ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH THE COUNCIL

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Equality screened/Rural Impact Assessed by	**Mary Hanna, Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager**
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AMENDMENT RECORD SHEET

Remove and destroy old pages. Insert new pages as indicated.

Revision Number	Page Number	Date Revised	Description of Revision
1.0	N/A	April 2026	Update to entire policy based on Internal Audit recommendations.

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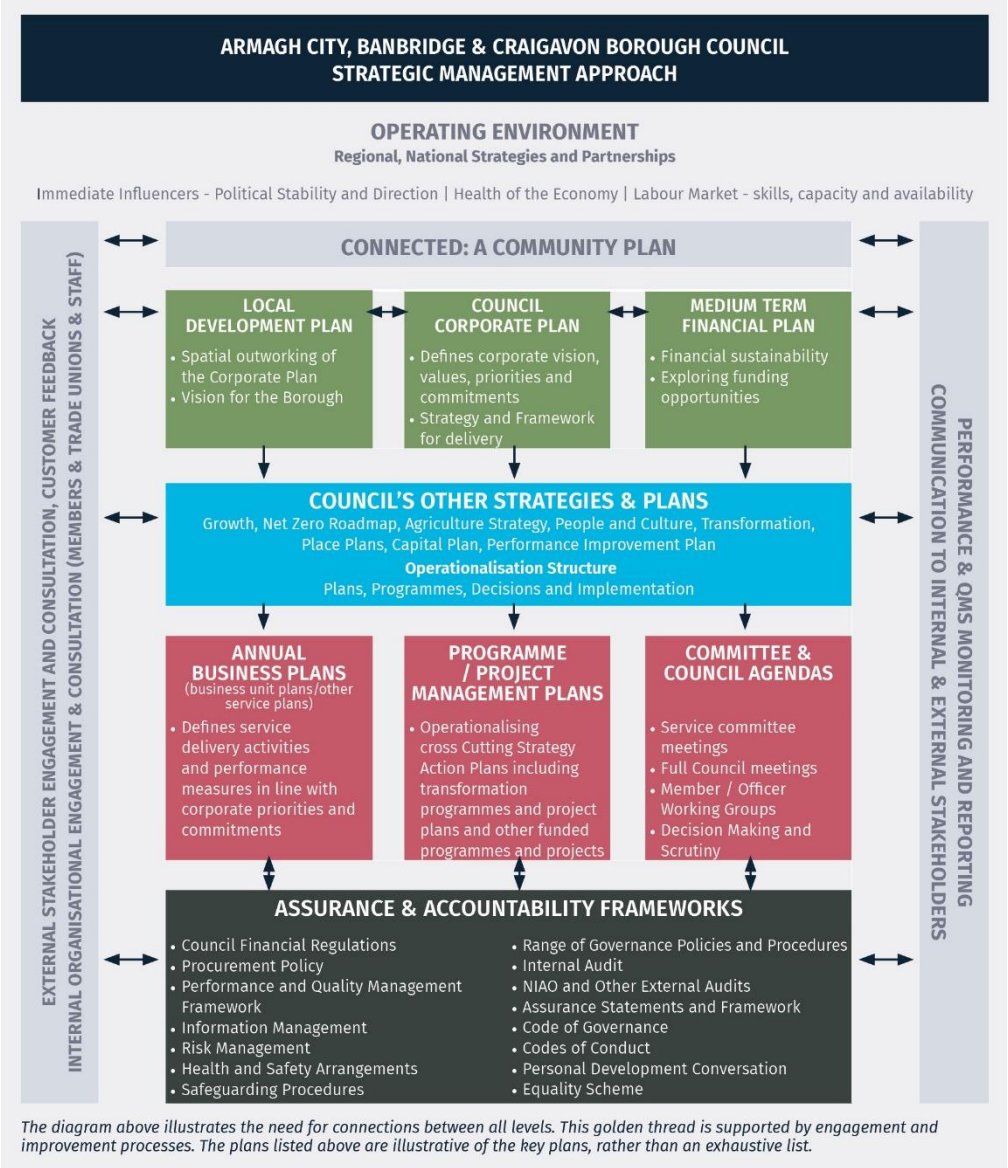
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1.0 Introduction

The Council is committed to ensuring continuous performance improvement in delivery of its services across all areas of service delivery. The Council's Strategic Approach to Management is represented in Diagram 1 below demonstrating how all the component parts align and work together in the delivery of Council services. It seeks to link the overarching Council priorities and commitments to service and individual work plans, making clear the contribution individuals make towards achieving strategic outcomes. The diagram also demonstrates the other elements that make up our accountability and assurance and performance management framework supported by two-way stakeholder and customer engagement, consultation, and feedback.

Performance & quality management is at all levels of strategic planning and is aligned to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan, as well as other Council strategies and plans. Operational delivery is set out in Business Plans, service/business unit plans and through team and personal development conversations.

Diagram 1: Strategic Approach to Management



The diagram above illustrates the need for connections between all levels. This golden thread is supported by engagement and improvement processes. The plans listed above are illustrative of the key plans, rather than an exhaustive list.

Our Community Plan gives us the **WHY** of what we are doing, providing a holistic view of the needs and aspirations of our Borough and articulating them in 9 long-term outcomes.

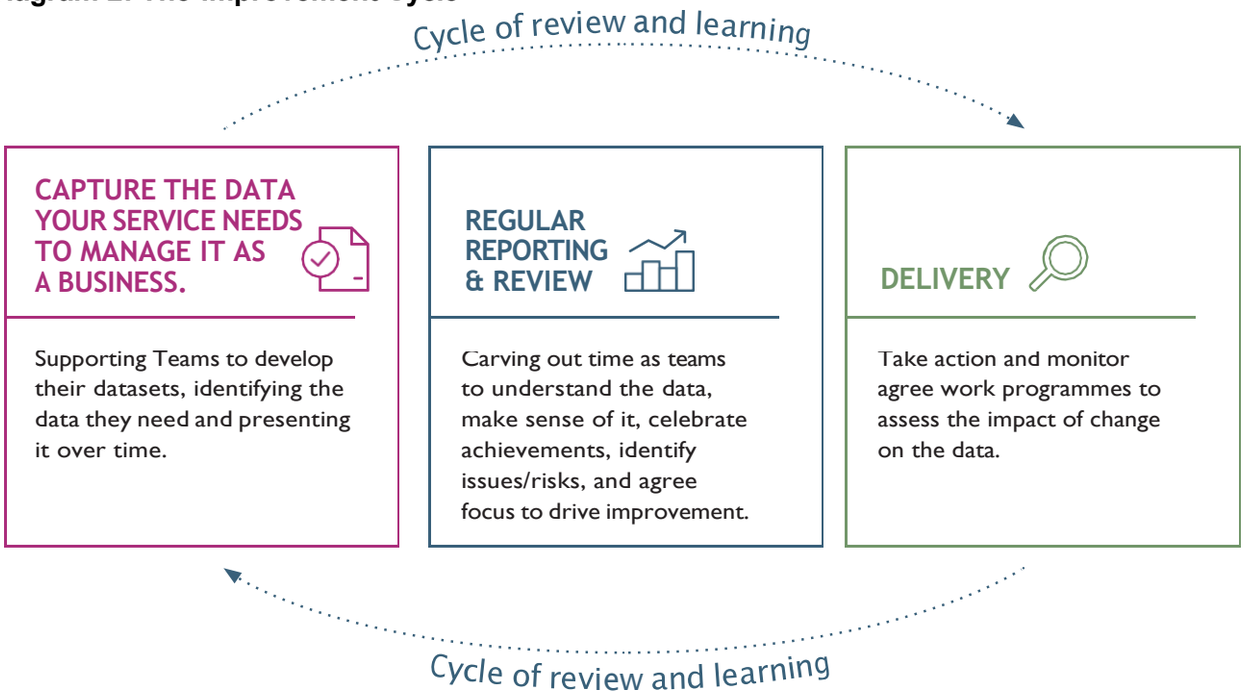
Our Corporate Plan explains **WHAT** we as the Council are doing to contribute to these outcomes as well as outlining any other key objectives for us as an organisation.

Our annual business plans detail the **HOW** giving staff and Elected Members the detail on actions which departments are taking to achieve the corporate plan commitments.

1.1 Performance & Quality Management

All elements of the Council's Performance & Quality Management Framework are built around the annual planning and reporting cycle with specific action being undertaken in the 4 financial quarters of each year. These elements are cyclical in nature and aim to deliver continuous improvement by following the 'Plan' 'Do' 'Review' process. The approach is simple as set out in the Improvement Cycle shown in Diagram 2 below with the three stages becoming a loop of review and learning

Diagram 2: The Improvement Cycle



2.0 Aim/Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Drive the Councils performance improvement agenda and fulfil statutory requirements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions as set out in the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.
- Assist in achieving corporate objectives aligned to the Community Plan and other strategic and Corporate Plans
- Support the change required for continuous improvement in delivery of services in a way that responds to stakeholders' needs in seeking to deliver excellent services.
- Create a level of understanding for Members, managers, employees, and service providers in terms of their responsibilities for performance improvement.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to everyone involved in delivery of Council services and is set in the context of the Council's statutory duty for continuous improvement under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

4.0 Policy Detail

In exercising its performance management duties, Council will seek to:

- Provide strategic direction on performance improvement, based on provision of quality customer focused services and achievement of outcomes for communities.
- Facilitate alignment between the Borough Community Plan, Council's Corporate Plan, Capital Plan, other strategies, business plans, business/service unit plans, individual performance/ development plans, and project-based activities in line with stakeholders' needs
- Agree annual budgets to facilitate implementation of agreed plans and strategies
- Create a performance culture within the Council.
- Use a QMS to provide a holistic view of service delivery considering quantitative and qualitative data, providing a more informed approach to performance and risk management.
- Encourage personal responsibility for performance.
- Engage with, motivate, and develop staff including provision of identified training and development needs.
- Promote performance improvement, encourage innovation, and share good practice.
- Encourage transparency of performance outcomes
- Recognise and communicate success.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties in relation to continuous improvement.
- Address underperformance in line with agreed procedures and policies

4.1 Statutory Requirements: (Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (the Act)

In line with the statutory duty under the Act to put in place arrangements for continuous improvement, each year Council is required to develop a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP identifies objectives for the year ahead and Council's actions to meet these objectives. The development and publication of this PIP assists Council in meeting its statutory obligations in relation to Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. It is aligned to the Community Plan outcomes and Corporate Plan commitments and priorities and is subject to, and informed by, public consultation.

Paragraph 45 of the current guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement (Local Government Circular 21/2016) states that councils should publish their Improvement plan by the end of June.

In addition to the improvement areas identified in the Performance Improvement Plan, the Department for Communities also set statutory targets for councils in the areas of Planning, Economic Development and Waste as set out in the Local Government Performance Indicators and Standards Order (2015). The Council has in place the following specific arrangements to monitor progress against the standards set for the statutory performance indicators and standards/targets:

- Inclusion within Performance Improvement Plan, with progress monitored and reported on bi-annual basis by the Performance & Audit Committee.
- Inclusion within relevant business plans, with progress being monitored and reported on a bi-annual basis to the relevant Council service committee.
- Data submission to Government Departments, with reports being issued/published quarterly and annually to monitor the performance of each Council, outlining regional trends and comparisons.

4.2 Annual Performance Improvement Plans

Annual improvement objectives are drafted, consulted on, and published as part of the annual Performance Improvement Plan each year before the end of June. Annual performance improvement objectives and the annual Performance Improvement Plan are approved by the Council's Governance, Resources and Strategy Committee.

Timeline - Development of Performance Improvement Plan.

The timeline below provides an overview of the process for the development of Council's Performance Improvement Plan, from drafting our Performance Improvement Objectives, through consultation, delivery, monitoring, and reporting arrangements.
(Note in election years the timeline may change as a result of Purdah)

July – Sept	➢ Preparation for NI Audit Office: audit fieldwork ➢ Preparation of Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report for previous year ➢ Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report for presented to EMT, Committee and Full Council, ahead of publication by 30 September ➢ Initiate Departmental Business Planning process ➢ Review of Performance Improvement Objectives previous year ➢ Initiate internal engagement to review, identify Performance Improvement Objectives for next year ➢ Desktop analysis of Evidence / data/ information/ trends, performance reports, committee reports etc. examined as primary sources of evidence for identification of areas for improvement
Oct – Dec	➢ 6 monthly progress updates on Departmental Business Plans to Service Committees ➢ Mid-Year Performance Report presented to senior management, Committee and Council ➢ Ongoing engagement & support with Departments for development of Business Planning Process ➢ Ongoing engagement on development of the proposed Performance Improvement objectives and Plan in line with departmental business planning process across council. ➢ Ongoing Business Planning, Efficiency & Estimates Process ➢ Ongoing support/ liaison with NI Audit Office and departments on Performance Audit ➢ Final NIAO Section 95 Report on Audit issued by 30 November ➢ Draft Improvement Objectives for public consultation presented to Senior Managers, recommended to Executive Management Team (EMT)
Jan – Mar	➢ Draft Performance Improvement Objectives reported to Governance Resources and Strategy Committee and Council for approval. ➢ Council strikes the Rate in February ➢ Ongoing engagement with Departments on development of Business Plans. ➢ Public consultation on Draft Improvement Objectives opens in February
Apr – June	➢ Public consultation on Proposed Improvement Objectives closed April ➢ Consultation responses collated and summary report presented to senior management. ➢ Draft Performance Improvement Plan reported to senior management, GRS Committee and Full Council for approval. ➢ Performance Improvement Plan published on Council's website by 30 June ➢ New Business Plans presented to Service Committees May 2025. ➢ Year End Annual Reports on Business Plans presented to Service Committees in June

Identifying Annual Performance Improvement Objectives:

As per Department for Communities (DfC) Government Guidance, improvement objectives are based on:

- a strong evidence base,
- an understanding of our citizens' needs,
- alignment with Council's priorities in the new Corporate Plan, and
- critical self-analysis.

When developing the proposed Performance Improvement Objectives, an analysis is undertaken of a wide range of evidence sources. This included performance data, trend analysis, committee reports, service-level performance reports, and other relevant information to ensure the objectives were evidence-based and aligned with both operational and strategic priorities.
Internal analysis and engagement within Council takes place during Autumn/ Winter with senior management and Council officers from across directorates including:

- Self-analysis by individual Heads of Department, reviewing Departmental data and information, Business Plan progress, performance & risk management data and information, previous Mid-Year Self-assessment report
- Peer analysis at Head of Department and Directorate team meetings with Directors and Executive Management Team members and finally,
- Independent critical analysis by the Strategy & Performance Department's Performance Team.

Consultation on Draft Improvement Objectives:

Following approval by Council, draft improvement objectives are subject to an eight-week public consultation period. During the public consultation period Elected Members and Council staff as well as Trade Unions representatives are also encouraged to provide further feedback on the draft performance improvement objectives.
The timeline above outlines the internal consultation within Council that took place, exploring potential areas for improvement, and the synergies between corporate, business planning, efficiency and estimate setting processes. It also indicates that we undertake the necessary public consultation exercise in line with our Public Consultation Policy. We use social media, Community Planning partners' contacts, business e-zine, community networks, emails to Section-75 groups, other councils, staff memos, intranet promotion, inform the Trade Unions and make hard copies of the consultation document available in each of the three main Council civic buildings in Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon.
The proposed Performance Improvement Objectives are therefore developed taking into consideration the views of internal and external stakeholders.

- Internal: Employees including the Senior Leadership Team, trade unions, and Elected Members.
- External: Citizens/customers, communities, businesses, and other stakeholders.

In the Consultation document itself, further details are provided on each of the proposed Performance Improvement Objectives, including:

- How each objective links with 'Connected' - our Community Plan,
- How each objective links to the themes and commitments within our Corporate Plan
- Why we have chosen the objective
- What we will do to achieve the objective – our actions
- How we will measure success – our Performance Indicators
- What success will look like – our targets
- How our Citizens and stakeholders will benefit
- Which aspects of improvement we are addressing

An analysis of the consultation responses, comments and feedback received during the consultation are summarised and shared with the relevant Council departments and business units for further consideration. Council will publish a response to all comments and feedback received via the consultation hub providing feedback on consultation response and suggestions made in addition to making amendments if required to the draft performance improvement objectives.

Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) Performance Improvement Audit & Assessment:

Each year the NIAO undertakes a Performance Improvement Audit & Assessment looking backwards at the previous year's performance and Performance Self-Assessment reports and looking forward at the Performance Improvement Plans for the year ahead. They produce an Audit & Assessment Report relating to the Council's statutory duty for continuous improvement, which along with the Certificate of Compliance is required to be issued to Council by 30 November.

The Audit Report and Assessment summarize the work of the Local Government Auditor (LGA) on the performance improvement audit and assessment undertaken in September-November. The report considers the wider statutory duty and focuses on the Council's Performance Improvement Plan for the year ahead and Self-Assessment Report for the previous year, setting out the LGA findings and conclusions. Contained within the report there will be any detailed observations on thematic areas and any proposals for improvement.
The Certificate of Compliance would outline if Council had discharged its duties in connection with (1) improvement planning and (2) publication of improvement information in accordance with section 92 of the Act as a result of the assessment, the Council had discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act and had acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently. It also outlines if Council had demonstrated a track record of ongoing improvement and if the NIAO believe that the Council is likely to comply with Part 12 of the Act during the year ahead.

4.3 Reporting Arrangements

The following formal reporting arrangements are in place at all levels to ensure regular review and reporting of QMS and other data/performance information, this includes:

Monthly Department/Team meetings
Monthly review of relevant data (identifying challenges, recognising achievements, and agreeing actions to address issues and risks) and quarterly review of progress against business plans and risk registers.

Directorate Management Team meetings
Heads of Department report to Directorate Management Team meetings on a quarterly/six monthly basis.

Executive Management Team meetings
Director reporting to EMT on a bi-annual basis.

Transformation Oversight Board
Implementation of Transformation Programmes and Projects are reported to the Transformation Oversight Board (TOB), which is made up of the Senior Leadership Team (i.e., EMT and Heads of Department). Each of these Programme and Projects will have their own Project Boards with agreed monitoring and reporting arrangements including updates to relevant Committees.

Performance & Audit Committee
Performance and Audit Committee receive Quarterly Corporate Performance reports, to provide a focus on key performance areas relating to people and financial management and business planning, etc. at a corporate level and in December it includes the Mid-Year Review of the Performance Improvement Plan including progress on achieving the Performance Improvement Objectives and Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards for Waste, Planning and Economic Development.

Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report
By 30 September, each year Council we will publish a retrospective Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report, setting out details of how we have performed during the previous year against this Performance Improvement Plan; including the statutory performance indicators and standards for Economic Development, Planning and Waste, self-imposed indicators and standards, service standards and any relevant benchmarking information. In September this is reported to the Performance & Audit Committee and Council prior to publication on the Council website.

Service Committees
Service committees receive 6 month and annual business plan progress reports in November and June.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone responsible for delivery of Council services (within and outside the organisation) is obliged to ensure that work is provided to a high professional standard with a focus on customer care and service excellence.

It is important to understand the roles and responsibilities that officers, Members, and the different Council committees have.

Detailed below is a summary of the key roles and responsibilities but is not an exhaustive list. All managers must recognise that effective performance management is their responsibility. However, the Council does have some key governance groups in relation to managing performance and improvement, with particular responsibility.

ELECTED MEMBERS / FULL COUNCIL

- Approve the Corporate Plan and annual estimates/budget
- Formulate/approve the Council's objectives/commitments
- Monitor and respond to performance data
- Challenge performance of all services.

GOVERNANCE, RESOURCES & STRATEGY COMMITTEE

- Approve the annual Performance Improvement Plan.
- Approve and oversee financial plans including Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Plan
- Oversight of Human Resource matters including absence

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

- Scrutinise the Council's performance and financial management
- Challenge the actions of Directors and Heads of Department in managing risk.

SENIOR MANAGERS EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Strategic responsibility for development and delivery of the Council's strategies and commitments, including monitoring corporate and directorate performance and assurance.
- Deliver the Financial Strategy and detailed efficiencies
- Approve Business Plans, manage delivery of the Corporate Plan and any under-performance.
- Manage Corporate & significant Project Risks
- Monitor & manage performance with use of QMS
- Complete PDCs
- Manage Health & Safety
- Manage corporate Business Continuity and Emergency Response to incidents
- Delivery of the Capital Plan
- Delivery of the Local Development Plan
- Comply with all Council policies and procedures

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

- Contribute to the Council's corporate commitments
- Develop and deliver relevant strategies, and plans, and business plans within budget and monitor operational performance and assurance
- Deliver relevant projects
- Develop annual budgets
- Monitor departmental budgets and implement agreed efficiencies
- Manage departmental and relevant corporate and project risks

- Monitor & manage performance with use of QMS
- Complete PDCs
- Manage Health & Safety
- Manage and implement departmental and relevant corporate Business Continuity arrangements and relevant response to Emergency incidents.
- Comply with all Council policies and procedures

MANAGERS

- Deliver business unit or team plans
- Deliver and monitor relevant project plans
- Support staff to deliver their objectives
- Maintain accurate and robust data to inform service delivery and reporting
- Monitor and manage performance with use of QMS
- Maintain service budget and implement efficiencies
- Escalate risks to Heads of Department
- Manage Health & Safety
- Complete PDCs
- Assist within implementation of Business Continuity and Emergency response
- Comply with all Council policies and procedures

STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE DEPARTMENT

- Provide support for QMS implementation and reporting
- Work closely with departments to assist in collation, maintenance, analysis of performance data to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Coordinate development of annual performance improvement plans, quarterly corporate and statutory reporting
- Provide support for use of the performance & risk management software
- Provide quality assurance support to departments during business planning and reporting

COMMUNITY PLANNING, POLICY & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

- Provide support for QMS implementation and reporting
- Support the development of a data and evidence-based approach to support the creation of key strategies & plans.
- Access and analyse data on behalf of Council to allow for the

ALL STAFF

- Deliver individual objectives
- Deliver high levels of customer
- Responsible for personal development and performance
- Understand how their work contributes to delivery of Council's priorities and commitments. development of policy, develop funding bids and to monitor progress and impact of Council initiatives.
- Provide advice and guidance on use of public consultations and internal surveys
- Follow Council policies and procedures

6.0 Related Policies and Internal Guidance

Consideration should be given to any internal guidance associated with this Policy, available on the Council's Intranet and or website, including the following:

- Performance & Quality Management Framework
- Developing Meaningful Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures
- Risk Management Policy
- Training & Development Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- PDC Process & Guidance
- Framework for Service Reviews
- Project Management Toolkit
- Capital Planning Process
- Capability Procedure

Appendix 1

Equality Screening

Policy Scoping

Policy Title: Performance Policy

Brief Description of Policy (please attach copy if available). Please state if it is a new, existing, or amended policy.

This is an existing policy which has been reviewed to fulfil the requirements of Council under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

Intended aims/outcomes. What is the policy trying to achieve?

The purpose of this Policy is to support the change required for continuous improvement in delivery of Council services in a way that responds to the needs of stakeholders and helps to achieve the corporate objectives aligned to the Borough Community Plan.

Policy Framework

Has the policy been developed in response to statutory requirements, legal advice or on the basis of any other professional advice? Does this affect the discretion available to The Council to amend the policy?

The Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the policy? If so, please outline.

This policy will have a positive effect on all stakeholders including the nine section 75 categories.

Who initiated or wrote the policy (if The Council decision, please state). Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

Who initiated or wrote the policy?	Martina McNulty, Head of Department: Strategy & Performance
Who is responsible for implementation?	All persons involved in the delivery of Council services.

Are there any factors which might contribute to or detract from the implementation of the policy (e.g., financial, legislative, other)?

Financial resources in light of efficiency savings could detract from the implementation of this policy.

Main stakeholders in relation to the policy

Please list main stakeholders affected by the policy (e.g., staff, service users, other statutory bodies, community or voluntary sector, private sector)

Employees, service users/customers, statutory partners, community and voluntary sector, private sector, residents, visitors, and all other stakeholders.

Are there any other policies with a bearing on this policy? If so, please identify them and how they impact on this policy.

Risk Management Policy. Consideration should also be given to any internal guidance e.g. Performance & Quality Management Framework, Developing Meaningful Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures, associated with this Policy, available on the Intranet.

Available Evidence

The Council should ensure that its screening decisions are informed by relevant data. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories. For up to date S75 Borough Statistics

Section 75 category	Evidence
Religious belief	The 2021 Census showed that 43.8% belonged to or were brought up in the Catholic religion and 46.7% belong to or were brought up in a Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related) religion. A further 1.2% belonged to or had been brought up in other religions while 8.2% neither belonged to, nor had been brought up in a religion.
Political opinion	Political Opinion Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 41 elected members. A breakdown of results of the Local Government Election in May 2023 for the borough are as follows: • Democratic Unionist Party – 13 • Ulster Unionist Party – 6 • Sinn Fein – 15 • Social Democratic and Labour Party – 1 • Alliance – 4 • Independent – 1 • TUV - 1 A total of 87,684 votes were polled in the borough from an eligible electorate of 155,625 giving an overall turnout of 56.34%. This breakdown is taken as an approximate representation of the political opinion of people within the borough.

Racial group	The 2021 Census showed that: • 96.7% of the usually resident population of the Borough were White and 3.3% were from minority ethnic groups. The main ethnic minorities were Mixed (1,652 individuals), Black African (1,132 individuals) and Chinese (683 individuals). • 85.5% of residents in the Borough were born in Northern Ireland. The Borough had 8.6% of residents or 18,836 individuals who were born outside the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland. 6.8% of residents aged 3+ years or (14,376 individuals) spoke a language other than English ~~or~~ as their main language. Apart from English, the most common other main languages were Polish (3,551 residents aged 3+ years), Lithuanian (2,611) and Portuguese (1,777).
Age	The population of the Borough was estimated to be 218,656 at 21 March 2021. The profile by age group is: • 0-15 years – 22.1% • 16 – 24 years 10% • 25 – 49 years 32.9% • 50 – 64 years 19% • 65 and over 16% This represented a 26.7% increase in the 65+ age group and a 25.62% increase in the 50-64yr age group since the last census in 2011.
Marital status	The 2021 Census provides information on the marital status profile of those aged 16 and over in the Borough: • Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership) - 35% • Married - 49% • In a registered same-sex civil partnership - 0.2% • Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership) – 3.4% • Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved - 6% Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership - 6%

Sexual orientation	The question on sexual orientation was new for the 2021 Census and was asked of all people aged 16 and over in the Borough: Straight or heterosexual – 90.5% Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other (LGB+) – 1.5% Gay or Lesbian – 0.8% Bisexual – 0.5% Other sexual orientation – 0.1% No sexual orientation stated 8% Prefer not to say – 4.9% Not stated – 3.1% Just 1.5% of the population aged 16 and over in the borough identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other (LGB+) while 90.5% identified as straight or heterosexual and 8% did not provide an answer to the question
Men and women generally	The 2021 Census showed that in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, 49.5% (108,268) of usual residents were males and 50.5% (110,388) were females.

Disability	2021 Census results identified 22.3% of Borough citizens as having a limiting long term health problem or disability, affecting 36,488 households. Of those citizens in the Borough with a limiting long term health problem or disability, 56.8% are in the 65+ age group. Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities showed as of November 2022 there were: • 2,510 or 5.2% of under 16 population and 5,030 or 15.2% of 66 and over population claiming Disability Living Allowance • 5,930 or 17.9% of 66 and over population claiming Attendance Allowance 18,540 Personal Independence Payment claims in payment (experimental statistics).
Dependants	The 2021 Census showed that 32% or 27, 192 households in the borough contained dependent children. Results from the 2021 Census also show that 12% of the borough's population aged 5 years old and over (or 24,741 individuals) provided unpaid care. Of those who provided unpaid support: • 46% provided 1-19 hours per week • 24% provided 20-49 hours per week • 30% provided 50+ hours per week • Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities show that at November 2022 there were 8,120 claimants, or 4.8% of 16 and over population, claiming Carer's Allowance in the borough.

Needs, experiences, and priorities

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

Section 75 category	Needs, experiences, and priorities
Religious belief	This policy is a general statement about the Council's commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery. There is not likely to be a negative impact on any of the section 75 categories.
Political opinion	
Racial group	
Age	
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	
Men and women generally	
Disability	
Dependants	

Screening Questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy for each of the Section 75 categories?

Category	Policy Impact	Level of impact (Major/minor/none)
Religious belief	None	No
Political opinion	None	No
Racial group	None	No
Age	None	No
Marital status	None	No
Sexual orientation	None	No
Men and women generally	None	No
Disability	None	No
Dependants	None	No

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy is a general statement about the Council's commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery. It is intended to have a positive impact on all stakeholders regardless of the section 75 categories they belong to.
Political opinion		
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependants		

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

Category	Details of Policy Impact	Level of impact (major/minor/none)
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

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

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons

Religious belief		This policy is a general statement about the Council's commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery. It is intended to have a positive impact on all stakeholders regardless of the section 75 categories they belong to.
Political opinion		As Above
Racial group		As Above

Multiple Identity

Generally speaking, people fall into more than one Section 75 category (for example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; young lesbian, gay and bisexual people). Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant s75 categories concerned.

N/A

Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006

Is there an opportunity for the policy to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

N/A

Is there an opportunity for the policy to encourage participation by disabled people in public life?

N/A

Screening Decision

A: NO IMPACT IDENTIFIED ON ANY CATEGORY – EQIA UNNECESSARY

Please identify reasons for this below

This Policy outlines the Council's commitment to ensuring continuous performance improvement in delivering services. It is not likely to have a negative impact on any of the Section 75 categories. However, business plans and Programme/Project plans have the potential to include measures that will positively impact on the Section 75 Categories.

B: MINOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARY AS IMPACT CAN BE ELIMINATED OR MITIGATED

Where the impact is likely to be minor, you should consider if the policy can be mitigated, or an alternative policy introduced. If so, an EQIA may not be considered necessary. You must indicate the reasons for this decision below, together with details of measures to mitigate the adverse impact or the alternative policy proposed.

N/A

C: MAJOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA REQUIRED

If the decision is to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

Timetabling and Prioritising

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

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

Policy Criterion	**Rating (1-3)**
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	

The total rating score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the Council in timetabling its EQIAs.

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

N/A

Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help the authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy. It is recommended that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced to mitigate adverse impact, monitoring be undertaken on a broader basis to identify any impact (positive or adverse).

Further information on monitoring is available in the Equality Commission's guidance on monitoring (www.equalityni.org).

Identify how the impact of the policy is to be monitored:

This policy will be monitored in line with the Policy review cycle as noted on cover page (3yrs).

Approval and Authorisation

A copy of the screening form for each policy screened should be signed off by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The screening recommendation should be reported to the relevant Committee/The Council when the policy is submitted for approval.

Screened by	Position/Job title	Date
Mary Hanna	Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager	18/09/2026
Approved by	Position/Job Title	Date
Martina McNulty	Head of Department: Strategy & Performance	18/09/2026

Please forward a copy of the completed policy and screening form to:

Equality@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

A copy of the completed screening form should be signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The completed screening form should be attached to the relevant Committee paper when the policy is submitted for approval.

Following completion of the screening process, the policy and completed screening form will be made available on the Council's website.

Appendix 2

Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)

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

1A. Name of Public Authority: Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough The Council

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

The Council is committed to ensuring continuous performance improvement in delivery of its services across all areas of service delivery. The draft policy further outlines Councils commitment and compliance with statutory requirements of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 in relation to performance management and improvement.

1C Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to:

Developing a	**☐Policy**	**☐Strategy**	**☐Plan/Procedure**	**☐ Activity**
Adopting a	**☐Policy**	**☐Strategy**	**☐Plan/Procedure**	**☐ Activity**
Implementing a	**☐Policy**	**☐Strategy**	**☐Plan/Procedure**	**☐ Activity**
Revising a	**☒Policy**	**☐Strategy**	**☐Plan/Procedure**	**☐ Activity**
Designing a Public Service	**☐**			
Delivering a Public Service	**☐**			

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above

Performance Policy

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Drive the Councils performance improvement agenda.
- Support the change required for continuous improvement in delivery of services in a way that responds to stakeholders' needs.
- Assist in delivery of excellent services.
- Assist in achieving corporate objectives aligned to the Corporate & Community Plans.
- Create a level of understanding for employees and service providers in terms of their responsibilities for performance improvement.
- Fulfil statutory requirements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions as set out in the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition ☐

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below) ☐

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable ☒

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural.'

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

This is an Internal policy and will not impact on people living in rural areas.

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

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes ☐ **No** ☒ **If response is No go to 2E**

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas *differently* from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

N/A

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	☐
Rural Tourism	☐
Rural Housing	☐
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	☐
Education or Training in Rural Areas	☐
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	☐
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	☐
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	☐
Poverty in Rural Areas	☐
Deprivation in Rural Areas	☐
Rural Crime or Community Safety	☐
Rural Development	☐
Agri-Environment	☐

Other (Please state)

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

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

The Performance Policy (an internal policy) applies to everyone involved in delivery of Council services and is set in the context of the Council's statutory duty for continuous improvement under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

SECTION 3
Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

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

Yes ☐ **No** ☒ **If response is No go to 3E**

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

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	☐
Consultation with Other organisations	☐
Published Statistics	☐
Research Papers	☐
Surveys or Questionnaires	☐
Other Publications	☐
Other Methods or Information Sources (Include details in Question 3C below)	☐

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

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

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

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

The Council is committed to ensuring continuous performance improvement in delivery of its services across all areas of service delivery. The Council's approach to performance management is at all levels of strategic planning and will be aligned to the Community, Corporate, Performance Improvement, and Departmental Business Plans as well as Thematic, Business Unit, and individual performance development conversations (PDC's).

This approach is underpinned by adoption of best practice and takes account of the Northern Ireland Audit Office proposals for improvement which asks Council to '*expand upon the current corporate performance management framework to develop a performance improvement policy.'*

Therefore, this Performance Policy (an internal policy) applies to everyone involved in delivery of Council services and is set in the context of the Council's statutory duty for continuous improvement under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

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

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

N/A

SECTION 5
Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes ☐ **No** ☒ **If response is No go to 5C**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

If the response to Section 5A was YES go to 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

The Council is committed to ensuring continuous performance improvement in delivery of its services across all areas of service delivery. The Council's approach to performance management is at all levels of strategic planning and will be aligned to the Community, Corporate, Performance Improvement, and Departmental Business Plans as well as Thematic, Business Unit, and individual performance development conversations (PDC's).

This approach is underpinned by adoption of best practice and takes account of the Northern Ireland Audit Office proposals for improvement which asks Council to '*expand upon the current corporate performance management framework to develop a performance improvement policy.'*

Therefore, this Policy (an internal policy) applies to everyone involved in delivery of Council services and is set in the context of the Council's statutory duty for continuous improvement under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

SECTION 6

Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

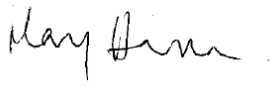
I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained, and relevant information compiled. ☒

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by: Mary Hanna

Position: Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager

Department / Directorate: Strategy & Performance/DCE Directorate

Signature:



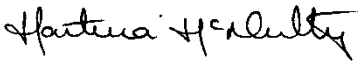
Date: 18/09/2026

Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by: Martina McNulty

Position: Head of Department: Strategy & Performance

Department / Directorate: Strategy & Performance/DCE Directorate

Signature:



Date: 18/09/2026