



Performance Improvement Plan

2016-2017

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**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council

Foreword

This is an historic time for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council as we progress into our second year of operation. We are a new council, unified across the whole area, bigger in scale and greater in power. To help us achieve our potential we set an ambitious first Corporate Plan for 2015-2017. The interim two year corporate plan set out our vision, ambitions and objectives for our initial period of transformation. This will drive our key projects and actions over these early formative years.

Alongside this we have a new statutory duty under Part 12 of the Local Government Act to put arrangements in place for continuous improvement in the exercise of our services, and each year the Council is required to develop a Performance Improvement Plan. The Performance Improvement Plan for 2016-2017 is informed by our current Corporate Plan and is set in the context of our three corporate priorities:

Prosper the Place; Serve the People; Strengthen our Position

The following four Performance Improvement Objectives have been identified for this year.

- Assisting economic growth and investment across the borough;
- Enhancing our local neighbourhoods, making them cleaner and more attractive;
- Increasing the use of council leisure assets to facilitate increased physical activity and increased volunteering opportunities, and
- Increasing online citizen engagement and business/service transactions.

A longer term Community Plan is currently being developed with our partners, including the community, voluntary and local business sector. Both the Community Plan and a new Corporate Plan will be finalised in 2017. Subsequent Performance Improvement Plans will be informed by and directly linked to the Community Plan.

We want to assure citizens that we are fully committed to using our best endeavours to deliver services that are efficient, economical and of an exemplary standard.

We look forward to working with citizens, local businesses and all of our stakeholders to ensure that we achieve our corporate vision to prosper the place, serve the people and strengthen our position.



Roger Wilson
Chief Executive
Date 20th June 2016

Introduction

The Council recognises ‘improvement’ to mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities.

The aim of this Performance Improvement Plan (2016-2017) is to set out what we will do in the year ahead to secure our new statutory general duty of continuous improvement in the exercise of our functions (including reference to any statutory performance standards), and to bring about improvement against at least one of the following specified aspects of improvement:

- Strategic effectiveness
- Service quality
- Service availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

In 2015/16 councils were subject to limited introduction of the new performance duty, however, the Local Government (2014 Act) (Commencement No 4) Order (NI) 2015 brings into effect the remaining provisions of the duty from 1 April 2016, with the exception of section 91(1) on the use of performance information, which will become effective from 1 April 2017.

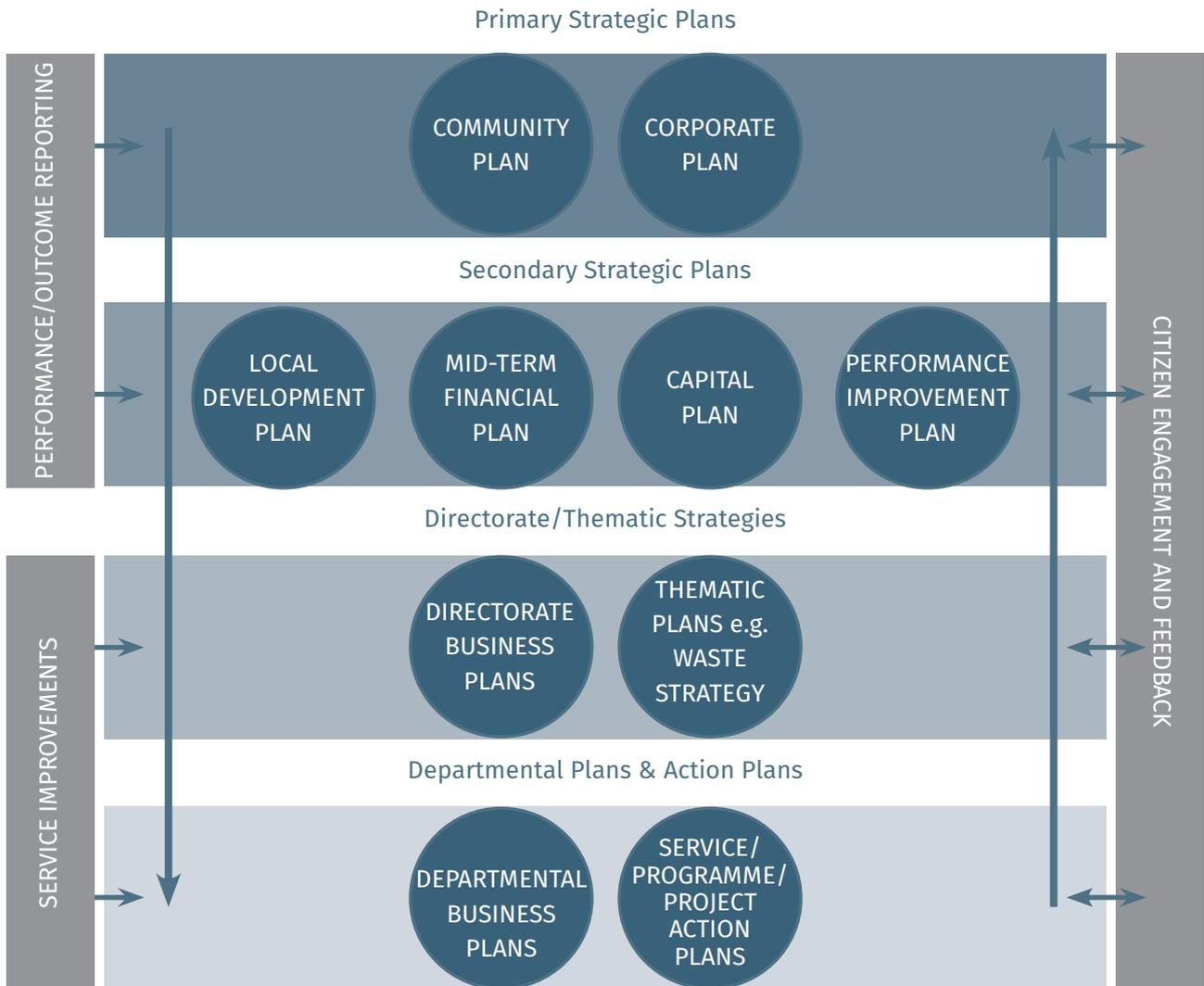
This plan reflects our corporate priorities, taking into account the needs of our citizens, businesses and visitors. It has been directly informed by the ongoing work with partners and stakeholders to develop a Community Plan for the area, by our existing Corporate Plan 2015-17 and through a dedicated public consultation process during May-June 2016.

The Corporate Improvement Plan sits within our Corporate Planning Framework which guides our strategic policy direction and drives our service delivery arrangements (Figure 1 below).

This publication fulfils, in part, the statutory requirement set out in Part 12 of the Local

Government Act (NI) 2014. This is our ‘forward-looking’ Improvement Plan for the 2016-17 year. Our ‘retrospective’ self-assessment performance report will be published by the end of September 2017.

Figure 1: Corporate Planning Framework*



*Please note this Framework will be reviewed and may be changed as required

2.0 Achieving Continuous Improvement

The Performance Improvement Plan is recognised as a key secondary strategic plan and is integral to our performance management approach and overall corporate planning framework.

We are continuing to develop this framework and to establish and implement the processes that will take forward our corporate vision, ensuring achievement of our performance improvement objectives. The Performance Improvement Plan echoes the commitment to continuous improvement that is enshrined in our Corporate Plan and in our values:

**Ambitious / Protective / Proactive / Respectful / Responsive / Excellent
Forward looking / Outward Looking / Exemplary**

3.0 Identifying Performance Improvement Objectives 2016-17

When finalised, the Community Plan will serve as an overarching strategy aimed at improving sustainable social, economic and environmental wellbeing and will therefore strongly inform future Performance Improvement Plans.

Since the organisation was only recently established (on 1 April 2015) there is insufficient evidence available from the new Community Planning process to fully inform our 2016-17 performance improvement objectives. Availability of appropriate and relevant performance data to contribute to our 2016-17 Performance Improvement Plan is indeed limited overall at this stage. However, we will develop appropriate systems to identify and capture more relevant information over the next year and beyond to fully support the improvement planning process.

This year's Performance Improvement Plan looks towards the corporate priorities contained in our Corporate Plan 2015-17:

Prosper the Place; Serve the People; Strengthen our Position

Each of the four performance improvement objectives for 2016-2017 has been developed within the context of the corporate priorities and will be linked to ongoing business being delivered during the year ahead. The performance improvement objectives include the statutory performance indicators and standards for Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management. The statutory indicators and standards are set out in Appendix 1.

The **Performance Improvement Objectives** identified for 2016-2017 are:

- Assisting economic growth and investment across the borough;
- Enhancing our local neighbourhoods making them cleaner and more attractive;
- Increasing the use of council leisure assets to facilitate increased physical activity and increased volunteering opportunities, and
- Increasing online citizen engagement and business/service transactions.

4.0 Performance Improvement Objectives 2016-2017

Corporate priority:

PROSPER THE PLACE

Increasing prosperity through developing the economy, employment, connectivity and environment.

Performance Improvement Objective 1

Support and assist economic growth and investment across the borough.

Why did we choose this objective?

- Growing the borough's economy is our number one priority.
- As the second largest local authority in Northern Ireland, with more than 204,000 residents and almost 8,000 businesses, it is our ambition to bring together the economic strengths of the region, its strategic location and its reputation for manufacturing excellence to create employment, grow our businesses and attract investment.

Key actions

- Support businesses, attract investment, protect jobs and increase employment.
- Support our town centres and rural areas through investment support, initiatives and revitalisation programmes.
- Develop a tourism development and marketing strategy to set out our vision for tourism growth.
- Continue to deliver an effective planning system.

We will have made a difference if:

- *165 new businesses have been supported by the council through 'Business Start'.
- *Major planning applications are processed within an average of 30 weeks.
- *Local planning applications are processed within an average of 15 weeks.
- *70% of all planning enforcement cases are progressed within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.

**statutory indicator/standards (Appendix 1)*

Performance improvement aspects:

Strategic effectiveness, service quality, service availability.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

Enhance local neighbourhoods, making them cleaner and more attractive.

Why did we choose this objective?

- The borough's environment directly affects business development and the wellbeing of those who work, live and visit the area.
- Environment is one of the three strategic pillars being considered as part of the community planning process.

Key actions

- Reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.
- Promote environmental responsibility through a 'clean neighbourhoods' action plan.
- Maintain the standards of cleanliness and biodiversity of council parks.

We will have made a difference if:

- *The amount of collected waste diverted away from landfill increases to 49.5% by 2017.
- *Biodegradable municipal waste landfilled falls to 10,069 tonnes.
- There is an increase in the number of 'green flags' awarded to council parks in the borough.

**statutory indicator/standards (Appendix 1)*

Performance improvement aspects:

Strategic effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability; innovation.

Corporate priority:

SERVE THE PEOPLE

Improving everyone's quality of life, opportunity, safety and wellbeing.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

Increase the use of council leisure assets to facilitate increased physical activity and increased volunteering opportunities.

Why did we choose this objective?

We have a broad range of leisure and recreational assets and we aim to make full use of these to enhance the well-being of all of our citizens.

Another 'Way to Wellbeing' identified by the Government is 'Giving', for example, providing opportunities for citizens to volunteer their time.

Key Actions

- Increase physical activity for all citizens by developing, promoting and operating a wide variety of activities suitable for all ages, abilities and levels of deprivation.
- Encourage active citizenship and volunteering by creating and promoting opportunities across health and recreation services.

We will have made a difference if:

- There is a 5% increase in the number of visitors to council leisure facilities.
- There is a 50% increase in the number of volunteer hours across health and recreation services.

Performance Improvement Aspects:

Strategic effectiveness; service quality; service availability; fairness.

Corporate priority:

STRENGTHEN OUR POSITION

Giving the leadership to tackle the issues that matter and influencing decision makers at all levels.

Performance Improvement Objective 4

Increase online citizen engagement and business/service transactions.

Why did we choose this objective?

Putting the citizen at the heart of everything we do:

- We want to develop customer services which are appropriate, timely and which meet the needs of service users across the borough.
- We want to explore new innovative ways to meaningfully engage with our citizens.

Key Actions

- Develop opportunities for more online transactions to take place across council services.
- Establish a new council website which will encourage more online transactions.
- Market the availability of online transactions e.g. via council newsletters/other media.
- Introduce new ways of engagement and innovation through the delivery of a digital engagement pilot as part of our Community Planning approach.

We will have made a difference if:

- There is a 5% increase in the number of online council business/service transactions
- We engage with at least 2,000 citizens through the digital engagement pilot.

Performance Improvement Aspects:

Strategic effectiveness; service quality; service availability; sustainability; efficiency; innovation.

5.0 Consultation

Performance improvement objectives were drafted in consultation with Council Officers prior to an official period of public consultation with a range of stakeholders. These include Elected Members, residents, local businesses, statutory and other community planning partners and other bodies with which collaborative working is taking place or is being planned.

The following consultation methods were used: Council website, email distribution lists, newspaper advertisements and letter invitations. Consideration of the consultation responses has not resulted in the need for any changes to the draft performance improvement objectives. Specific service-related comments and suggestions for improvement will be considered by the relevant department.

6.0 Performance Reporting

Council departments will establish performance indicators and standards which relate to the objectives identified in their annual business plans, and which will be aligned with those set out in this plan. Implementation will be overseen through internal performance management and governance arrangements including Committee reporting.

A mid-year report (covering the period April-September 2016) on progress against the current year's performance improvement objectives will be presented to members of the Performance and Audit Committee.

By the end of September 2016 we will publish a retrospective self-assessment report setting out details of how we have performed against the statutory performance indicators and standards for Planning, Waste and Economic Development in 2015-16.

By the end of September 2017 we will publish a retrospective self-assessment report setting out details of how we have performed against the Performance Improvement Objectives for 2016-17. Where possible, and as required, the Council will benchmark the above indicators against the performance of the other councils and will identify wider benchmarking opportunities with other similar bodies.

7.0 How To Propose New Improvement Objectives

We welcome your on-going feedback and comments or suggestions on how we might improve our services and in particular if you would like to propose any new improvement objectives. Please use one of the following ways to contact us:

Email: performance@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 0300 900

In Writing: Performance and Audit
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Armagh Old City Hospital
Abbey Street
Armagh
BT61 7DY

This document is available in a range of formats upon request using the contact details above.

Appendix 1

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015 has specified the following performance indicators and standards for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council in relation to Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management as set out in the table below.

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard to be met (annually)
ED1	The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity. (Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client-led business plans under Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's Regional Start Initiative or its successor programmes)	165
P1	The average processing time of major planning applications. (An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015 (a))	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 30 weeks.
P2	The average processing time of local planning applications. (An application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 or any Regulations made under the Act)	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 15 weeks.
P3	The percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks. (Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 or any Regulations made under the Act)	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.
W1	The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse).	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme. (50% BY 2020)
W2	The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (29,173 tonnes)
W3	The amount (tonnage) of Local authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings. (The total amount of waste collected)	

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