Property	Sustainability/DfI/Waste	✓			
	Review response to bathing water quality during flood events - consider a prediction model to include communications to raise awareness of the risk of reduced bathing water quality following periods of heavy rainfall.	Environmental Health	Communications	✓			
	Continue to ask DAERA for bathing water testing data all year round in order to build a clear picture of quality across the boroughs beaches for which ANDBC operators them.	Environmental Health	DAERA				

Operations (continued)							
Priority							
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**			
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Strengthen the resilience of the Council by mainstreaming adaptation considerations into operations and service delivery (continued)	Review response to monitoring, identifying and communicating locations of blue green algae blooms.	Environmental Health	DAERA				
	Review existing and future cemetery planning to ensure extreme weather is included	Parks & Cemeteries	Capital Projects, Planning/GIS/ Sustainability	✓			
	Develop severe weather protocol for waste management, property, parks, cemeteries & fleet supported by a clear communications method to inform public of any changes/ alterations	Waste & Cleansing Services	Assets & Property, Parks & Cemeteries/ Communications	✓			
Review operational response to increased visitors, including litter, waste and antisocial behaviour	Continue to dentify areas at risk of increase in litter, fire risk, anti-social behaviour and ensure response procedure to this is fit for purpose, including communications.	NET	Waste & Cleansing/ Environmental Health/ NIFRS/PSNI	✓			
	Review resources required to respond to commercial health and hygene issues as a response to extreme weather	Environmental Health			✓		
Human Resources	Review of staff working conditions and PPE for extreme weather - breaks, hydration, sunscream, shading, AC	Administration (H&S)	all Service Units		✓		
	Review of working patterns and shifts or redirection of staff to more urgent weather related duties	Human Resources	all Service Units	✓			

Energy & Buildings						
Priority						
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**		
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +

Objectives	Action	Lead Department / Team	Partners (Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Risk assess all council buildings and sites against the effects of climate change and develop an action plan and budget to manage this	Undertake climate risk assessment of all buildings and sites based on data available including older sites with exposed stonework, sites with shared/contracted spaces	Assets & Property	all Service Units	✓	✓		
	Ensure operational equipment is utilised correctly and operating efficiently, eg heating/cooling.	Assets & Property			✓		
	Prioritise opportunities for natural heating & cooling to avoid high energy costs	Assets & Property	Capital Projects/ Regeneration	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop a Fleet Management Strategy	Review of operation procedures in times of extreme weather	Assets & Property			✓		
		Assets & Property			✓		
Develop a Sustainable Buildings Criteria	Develop a baseline criteria for future builds and refurbishments include lifecycle costings as part of a wider Sustainable Capital Projects policy.	Capital Projects	Finance/Procurement/ Leisure & Amenities	✓			
	Ensure Council capital development and regeneration projects are designed and built to respond and adapt to climate change	Strategic Capital Projects/Regeneration	Finance/Procurement/ Leisure & Amenities	✓	✓	✓	✓

Green Space & Biodiversity						
Priority						
Objectives	**Action**	**Lead Department / Team**	**Partners**	**Timeframe (years)**		
			(Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +

Objectives	Action	Lead Department / Team	Partners (Internal & External)	1- 2	2- 3	3-5	5 +
Develop Green Infrastructure Plan	Integrate climate adaptation into management and maintenance plans for key public parks & spaces.	Parks & Cemeteries	Sustainability/Climate NI/NIEL	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Identify opportunities during capital and regeneration projects to design in Green Infrastructure	Capital Projects/ Regeneration	Parks & Cemeteries/ Sustainability/Climate NI/NIEL	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Identify sites that could manage flood risk with natural flood water storage and work in partnership with external organisations to use these as flood alleviation	Sustainability	Planning/Parks & Cemeteries/Climate NI/ NIEL	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Explore the use of SUDS on public sector owned infrastructure to include where possible soft SUDS options such as include swales, ponds, wetlands, green roofs, infiltration trenches for capital development projects.	Sustainability	Assets & Property/Parks & Cemeteries/Capital Projects/Regeneration/ Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue no mowing areas, develop in other areas	Parks & Cemeteries			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Utilise climate friendly and local planting	Parks & Cemeteries	Sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓
LBAP	Develop any climate adaptation actions from LBAP	Parks & Cemeteries	Sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue Nature Recovery Networks project	Parks & Cemeteries	Sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓
LDP	Develop and consult on supportive Planning Policy in Draft Plan Strategy	Planning	Sustainability	✓			

Implementation and Monitoring

This Climate Adaptation Plan is the beginning of a new process to deliver a range of actions to adapt Ards and North Down Borough Council to the impacts of Climate Change.

This plan will continue to evolve to ensure the borough remains prepared to adapt.

The Action Plan will remain as a live document. There will be annual reviews at the Climate Action and Sustainability Champions Working Group to discuss progress and issues raised.

This will also remain part of the Roadmap to Sustainability and will be reported to Council as per agreed schedule.

Meeting the reporting requirements of the Climate Change Act NI will be determined by Department of Agriculture and Rural development (DAERA). They will define both format and frequency of reporting. At time of writing this plan the reporting element of the legislation is going through a consultation phase.

Monitoring of the Adaptation Plan and Actions will vary depending on the type of objectives. Indicators will be agreed as individual actions are implemented. Examples of indicators:

- Financial
- Staff hours
- Training hours
- Community engagement sessions
- Grants/emergency support claims
- Water/air quality data

This list is not exhaustive.

Some of these indicators will form part of our mandatory reporting requirements, within the Climate Change Act NI.

For more information on the Ards and North Down's Climate Adaptation Summary Report, please visit the website are contact the department:

W: www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

E: AND@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

Unclassified

ITEM 7

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	16 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance
Date of Report	20 February 2024
File Reference	'-
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ☒ No ☐ Other ☐ If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Updated Business Continuity Policy and Plan
Attachments	Appendix 1 Business Continuity Policy v2.0 Appendix 2 Business Continuity Plan

Given the changes in Council structures since the legacy Council, Business Continuity Plans were implemented, it was identified that the legacy Plans were not fit for purpose in the event of Council service disruption and therefore a review and internal consultation was undertaken in 2023. The Business Continuity plan was approved by the Corporate Leadership Team in December 2023.

Business Continuity Management is a process that involves organisations identifying their vulnerabilities to business interruption and making arrangements to reduce risk and mitigate against the effects of any disruptions.

The Council is committed to ensuring that critical services can continue, or be recovered in a timely manner, in the event of a disruption or emergency. Council's Business Continuity Management arrangements are underpinned by the Business Continuity Policy and Plan.

Not Applicable

The Business Continuity Plan provides overall guidance to Ards and North Down Borough Council's Corporate Leadership Team, Heads of Service Team and Service Unit Managers to build resilience so that the Council can:

- Respond to a disruptive incident.
- Maintain delivery of critical activities/ services during an incident.
- Recover from and return to 'business as usual' in a timely manner following an incident.

Business Continuity Planning will aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Protect the safety of staff, visitors, and the wider community.
- Protect vital assets e.g. equipment, data, reputation etc.
- Ensure service delivery is not adversely affected, statutory and regulatory priority requirements are met and disruption to all services is minimised.
- Ensure customer expectations continue to be met, or managed, in such a way that customers are not adversely affected.
- Ensure the Council's reputation among stakeholders and the public is not negatively affected following the disruption.

The Plan works at the worst loss level, however, for less severe incidents only the relevant sections of the Plan would be selected.

Business Continuity training and exercising will be completed annually in conjunction with Emergency Planning training and exercising.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approve the attached updated Business Continuity Policy and Plan.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY COVER SHEET

Policy Title	Business Continuity Policy
Policy/File Reference	260506 – Business Continuity
Version	2
Policy Summary	The purpose of this document is to outline the Council's Policy with regard to Business Continuity Management
Responsible Officer(s)	Director of Corporate Services
Date of Equality Screening	14 November 2023
Date of consultation with Consultative Panel	N/A – internal administrative process
Date of consultation with Unions	N/A – internal administrative process
Date of Council approval	
Implementation date	
Appendices attached	Business Continuity Plan
Next review date	December 2024

Revision History:

Version	Changes made by	Date	Reason for change
1	Performance Improvement Manager	February 2016	Policy established
2.	Transformation Manager	November 2023	Business Continuity Plan revised.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Business Continuity Policy

Introduction	Business Continuity Management (BCM) is a process that involves organisations identifying their vulnerabilities to business interruption and making arrangements to reduce risk and mitigate against the effects of any disruptions.
Policy statement	Ards and North Down Borough Council (the Council) is committed to ensuring that critical services can continue, or be recovered in a timely manner, in the event of a disruption or emergency. Council's BCM arrangements are underpinned by the Business Continuity Policy and Plan.
Purpose of this policy	The purpose of this policy is to provide elected members and officers with a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan (BCP) to assist in ensuring continuity of business should an incident occur.
Who does this policy apply to?	All council staff, elected members and suppliers of goods and/or services critical to the Council's business continuity.
Business Continuity Plan	The BCP provides overall guidance to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) in responding to any significant incident that threatens to interrupt normal operations. It will work at the worst loss level and for less severe incidents, only the relevant sections of the plan would be selected. The plan is set out in four phases: Emergency Response; Emergency Management; Business Continuity and Recovery and Resumption.
Aims	The aim of the BCP is to mitigate the effects of any incident that might occur which could disrupt the core activities of the council to such an extent that it may cause loss of services or require relocation of any part of the organisation.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Business Continuity Policy, Continued

Objectives	• To save life; • To prevent escalation of an incident; • To protect assets; • To support the continuation of critical services; • To enable a timely and orderly recovery of the business; and • To protect the reputation of the Council.
Roles and responsibilities	A full reporting structure and details of roles and responsibilities are outlined in the BCP.
Monitoring of the BCP	Performance monitoring will be co-ordinated by the Risk Manager and Transformation Manager and will focus on the following: • Ensure that all critical functions are identified; • Verify the plan works and is fit for purpose; and • Familiarise the key staff identified in the BCP with what is expected of them in a crisis.
Training and exercises	Business Continuity training and exercises will be completed annually in conjunction with Emergency Planning training and exercises. Training and exercises will therefore be co-ordinated by the Risk Manager and Transformation Manager and will prepare key staff for crisis conditions through training and desktop/scenario exercises.

Ards and North Down Borough Council
Business Continuity Plan

To plan for Business Continuity

Ards and North Down
Borough Council

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Date	Version No.	Amendment Details & Reason
01/2020	Version 1	Plan established
02/2020	Version 1.1	Updated to reflect terminology used in First Steps following review by Risk Manager.
05/2023	Version 1.2	Document reviewed by Emergency Planning Officer during BCP/BIA audit process.
11/2023	Version 1.3	Document reviewed and updated by Transformation Team - Audit recommendations.

APPROVALS

Date	Name of Approver	Version	Approval Date
Nov 2023	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)	Version 1.3	December 2023

CONTENTS

BUSINESS CONTINUITY RESPONSE PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

Aim
The Business Continuity Plan (BCP, the Plan) provides overall guidance to Ards and North Down Borough Council (ANDBC, the Council) Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Heads of Service Team (HoST) and Service Unit Managers (SUMs) to build resilience so that the Council can:

- Respond to a disruptive incident.
- Maintain delivery of critical activities/services during an incident.
- Recover from and return to 'business as usual' in a timely manner following an incident.

Business Continuity Planning will aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Protect** the safety of staff, visitors, and the wider community.
- **Protect** vital assets e.g. equipment, data, reputation etc.
- **Service delivery** is not adversely affected, statutory and regulatory priority requirements are met and disruption to all services is minimised.
- **Customer expectations** continue to be met, or managed, in such a way that customers are not adversely affected.
- **Reputation among** stakeholders and the public is not negatively affected following the disruption.

The Plan works at the worst loss level, however, for less severe incidents only the relevant sections of the Plan would be selected.

Scope of Plan
All critical services, key support services and internal management functions across the Council.

Disruptions may include credible natural disasters, external threats, service level failure and any unforeseen event that could adversely affect the organisation meeting its objectives/delivering services.

Plan Ownership and Management
The Chief Executive or their Deputy (Duty Director) retains overall ownership of the Business Continuity Plan.

Governance, monitoring, and reviewing of the Plan will be performed by the Transformation Manager and Transformation Team under the direction of the Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance. Roles of the Transformation Team are as follows:

- Governance oversight – ensuring the correct approvals are in place for the BCP and annual reviews are completed.
- Implementation, review and testing of the BCP (testing will be completed annually in conjunction with Emergency Planning training and exercising).
- Overarching governance of the Business Impact Analysis (BIA), completed by each Service Unit.

The **Business Continuity Team** (BCT) consists of:

	Business Continuity Team Members
Core	Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance
Core	Transformation Manager
Core	Emergency Planning Officer
Core	Risk Manager
Incident Dependent Business Continuity Team Members	The BCT will be supplemented by key decision-makers and specialist support from the affected Directorate/ services. The composition of the team will depend on the nature of the incident and will be determined through BCT and EMT engagement.

Contact details outlined in the Emergency Contacts Directory.
Internal - External Contacts Directory

The BCT is responsible for completing the Business Continuity Phase actions following an incident and the activation of the BCP.

Plan Roles and Responsibilities
The **Emergency Management Team** (EMT) consists of:

EMT Members
Chief Executive
Director of Community and Wellbeing
Director of Environment
Director of Corporate Services
Director of Place
Director of Prosperity
Head of Communications and Marketing
Risk Manager

Contact details outlined in the Emergency Contacts Directory.
Internal - External Contacts Directory

This list can be supplemented by any other members as required by the EMT.

The **EMT** is responsible for:

- Providing strategic direction in relation to an emergency.
- Being a focal point for the co-ordination of the Emergency Management and Business Recovery activities.
- Determining Council policy and priorities given the nature of the incident.
- Allocating resource to functional areas and adjudicating on conflicting demands.
- Maintaining a record of the Council response to the incident.
- Recording financial transactions arising from the incident.
- Liaising with external organisations at a strategic and tactical level.
- Managing the media and maintaining the Council's reputation.

Emergency Response Team (ERT)

The ERT is site or area specific and will be responsible for implementing Phase 1 of the BCP (Emergency Response). The ERT comprises members of the Emergency Management Team and key support staff for each site or area.

Key support staff for each site or area is outlined in the Emergency Contacts Directory.
Internal - External Contacts Directory

In addition, a detailed organisation chart is located at AND BC Organisational Structure.pptx (sharepoint.com),

Plan Storage
EMT members should always keep copies of this plan readily available – it is suggested that they consider one or more of the following options, bearing in mind the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 for personal or sensitive data:

- A hard copy in the office to take out in case of an evacuation.
- Offline version on computer.

Electronic copies of this Plan are stored offline on the CleverTouch screen and online at Business Continuity Plan.

Full duplicates of the plan are held in the Emergency Planning Grab Bags located in the following areas:

- Risk Management, City Hall, The Castle, Bangor, BT20 4BT
- Reception, Signal Centre, 2 Innotec Drive, Bangor, BT19 7PD

Plan Review Date
The Plan should be reviewed annually or upon activation or validation and in parallel with the Council's Emergency Plan.

The BCT will review and update the Business continuity Plan (if required) on an annual basis, which will include reviews after every exercise and after the plan is activated for an incident.

The Council's CLT and HoST will validate the document after each review.

Links to other Plans/ Procedures

This Plan is associated with:

- Emergency Plan and First Steps
- IT Disaster Recovery Plan
- Risk Management Plan
- Pandemic Business Continuity Plan

All of the above key documents are saved in the Emergency Planning or Risk Management SharePoint sites.

Plan Distribution
Plan is available on SharePoint and is accessible to CLT and HoST Business Continuity Plan.

2. BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS

The completion of a BIA for each Service is key to enable HoST and SUMs to effectively activate and inform the BCP when required. Undertaking a BIA and Risk Assessment will enable services to better understand the organisation and build Business Continuity Management (BCM) capability.

Key areas assessed as part of the BIA:

- Critical Function Analysis including the Impact of Individual Business Functions.
- Single Points of Failure for Business/ Service.
- Stakeholder and Dependency Analysis.
- Resource Requirements for Individual Service.
- Recovery Time Objective and Recovery Point Objectives.
- Risk Assessment.

Each Service Unit is responsible for reviewing and updating their BIA on an annual basis. This review should be undertaken in line with the annual review of the BCP.

The Transformation Team is responsible for the overarching governance of the BIA process. The Transformation Team will consider any new BIA revisions to inform the BCP management. The BIAs are held centrally at **Business Continuity Plan**.

Record of Business Impact Analysis review

Date all Business Units BIA reviewed	Reviewed By	Signed off by

Critical Service Identification, Analysis and Recovery Process
CLT has identified the following as critical frontline services provided by the Council:

Service	Directorate (Section)
Registration of Births and Deaths	Corporate Services (Administration)
Burial of the Dead	Community and Wellbeing (Parks and Cemeteries)
Collection and Disposal of Refuse	Environment (Waste and Cleansing)
Corporate Communications	Chief Executive's Office (Communications and Marketing)
Emergency and Civil Contingencies Response	All Directorates

The methodology used to identify the critical services is outlined at **Appendix 1**.

The following services **directly support** these identified critical frontline services:
- Building Control
- Buildings Maintenance
- Environmental Health
- Finance (Employee Payments)
- Human Resources
- Safety and Risk
- Digital Services
- Vehicle Maintenance
- Technical and Property Services

Risk Management Approach

The BCP is considered in line with the Council's Risk Assessment and Risk Management Approach (refer to Council's Risk Management Strategy).

Each Directorate conducts a thorough Risk Assessment/ Review on a quarterly basis. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed quarterly by HoST and CLT and biannually by the Audit Committee.

High priority risks identified as most likely to disrupt Business Continuity are located within the Corporate Risk Register.

Service Units also complete an annual Risk Assessment as part of the BIA.

3. BUSINESS CONTINUITY RESPONSE PLAN

3.1 PHASE 1- EMERGENCY RESPONSE SECTION

Immediately refer to and follow Emergency Plan – First Steps guidelines for duty Director and Heads of Service.

Immediately refer to and follow **IT Disaster Recovery Plan** if an IT emergency occurs.

Purpose of the Emergency Response Phase
This phase covers the first minutes and hours following the incident and the immediate actions that are likely to be required. The key objectives of this phase are to:

- Protect the safety of staff, visitors, and the wider community.
- Protect vital assets e.g. equipment, data, reputation etc.
- Ensure necessary communication takes place.
- Support the Business Continuity phase.
- Support the Recovery and Resumption phase.

The phase covers:

- Evacuation
- Roll call
- Emergency service call out
- Attendance to injured

- Missing persons search
- Site shut down
- Securing the site
- Damage assessment

Incident Discovery
The first person on-scene will typically serve as the Incident Controller (IC), until relieved by a more senior person (management). It is the responsibility of the Incident Controller to:

- Complete the Incident Log within Emergency First Steps.
- Take appropriate personal protective measures.
- Notify a member of EMT of the incident.
- Advise personnel in the area of any potential threat and/ or initiate emergency procedures.
- Eliminate potential ignition sources.

Incident Controller
The Incident Controller is responsible for overall management of an incident and will focus on the co-ordination of the emergency at the incident.

Emergency Response (Phase 1) Actions

Incident Controller

RESPONSIBILITY: Incident Controller	
Emergency Response Action Check List	**Action Taken**
Receive advice of situation/ information.	☐
Ensure Emergency Services have been contacted if applicable.	☐
Call out appropriate members of the ERT and meet at an agreed point.	☐
Determine if evacuation is required.	☐
Liaise with the Emergency Services, Facilities Management and Security.	☐
Establish control of the incident.	☐
Call out rest of ERT and brief members.	☐
Refer any media enquiries to Corporate Communications and Marketing.	☐
Initiate instructions to all Management and staff using the call out/ cascade arrangements.	☐
Act as main point of contact at the incident site for the EMT.	☐

Emergency Response Team Members

RESPONSIBILITY: Emergency Response Team	
Emergency Response Action Check List	**Action Taken**
Meet with ER Team Leader at an agreed point – establish common understanding.	☐
Shut down heating/ventilation and make safe utilities – water, gas and electricity.	☐
Ensure that access routes are kept clear for Emergency Services.	☐
Ensure no unauthorised entry.	☐
Advise Emergency Services of any missing persons.	☐
Provide support for the EMT as directed by the Incident Controller.	☐
Prepare Emergency Incident Report Form (Incident Controller) First Steps.	☐
Consider immediate actions to be taken by specialist staff – Digital Services, Assets and Property, Human Resources etc.	☐
Decide what to do with staff in the short term.	☐
Brief SUMs to instruct staff to return to work or go home.	☐
Attend to any problems arising from: • Loss of Cash; • Loss of car keys; • Denial of access to cars; and/ or • Loss of personal effects.	☐
If appropriate, supply next of kin lists and give to Police if/when requested.	☐

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Next of kin lists details are updated twice a year as per HR process.	
Reference to site drawings for information as appropriate.	☐

In the aftermath of an incident the ERT will be responsible for securing the area and making it safe and for conducting the initial salvage operations.

Prefer to **Appendix 2** for **Post Incident Salvage Activity**.

Service Unit Managers

RESPONSIBILTY: Service Unit Managers	
Emergency Response Action Check List	**Action Taken**
Ensure that all staff have been accounted for (see note below).	☐
Ensure all staff are informed of the situation.	☐
Later in the day, when the incident has become clearer, receive advice from the ERT and update staff.	☐
Advise staff of selected assembly points and time for next business day.	☐
Make notes of outstanding business activities.	☐

Note: When SUMs are out of the office they should appoint a deputy, normally a member of the administrative staff to notify the Incident Controller that staff have been accounted for, or any missing persons. The Deputy will notify the SUM of the situation.

Out of Hours Contacts

Name	Contact	Service Provided
Sword Security	02890 503040 02890 899009	ADT alarm receiving centre, **Sword** (out of hours keyholders) respond to the call, investigate the incident and if required contact the Duty Director (rotates).
Raymond Fair (North Down/ Donaghadee)	07850858101	Standby Call out Contractor. In the event of immediate maintenance work being required i.e. broken door.
Bailie Thompson	07774231416	Standby call out contractor. In the event of immediate maintenance work being required i.e. broken door.
Manguard Plus Security Services	028 9084 2328	Contractor responsible for opening/ closing of gates for cemeteries and play parks i.e. if a lock in occurs.

Refer to **Appendix 3** for details of additional external key contacts.

Assembly Points
Pre-agreed assembly points for the ERT have been identified as:

Bangor Castle	Location(s)
Assembly Point 1:	Large flagpole @ barrier.
Assembly Point 2:	Car park bollards – only for museum and café personnel and members of the public.

Church Street	Location(s)
Assembly Point:	Footpath opposite Housing Executive offices.

North Road	Location(s)
Assembly Point:	Car park located outside the main gate.

ERC	Location(s)
Assembly Point:	Outside front gates of ERC.

Signal Centre	Location(s)
Assembly Point:	Farthest corner of car park – near Balloo Road.

Community Centres	Location(s)
Assembly Point:	Farthest corner of car park or safest point outside the centre boundary.

3.2 PHASE 2. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SECTION

Communication Actions

In the event of an incident and this plan being activated, the EMT should be contacted. Nature of contact will depend on the incident type and time it has occurred.

A member of the ERT is responsible for completing the communication actions. The Regional Communications Strategy for emergencies will be followed.

Name	Role	Likely message
ERT	Strategic and Operational Management	- On standby - Advance preparation - Incident is taking place - Action being taken - Impact on the service(s) - Request to escalate or support - Incident has taking place - Action being taken - Impact on the service(s)
Head of Communications and Marketing (or deputy if not available)	Communications	- Media Monitoring - Incident is taking place - Action being taken - Impact on the service(s) - Indication of any press interest

Business Continuity Plan Activation

Any two members of the EMT, one of which should be a Director, can activate and stand down the BCP.

Circumstances

This Plan will be activated in anticipation of, or in a response to, an incident causing significant disruption to normal service delivery/ business, particularly the delivery of key/ critical activities. Examples of circumstances triggering activation of this Plan include:

- Loss of key staff or skills e.g., above normal levels of absenteeism due to illness.
- Loss of critical systems e.g., ICT failure.
- Redirection of staff in response to an actual or anticipated major incident.
- Denial of access, or damage to, facilities e.g., loss of a building through fire.
- Prolonged power failure.
- Pandemic.
- Disruption of energy or fuel supplies.
- Loss of a key resource e.g., a major supplier vital to the delivery of a key service.

ISO 22301 identifies several disruptive threat scenarios that are to be considered including extreme weather, fire, flood, natural disaster, theft, IT outage, staff illness or terrorist attack. This BCP operates for all the ISO 22301 identified threat scenarios and can also be applied to any additional unidentified threats where the outcome triggers any of the circumstances

mentioned above. Additionally, a Pandemic BCP and an IT Disaster Recovery Plan (IT DRP) have been produced to further supplement the detail covered within this BCP.

Process For Activation
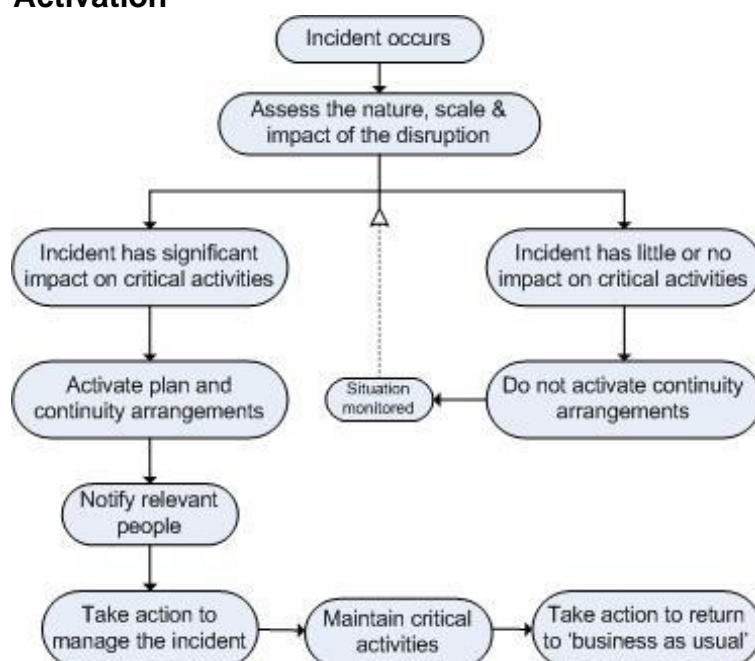
Issues to consider:

A	Has the incident devastated the premises?	The BCP will be activated immediately.
B	Is the damage to the site only partial?	The ERT be instructed to go to the site and report on the extent of the damage and potential unavailability period in the first instance before the plan in activated.
C	Is there denial of access not associated with physical damage to the premises?	Further information is likely to be sought before a decision is made.
D	External impacts	Potential of actual incidents. Refer to First Steps / Emergency Plan.

Recovery Strategy

In the event of a denial of access to our facilities, the strategy for managing the emergency and recovering the business is based upon the key objectives detailed below:

Objective	Recovery Strategy
Protection of personnel	All actions are designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of Council staff and third parties is a primary objective.
Management of reputation	The Chief Executive and Directors will provide direction with a view to minimising any potential damage to the Council's reputation.
Maintenance of customer confidence, reputational damage.	Implementation of service recovery plans found within the Business Impact Assessments in a prioritised manner will support the continued confidence of ratepayers and other Council customers.

Operation Control

Operation control is the designated environment where the EMT will assemble and operate during the Emergency. It will be equipped in advance as far as possible with telecommunications, information technology and materials, which will assist the team.

Where appropriate, a virtual operation control can be set up on Microsoft Teams or conference facility.

For guidance and templates associated with Operation Control refer to Emergency First Steps.

Emergency Management (Phase 2) First Actions

Responsibility: Emergency Management Team	
Emergency Management Actions	**Action Taken**
Confirm Team Roles • Agree roles and responsibilities of the team during the Emergency depending on who is available. • Media spokesperson. • Welfare liaison. • Incident liaison. • Log keeper.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Confirm Key Contacts • Establish main points of contact for ongoing information and updates of information. • Brief Mayor and agree basis for ongoing communication.	☐ ☐
Start Event Log and Communications Log • Written record of significant events throughout the emergency. • Written record of all communications.	☐ ☐
Welfare Issues • Establish if there are any injured persons/ fatalities. • Ensure next of kin information is available. • Determine if staff need to be taken to a sheltered location. • Decide if it is necessary to set up an information service for relatives.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Analysis of Impact • Use flipcharts/ whiteboards etc. to capture and share known information for analysis. • Determine the scope of the problem and its implications.	☐ ☐
Council Priorities • Review Council priorities and policy following the incident. • Define and prioritise objectives. • Liaise with Mayor to agree strategy in relation to Council business. • Determine if an emergency Council meeting is required.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Communications • Implement internal communications plan. • Work with Corporate Communications to agree external communications plan. • Determination of which, if any, external regulatory bodies should be notified.	☐ ☐ ☐
Media Strategy • Agree the media strategy to be implemented.	☐

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Legal Perspective • Establish if external legal advice is required e.g., liability issues arising.	☐
ICT Recovery • Implement ICT recovery plans.	☐
Insurance Position • Establish if insurance cover is in force and, if so, how best to use the support it may provide. • Contact assigned loss adjuster or main insurance contact.	☐ ☐
Information Collection Strategy • Identification of major information gaps. • Development of an investigative strategy.	☐ ☐
Recovery Management • Revise recovery priorities. • Identify support requirements for critical services. • Authorise invocation of service recovery plans for critical services.	☐ ☐ ☐

3.3 PHASE 3. BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Purpose of the Business Continuity Phase
The purpose of the business continuity phase of response is to ensure that critical activities are resumed as quickly as possible and/ or continue to be delivered during the disruption.

Business Continuity (Phase 3) Actions
The BCP for the incident is responsible for ensuring the following actions are completed:

RESPONSIBILITY: Business Continuity Team (BCT)		
Business Continuity Action	Further Info/ Details	Action Taken
1. Identify any other staff required to be involved in the BC response	Depending on the incident, the BCT may need additional/specific input in order to drive the recovery of critical activities.	☐
2. Evaluate the impact of the incident	Understand the impact of the incident on 'business as usual' working activities.	☐
3. Plan how critical activities will be maintained	Consider: • Immediate priorities • Communication strategies • Deployment of resources • Finance • Monitoring the situation • Reporting	☐
4. Log **all** decisions and actions, including what you decide **not** to do and include rationale	Use a decision and action log. For template refer to Emergency First Steps.	☐
5. Log **all** financial expenditure incurred	Ensure a clear breakdown of all financial expenditure is recorded.	☐
6. Allocate specific roles as necessary	Roles allocated will depend on the incident and availability of staff	☐
7. Secure resources to enable critical activities to continue/ be recovered	Consider requirements such as the staffing, premises, equipment. Refer to BIA for affected service unit/s (Business Continuity Plan) for more detailed information on resource needs.	☐
8. Deliver appropriate communication actions as required	Ensure methods of communication and key messages are developed as appropriate.	☐

Communications Nominee and Log
To avoid miscommunication, all communications should be considered and nominated to a responsible owner. This will be assessed based on the content communicated. Communications will all be recorded as per process outlined in Emergency First Steps.

3.4 PHASE 4. RECOVERY AND RESUMPTION

Purpose of the Recovery and Resumption Phase
The purpose of the recovery and resumption phase is to resume normal working practises for the Council. Where the impact of the incident is prolonged, normal operations may need to be delivered under new circumstances e.g., from a different building.

Approval from the EMT is required to announce a return to BAU working practices.

Recovery And Resumption (Phase 4) Actions

RESPONSIBILITY: Emergency Management Team		
Recovery and Resumption Action	**Further Info/ Details**	**Action Taken**
1. Agree and plan the actions required to enable recovery and resumption of normal working practises	Agreed actions will be detailed with timescales and responsibility clearly allocated.	☐
2. Continue to log all expenditure incurred as a result of the incident	Use a financial expenditure log to do this.	☐
3. Respond to any long-term support needs of staff	Depending on the nature of the incident, the Business Continuity Team may need to consider the use of Counselling Services e.g., internal Occupational Health involvement or appropriate External Agencies.	☐
4. Carry out a 'debrief' of the incident and document opportunities for improvement	Use a Lessons Learned Log to do this. This should be reviewed by all members of the BCT to ensure key actions resulting from the incident are implemented within designated timescales. Refer to Lessons Learned log template within Emergency First Steps. All lessons learned will be recorded centrally within the Emergency Planning SharePoint site.	☐
5. Review this Continuity Plan considering lessons learned from incident and the response to it	Implement recommendations for improvement and update this Plan in collaboration with the BCT.	☐
6. Publicise that there is now 'business as usual'	CLT/EMT will direct recovery action to HoST or SUMs.	☐

4. BUSINESS CONTINUITY TRAINING AND EXERCISING

Business Continuity training and exercising will be completed annually in conjunction with Emergency Planning training and exercising.

Training will be provided for all officers who have a nominated role within business continuity response, or who are involved in arrangements to warn, inform, and advise the public and other persons whom CLT considers necessary. This could include business partners and critical suppliers who have a role in the Plan.

When available, all relevant staff are encouraged to participate in both training and exercising to improve knowledge, skills, and competence in their ability to respond to a business continuity incident. Staff training records will be maintained by Human Resources.

Training may take the form of:

- General awareness training.
- Specific emergency role training.
- Observation of, or participation in, an exercise.

Exercises have three main purposes:

- To validate plans (validation).
- To develop staff competencies and give them practice in carrying out their roles in the plans (training).
- To test well-established procedures (testing). Most exercises will have some elements of all three.

There are three main types of exercise:
- Discussion-based.
- Tabletop.
- Live play.

All critical aspects of the plan should be tested routinely:

The contact list	To ensure all contact details are up to date	Bi-Annually by Emergency Planning team

A central record will be kept of the annual training and exercise carried out for Emergency and Business Continuity planning within the Emergency Planning SharePoint site.

APPENDIX 1: CRITICAL SERVICE IDENTIFICATION

In March 2020, the Council identified the emerging risk of Covid-19 and implemented its Pandemic BCP addressing the impact of the government required lock down arrangement.

This full Pandemic BCP is located within the Emergency Planning SharePoint site.

A lessons learned activity was completed and captured in the recovery workbook and this has informed the ongoing review/ revisions of the overarching BCP.

The below form was used to identify critical services, analysis and recovery process.

Critical Service Identification	Directorate
Responsibility: *(Role responsible for leading on this activity, plus deputies)*	
Critical Services on organisation if interrupted: Low / Medium / High Risk **Very Likely** — L M H H / L M H / L L M / **Unlikely** L **Low Impact** → **High Impact**	
Likelihood of interruption to organisation if interrupted: Low/ Medium/ High Risk	
Core Services – elements could be scaled back during the period of an emergency if interrupted: Low / Medium / High Risk	
Recovery Timeframe: *i.e. how quickly must the core services be recovered to avoid lasting damage.* *Over 72 hours?*	
Staff performing critical roles *i.e. numbers, skills, knowledge, alternative internal or external sources for staffing*	
Data systems *(Backup and recovery processes, staff and equipment required)*	
Premises *(Potential relocation or work-from-home options)*	
Communications *(Methods of contacting staff, suppliers, customers, etc)*	
Equipment *(Key equipment recovery or replacement processes; alternative sources; mutual aid)*	
Key dependencies to your service *(Processes to replace stock and key supplies required, provision in emergency pack)* ***NB**: Internal and external*	
Internal Link to other Directorates	
Any other information, including relevant Council policies that may be impacted during an incident	

APPENDIX 2: POST INCIDENT SALVAGE ACTIVITY

In the aftermath of an incident the ERT will be responsible for securing the area and making it safe and for conducting the initial salvage operations.

RESPONSIBILITY: Emergency Response Team	
Post Incident Salvage Activity	**Action Taken**
Secure access to damaged area	☐
Determine if entry to damaged facility is safe and establish what precautions should be taken	☐
Determine if specialist advice is required – e.g. structural engineer	☐
Ensure personnel accessing the area have appropriate Personal Protective Equipment	☐
Carry out damage assessment survey – make an inventory of damaged equipment	☐
Photograph damaged areas	☐
If possible, protect exposed work areas	☐
If possible, protect or remove undamaged equipment and arrange temporary storage	☐
If possible, arrange for safe reconnection of utilities to unaffected site areas	☐
Advise the EMT on the potential period of unavailability of the premises	☐
Meet Loss Adjusters on site	☐
Call out clean up/ salvage/ restoration contractors	☐
Work with consultants in quantifying repair needs	☐
Arrange temporary repairs as required	☐
Arrange temporary light, power, heat	☐
Commence salvage activities	☐
Arrange extra security if necessary	☐
Arrange for redirection of mail	☐

APPENDIX 3: KEY EXTERNAL CONTACTS LIST

1. Key Suppliers

Supplier	Provides	Telephone
Raymond Fair	Civil Works Contractor	07850 858 101
William Thompson	Civil Works Contractor	07774 231 416
IT Assist	Network servers	0300 1234 155
TotalMobile	Finance and Payroll	028 9028 5777
Hallmark Solutions	PAMS (Personnel)	028 9081 2618
Unit4	Transfare (Mileage)	01423 537 810
Honeycomb Recruitment	*Agency Staff* Claire McCleery David McClure	 07847 503777 028 9620 7050
Hays Recruitment	*Agency Staff* Michael Dickson Cara Marks Rebecca Kinder	 028 9044 6900 07793 858117 028 9044 6911 07738 560898 028 9044 6911 07738 560898
Noonan	Key holder service	028 9077 4799
GPS	Print services	
Heatrick (Timber, rubble and cardboard)		028 3884 1934
McKenzies (Metal)		028 3884 1934
East Belfast Mission (Re-use)	Waste collection services	028 9045 8560
McNabb Bros (Plasterboard and hard plastics)		028 9081 2614
J McQuillan & Sons (Paint)		028 9446 6708
Arc21 (household, green, blue)		

2. Utility Companies

Utility	Company	Telephone
Electricity	Go Power	028 8676 0600
Gas	Go Power	028 8676 0600
Telecommunications	BT – Phone lines	0800 154 434
Telecommunications	BT – Alarm lines, buildings maintenance, networks	0800 800 154
Telecommunications	BT – Church Street Internet	0808 1002 440
Telecommunications	Vodaphone – Internet City Hall Account Manager	03333 041 100
Telecommunications	Vodaphone – Mobile devices Account Manager Fault/Incident	 03333 041 100 08000 568 755
Telecommunications	Eircom – City Hall link to IT Assist	028 3000 2153
Telecommunications	Atlas Communications – network	028 9078 6999
Water	NI Water	03457 440088 0800 028 2011

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3. Local Emergency Services

Service	Location	Telephone
Ambulance	Emergencies Southeastern Area HQ	999 028 9127 4234
Fire and Rescue Service	Emergencies Southern Command HQ	999 028 3833 2222
Hospitals	Ulster Hospital Ards Community Hospital Bangor Community Hospital	028 9048 4511 028 9181 2661 028 9147 5120
PSNI	Emergencies All areas across the borough - Newtownards Station	999 101

4. Insurance and Finance Companies

Service	Company	Contact	Telephone	E-mail
Banking	Barclays Bank	Peter Cavanan (Account Manager) Catherine Keane (Service Branch contact)	0800 046 6121	Client.service1@barclays.com

Notes:
Instructions to the bank can only be made by authorised signatories: Stephen Reid, Stephen Grieve, Sharon McCullough, Paul Murray, Stuart Waring and David McCallum. Often telephone instructions require the caller to pass through a security procedure which only finance staff are set up for. Written instructions usually require any two signatures.

Queries regarding **Business Internet Banking** should go to 0330 156 0087 and use Client ID. Online instructions require a card reader and smart card and a PC that has the requisite software on it. The following staff can input payment requests online Sarah Shaw, Rae Moore, Tara Norrie, Leontia Connolly, Emma McConkey and Carol Poots. Two of the above signatures (except SR) are required then to authorise such payments.

Queries regarding BACS transmissions should go to 0330 156 0083 and use organisation ID or any service user number (SUN).

Bank issued Cheque Books are held in the safe in the Supplier Payments Office.

Insurance	Willis Towers Watson -	Alan Scott	028 9089 5063 07715 368 764	scottar@willis.com
	Willis Tower Watson	Nicola Elwood	028 9089 5083	elwoodnj@willis.com

Unclassified

ITEM 8

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	16 April 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance
Date of Report	20 March 2024
File Reference	'-
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ☒ No ☐ Other ☐ If other, please add comment below:
Subject	ANDBC Digital Strategy
Attachments	ANDBC Digital Strategy

As part of our Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme (STEP), the Council committed to developing a Digital Strategy (a plan that outlines how we will invest in digital technology to make a wide range of Council services work better for staff, residents and partners).

BT Digital Transformation Consulting started working with us in October 2023 to help us undertake a 'Digital Discovery' journey – which was the first key step in developing the strategy.

Digital Discovery aimed to help us understand more fully what we want to achieve and how we should go about achieving it. It included:

- Agreeing digital principles for the Council so we have a clear and shared understanding of our goals.

- Identifying high-level outcomes that the Council aims to achieve through its IT operations, strategies, and initiatives.

- Developing a project register of all ongoing IT-related projects.

Not Applicable

- Establishing the digital maturity of the Council i.e. assessing how effectively the Council has embraced digital tools and strategies to achieve its goals, optimise processes, and foster innovation.

- Undertaking a gap analysis to identify what needs to be done to achieve our agreed outcomes.

The output of all of the above activities was the production of a Transformation Roadmap. The roadmap outlines a strategic and phased plan for the council's journey toward digital maturity and innovation (structured and prioritised over 3-5 years). It provides a visual representation of key milestones, initiatives, and activities essential for achieving the council's vision.

The attached Digital Strategy concludes with a comprehensive view of the organisation's project landscape. This includes the current project register detailing ongoing initiatives. This is followed by the proposed project register. Each proposed project is individually detailed, offering a breakdown of its envisioned outcomes, associated resource requirements, and projected costs. Together, these projects form a strategic bridge, connecting the current state to a vision of transformative projects aligned with the council's digital journey.

Next Steps

Following approval of this Digital Strategy:

- A Digital Transformation Board will be established.

- A programme of digital transformation projects will be defined.

- The projects will be prioritised and an overall workplan with individual workstreams and governance will be developed.

- Project resource requirements will be defined (and this may include the identification of external expertise in some instances).

The above actions will enable the Council to commence the implementation of its digital transformation journey.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approves the attached Digital Strategy.

BT

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

Ards and North Down Borough Digital Strategy

BT Digital Transformation Consulting

Feb 2024

Council Vision

"A strategy for use of digital platforms to deliver services securely, effectively and sustainably, transforming the culture to drive digital empowerment across our internal and external communities."

Ards and North Down Borough council has an ambition to become a **digital leader**, harnessing technological advances to provide services and improve how it works efficiently.

The Council seeks to **embrace measured risk-taking and entrepreneurship, encourage sustainability, work collaboratively** inside and outside of the Council, **think creatively,** and **respond with agility** to changing demands. It requires innovative services, partnership, customer focus and managed risk-taking in a more agile method of working.

Ards and North Down Borough Council and BT have undertaken a **Digital Discovery** and created a **Digital Strategy for the future**. Aligning with Ards and North Down's Corporate Plan, the ambition is to use this strategy to drive the council's journey towards becoming a digitally empowered and efficient organisation.

Built on a foundation of evidence and shaped through consultation with stakeholders, the Digital Strategy outlines clear thematic priorities and integrated actions that directly translate into **tangible outcomes**. These outcomes align with the Council's pursuit of prosperity and growth within the Borough of Ards and North Down.

Ards and North Down Borough Council's aim is to empower innovation, enhance efficiency, and facilitate digital transformation. By doing so, the organisation will unlock the full potential of Ards and North Down Borough Councils people, to begin to use digital platforms to deliver services securely, effectively, and sustainably, transforming the culture to drive digital empowerment across our internal and external communities.

As Ards and North Down Borough Council embarks on its journey towards a brighter future, this Digital Strategy serves as a comprehensive roadmap to harness the power of people, process and technology.

Method Statement

The agreed scope of the engagement was to **turn the lens inwards** on the current ways of working within the council and identify key areas to accelerate Ards and North Down Borough Council towards becoming a digitally driven council and towards their vision:

"A strategy for use of digital platforms to deliver services securely, effectively and sustainably, transforming the culture to drive digital empowerment across our internal and external communities."

The areas below were the **agreed scope for the engagement,** which where the main backbone of discovery sessions and tangible outputs throughout this report.

- Health-check assessment

- In Flight Project Register

- Digital Principles

- High Level Themes

- High Level Outcomes

- Strategy to Technology Map

- Digital Maturity

- Gap Analysis

- Technology Register

- Transformation Roadmap

The **digital discovery**, was broken down into a several workshops, focusing on 3 key areas:

- **Business** – Vision and Strategy, Digital Culture, Digital Workforce, Digital Tools and Analytics, Digitally Integrated Council.

- **General** – Service to Citizens, Citizen Communications, Sustainability, IT Procurement.

- **Technology** – Data Management, Digital Governance, Cyber Security, Network Infrastructure and Connectivity, Advanced Computing Solutions, IT Hardware and End User Technology.

Our Approach

1 – Digital Discovery

Vision and Goals – where do you want to go?

Customer Executive Summary

Business and Digital Strategy – how are you getting there?

| Digital Principles | Your Digital Healthcheck | High Level Themes | High Level Outcomes |

Systems Information (App/Tech) – what technology do you have currently?

Applications | Network | Systems | Services | Data

Security

Security

2 – Gap Analysis

Understand your baseline and target

Your Digital Healthcheck results

Applications | Security | Data

Network | Services

3 – Outputs

Target level digital maturity | Technology Register

Digital Transformation Roadmap | Strategy to Technology Map

4 –Potential Future Engagements

Social Media Insights

Staff and Customer Experience

Strategy Alignment

Carbon Calculator

Business Led Innovation Areas including live demos

Technical Debt Areas

Initiation → Discovery → Gap Analysis → Outputs → Future
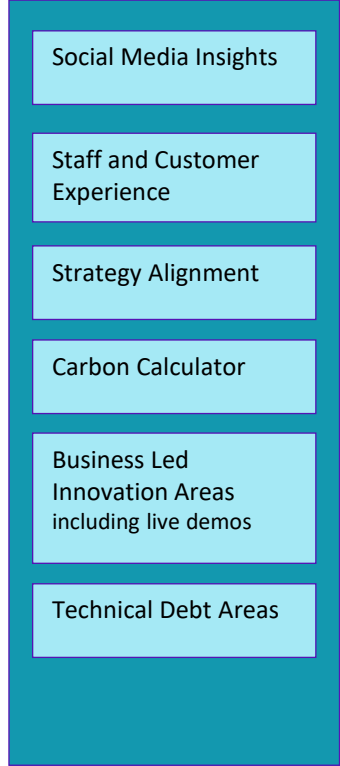
Key activities included:

Facilitated Workshops: Brought together key stakeholders in a structured and collaborative setting. Participants engaged in discussions, brainstorming sessions, and interactive activities to assess and improve digital maturity.

Hothouses: Intensive, focused workshops conducted over a limited timeframe, typically a day or a few days. They bought together cross-functional teams and subject matter experts to address specific digital maturity challenges or initiatives.

One-on-One Interviews: Conducted individual interviews with key decision-makers, department heads, and employees to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on digital maturity, uncovering specific pain points and opportunities for improvement.

Technology Review: A high level review of all core business applications as well as enterprise architecture to understand key challenges and define priority recommendations.

Your Digital Healthcheck: A comprehensive digital maturity assessment that provides a practical, data-driven current snapshot to assess your digital health and allow informed decisions and strategic planning.

Exec Summary

Principles to Outcomes:

This section highlights the council's agreed-upon digital principles, laying the groundwork for a comprehensive understanding of the councils shared vision.

The foundational principles are firstly defined and then mapped to target outcomes.

These outcomes were identified through your digital healthcheck, a digital maturity assessment and series of collaborative workshops. They illustrate identified key priorities and areas of action for the council.

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1 Citizen First

The end user is at the centre of everything we do ensuring we provide the right services in a digitally inclusive way.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

2 Digital Workforce

We invest in programmes that improve digital literacy among our employees and provide our workforce with the tools to do their job and develop digitally for the future.

3 Secure by Design

Security will be designed into all our processes, and we will ensure governance is applied around the security of the Council's services and Citizen's data.

4 Better Connected

We explore and exploit opportunities for collaboration, ensuring we make best use of technology to enhance innovation and the overall effectiveness of Council.

5 Sustainably Driven

We strive to reduce the carbon footprint of digital solutions and adopt sustainable practices to benefit our overall environmental targets.

Principles mapped to Target Outcomes

Ards and
North Down
Borough Coun

1 Citizen First

What the citizen wants, when they need it The timely and responsive delivery of services

Single view of the customer A consolidated and unified profile that captures all relevant information about a customer from various sources

Unified customer contact process A streamlined and integrated approach that consolidates all customer interactions into a cohesive system

Remove data silos Breaking down isolated pockets of information

2 Digital Workforce

Digital skills development programme An initiative designed to enhance individuals' proficiency in utilising digital technologies

Empowered staff Employees who are granted the authority, autonomy, and digital resources to make decisions and take actions within their roles

Governed data Implementation of structured policies, standards, and procedures for managing and maintaining data

3 Secure by Design

Controlled IT estate Implementing policies and measures to oversee and govern the IT infrastructure, applications, and data

Manage, monitor, detect A proactive and reactive approach to maintaining control, ensuring optimal performance, and identifying and addressing issues promptly

Critical Security Control Programme Best practices and security measures designed to protect information systems and data from cyber threats

4 Better Connected

Meaningful collaboration Working together in a purposeful and significant way to achieve common goals

Dedicated structures and processes Establishment of specialised and focused organisational frameworks and systematic procedures designed to achieve specific goals

The right tools at the right time Ensuring that appropriate resources and technologies are available when needed

5 Sustainably Driven

Measure and manage carbon footprint of IT infrastructure Tracking and optimising the environmental impact of the organisation's digital operations

Channel shift from paper processes Migration of traditional paper-based methods to digital channels or electronic processes to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance accessibility

BT

Digital Strategy Report

BT Digital Transformation Consulting

Healthcheck

BT's Digital Healthcheck provides an assessment framework which works with business users to gain insight into technology maturity and areas of digital challenges across the business.

The assessment captures sentiment and statistics to provide organisations with a baseline and insights that can be used to identify target areas for improvement and to measure the improvement after an appropriate time period.

The Digital Health Check is designed to be repeatable, ensuring that the assessments can be easily replicated at appropriate intervals to determine and measure progress from the baseline to the target goals.

A full detailed report of the digital healthcheck findings are also available.

Your Digital Healthcheck – Sections Covered

Vision & Strategy

Digital vision, strategy, and their alignment with business goals. Considers the clarity of direction, communication across the organisation and the delivery.

Digital Culture

Environment for fostering innovation. Willingness to explore new ideas, take risks, and support creativity. Looks at the presence of innovation processes and the ability to learn from failures.

Digital Workforce

Workforce readiness for digital transformation. Considers mindset, skills, training, and adoption of digital collaboration technologies.

Digital Tools and Analytics

Usage of digital technologies. Evaluates the organisation's agility and utilisation of new tools and systems as well as governance.

Digitally Integrated Council

Integration and adaptability of digital technologies across the Council's enterprise.

Service to Citizens

Evaluates the quality of customer experience, communication, and support. Considers the use of data and technology to meet customer expectations.

Citizen Communication

Maturity of the organisation's citizen communication systems, including unified communications, contact centres, measurement and management.

Sustainability

Commitment to sustainable practices in the digital realm. Looking into efforts to minimize environmental impact and the integration of sustainability into digital initiatives.

IT Procurement

Procurement strategy and standardisation, vendor selection and relationships, and procurement governance to minimise risk, and optimise process.

Data Management

Manage and leverage data effectively. Considers data governance, privacy protection, and compliance with regulations. Assesses the ability to extract insights and make data-driven decisions.

Digital Governance

Digital Governance involves the management and oversight of digital strategies and initiatives within a local council to ensure efficiency, compliance, and responsible use of digital tools and data.

Cybersecurity

Security measures, including cybersecurity strategies, access control mechanisms, and adherence to security protocols.

Network Infrastructure & Connectivity

Maturity and efficiency of the network infrastructure. Reviews the design, implementation, and management of networks, ensuring they can support the business's requirements.

Advanced Computing Solutions

Evaluation of computing resources, both on-premises and cloud-based. Review of management or resources and future advancements.

IT Hardware & End-User Technology

Organisation's deployment and management of end-user devices. Evaluates maintenance policies and replacement strategies.

Healthcheck results

165
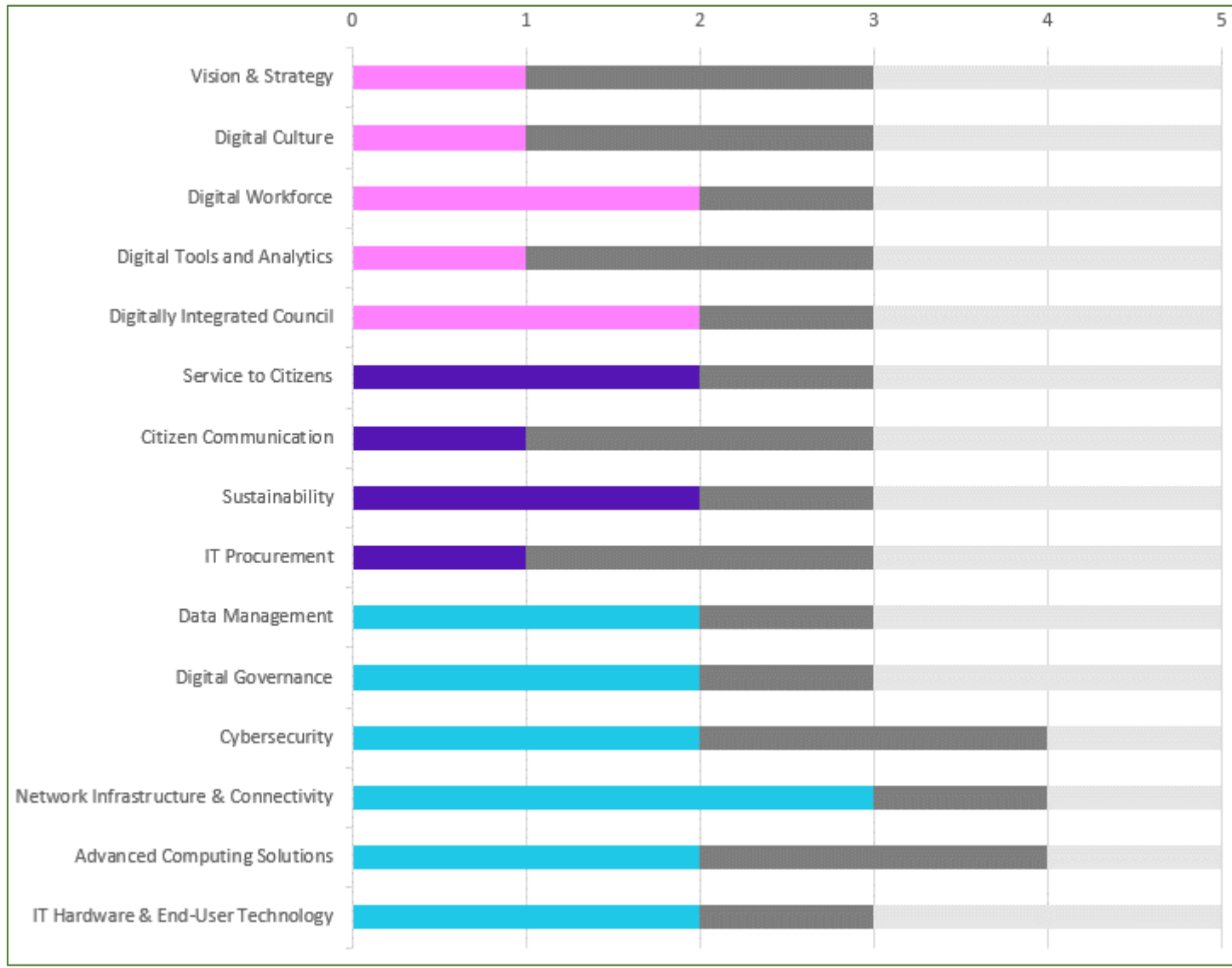
This graph shows the average result for each section of Your Digital Healthcheck. Each answer is rated on a scale from 0 to 5:

0 Non-existent, or non-functional
1 Basic functionality - does not adequately meet business needs
2 Functional but may not be fully comprehensive
3 Meets business requirements effectively
4   Well executed, robust and comprehensive
5 Excelling, leading across industries

"Processes for getting software/tools are ad hoc, there isn't a dedicated process – it would be good to get a mechanism in place"

"We now have Citizen space for surveys (customer engagement)"

"We don't have the headspace for new innovation"

"We are very siloed, internal data is in HR and Finance, external data is all over the place"

"Currently all forums for employees to regularly share innovative ideas are informal and not specific to Digital"

"We do capture insights from employees to drive innovation but not in the area of digital innovation"

"Some staff are terrified of SharePoint"

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Healthcheck Results - Business

Vision & Strategy

Current 1 / Target 3
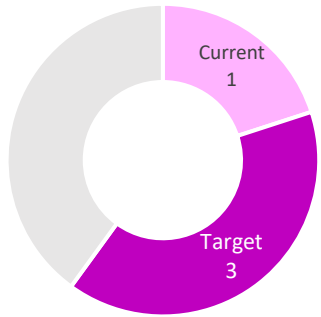
The council recognises the importance of having a **digital-first mindset** and is in the process of developing a **well-defined digital vision.**

There's a need for improved communication around digital efforts, **strategic resource allocation**, clearer measurement of progress, comprehensive planning with a **better understanding of funding**, and enhanced involvement of department heads and staff members in the design and execution of digital initiatives.

Digital Culture

Current 1 / Target 3
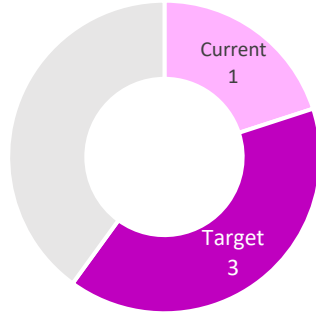
There are existing **feedback channels** and some efforts to **encourage innovation**, with sporadic initiatives in place to promote creative thinking within certain departments.

Improvement is needed in **fostering a structured process for innovation**, aligning innovation initiatives with the digital strategy and enhancing collaboration with external organisations. Additionally, there's a need to address **skill gaps** in basic digital tools and provide staff confidence in platforms like SharePoint.

Digital Workplace

Current 2 / Target 3
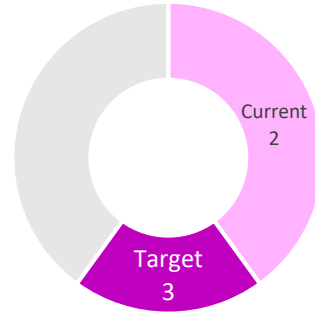
Efforts have begun to instil a digital mindset among employees, with visible willingness to embrace **digital transformation**, focusing on **cultural shift**. There are provisions and accessibility features for individuals with specific requirements.

Improvements are needed in **standardising training programs**, identifying and addressing digital skills gaps more consistently, and **optimising impact measurement** of digital skills development programs. There is a need for specific training on programs, to begin to fully utilise applications EG. Sharepoint, Teams, CORE, etc.

Digital Tools

Current 1 / Target 3
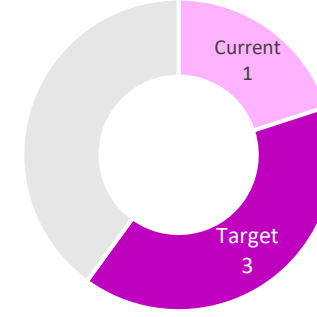
Efforts are focused on digitising workflows and implementing **data-driven decision-making systems**, aiming to improve processes and leverage insights for informed decisions.

There's a need to enhance integration of digitised processes, **streamline data analysis for decision-making**, establish real-time reporting capabilities, promote piloting of digital solutions, and effectively utilise collaboration tools to optimise workforce performance and service delivery.

Digitally Integrated Council

Current 2 / Target 3
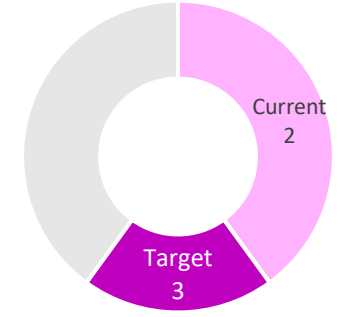
Efforts to foster **collaboration and cross-functional teamwork** are underway, with established working groups and some initiatives to integrate digital systems across departments.

There's a need to embed a stronger culture of collaboration, **improve knowledge sharing mechanisms**, achieve more comprehensive digital system integration, enhance system agility, and **strengthen collaboration** with external partners for more effective shared digital initiatives.

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Healthcheck Results - General
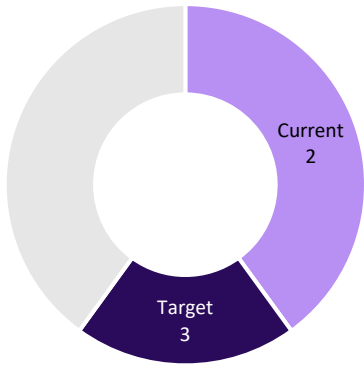
Service to Citizens

Efforts are underway to **measure and manage customer satisfaction**, including investments in tools like Citizen Lab for citizen engagement.

Improvements are **needed in formalising processes for managing customer relationships and experiences**, consistently measuring, and managing customer satisfaction, systematically using customer feedback for **operational improvement**, and leveraging emerging technologies like AI and IoT to enhance public services.
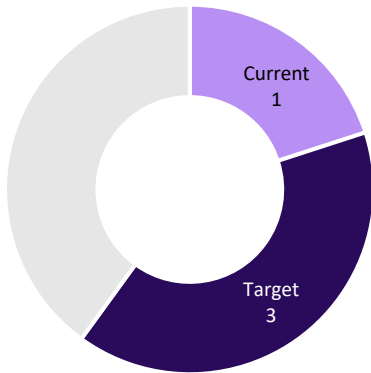
Citizen Communication

The council has a **record management system** (Te-Care) for specific service unit requests and complaints, and there are **formal processes for handling customer inquiries and complaints**.

Improvements are needed in implementing a more comprehensive system for managing customer information, possibly through the implementation of a **council wide Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system**. There's room for enhanced use of technology to route inquiries as well as to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of handling customer inquiries and complaints.
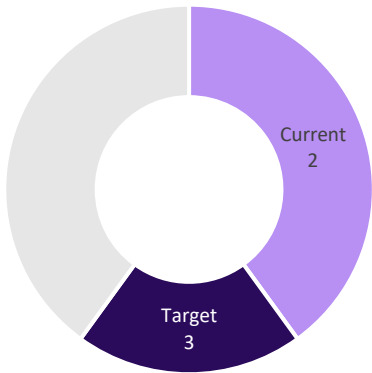
Sustainability

A draft **energy strategy** is going to the council for approval in January 2024, with a **move towards digital solutions** already in train.

As there is no manager currently in place for sustainability, it is difficult to drive a strategy forward. **Current initiatives are project based** and would benefit from a more integrated approach.
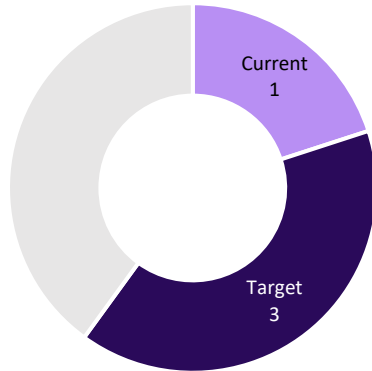
IT Procurement

Current general **procurement strategies are effective**, but not for digital**.** The council effectively **leverages digital systems and applications** for procurement activities, enhancing various aspects of the procurement process.

There's a **need for the development of IT specific procurement processes**, specifically including governance of digital initiatives. Current process lacks supply chain risk management, with rudimentary supplier relationship management for digital in place.

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Healthcheck results - Technology

Data Management

Current 2 / **Target 3**
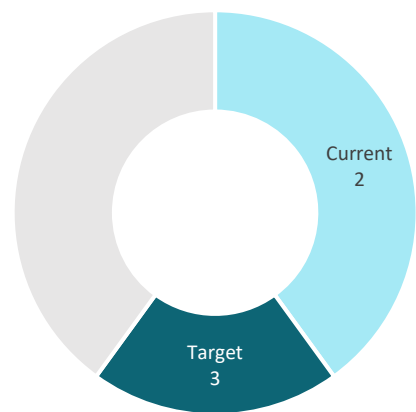
The council maintains an **access control management system** with advanced security features and compliance with data protection regulations.

Improvements are needed in **breaking down data silos** and **establishing protocols for reasonable data sharing** between departments and systems to overcome the existing fragmented structure.

Digital Governance

Current 2 / **Target 3**
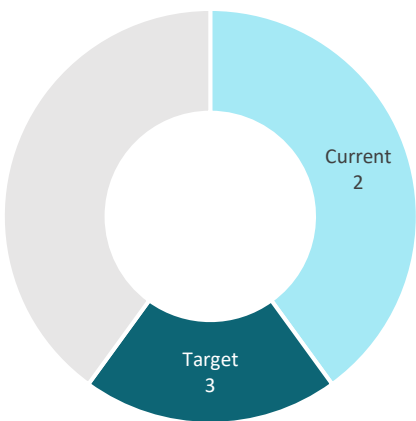
The council maintains some **governance structures overseeing digital strategies and initiatives**, and there are ongoing efforts towards compliance and sensitive data security.

Creating a **digital governance model for all digital projects** would allow the council to align digital initiatives with organisational goals.

There is a need to conduct more effective evaluations of digital initiatives.

Cybersecurity

Current 2 / **Target 4**
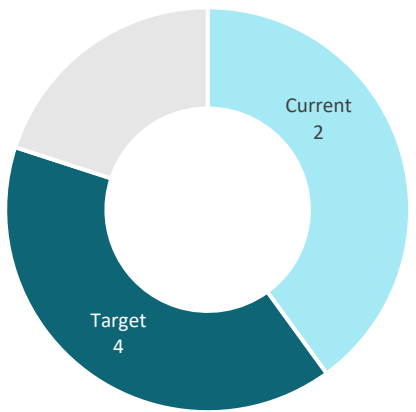
The council has a reasonably effective **incident response process** and maintains awareness of cybersecurity threats through existing channels.

Enhancements are needed in developing a **comprehensive cybersecurity risk management strategy**, establishing a more proactive cybersecurity position, creating a structured system to respond to threats promptly, and improving security awareness training for employees.

BT

Healthcheck results - Technology

Current
3

Target
4
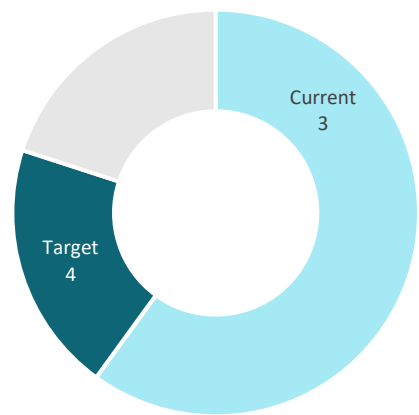
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity

The **network infrastructure is well-documented, continually updated**, and currently undergoing improvements, especially concerning WAN and Switches.

Establishing a **redundancy plan, enhancing network security practices**, implementing more consistent updates, and ensuring standardisation across various locations are critical areas that require attention.

Current
2

Target
4
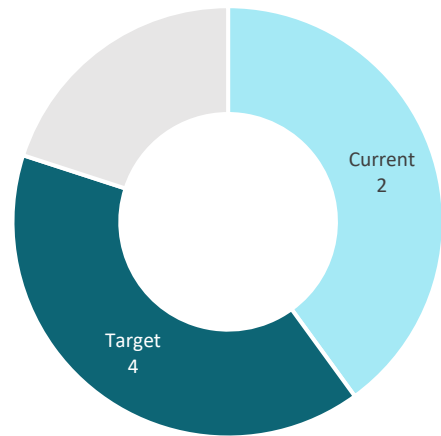
Advanced Computing Solutions

The council **effectively utilises on-premises and cloud resources** and is developing a strategy for hybrid solutions.

Enhancements are needed in establishing a **comprehensive hybrid computing strategy**, leveraging cloud computing with formalised documentation, gaining better insights and controls over computing resources.

Current
2

Target
3
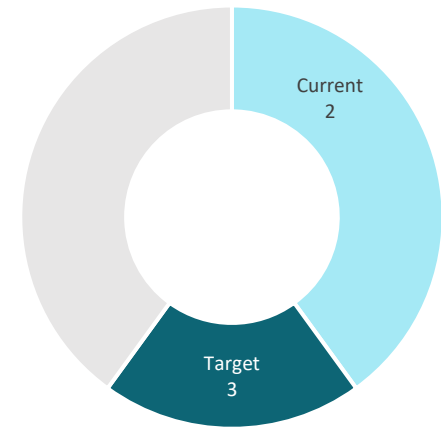
IT Hardware and End-user Devices

The council **effectively uses mobile technology and VoIP**, efficiently managing end-user devices, and following a proficient process for disposing obsolete IT hardware.

Improvements are needed in establishing a **formalised process** for monitoring and controlling end-user devices

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**Ards and
North Down**
Borough Council

Current Landscape

Larger images have been provided

Current Landscape Overview

This is a point of time snapshot of your current estate broken down into the following:

Strategy to Technology Map: A visual representation aligning the council's strategic goals and plans with the corresponding business areas, teams, applications, hardware and technological solutions.

Captured during the hothouse and reviewed within the HOST session.

So What: Provides a clear view as to how technology implementation supports the council. Allows for identification of gaps or misalignments between objectives and current capabilities.

Current Customer Contact Processes: A detailed overview of the existing customer contact processes within the council.

Captured during the December HOST session.

So What: A starting point of data discovery, looking at the customer journey and understanding touchpoints, interactions, and pain points.

HOST Summary: Shows the current state of digital adoption within various departments, pinpointing areas where paper-based processes persist as well as instances of data duplication.

Captured during the December HOST session.

So What: An analysis of the above document, this is the first steps in understanding how processes are used across the council and how best to begin moving towards the council objectives.

Technology Register: A comprehensive point in time inventory detailing all the technology assets and systems employed within the council. Uses Red-Amber-Green (RAG) colour coding (Red: to be addressed, Amber: approaching soon, Green: Functional). Looking at applications, down into the infrastructure services (End User Compute, Data Centre, Unified Comms/Contact Centre, Network and ITSM), also touching upon 3rd party hosted services.

Captured through all workshops and via the Hothouse.

So What: The RAG status helps to quickly provide the health of IT systems and their alignment with standards and future plans. The register also helps the council to keep track of their technology assets, identify areas of improvement or upgrading, and ensure they are following best practices and planning.

Larger images have been provided

BT

Strategy To Technology Map

Strategy To Technology Map — Ards and North Down digital strategy technology mapping diagram showing the relationship between Strategies - Plans, Main Areas, Service Areas, Teams, Applications, End User Devices (Laptops, PCs, Misc / OEM), Data Centre (VMs, Physical Servers, Security Devices, Network Devices), Peripherals, External Dependencies, and Legacy systems.

Current Customer Contact Processes

Row labels (left column):
- Business Area/ Service Area
- Type of Comms with Customer
- Customer Interaction/ Cross Service Area Collaboration
- Systems used to retain info on customers
- Retention Policy/ Duration
- Types of Data stored (eg. name, add). Additional info - complaints etc.
- Format of Artefact (eg. Word doc, PDF, xls.)
- Paper Processes
- Business Cases

Business Areas / Service Areas:
Waste & Cleansing Services · Regulatory Services · Environmental Health Protection & Development · Planning · Tourism · Administration · Comms & Marketing Service · Community Planning · ED · Finance · Community & Culture Service · Leisure · Parks & Cemeteries · Regeneration

Legend:
- Digitalise?
- Duplication of Data

HOST Summary

	Holds Customer Data	Has Paper Processes	Data Duplication (Digital/Paper)	Appetite for Digitisation	New Business Cases in motion
Waste & Cleansing Services	●	●			
Regulatory Services	●	●			
Environmental Health Protection & Development	●	●			
Planning	●	●	●	●	
Tourism	●	●	●		●
Administration	●	●	●	●	
Comms & Marketing Service	●	●			●
Community Planning					
ED	●	●			●
Finance	●	●		●	●
Community & Culture Service	●	●			
Leisure	●	●	●	●	●
Parks & Cemeteries	●	●	●	●	●

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Technology Register

Citizen Applications
Public Services

HRC Bookings | Customer Service / HRC Booking Telephone | Goss Interactive | HRC Booking Email Address | Dog Fouling Reporting | Property Certificate | Building Application

Council Website – The Internet Company Ltd | Social Media – X Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn | AND Leisure App for Leisure Booking - Innovatise | Dog License | Bin Collection Calendar | Rhecavion App | Bill & Penalty Payment

Corporate Applications
Service Area Applications

Waste & Cleansing Services: Route Man

Asset & Property Services: Turbine Software, AutoCAD, Autodesk DWG, TDS Access Cloud, Asset HQ, Building Mgmt, ATEN Control Systems, Joomu

Regulatory Services: TE License, TE Build, TE Dog

Parks & Cemeteries: PSS Live, Plotbox

Leisure: Course Pro, Legend - Xplor

Community & Culture: Digital Locator

Environmental Health & Development: Home Safety, Dejava, Audacity, Food Surveillance, TE Health

Planning: Planning Portal, Photoshop Elements

Tourism

Economic Development

Strategic Capital Development: AutoCAD LT

Regeneration: AutoCAD LT

Strategic transformation & Performance: Microsoft Power BI, Kimona Lite, ArcGIS, Tableau, Microsoft Project, Export PDF, Adobe Pro, Microsoft Visio, M365, Citizen Space, Checkpoint VPN Client, FS Pro, Pentana, eTendersNI

Administration: Decision Time, Land Registry, TE Core, NIROS, Claim Control, Trove Minutes, Real Asset

Finance: Ice Cream PDF Connector, Bottomline, Total Mobile

HR & Org Development: Core HR, eLearning

Comms & Marketing Service: Canva, In Design, Adobe Creative Cloud, Adobe Bridge, Photoshop, Citizen Lab, PageOne, Mailchimp, Simpleview, Drupal

Community Planning: SPSS

Document & Records Management: MS Sharepoint, MS Teams

Intranet: Sharepoint

Internet & Customer Access: Council Website – Eye Kline, Leisure, Visit Ards & ND, Economic Development, Arts & Culture

Messaging: M365 Outlook, MS Teams, Page One, Mitel My Collab

Office Productivity: M365

File and Print: IT Assist File Ser, Museum NAS, On Premise File Ser, Serva

Geographic Information: Esri

Business Intelligence: SPSS, Power BI, Tableau

Asset Management: Service Manager

Infrastructure Services

End User Compute & Devices

Core Client Applications: Remote Access / VPN Client - Checkpoint - Cybit, SCCM Application / Deployment for end user devices and servers, Browser: Microsoft Edge, Firefox – IT, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer

End User Compute Platforms: Desktop and Laptop Operating System: Windows 10 & 11, Windows XP – Braking SW, iPad Tablet OS, VM on MAC, Samsung Smartphone OS, Samsung Smartphone OS12 & 13, iPhone Smartphone IOS, Huawei Smartphone OS, Microsoft Smartphone OS

End User Hardware: Samsung SM-T50S Tablet, Samsung SM-T50SN Tablet, iPad Air, Samsung SM-T59S Tablet, iPad Air 2, Samsung SM-T515 Tablet, Samsung SM-X760B Tablet, iPad 8th Gen, Lenovo 34140HG, iPad 4, Lenovo 3396 C4G, Samsung Galaxy Tablet A 2019, Lenovo 3495 DIG Tablet...

Dell Latitude Laptop 5300 2-in-1, Dell Latitude Laptop 5300 2-in-1, Dell Latitude Laptop 5320, Dell Latitude Laptop 5440, Dell Latitude Laptop 5430, Dell Latitude Laptop 5310 2 in-1, Dell OptiPlex 3050 AIO PC...

Application Management: Application Packaging: SCCM, Application Deployment: SCCM, Application Streaming: SCCM, Application Deployment: SCCM, Intune

Remote Access: Checkpoint VPN, Council PCs, Council Laptops, Staff Devices

End User Compute Management: Microsoft SCCM, Microsoft Intune for Samsung Tablets and Laptops

End User Device Security: ESET, Bitlocker

Mobile Dev. Mgmt: Microsoft Intune, Asset Inventory

Peripherals: Canon IPF750, Canon IPF785, Xerox 9065, Xerox 405, Xerox 6135, Xerox 6170

IP Phones: Mitel 5304 IP, Mitel 5312 IP, Mitel 5330 IP, Mitel 5330e IP, Mitel 6930 IP

Data Centre & Cloud Computing

Platform Services

Database Servers: IT Assist Legacy SQL, IT Assist Hosted SQL Servers

Public Cloud SaaS Providers: Microsoft M365, Time and Date Security - TDS Access, Plotbox.io Plotbox, Home Safety, Adobe – Adobe Pro, Pentana Solutions Pentana, The Access Grp – Core HR, Tascomi/Idox – TE..., Fitronics - Course Pro, Microsoft PowerBI, Project, Information Mapping - FS Pro, NIDirect - Land Registry, IEB - Asset HQ, PSS Ltd – PSS Live, Legendware Legend, ArcGIS – ARCGIS, Insight Platforms Citizen Space, Apply to Supply Decision Time, Bottomline.com Bottomline, Goss Interactive, Adobe.com InDesign, Drupal.org Drupal, PageOne SMS, Skillgate - eLearning

Directory Services (including authentication): Active Directory Functional Levels 2012, Microsoft Azure AD, IT Assist Hosted Domain Controllers, Active Directory Service DNS etc

Platform Security: IT Assist – Sophos for Servers, ESET AV, Bitlocker

Virtualisation Platform: IT Assist VMWare vSphere

Data Centre Facilities: IT Assist Primary DC, IT Assist Secondary DC, Digital Services Computer Rooms

Infrastructure Services

Server Operating Systems: Windows Server 2012 R2 – On Prem, Windows Server 2019 - On Prem, IT Assist Hypervisor Version, Windows Server 2016 - On Prem, HR Azure Operating Systems on DC's, ITAssist VM Operating Systems - Server 2019?

Microsoft Azure Servers: PRANJ10C4 - Active Directory/AD Connect, DNS/DHCP, PRANJ20C? - Active Directory/AD Connect, DNS/DHCP

IT Assist Hosted Virtual Servers: PRANDFS01 Managed File Server, PRANDB01- RDSH Services Broker for Total, PRANDGIS0 – GIS Enterprise Portal & Server, GIS Content (Ds) & (Us), PRANDAS04 – IT Service Manager, PRANDAS08 – TDS Corima Door Access SW for Core...

On Premise Physical Servers: PRANDDC6 - AD Connect DNS/ DHCP,VPN Poweredge R440 Server 2016, PRANDC2 – AD Console Controller Poweredge - Server 2012 R2, PRANDDC7 - Active Directory DNS / DHCP - Poweredge R440 - Server 2016...

Data Protection: Standard M365 E-Mail, IT Assist SQL Backup, IT Assist VM Backup

File Services: Digital Scanning Svc Ltd NAS - Museum Managed, On Premise File Server Windows Server 2012 R2, IT Assist Managed File Server

Infrastructure Management: Microsoft SCCM, Microsoft Intune

Legacy Systems: Ards DB (Finance & Payroll) SQL, North Down DB (Finance & Payroll) SQL, Environmental Health Legacy DB, IT Assist SQL Serve, PAMS Core -Retired – On Premise, XN Leisure Legacy – On Premise

UC&CC

Unified Comms/Fixed Telephony: Mitel Telephony (Atlas)

Mobile Telephony: Samsung SM-G411GE Smartphone, Samsung SM-L736FN Smartphone, Microsoft Lumia 550 Smartphone, Nokia 105 Std Phone...

Network

Local Area Networking: Cisco Catalyst 3550 Switch, HP ProCurve 2810-24G Switch, HP ProCurve 2520G PoE+ Switch, HP Aruba 2530 48G PoE+P Switch, Hpe Aruba 6000 48G Class4 POE Switch...

Network Security: Checkpoint 3100, Checkpoint Quantum 6200 NGFW, Fortinet (Signal)

Wide Area Networking

Network Management

Network Services

ITSM

Helpdesk: Service Manager

Service Management Tools: Service Manager

Key

- Healthy Asset - No Attention Required (green)
- Will Require Attention or Asset Currently in Transition (amber)
- Asset Needs Immediate Attention (red)

Note: Please refer to Technical Register Spreadsheet for detailed information relating to Asset

3rd Party Hosted Services
Drupal.org, Adobe, ITASSIST, Microsoft, Plotbox.io, Decision Time, Goss, Bottomline, IEB, PSS, Legendware, ArcGIS, Insight Platforms, Apply to Supply, NI Direct, Information Mapping, Fitronics, Tascomi, The Access Grp, Pentana, Time & Data Security, Innovatise, Skillgate

To Be State

BT

Ards and North Down
Borough Council

Vision & Principles

Vision & Principles:

Vision: An agreed upon forward-looking statement defining the future state the council hopes to achieve.

Principles: Foundational values shaping the council's culture, behaviour, and decision-making.

Principles to Target Outcomes: Aligning the identified principles to outcomes discovered through your digital healthcheck. They illustrate identified key priorities and areas of action.

Outcome Breakdown by Principle: Each principle is further broken down to target states. Each state is also categorised by priority, as identified via the workshops.

Council Vision

"A strategy for use of digital platforms to deliver services securely, effectively and sustainably, transforming the culture to drive digital empowerment across our internal and external communities."

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Digital Strategy

1 Citizen First

The end user is at the centre of everything we do ensuring we provide the right services in a digitally inclusive way.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

2 Digital Workforce

We invest in programmes that improve digital literacy among our employees and provide our workforce with the tools to do their job and develop digitally for the future.

3 Secure by Design

Security will be designed into all our processes, and we will ensure governance is applied around the security of the Council's services and Citizen's data.

4 Better Connected

We explore and exploit opportunities for collaboration, ensuring we make best use of technology to enhance innovation and the overall effectiveness of Council.

5 Sustainably Driven

We strive to reduce the carbon footprint of digital solutions and adopt sustainable practices to benefit our overall environmental targets.

Ards and North Down Digitally Driven Council

Citizen First
Easy to use services

Digital Workforce
Digital tools, culture, skills and behaviours

Secure By Design
Shift to proactive

Better Connected
Living platforms

Sustainably driven
Change our consumption

Digital Governance

Budgetary Control

Managed IT Estate

- What the citizen wants, when they need it
- Single view of the customer
- Unified customer contact process
- Remove data silos

- Digital skills development programme
- Encourage calculated risks
- Empowered staff
- Governed data
- Foster a digital mindset culture

- Controlled IT estate
- Manage, monitor, detect
- Critical Security Control Programme
- Workforce security skills

- Meaningful staff collaboration
- Memorable experiences
- Dedicated structures and processes
- The right tools at the right time

- Measure & manage carbon footprint of Digital Services
- Sustainability code of practise for staff
- Channel shift from paper processes

Principles mapped to Target Outcomes

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

1 Citizen First

What the citizen wants, when they need it The timely and responsive delivery of services

Single view of the customer A consolidated and unified profile that captures all relevant information about a customer from various sources.

Unified customer contact process A streamlined and integrated approach that consolidates all customer interactions into a cohesive system.

Remove data silos Breaking down isolated pockets of information

2 Digital Workforce

Digital skills development Programme An initiative designed to enhance individuals' proficiency in utilising digital technologies

Empowered staff Employees who are granted the authority, autonomy, and resources to make decisions and take actions within their roles

Governed Data Implementation of structured policies, standards, and procedures for managing and maintaining data

3 Secure by Design

Controlled IT estate Implementing policies and measures to oversee and govern the IT infrastructure, applications, and data

Manage, monitor, detect A proactive and reactive approach to maintaining control, ensuring optimal performance, and identifying and addressing issues promptly

Critical Security Control Programme Best practices and security measures designed to protect information systems and data from cyber threats

4 Better Connected

Meaningful collaboration Working together in a purposeful and significant way to achieve common goals

Dedicated structures and processes Establishment of specialised and focused organisational frameworks and systematic procedures designed to achieve specific goals

The right tools at the right time Ensuring that appropriate resources and technologies are available when needed

5 Sustainably Driven

Measure and manage carbon footprint of IT infrastructure Tracking and optimising the environmental impact of the organisation's digital operations

Channel shift from paper processes Migration of traditional paper-based methods to digital channels or electronic processes to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance accessibility

BT

1 Citizen First

The end user is at the centre of everything we do ensuring we provide the right services in a digitally inclusive way.

Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

Highest Priority

Define a robust process for capturing council wide customer inquiries and complaints, using techniques and tools to enhance customer satisfaction.
Citizen Communication, current: 2 target: 4

Implement a highly detailed and effective formal record management system for customer information, with customer data comprehensively and securely managed.
Citizen Communication, current: 1 target: 3

Establish processes for managing customer relationships and experiences effectively.
Service to Citizens, current: 0 target: 3

Leverage digital tools and platforms successfully, resulting in meaningful engagement and feedback collection from citizens.
Service to Citizens, current: 2 target: 4

Provide highly effective online services for residents, with a comprehensive range of options for online payments, service requests, and access to important documentation.
Service to Citizens, current: 2 target: 4

Utilise technology to route inquiries from customers and residents highly effectively, resulting in efficient and effective inquiry management.
Citizen Communication, current: 1 target: 4

Medium Priority

Implement processes for managing customer feedback effectively and use it systematically to improve operations.
Service to Citizens, current: 1 target: 3

Takes council wide measures and initiatives that significantly enhance the management of service quality in customer communications.
Citizen Communication, current: 2 target: 4

Actively measure and manage council wide customer satisfaction. Provide well-designed feedback mechanisms, both qualitative and quantitative, to gather customer insights. Regularly analyse customer feedback and develop action plans to enhance satisfaction. Monitor customer satisfaction metrics and targets and use them to drive continuous improvement initiatives.
Service to Citizens, current: 2 target:4

Actively retain a history of communications with customers, with a reasonably effective approach to ensuring past interactions are accessible and contribute to better service delivery.
Citizen Communication, current: 1 target: 3

Also Important

Implement a detailed understanding of customer segments and target them effectively
Service to Citizens, current: 2 target: 3

Actively utilise AI chatbots or similar automated systems to a reasonable extent for enhancing customer service and support.
IT Hardware & End User Technology, current: 2 target:3

Utilise emerging technologies to some extent - such as AI, machine learning, or IoT - for improving public services
Service to Citizens, current: 1 target: 2

Excel in providing accessibility and inclusivity in digital services and communications for people with disabilities, with well-established mechanisms and features that ensure a high degree of inclusivity and usability for all residents.
Service to Citizens, current: 4 target: 5

2 Digital Workforce
Culture & Skills

We invest in programmes that improve digital literacy among our employees and provide our workforce with the tools to do their job and develop digitally for the future.
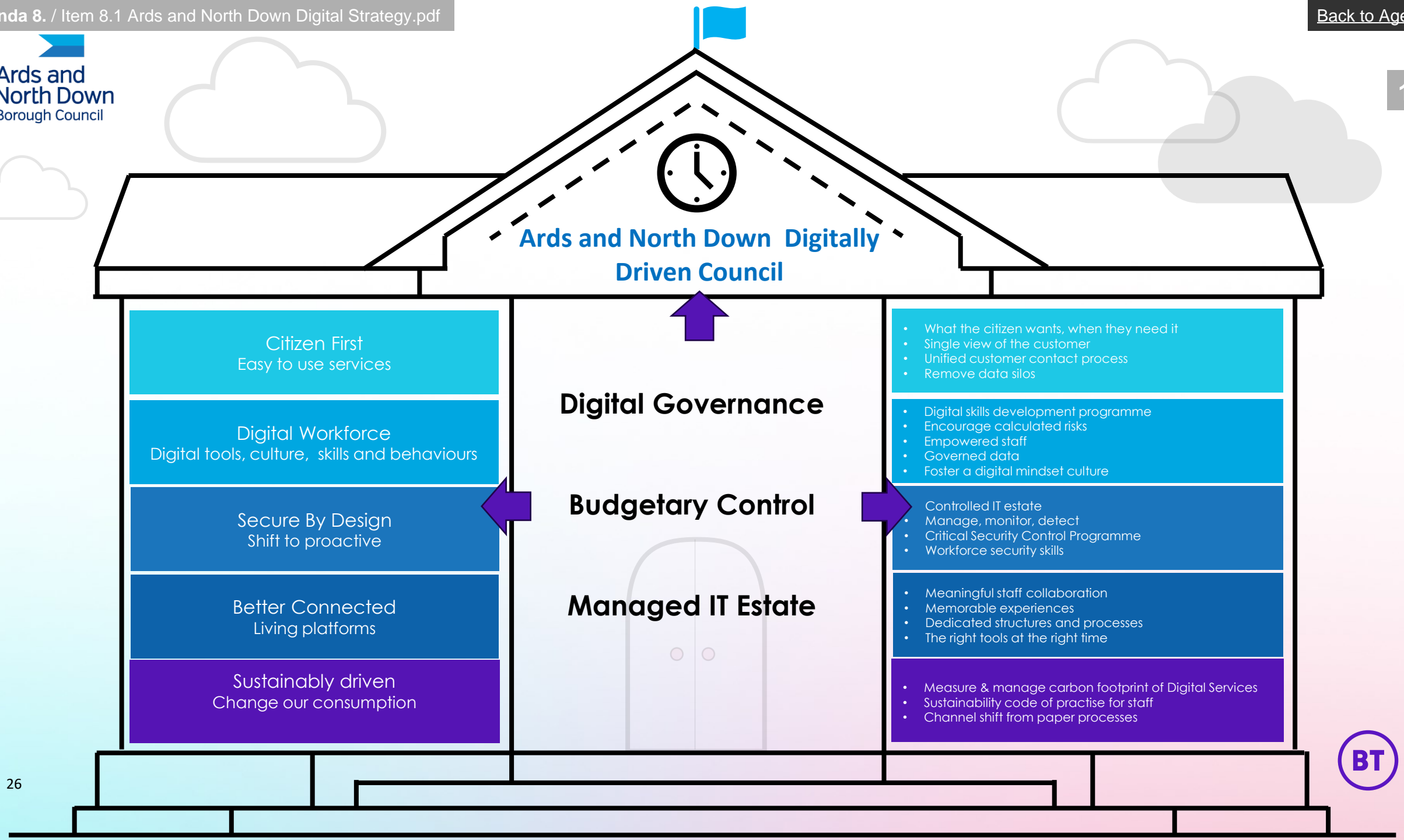
Ards and North Down Borough Council

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Highest Priority

Effectively communicate digital vision and strategy to employees and stakeholders, ensuring an understanding of goals and objectives.
Vision & Strategy, current: 1 target: 3

Actively measure and assess the impact of digital skills development programs on employee performance, with moderately effective evaluation methods in place.
Digital Workforce, current: 1 target:3

Actively gather feedback from employee's and establish a reasonably effective process to improve digital tools, training, and resources based on this feedback.
Digital Workforce, current: 2 target: 3

Actively identify digital skills gaps with prioritised targeted training and development initiatives to prepare employees for new and emerging technologies.
Digital Workforce, current: 2 target:3

Medium Priority

Advance workforce skills in digital technologies. Upskill users to be proficient in utilising a wide range of digital tools and technologies relevant their job roles to improve productivity, innovation, and customer experience.
Digital Workforce, current: 2 target: 3

Encourage calculated risks and offer support for learning from failures. Shift the culture so that failures are viewed as growth opportunities and provide mechanisms to analyse and learn from them.
Digital Culture, current: 1 target:3

Invest in training specifically for digital initiatives to design and deliver comprehensive and consistent upskilling programmes in digital literacy and skills development.
Digital Workforce, current: 2 target: 3

Encourage a digital mindset through dedicated programs, incentives, and learning opportunities, empowering and equipping employees to embrace digital transformation and contribute to digital initiatives.
Digital Workforce, current: 2 target: 3

Also Important

Promote diversity and inclusivity effectively among digital opportunities and ensure training programs are accessible to a wide range of employees, including those with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
Digital Workforce, current: 3 target: 4

Recognise and encourage innovation and creative thinking among employees to a reasonable extent. Carry out recognition programs, rewards, or performance evaluations that consider innovative contributions.
Digital Culture, current: 1 target: 3

Actively encourage the piloting and testing of digital solutions.
Digital Tool & Analytics, current: 1 target: 3

Actively implement accessibility features to ensure that digital services and information are available and usable by individuals with disabilities.
IT Hardware & End User Technology, current: 2 target: 3

2 Digital Workforce Technology

We invest in programmes that improve digital literacy among our employees and provide our workforce with the tools to do their job and develop digitally for the future.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

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Highest Priority

Manage data quality and integrity reasonably, to ensure reliable and accurate digital insights and decision-making. Establish data quality standards and processes that are consistently followed and monitored.
Data Management, current: 1 target: 3

Use data and analytics effectively to a reasonable extent. Identify areas for workforce optimisation to improve the use of analytics techniques to support decision-making.
Digital Tools & Analytics, current: 2 target: 3

Enable data-driven decision-making and insights by using digital systems and processes effectively. Collect, integrate, and analyse data across systems, providing valuable insights that inform decision-making. Establish processes and tools to ensure the utilisation of data-driven insights.
Digital Tools & Analytics, current: 2 target: 3

Actively utilise digital tools. Deploy a comprehensive suite of digital tools and platforms across functions and departments as needed. These tools to be well-integrated into work processes, and employees receive to training and support to maximise their utilisation.
Digital Workforce, current: 3 target: 4

Medium Priority

Actively measure the effective use of data and have reasonably effective approach in place for these assessments.
Data Management, current: 0 target: 3

Leverage VoIP technology highly effectively, with well-established integration into the communication infrastructure.
IT Hardware & End User Technology, current: 3 target: 4

Computing solutions meet current business needs very effectively and with room for growth.
Advanced Computing Solutions, current: 3 target: 4

Actively utilise data analytics and business intelligence to inform decision-making and moderately improve service delivery, with a reasonably effective approach in place.
Digital Tools & Analytics, current: 1 target: 3

Establish comprehensive and efficient processes for the disposal of obsolete IT hardware, with a strong focus on environmental responsibility.
It Hardware & End User Technology, current: 3 target: 4

Deal with legacy technologies when adopting new digital systems, technologies, and processes reasonably. Establish a structured approach to modernising legacy systems to support digital initiatives effectively.
Advanced Computing Solutions, current: 2 target: 3

Also Important

Utilise highly effective mobile technology, using advanced features and applications to drive business operations.
IT Hardware & End User Technology, current: 4 target: 5

Use network infrastructure to handle the current volume of traffic exceptionally well and is scalable to future demands.
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 3 target: 5

Ensure proactive infrastructure standardisation across all sites, driving more efficient operations and resource utilisation.
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 2 target: 4

Ensure device management processes are comprehensive and efficient, with proactive upgrades and maintenance.
IT Hardware & End User Technology, current: 3 target: 4

Almost never experience connectivity issues, and if we do, they are resolved immediately
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 4 target: 5

Provide effective real-time visibility and reporting capabilities with digital systems and processes. Establish dashboards and reporting tools that enable timely access to key information and data. Reporting is automated and provides near real-time insights, allowing for better monitoring and decision-making.
Digital Tools & Analytics, current: 1 target: 3

3 Secure by Design

Security will be designed into all our processes, and we will ensure governance is applied around the security of the Council's services and Citizen's data.

Ards and
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Borough Council

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Highest Priority

Manage cybersecurity risks proactively with a comprehensive strategy.
Cyber Security, current: 0 target: 3

Excel in responding to security incidents, with a highly efficient incident response plan with dedicated resources.
Cyber Security, current: 2 target: 5

Implement a comprehensive and effective security awareness and training program, with regular updates.
Cyber Security, current: 2 target: 4

Implement robust security measures, with regular audits and improvements for compliance.
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 2 target: 4

Update or upgrade network infrastructure proactively, based on performance metrics and trends.
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 2 target: 4

Actively prioritise cybersecurity measures and data protection to a reasonable extent.
Cyber Security, current: 1 target: 3

Medium Priority

Actively establish guidelines and policies for secure and responsible use of digital tools and data, with a reasonably effective approach that emphasises data privacy and security.
Digital Governance, current: 2 target: 3

Ensure compliance in digital operations, with established data protection protocols and procedures for users, that are consistently followed and monitored.
Data Management, current: 2 target:3

Implement or maintain advanced data security mechanisms. Proactively identify and address potential security risks, and continuously update and improve data security measures to enhance protection against unauthorised access or breaches.
Digital Governance, current: 3 target: 4

Document and regularly test a Business Continuity and/or Disaster Recovery / redundancy plan.
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 0 target: 2

Also Important

Use a systematic process for keeping up with cybersecurity threats and trends, with a dedicated team or resources.
Cyber Security, current: 3 target:4

Document, update, review, and continually improve network infrastructure.
Network Infrastructure & Connectivity, current: 5 target: 5

4 Better Connected

We explore and exploit opportunities for collaboration, ensuring we make best use of technology to enhance innovation and the overall effectiveness of Council.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

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Highest Priority

Share data reasonably between different applications, departments, or systems. Establish data-sharing protocols and processes that facilitate data exchange and integration across the organisation.
Data Management current: 0 target: 3

Use integrated and sophisticated technology and data in customer service and support.
Citizen Communication, current: 1 target: 3

Actively foster a culture of collaboration. Collaboration is essential for success, and there are dedicated structures, processes, and incentives to promote collaboration across departments and teams.
Digitally Integrated Council, current: 2 target: 4

Use well-integrated digital systems and processes across different departments and functions. Establish connections, interfaces, and data-sharing mechanisms that enable smooth collaboration and efficient cross-functional operations.
Digitally Integrated Council, current: 2 target: 3

Medium Priority

Effectively measure and manage the quality of service of customer/citizen contact.
Citizen Communication, current: 1 target: 3

Actively involve key department heads and staff members in the design and execution of digital initiatives and establish a reasonably effective collaborative process.
Vision & Strategy, current: 2 target: 3

Effectively embrace and utilise digital collaboration tools and technologies to a reasonable extent. Establish platforms and tools that support real-time communication, document sharing, and virtual meetings, enabling remote teams to collaborate effectively.
Digital Tools & Analytics, current: 2 target: 3

Effectively use data from customer/employee /citizen interactions, utilising advanced analytics to drive improvements.
Citizen Communication, current: 2 target: 4

Actively foster knowledge sharing and collaboration among departments and teams, with moderately effective mechanisms in place to maximise the benefits of digital solutions.
Digitally Integrated Council, current: 2 target: 3

Also Important

Ensure customer/citizen/employee support is well integrated across council-wide business functions, with a moderately effective level of collaboration and coordination.
Citizen Communication, current: 1 target: 3

Effectively monitor and control end-user device usage, with regular reports and reviews.
IT Hardware & End User Technology, current: 1 target: 3

Achieve highly effective data collection, with well-established processes and successful outcomes.
Data Management, current: 2 target: 4

Utilise some open data initiatives to promote transparency and collaboration.
Data Management, current: 0 target: 2

Continue to actively engage with citizens through social media channels and online communities, with a reasonably effective approach in place to foster transparency and open communication.
Service to Citizens, current: 3 target: 3

5 Sustainably Driven

We strive to reduce the carbon footprint of digital solutions and adopt sustainable practices to benefit our overall environmental targets.

Highest Priority

Excel in incorporating environmental sustainability practices into digital initiatives and operations. Sustainability is a core principle guiding the digital strategy, and the council should proactively integrate environmental considerations into all aspects of their operations, striving for continual improvement and innovation in sustainability practices.
Sustainability current: 2 target: 5

Create well-defined programs and practices to promote sustainable digital practices among employees and stakeholders. Sustainability to be integrated into policies, guidelines, and training programs, and actively engaged and communicated with stakeholders to foster awareness and participation.
Sustainability current: 2 target: 4

Actively communicate sustainability efforts and achievements related to digital initiatives to internal and external stakeholders. Use various communication channels, such as newsletters, reports, and dedicated sustainability updates to keep stakeholders informed.
Sustainability current: 1 target: 3

Medium Priority

Produce well-defined processes and practices to measure and manage the council's carbon footprint and energy consumption related to digital technology and infrastructure. Strategies encompass regular monitoring, data analysis, optimisation efforts, and the adoption of energy-efficient technologies and practices.
Sustainability current: 2 target: 4

Implement well-defined processes and practices to collaborate with external partners or suppliers to promote sustainable digital initiatives and reduce environmental impact. Sustainability criteria is integrated into partnership selection, supplier evaluation, and procurement processes.
Sustainability current: 2 target: 4

Also Important

Leverage cloud computing in a highly effective way, using advanced features and services to drive business operations.
Advanced Computing Technology, current: 3 target: 5

T-Map

T-Map:

Transformation Roadmap: The transformation roadmap outlines a strategic and phased plan for the council's journey toward digital maturity and innovation. It provides a visual representation of key milestones, initiatives, and activities essential for achieving the council's vision.

The T-map uses colour coded recommendations based on principles:
- **Pink** – Citizen First
- **Peach** – Digital Workforce
- **Purple** – Better Connected
- **Green** – Sustainably Driven
- **Blue** – Secure By Design
- **Darker Purple** – Specific to hardware recommendations (linked with the Technology Register).

Equipment Maintenance: suggested upgrade plan of IT equipment.

Proposed Digital Governance Process: Introduces a suggested framework for managing, controlling, and optimising digital initiatives within the council. This process is designed to align with the council's overall strategy, providing a systematic approach to oversee digital projects, data management, and technology investments.

Digital Strategy Implementation Map (T Map)

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| | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Goal: |

Digitally and Data Enabled Council

Citizen First

- Assess current online services
- Create council-wide Customer Inquiries process
- Investigate a single entry point for incoming citizen communication
- CRM
- inquiry management routing
- Create council wide customer feedback process
- Provision of more online citizen services
- Customer segment analysis
- Understand, measure and manage the quality of service of customer service
- Measure and manage information from customer inquiries process
- Innovation of emerging technology (AI, IOT)
- Explore use of chatbots for customer channels
- Retention of customer communication
- Refine digital inclusivity initiatives
- Automated reporting with near real time insights – for better monitoring and decision making
- Maintain device management processes. Amend according to Security programme
- Proactive infrastructure standardisation
- Continued Promotion of Diversity and inclusion in digital
- PC as a Service
- Open data initiatives
- VoIP capability in line with PSTN retirement
- Retire legacy systems
- Digital mindset culture change initiatives
- Disposal of obsolete IT hardware
- Mobile workforce capability – investigate innovative areas for business operations
- Connectivity plans for new premises

Digital Workplace

- Feedback mechanism from employees on digital tools & training
- Decommission Apple iPAD Hardware
- Devise digital skills programme
- Extend Support or Replace PRANDDC6/7 Server Hardware
- Decommission PRANDDC2/3 Server Hardware
- Utilise Microsoft intune to simplify app management, automate device configuration, etc.
- Digital vision comms to employees
- Extend Support or Replace PRANAS07 Server Hardware
- Infrastructure upgrade plan
- Upgrade Active Directory 2012 R2 & associated OS'
- Recognition & reward scheme for digital innovation among employees
- Establish data strategy
- M365 backup
- Prioritise data driven insights based on source systems availability & business need
- Replace & Standardise Mobile Handsets
- Utilise Viva Insights to unlock insights to make the most of your employees & their time
- Continued social media service
- Monitor usage of Document Management System - share – collaborate – store
- Maintain data management processes. Amend according to Security programme
- End user device monitoring and controls
- Measure & manage carbon footprint of IT infrastructure
- Document & govern cyber security strategy
- Define cloud first strategy and the impact on sustainability
- Assess security controls to identify gaps & prioritise activities
- SOC / SIEM
- Implement regular sustainability comms programme
- Identify threats and define security protocols
- Identify, assess, prioritise, and address cyber risks
- Establish data governance programme
- Refresh LAN Switching
- Create policy for use of Teams and S Drive
- Data governance initiatives
- Folder Structure & Sharing, Naming Convention Policy
- Sustainability training programme
- Central Logging System
- Initiate Critical Security Control Programme
- EDRMS
- Establish data-sharing protocols and processes for council wide data exchange
- Training plan for best use of collab tools
- Data Governance Policy
- Address Channel shift from paper processes
- Refresh & Standardise Mobile Tablets
- Identify carbon footprint of IT infrastructure
- Sustainability code of practise for staff
- Establish Security Strategy
- Security specific consulting to scope programme

Better Connected | Sustainably Driven | Secure by Design

Equipment Maintenance (End User Compute, Server Hardware, Infrastructure Services)

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	2023/24		2024/25	2026/27

Infrastructure Services
- Active Directory 2012 R2
- SQL Server 2012

Server Hardware
- PRANDDC2
- PRANDDC3
- PRANDDC6
- PRANDDC7
- PRANDFS02

Laptops / Notebooks

2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2026/27
KIOSK - Not Used	Parallels Virtual Platform	Latitude 5310 2-in-1	Dell G15 5530
Lenovo 3414DHG	EIBSW-SAM	Latitude 5320	Latitude 3520
400B4B, 400B5B, 200B4B, 200B5B	700T1C	Latitude E5430 vPro	Latitude 5440
3396C4G, 3414DHG, 3493DEG	Surface Pro 3		
HP Pro 3010 SFF, 3300 MT	HP EliteDesk 800 G1 TWR		
Dell Latitude 3390 2-in-1	Dell Optiplex 7040, 7060		
Dell Latitude 3490, 3540	Dell Optiplex 390, 990		
HP Pro Desk 400 G1, G2, G2.5 SFF, G3 DM	Dell Optiplex 3010, 3011, 3020, 3050, 3070		
Dell Latitude 5300 2-in-1	Dell XPS 13 9360, 9365		
Dell Latitude E5500, E5520, E5530, E5540	Dell XPS 15 9575		
Dell Precision 1650, 7530	HP 280 G2 SFF350 G2, 620		
Acer TravelMate P259-M	HP Compaq 8710w, 6300 SFF		

Legend:
- Replace/Refresh/Upgrade
- Decommission

Proposed Digital Governance Process

Establish a **comprehensive governance framework** for technology deployment, by consolidating the control of hardware and software procurement and management within the digital team.
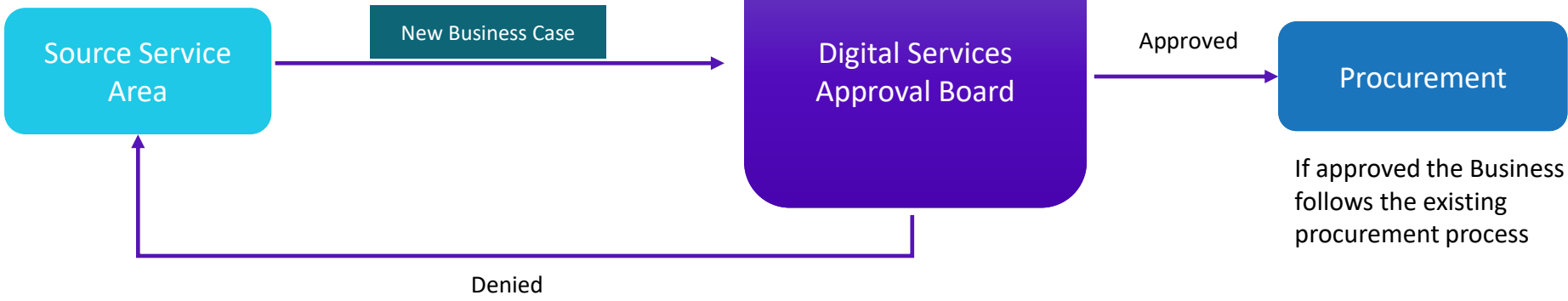
Eliminate instances of **'shadow IT'** and guarantee that any alterations are in harmony with the overarching digital and technology strategy.

This initiative aims to enable the council to **gain control** over the **entirety of technology expenditures**.

Introducing a Digital Services Approval Board positioned **prior to the procurement phase**.

This board**, led by Digital Services**, involves essential council stakeholders in the review of **new business cases** to assess their **suitability** for the council.

Through this process, the aim is to **reduce redundancy in technical and digital capabilities** throughout the council, effectively eliminating any 'shadow IT' practices in future initiatives.

Impacted Services Areas:

Service Area 1

Service Area 2

Service Area 3

Input requested for impact

Source Service Area

New Business Case

Digital Services Approval Board

Approved

Procurement

If approved the Business Case follows the existing procurement process

Denied

Enhance the approvals process and prioritisation by implementing a **decision-making matrix** that relies on established criteria. These criteria include factors such as adherence to AND Digital Principles, value for money, impact on other services, avoidance of technical debt increase, and fostering innovation.

Project Breakdown

Project Breakdown:

A comprehensive view of the organisation's project landscape. Starting with the **current project register** provided by the council, we gain insights into ongoing initiatives.

This is followed by the **proposed project register**, reflecting a considered blend of outputs from Your Digital Healthcheck, collaborative workshops, and overarching strategic goals.

Each **proposed project is individually detailed**, offering a breakdown of its envisioned outcomes, associated resource requirements, and projected costs.

Together, these slides form a strategic bridge, connecting the current state to a vision of transformative projects aligned with the council's digital journey.

Current Project Register

| In Progress | Business Case/ Procurement |

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Project Name	Project Description	Link to Principles
Engagement Platform (CitizenLab)	Citizen Lab is a community engagement platform which will primarily be used for the Waterfront Project and other major engagement processes i.e. Waste	Citizen First
Access Rights Management/ AD Audit	Visibility of access; user access management tool	Better Connected
Digital Strategy	Business Consultancy Services	Digital Workforce
New Finance System	Enterprise software for management of the Council's finances	Digital Workforce
Telephone migration	Migration from PSTN/ISDN to Cloud	Citizen First
Laptop replacements	216 desktops to be replaced by laptops - reviewing procurement options	Digital Workforce
Firewalls and Switches and Servers	Procurement of 2 x Firewalls to replace devices that are coming end of life.	Secure by Design
GOSS Website	Content Management System for .gov website	Citizen First

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Proposed (additional) Project Register

Proposed	In Progress	Business Case/ Procurement

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Project Name	Project Description	Link to Principles
Single Entry Point for Incoming Citizen Communication	Council-wide single-entry point for all incoming enquiries/complaints/service requests/citizen contact.	Citizen First
Digital Governance Programme	Establish digital governance programme.	Digital Workforce
Establish a Data Strategy	Establish a comprehensive council-wide data strategy aimed at guiding staff on data sharing, storage, collaboration, and more.	Better Connected
Document Management and Storage	Establish an effective document management and storage system aligned with the broader data strategy.	Better Connected
Digital Skills Programme	Develop and implement a comprehensive council-wide Digital Skills Programme aimed at enhancing the digital literacy and proficiency of council staff.	Digital Workforce
Staff feedback loop	Establish a structured and continuous feedback loop to gather insights from council employees regarding their experiences with digital tools and training initiatives.	Better Connected
Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Server Hardware	Refresh/Replace or Decommission identified and Server Hardware.	Secure by Design
Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Desktop Hardware	Refresh/Replace or Decommission identified Desktop Hardware.	Secure by Design
Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Upgrade Microsoft Active Directory 2012 R2	Upgrade Microsoft Active Directory 2012 R2.	Secure by Design
Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Firewalls	Replace 2 x Firewalls to replace devices that are coming end of life.	Secure by Design
Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Switches	Procurement of switches to replace devices that are coming end of life.	Secure by Design
Infrastructure Carbon Footprint	Utilise the BT carbon calculator, or equivalent, to assess the current carbon output and associated costs of the council's infrastructure. Evaluate future potential setups and their environmental impacts to make informed decisions regarding infrastructure planning.	Sustainably Driven
Establish Security Strategy	Establish a comprehensive security strategy to ensure the identification, assessment, prioritisation, and mitigation of cyber risks. Assess existing security controls to identify gaps and prioritise activities. Develop and implement a well-documented and properly governed cybersecurity strategy.	Secure By Design
Sustainability Code of Practice	Utilising Digital Solutions/ Tools over making use of Paper. Reducing the amount of duplication of data, across paper and digital systems.	Sustainably driven

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Project Infosheet

Project: Single Entry Point for Incoming Citizen Communication

1 → **Citizen First**

Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Rough Order of magnitude costs
For Initial discovery exercise: Internal staff – Internal costs External costs - £xx

Resources required
Internal: to be defined External: dependency on Idox (Tascomi)

Intention / Description	Council-wide single-entry point for all incoming enquiries/complaints/service requests/citizen contact
Desired Outcome	Define a robust process for capturing council wide customer inquiries and complaints, using techniques and tools to enhance customer satisfaction. Ultimately, to implement a highly detailed and effective formal council-wide customer relationship management system for customer information (from incoming requests), with customer data comprehensively and securely managed. **Requirements must include:** data classification; right to be forgotten capability; master data management capability; data migration rules.
Benefits	Cohesive understanding of our incoming customer contact through a central system Corporate technology solution to enable improved communication between departments Adopt a common approach across council services Enhanced customer satisfaction
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council service areas who currently hold customer data (see current customer contact process from HOSTs) Waste and Cleansing Services, Regulatory Services, Environmental Health Protection and Development, Planning, Tourism, Administration (Lands, Democratic Services, Compliance, Risk), Communications and Marketing Services, Economic Development, Finance, Community and Culture Services, Leisure
Approach	Initial options: 1) Investigate T-suite enhancement. Assess the feasibility of integrating existing solutions. Investigate the option of a single-entry point for all T-suite applications, maintain master customer data centrally, and route out to existing T-suite applications for service area specific information 2) Data discovery exercise to scope out a new CRM that can easily integrate with MS365. Assess departmental readiness, prioritise departments in initial scope, document requirements, assess COTS / bespoke options 3) Do nothing

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Project Infosheet

Project: Digital Governance Programme

2 ▶ Digital Workforce

Strategic Alignment & Priority

Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required

Internal: to be defined

Rough Order of magnitude costs

Internal staff – Internal costs

Intention / Description	Establish digital governance programme The organisation currently implements new technology as per business need by business owners, however, the IT department are not always involved in this process at its onset. Organisational processes need to include IT and security from the beginning (before approval to procure) so that business needs can be aligned to IT requirements at the initial stages of any procurement involving digital changes.
Desired Outcome	All Digital initiatives flow through one pipeline with an IT gateway for security and budgetary control A key element of the governing strategy is to clarify roles and responsibilities related to digital initiatives and define who is responsible for what aspects of digital projects. This will reduce risk in the delivery of digital initiatives It is also known that organisations with well-defined digital and business strategies are often more attractive to digital talent. Employees are more likely to be engaged and motivated when they understand the organisation's digital direction and their part in that journey.
Benefits	• Helps manage the risks associated with IT purchases such as security, data privacy, vendor reliability, in-life support capability. • Standardising the procedures create consistency and clarity making it easier for all stakeholders to understand and follow the process. • Ensures that all IT procurements comply with internal policies, legal requirements, and program requirements. • A documented process provides transparency into procurement decisions. • A well-structured process facilitates vendor selection. • By defining procurement requirements, the council can ensure they acquire the right IT resources, avoiding over/under provisioning. • Procurement process can be used as a training tool for employees involved in IT procurement ensuring they understand their roles and responsibilities. • Ensure value for money investments. • Ensure internal resources are aligned to support the new systems.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All service areas
Approach	See diagram

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BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Establish a Data Strategy

4 **Better Connected**		

Strategic Alignment & Priority

Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required

Internal: To be defined
External: Potential collaboration with data strategy consultants for specialised expertise.

Rough Order of magnitude costs

Internal staff – Internal costs
External consultancy if required

Intention / Description	Establish a comprehensive council-wide data strategy aimed at guiding staff on data sharing, storage, collaboration, and more.
Desired Outcome	**Data as the Foundation:** • Position data as the cornerstone of any strategy. • Prioritise data governance, quality, and analytics for informed decision-making. **Data-Driven Culture:** • Foster a data-driven culture. • Maximise the value of information assets through effective data management practices. **Data Principles:** • Clearly defined principles governing data usage, sharing, storage, and collaboration. **Main Data Users:** • Identify primary internal and external stakeholders interacting with organisational data. **Data Governance:** • Establish a robust framework for data governance. • Define policies and procedures for effective data management. • Clearly define roles and responsibilities for data ownership.
Benefits	Shared data sources: Improve accessibility and collaboration on shared data sources. Removal of duplication: Minimise redundant data storage and enhance efficiency. Standards for document store, share, and collaborate: Establish clear standards for document management. From the Data Strategy will flow subsequent policies on: • Data Sharing Protocols • Collaboration Policy • Security Protocols
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All service areas
Approach	Identify clear outcomes: Define specific and measurable outcomes for the data strategy. Secure executive sponsorship: Gain support from key executives to ensure the success and adoption of the strategy. Build a cross-functional team: Form a team with representatives from various departments to ensure a holistic approach to data management.

BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Document Management and Storage

4 Better Connected		
Strategic Alignment & Priority		
Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck		
Resources required		
Internal: To be defined External: Consultancy if required		
Rough Order of magnitude costs		
Internal staff – Internal costs External consultancy if required		

Intention / Description	Establish an effective document management and storage system aligned with the broader data strategy.
Desired Outcome	**Efficient Document Management:** • Implement standards for storing, sharing, and collaborating on documents. • Minimise duplication and enhance accessibility. **Integration with Data Strategy:** • Align document management practices with the established data strategy. **Structured Document Repositories:** • Design and implement structured repositories for efficient document storage. **Naming Conventions:** • Establish clear and consistent naming conventions for organised document management. **Collaboration Policies:** • Develop policies for collaborative document creation and sharing. **Teams and SharePoint Policy & Integration:** • Develop policies governing the use of Teams and SharePoint for data-related activities. • Ensure integration with the broader data strategy. • Seamlessly integrate Teams and SharePoint into the overall data strategy. • Enhance collaboration, sharing, and storage capabilities.
Benefits	Improved document accessibility, efficiency in collaboration, minimisation of redundancy.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All service areas
Approach	The data strategy should flow down into the document management and storage solution Investigate capability of existing tools - seamless integration of Teams and SharePoint

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Project Infosheet

Project: Digital Skills Programme

2 Digital Workforce

Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required
Internal: To be defined External: collaboration with external training providers if required

Rough Order of magnitude costs
Internal staff – Internal costs External training provider if required

Intention / Description	Develop and implement a comprehensive council-wide Digital Skills Programme aimed at enhancing the digital literacy and proficiency of council staff.
Desired Outcome	Establish a structured training curriculum covering various aspects of digital skills, including but not limited to software usage, data security, and emerging technologies. Encouraging self-learning and risk taking. Improve staff members' confidence and competence in utilising digital tools and platforms. Measure and demonstrate a noticeable increase in digital proficiency across council departments.
Benefits	• Empower council staff with up-to-date digital skills, fostering efficiency and productivity. • Enhance the overall cybersecurity posture by promoting awareness and best practices. • Create a digitally fluent workforce capable of adapting to technological advancements. • Contribute to a culture of continuous learning within the organisation.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council staff members across all service units.
Approach	Conduct a skills gap analysis to identify specific digital competencies needed. Design a tailored curriculum addressing identified skill gaps. Utilise a blended learning approach, incorporating online courses, workshops, and hands-on practical sessions. Implement a feedback mechanism for continuous improvement.

BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Staff Feedback Loop

4 Better Connected

Strategic Alignment & Priority

Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required

Internal: To be defined
External: Potential collaboration with external consultants for feedback analysis.

Rough Order of magnitude costs

Internal staff – Internal costs

Intention / Description	Establish a structured and continuous feedback loop to gather insights from council employees regarding their experiences with digital tools and training initiatives.
Desired Outcome	Create a robust feedback mechanism that allows employees to provide input on the usability, effectiveness, and relevance of digital tools and training programs. Implement improvements based on employee feedback to enhance user satisfaction and optimise digital tool utilisation. Cultivate a culture of open communication and collaboration between digital and staff members.
Benefits	• Enhanced user satisfaction and engagement with digital tools and training programs. • Identification of areas for improvement in existing digital solutions. • Increased adoption of technology through user-centric enhancements. • Improved alignment of digital initiatives with staff needs and preferences.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council staff members across all service units.
Approach	Implement a user-friendly digital platform for employees to submit feedback. Regularly collect feedback through surveys, focus groups, and user forums. Collaborate with project team to analyse feedback data and prioritise improvement areas. Communicate changes and updates to employees based on their input. Option: 1. Develop an in-house feedback platform integrated with existing communication channels. 2. Utilise external feedback tools specialised in employee engagement.

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Project Infosheet

Project: Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Server Hardware

3 Secure by Design
Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck
Resources required
Internal: To be defined External: External supplier
Rough Order of magnitude costs
1 – approx. 5k 2 – approx. 1k to 20k

Intention / Description	Refresh/Replace or Decommission identified Server Hardware
Desired Outcome	1. Refresh support on old Dell Poweredge Server Hardware. 2. Decommission and possibly Replace old Dell Poweredge Server Hardware that cannot be further supported.
Benefits	1. Critical Hardware has Vendor Warranty and Support 2. Remove old unsupportable hardware and possibly replace with Hardware that can be supported
Target Beneficiary (internal)	1,2 - All council service areas that relay on Microsoft Active Directory Services and Digital Services for Supportability– see HOST session map
Approach	1. Inventory equipment and engage vendor for After Point of Sales Support (APOS) or replacement hardware and migration of services. 2. Inventory equipment and engage vendor for costs to replace and migrate services otherwise migrate services and decommission hardware.

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Project Infosheet

Project: Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Desktop Hardware

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3 ▶ Secure by Design

Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck
Resources required
Internal: To be defined External: External supplier
Rough Order of magnitude costs
Approx 120k - 150k

Intention / Description	Refresh/Replace or Decommission identified Desktop Hardware
Desired Outcome	Replace Desktop, Laptop, Tablet and iPad estate that are out of support
Benefits	Replace old unsupported Laptop and Desktop hardware and replace with new performant and supportable Hardware
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council employees that use these Desktop and Laptop devices, Digital Services for Supportability
Approach	Inventory equipment and engage vendor for direct replacement hardware. Migrate relevant user data, if applicable. Secure Decommission of old hardware (including any data). Explore Opex, PCaaS and Capex options.

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BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Upgrade Microsoft Active Directory 2012 R2

3 **Secure by Design**

Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as high priority in Your Digital Healthcheck
Resources required
Internal: To be defined External: External supplier
Rough Order of magnitude costs
Approx 40k

Intention / Description	Upgrade Microsoft Active Directory 2012 R2
Desired Outcome	Upgrade Microsoft Active Directory 2012 R2 Forest and Domain Functional Levels
Benefits	Upgrade unsupportable Microsoft Active Directory version to a supported and more secure version
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council service areas that relay on Microsoft Active Directory Services and Digital Services for Supportability– see HOST session map
Approach	Engage partner to perform due diligence, AD design, Migration strategy and delivery of AD upgrade.

BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Firewalls

3	Secure by Design

Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as medium priority in Your Digital Healthcheck
Resources required
Internal: To be defined External: External supplier
Rough Order of magnitude costs
Approx 100k

Intention / Description	Replace 2 x Firewalls to replace devices that are coming end of life
Desired Outcome	Existing Firewalls Decommissioned and New replacement Firewalls in place
Benefits	Supported Firewalls in Live Environment. Avail of latest Next Generation features.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council service areas that relay on the security of Services and Digital Services for Supportability– see HOST session map
Approach	Engage partner to perform due diligence and supply of infrastructure, including migration services.

50

BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Infrastructure Upgrade Plan - Switches

3 ▶ Secure by Design

Strategic Alignment & Priority
Identified as medium priority in Your Digital Healthcheck
Resources required
Internal: To be defined External: External supplier
Rough Order of magnitude costs
Approx 100 - 120k

Intention / Description	Procurement of switches to replace devices that are coming end of life.
Desired Outcome	Existing switches Decommissioned and New replacement switches in place
Benefits	Supported Firewalls in Live Environment. Avail of latest Next Generation features.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council service areas that relay on the connectivity of Services and Digital Services for Supportability– see HOST session map
Approach	Engage partner to perform due diligence and supply of infrastructure, including migration services.

BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Infrastructure Carbon Footprint

5 **Sustainably Driven**

Strategic Alignment & Priority

Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required

Internal: To be defined
External: Potential collaboration BT and other environmental consultants for specialised assessments.

Rough Order of magnitude costs

BT – costs tbc

Intention / Description	Utilise the BT carbon calculator, or equivalent, to assess the current carbon output and associated costs of the council's infrastructure. Evaluate future potential setups and their environmental impacts to make informed decisions regarding infrastructure planning.
Desired Outcome	Gain a comprehensive understanding of the current carbon emissions and associated costs of the council's infrastructure. Identify opportunities for reducing carbon emissions and costs through infrastructure optimisation and environmentally friendly practices. Implement measures to achieve a tangible reduction in the carbon footprint of the council's infrastructure. Promote sustainable infrastructure practices for long-term environmental benefits.
Benefits	• Reduced carbon emissions aligning with environmental sustainability goals. • Cost savings through optimised infrastructure and energy-efficient solutions. • Enhanced reputation and compliance with environmental regulations. • Improved resilience to future changes in environmental policies.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All council departments
Approach	Utilise the BT carbon calculator, or equivalent, to conduct a thorough assessment of current infrastructure carbon emissions. Collaborate with infrastructure teams to identify areas for improvement and implement sustainable practices. Explore and evaluate environmentally friendly technologies and infrastructure setups. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for ongoing monitoring and improvement. Follow-on: • Implement energy-efficient technologies and practices. • Explore renewable energy sources for council infrastructure.

BT

Project Infosheet

Project: Establish Security Strategy

3 Secure by Design

Strategic Alignment & Priority

Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required

Internal: To be defined
External: Potential collaboration with cybersecurity consultants. External assessments.

Rough Order of magnitude costs

BT costs - £15k
Internal commitment

Intention / Description	Establish a comprehensive security strategy to ensure the identification, assessment, prioritisation, and mitigation of cyber risks whilst supporting and enabling the business. Assess existing security controls to identify gaps and prioritise activities against a best practice framework. Develop and implement a well-documented and properly governed cybersecurity strategy.
Desired Outcome	**Secure By Design:** Integrate security measures into all aspects of IT systems and processes. Foster a security-aware culture within the council. **Shift to Proactive:** Move from a reactive to a proactive security posture. Anticipate and address potential threats before they become critical. Adopt a mindset where we could be audited at any time. Ensure compliance with regulations. **Controlled IT Estate:** Implement measures to maintain a secure and well-controlled IT environment. Regularly assess and update security controls to adapt to evolving threats. **Manage, Monitor, Detect:** Implement robust management, monitoring, and detection mechanisms for cybersecurity which hook into governance and appropriate processes and procedures. Utilise advanced tools for real-time threat detection and response. **Critical Security Control Programme:** Develop and implement a structured program focusing on critical security controls driven by a gap analysis against a best practice framework such as CIS v8.0, NIST 1.1/2.0 or CAF. Prioritise security controls based on their impact and effectiveness.
Benefits	• Enhanced cybersecurity posture and resilience against evolving threats. • Proactive identification and mitigation of potential cyber risks. • Improved governance and documentation of cybersecurity policies and practices. • Increased confidence in the security of the IT environment. • Increased ability to demonstrate compliance against regulations during an audit or investigation.
Target Beneficiary (internal)	All service units and teams utilising IT systems within the council or staff who have access to sensitive data.
Approach	Conduct a comprehensive cybersecurity risk assessment. Identify gaps in existing security controls and prioritise remediation efforts against a best practice framework. Develop a well-documented cybersecurity strategy with clear governance structures. Implement a Critical Security Control Programme to address key vulnerabilities. Option: 1. Enhance in-house cybersecurity capabilities. 2. Collaborate with external cybersecurity experts for assessments and strategy development.

Project Infosheet

Project: Staff Sustainability Code of Practise

5 ▸ Sustainably Driven

Strategic Alignment & Priority

Identified as highest priority in Your Digital Healthcheck

Resources required

Internal: To be defined
External: Potential collaboration with sustainability experts for specialised advice.
assessments.

Rough Order of magnitude costs

tbc

Intention / Description	Implement a Staff Sustainability Code of Practice emphasising the use of digital solutions/tools over paper, with the goal of reducing data duplication across paper and digital systems.
Desired Outcome	**Sustainable Council:** Transition to a more sustainable council by minimising the use of paper. Reduce duplication of data across all service areas. **Digital Solutions Adoption:** Encourage staff to utilise digital solutions over paper-based processes. Create well-defined programs and practices to promote sustainable digital practices.
Benefits	• Elimination of paper usage by staff • Increased adoption of digital solutions • Reduction in data duplication and associated inefficiencies
Target Beneficiary (internal)	Removal of paper processes Duplication of data across the following services areas: - Planning - Tourism - Administration - Leisure
Approach	Develop and communicate a clear Staff Sustainability Code of Practice, encouraging staff to embrace digital tools for day-to-day tasks. Provide training programs for staff on digital tools and sustainability practices. Integrate sustainability into existing policies and guidelines. Ensure that sustainability practices are embedded in daily operations.

BT

Conclusion

This digital strategy sets the stage for a dynamic and resilient digital future for Ards and North Down Borough Council.

Initially, a comprehensive understanding of the Council's operations was crucial to gauge the scale and areas of focus for transitioning to a digitally driven entity. This entailed delving into the council's workings to assess the current landscape thoroughly.

The resulting Digital Strategy outlines key projects in a roadmap format, emphasising a council-wide approach to digital empowerment. It not only delegates tasks to the digital team but fosters a culture where all staff members take ownership and actively contribute to shaping the council's digital growth mindset.