

COVID 19

*a responsive and  
resilient approach*

# Annual Performance Report 2020/2021

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021



Fermanagh & Omagh  
District Council  
Comhairle Ceantair  
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

# Supporting Our Fermanagh and Omagh

At this time there are simple steps we can all take to support our Fermanagh and Omagh, our local communities and businesses. By taking a simple step we can all make a significant impact in building a brighter future for the District.

## Stay safe



### Your Council

delivered essential services to our ratepayers throughout the health emergency and is reopening non-essential services and facilities in line with government advice and when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

### Save lives

always follow official government and PHA (Public Health Agency) advice.

### Stay connected

take care of your body and your mind. Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours; ask for help if you need it; and keep yourself active.

## Support local



### Your Council

is supporting local businesses to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and to trade during these challenging times.

### Local businesses

are key employers and provide livelihoods across the district. Continue to support essential businesses who helped us all throughout the pandemic and as more businesses reopen, shop local and support local.

### Our spectacular natural environment

provides us with the space to connect with nature and to keep active. Cherish these spaces. When visiting, avoid large crowds, keep your distance from others and respect these spaces by leaving no trace.

## Work Together



### Your Council

is working with others to improve the lives and wellbeing of our communities and our local businesses.

### Communities working together

achieve so much more. Support your local community when you can and volunteer time to help others.

### Stronger Together

we are stronger together and can deliver a brighter future for our District and its people.

## Thank you



### Thank you to our residents

for playing your part in keeping people safe. Keep going. Together we will beat COVID-19

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# Performance Score Card 2020/21

## Self Assessment Performance Key

The key below outlines how we have evaluated progress against our **objectives** or **activities**:

<b>Green</b>	Objective/Action achieved/on track
<b>Amber</b>	Objective/Action partially achieved/likely to be achieved
<b>Red</b>	Objective/Action not achieved/unlikely to be achieved
<b>White</b>	Data not yet available

Performance against **Performance Indicators** or **Measures** is evaluated using the key below:

<b>Green</b>	Performance indicator/measure has been maintained or improved since the previous year
<b>Red</b>	Performance indicator/measure has declined since the previous year
<b>White</b>	Data not yet available

## Progress Overview – Corporate Actions

Corporate Business and Recovery Plan Actions led and coordinated by:	Number actions/ activities Assigned	Green	Amber	Red
Community, Health and Leisure Directorate	CH&L 7/35	26/74%	7/ 20%	2/6%
Chief Executives and Corporate Services and Governance Directorate	CS&G 7/20	20/100%	-	-
Environment and Place Directorate	EP 4/15	10/67%	5/33%	-
Regeneration and Planning Directorate	RP 9/23	22/96%	1/ 4%	-
Overall total:	27/93	78/93 84%	13/93 14%	2/93 2%

## Statutory Indicators

ED1: The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity	<b>Target: 170</b> <b>Achieved: 101</b>
P1: The average processing time of major planning applications	<b>Target: 30 weeks</b> <b>Achieved: 58.6 weeks</b>
P2: The average processing time of local planning applications	<b>Target: 15 weeks</b> <b>Achieved: 15.6 weeks</b>
P3: The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks	<b>Target: 70%</b> <b>Achieved: 56.6%</b>
W1: The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse).	<b>Target: 50% by 2020</b> <b>Achieved: 47.13%*</b>
W2: The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.	<b>Target: &lt;13,781 tonnes</b> <b>Achieved: 14,410 tonnes *</b>
W3: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings	<b>Baseline 19/20: 55,233 tonnes</b> <b>Achieved: 58,108 tonnes*</b>

\* Figures provided are based on 'unverified' information at time of publication by Department of Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA); these figures will be updated in next year's Annual Report 2021-2022

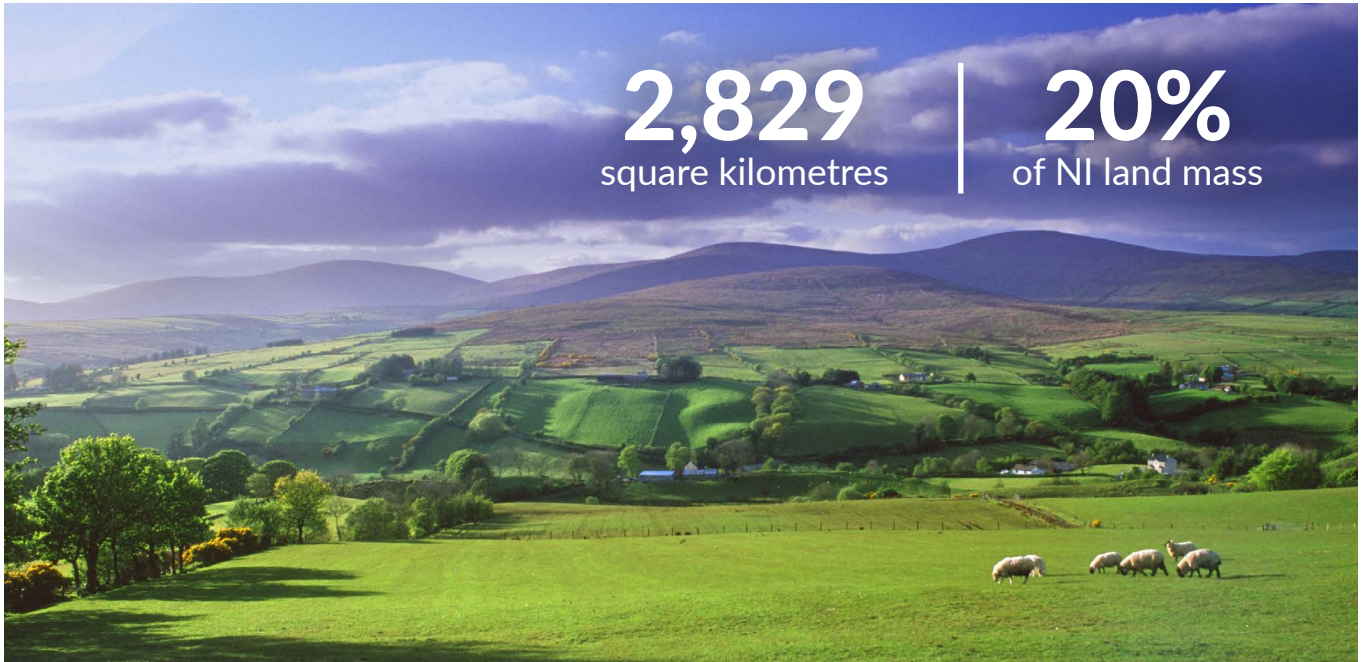


**Waste Collection Services continued during lockdown**

**SECTION 1.0**

# About Us

# 1.0 | About us



Fermanagh and Omagh District Council covers an area of **2,829** square kilometres in the Southwest of Northern Ireland which represents approximately **20%** of the total land mass of Northern Ireland.

The district is the largest, geographically, of the 11 Council areas, however it has the smallest population with 117,337 people. As a result, the population density of approximately 41 people per km<sup>2</sup> is the sparsest in NI. This is a key feature of the region but also a challenge in relation to how the Council delivers services.

The district is a place of outstanding natural beauty, with a unique mix of tranquil Lakelands, heather clad mountains, ancient boglands, forest parks, historic towns and villages, and a rich cultural heritage.

The Council has responsibility for a number of statutory and regulatory functions, including the Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships, Building Control, Planning, Environmental Health, Off Street Car Parking and Licensing. It also delivers a range of other

public services including waste management and recycling, street cleansing, recreation, sport and leisure services, the management of parks, open spaces and water recreation sites, culture and arts facilities and events, tourism and local economic development and regeneration, as well as community and good relations support.



Fermanagh & Omagh  
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# 1.1 Introduction to Annual Performance Report 2020-2021

## 'The Council Response to COVID 19'

The Council's Annual Performance Report is a statutory document required by the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 to provide an overview and self-assessment of the performance of the Council during the previous financial year (1st April 2020 until 31st March 2021) against the priorities it set, utilising data to do so. In previous years, this would have included performance against the agreed Corporate Improvement Plan and its objectives.



In March 2020, life as we know it was turned upside down due to the impacts of the global coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent unforeseen and unprecedented limitations on our daily lives introduced through The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020. The implications for citizens, society, the economy and for the Council as an organisation was significant with closure of all but critical services, lockdown and shielding restrictions, closures of schools and businesses and, most significantly, the risk to the health of citizens and potential loss of life. The Council's Emergency Management Team stood up on 13 March 2020 in response to COVID 19, Emergency Plans

were enacted, and the Emergency Management Team was actively involved in managing the risks identified. Agility and flexibility in approach was promoted. The effects of the pandemic are projected to be long lasting and to impact service provision for some time to come.

Like many organisations, the Council completed an early review of its delivery plans and business continuity plans. It became clear that additional measures were needed to manage the pandemic. The Elected Members and Senior Management Team quickly turned from strategic planning for the next 10 years, to developing a new way of operating for the Council that was agile and responsive in its approach. There was no blueprint for this, but the collective approach taken helped build shared understanding of need and support for partnership approaches with a wide range of statutory, business and community partners. What became immediately clear, was that the virus presented not just a challenge for the Council but an opportunity to embrace transformational change and the Council has worked to capitalise on this during this period.

A two-year Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-2022 with 27 identified cross cutting actions was developed to respond to the impacts of the pandemic, both in terms of the effects on the organisation and on communities and businesses across the district. The Council agreed the content of the document in November 2020. This document prioritised the relevant components contained in the Corporate Plan 'Delivering Sustainable Change 2020-2024' and addressed the challenges the pandemic presented. It provided clear direction and leadership outlining the priorities for the organisation to support citizens dealing with lockdowns, extended periods of shielding and fluctuations in infection rates, business closures, home-schooling, and digital reliance, to name but a few.



In addition, the Department for Communities provided direction that councils were not required to publish a Performance Improvement Plan for 2020-21, in recognition that councils' focus would be on emergency response service delivery and performance recovery. This document will therefore not report on an Improvement Plan and its objectives as it did in previous years, however, it will report on progress of the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-22 in respect of delivery during the 2021-22 financial year. It is worth highlighting that the Council continues to implement its statutory obligations and has

developed a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for 2021-22 which is based around the improvement priorities identified in its Corporate Plan 'Delivering Sustainable Change Together 2020-2024' and reflects the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. The PIP will be subject to quarterly progress reports which will be presented to the Council's Regeneration and Community Committee and to the Audit Panel and is available to download at [FODC-Performance-Improvement-Plan-21-22.pdf](https://fermanaghomagh.com) (fermanaghomagh.com). The Annual Report 2021-2022 will provide an update on the Improvement Plan 2021-2022.

## Corporate Improvement Priority Area 2020-24



### Positive Climate Action:

what we will do to support an agenda to positively address climate change, including promotion of a circular economy ethos.

### Promoting and Supporting Health and Wellbeing:

in line with our 'Active Together' strategy provide accessible and inclusive opportunities for all to participate in physical activity and other leisure services.

### Jobs and the Local Economy:

our district is highly dependent on small, local businesses and continued high levels of entrepreneurship which we will continue to nurture and support.



### Developing our Tourism Potential:

capitalise on the untapped tourism potential in our district and working in partnership so that the district can benefit from the rewards

### Tackling Disadvantage:

work to address the difficulties preventing people from participating fully in society, including poverty, but also, eg. limiting factors in one's life situation (such as a lack of skills), unequal levels of health and wellbeing associated with economic disadvantage and discrimination



## 1.2 | Demonstrating progress during challenging times

The Council's Annual Report 2020-21 is therefore a very different document from previous years and focuses on the progress achieved in respect of delivery of:

**(i) Progress against the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020 -2022 in year 1st April 2020 until 31st March 2021.**

This document includes 27 actions which are cross cutting across all service departments and requires a collaborative approach to delivery. Each of the Council's Directorates including, Community Health and Leisure, Corporate Services and Governance, Regeneration and Planning, and Environment and Place were assigned a number of actions to lead, coordinate and to report progress on, but most required support from across the organisation, collectively. This document demonstrates the Council's commitment to partnership working and progression of enhanced communication between services areas during challenging times. Agility in approach was key to its execution. Clarity of purpose facilitated effective decision-making utilising data and intelligence

**(ii) Information on how the Council performed against a range of statutory and self-imposed performance indicators/measures**

A set of seven statutory indicators have been set for Local Government via the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015. These relate to three Council functions, ie, waste management, economic development and planning. In addition, the Council has a performance management framework in place which includes a range of corporate and service level performance measures to support delivery of the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-2022. These are referred to as 'self-imposed' performance measures. Information on progress against this range of measures is included in this report and, where possible, performance benchmarking provided against other councils in Northern Ireland.

**(iii) Financial overview**

The financial overview is a summary financial statement extracted from the audited accounts of the Council. The audited Statement of Accounts will be available on the Council website by 30th September 2021 at [www.fermanaghmagh.com](http://www.fermanaghmagh.com).

In response to the COVID 19 pandemic performance has been significantly impacted during this financial year in all service areas, some more than others. Specific information on those impacts is included throughout this report. However, there are a number of exemplars demonstrating how the Council as an organisation has provided additional services and supported those in most need throughout these unprecedented times.



***Our work is scrutinised by the Northern Ireland Audit Office and annual Audit Reports will be available to view on our website at [www.fermanaghmagh.com](http://www.fermanaghmagh.com)***

# 1.3 The Challenges presented by COVID 19

## Coronavirus - what is it?

**About**

Coronavirus (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people.

**Contagion**

- HUMAN CONTACT
- AIR TRANSMISSION
- CONTAMINATED OBJECTS

**Prevention**

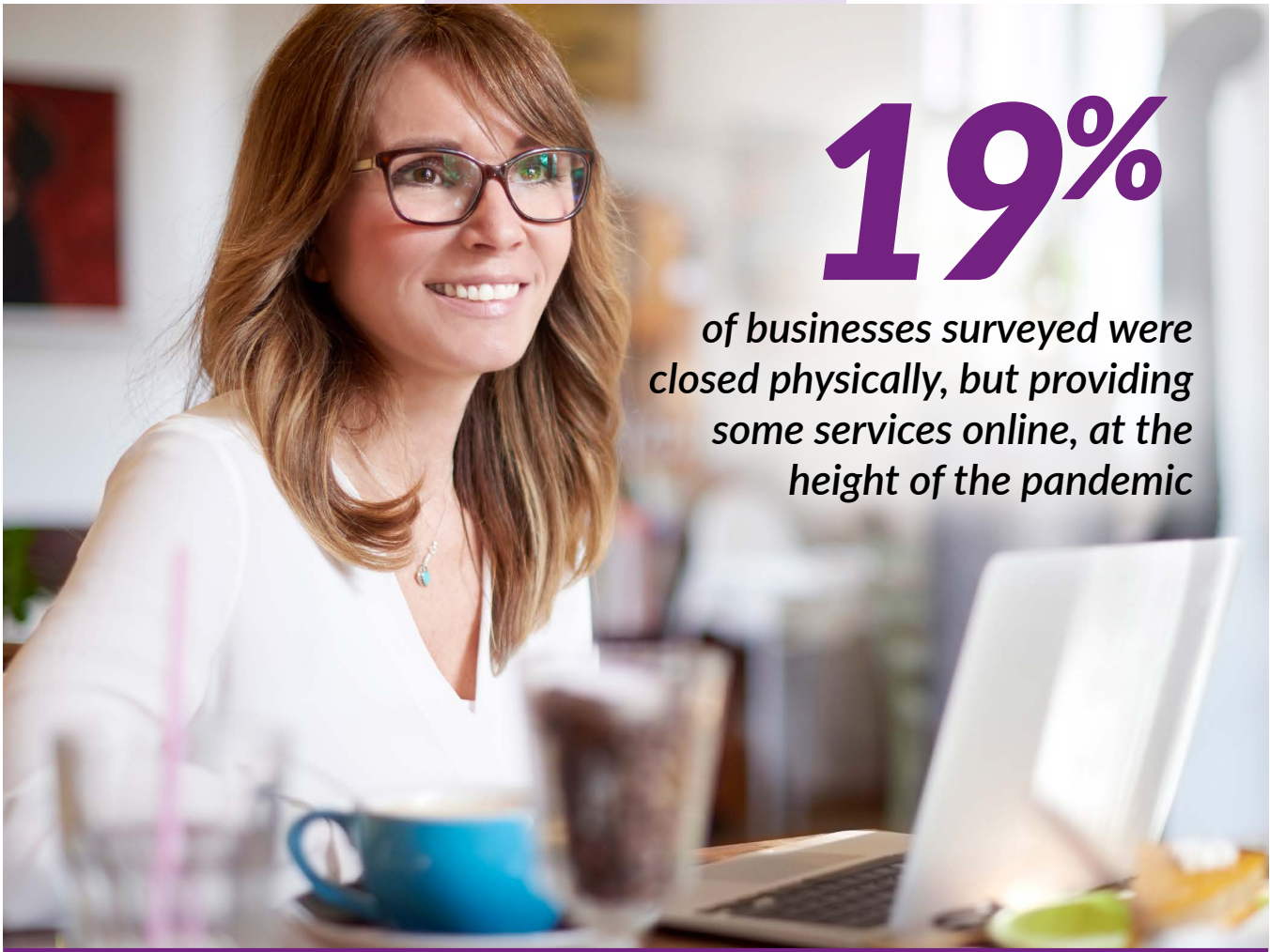
- WASHING HANDS
- USE MASK
- AVOID CONTACT WITH ANIMALS

**Symptoms:** FEVER, HEADACHE, MUSCLE PAIN, COUGH, DYSPNEA

No review of the Council's progress for this year would be complete without reflecting the unprecedented scale of the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. The table below outlines the impact on our people, the economy and the organisation itself as at 14 April 2021.

Table 1: COVID 19 Data sets monitored		
Our People	Our Economy	The Council
Number of C19 Confirmed Cases: <b>5,798</b>  Number of C19 Deaths: <b>85</b>  Referrals to the Community Coordination Hub: <b>2741</b>  Number of individuals who were advised to shield: <b>5,271</b>  A total of <b>17,000</b> food parcels distributed across the district (1275-1300 per week at peak (May 2020))  % of those in receipt of DfC food packs who indicated a need for ongoing support: <b>33%</b>	Economic output in NI fell by <b>2.8%</b> in 2020, as measured by the NI Composite Economic Index (NECEI)  <b>85%</b> of all businesses have used the furlough scheme (NI)  Cumulatively, <b>16,000</b> employments in Fermanagh and Omagh have been furloughed since the Coronavirus Jobs Retention Scheme (CJRS) was introduced (there were over 14,000 employments furloughed at peak, or 32% of eligible jobs as at July 2020)	C19 related expenditure: <b>£838,892</b> (2020/21 subject to audit)  Number of community groups supported for C19 activities: <b>67</b>  Emergency funding allocated: <b>£130k</b>  <b>230</b> community groups supported for the Recover Grant programme  Recover Grant programme funding allocated: <b>£114,881.68</b>

Table 1: COVID 19 Data sets monitored		
Our People	Our Economy	The Council
<p>Increased demand experienced by foodbanks: 8 to <b>10</b> times increase in 'normal demand' reported by some foodbanks during Covid-19 peaks</p>	<p>In February 2021, the number of employments on the furlough scheme had dropped to <b>5,800</b>, accounting for <b>13%</b> of eligible jobs</p> <p>A total of <b>16,600</b> claims have been made to the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), claiming a total of £43.4m, across the 3 tranches. (First Tranche: 6,400, £17.8m; Second Tranche: 5,600, £13.6m; Third Tranche: 4,600, £12.5m)</p> <p><b>58%</b> of businesses surveyed by Fermanagh and Omagh DC were closed, with no online business, at peak</p>	<p>No of staff working remotely / agile working: <b>325</b> (of the 325 employees, 144 employees are currently agile working)</p> <p>No of staff working on site: <b>327</b></p> <p>No of staff furloughed: <b>88</b> (of the 88 furloughed employees, 42 employees are flexibly furloughed (therefore 46 are fully furloughed)</p>



**19%**

*of businesses surveyed were closed physically, but providing some services online, at the height of the pandemic*



### Emerging demands

Councils were part of the front line in the fight against coronavirus. Preserving essential services, supporting vulnerable groups, and responding to hardship amongst residents and businesses. The Council continues to actively assess emerging new demands through the collation of data and analysis as outlined in the 'Table 1: COVID 19 Data sets monitored'. As social restrictions lift, and local health care systems see secondary waves of demand threaten to overwhelm capacity, it is recognised the Council may need to continue to focus on delivering its core services and widen its remit to help prevent extensive vulnerability.



### Regional vs Local Priorities

It is important to recognise the resource implications for the organisation, as Stormont continues to launch initiatives that local Councils are required to administer. The reduction in income generated as a result of closures of arts, leisure and cultural facilities continues. The levelling up agenda and the disparities amongst some of our communities have been further highlighted during these unprecedented times and work to promote fairness and improved quality of life outcomes for all our people is a priority.



### Responsive to change

As it stands many uncertainties about the future exist. However, seizing positive opportunities to learn lessons and capitalise on learned experiences is vital and the Council is working to ensure emerging demands are met and decisions are taken to prepare for a 'new normal' through its strategic planning processes, which are becoming more innovative and agile in approach to meet these demands.



### Workforce

Staff started working from home, other critical and frontline workers quickly established how to continue their roles in a new social distancing context and critical services were provided by 269 staff continuing to work onsite. Managers had to swiftly adapt to managing a range of front line and remote teams while at the same time trying to understand and implement a tidal wave of new government guidance on service delivery and working practices.

**SECTION 2.0**

# Strategic Planning and Vision

## 2.0 | Strategic Planning and Vision

Community Planning is a statutory duty placed on the Council as outlined in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 which states the Council must 'lead in bringing together partner organisations including statutory, business and community and voluntary sector organisations operating to agree priorities for the District'. The Community Plan for the district, 'Fermanagh and Omagh 2030', is the overarching, outcomes based, long-term strategy for the area, developed through a process of co-design with the community and partners. It is based on a thorough analysis of the district's needs and priorities through the collation of relevant data and intelligence, supported with local knowledge through participative engagement and consultation with its people. Further information on the community planning process, including a

copy of the Community Plan, is available at [bit.ly/3uYZvtm](http://bit.ly/3uYZvtm). Legislation requires that Councils report to the public, publishing on 30 November, every two years, a Statement of Progress outlining progress towards the six identified outcomes, updated population indicator data trends and actions progressed. The Council's most recent Statement of Progress can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/FO2030StatementOfProgress>

Although, as indicated above, the Corporate Plan 'Delivering Sustainable Change 2020-2024' has been updated by the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020 - 2022 to take account of the implications of the pandemic, the shared Community Planning and Corporate Vision and the Council's mission is still central to the approach to performance management and supporting recovery and is set out below:



***“Our Vision is of a welcoming, shared and inclusive Fermanagh and Omagh district, where people and places are healthy, safe, connected and prosperous, and where our outstanding natural, built and cultural heritage is cherished and sustainably managed”.***

# Our Mission

The Council has defined its core purpose as:



*“We work in partnership to improve the lives and wellbeing of our communities”*

The Council has aligned its services and activities in the *Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-2022* to deliver towards the three identified themes and six long-term outcomes set out in the ‘FO 2030 Community Plan’ and Corporate Plan ‘*Delivering Sustainable Change Together 2020-2024*’

Theme:



## People and Communities

Outcome:

1. Our People are Healthy & Well - Physically, Mentally & Emotionally
2. Older people lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives
3. Our communities are inclusive, safe, resilient and empowered
4. Our people have the best start in life, with lifelong opportunities to fulfil their potential

Theme:



## Economy, Infrastructure & Skills

Outcome:

5. Our economy is thriving, expanding and outward looking

Theme:



## Environment

Outcome:

6. Our outstanding and culturally rich environment is cherished, sustainably managed and appropriately accessible.



The 27 Corporate Actions identified in the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-2022 have also been linked to the Council's Values Framework. Leadership emerged as an area of huge importance during the crisis with diverse and dispersed teams responding to demands beyond their usual roles, many redeployed and others taking on additional duties. The Values Framework highlights the importance of promoting compassionate, collective, transparent and decisive leadership as the organisation reconfigures teams, rethinks how resources are deployed and re engineers longstanding practices and processes to meet new demands. One of the outcomes of this crisis for the Council is more emphasis on developing behavioural and values-driven leadership and embedding this throughout the organisation. A process to embed the Council's values into recruitment, induction and learning and development processes and practice is progressing and scheduled to be completed in December 2021.

The Council has also sought to align its services and activities with 15 of 17 related Sustainable Development Goals in the Diagram: Our Values.

### Our Values

The Council has adopted the following Values to guide our behaviour in the workplace and how we relate to our work colleagues, our customers, our communities and our partners.



## 2.1 | Our Key Principles

Providing clarity on how, as an organisation, the Council would respond during COVID 19 was critical. The Council agreed four key principles to drive its decision making and support those most in need during the crisis and as it emerged into recovery, outlined in the table below 'Fermanagh and Omagh key principles in the fight against COVID 19'. These allowed the organisation to move at speed and respond effectively to support communities through the crisis, for example, providing and co-ordinating support for those who were shielding, and delivering food packages and medicines through the process of a newly established community hub.

The collation of relevant, robust, and timely data on a weekly basis, was prioritised and progressed and data trends and analysis reported to Senior Management on a weekly basis by the Council's Data Team, including reviewing the trends in transmission rate and testing. Daily data reports were prepared and presented to Senior Management Team during the month of April and weekly reports thereafter. These were continuously monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring performance of the agreed 27 corporate actions utilising an outcomes-based approach has been embedded in the culture of the organisation. Performance Report Cards are

in place for each corporate action and a suite of performance measures have been developed to enable progress to be monitored, reviewed and where necessary, a change in approach adopted to meet new and emerging demands. This supports monitoring the effectiveness of actions identified in terms of their impact and contribution towards agreed outcomes, population indicators and council values.

As the Council progresses towards the end of the lifespan of the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-22, the 'NI Executive's Building Forward; Consolidated COVID 19 Recovery Plan' will become central to determining and aligning new approaches to support recovery locally. The priority is to work with Government, residents, partners, and businesses to ensure reduced infection rates, an effective vaccination programme is delivered and to lead economic recovery. During these times the Council's approach to strategic planning has had to move away from traditional plans and become more flexible. The fast-changing nature of COVID 19 and its impacts demands a different approach. Instead, we will be agile, evidence led, and responsive ensuring actions are supporting the people of our district in line with health regulations.

### Fermanagh and Omagh key principles in the fight against COVID 19

Key Principles	How we will deliver
<b>Safeguarding public health is our top priority</b>	We will always be guided by public health advice to protect health, safety and wellbeing
<b>Building resilience in our organisation</b>	We will endeavour to be resilient and sustainable as an organisation and continue to provide essential services to our communities.
<b>Working with others</b>	Collaboration across public, private and the community/voluntary sector is essential to delivering on our agreed outcomes.
<b>Continual monitoring and review</b>	This is a volatile situation and we will continue to monitor data and evidence to ensure a high level of preparedness and enable us to respond in a timely and effective manner. As such, this plan remains a working document and subject to ongoing review. A Performance Report Card will be developed for each Corporate Action and a suite of performance measures will be agreed to enable monitoring of the effectiveness of actions in terms of their impact and contribution towards our values and outcomes; these will follow an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) approach.



SECTION 3.0

# Ensuring Continuous Improvement

## 3.0 | Ensuring Continuous Improvement

'The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014' outlines the roles and responsibilities of Councils and prescribes that achieving continuous improvement in how a Council delivers its services must be prioritised.

A new approach to managing performance will be implemented further in 2021 as the Council promotes recovery. This process will help the Council to detail its ambitions and expectations for corporate performance and how it proposes to continuously improve on performance year on year.

The Council's accepted definition of improvement is taken from the statutory guidance and states that "improvement is...more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement for Councils should mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities"

The legislation states that the Council "must have regard in particular to the need to improve the exercise of its functions in terms of":



**Strategic effectiveness**



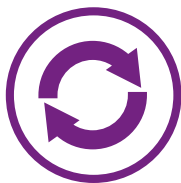
**Service quality**



**Service availability**



**Fairness**



**Sustainability**



**Efficiency**



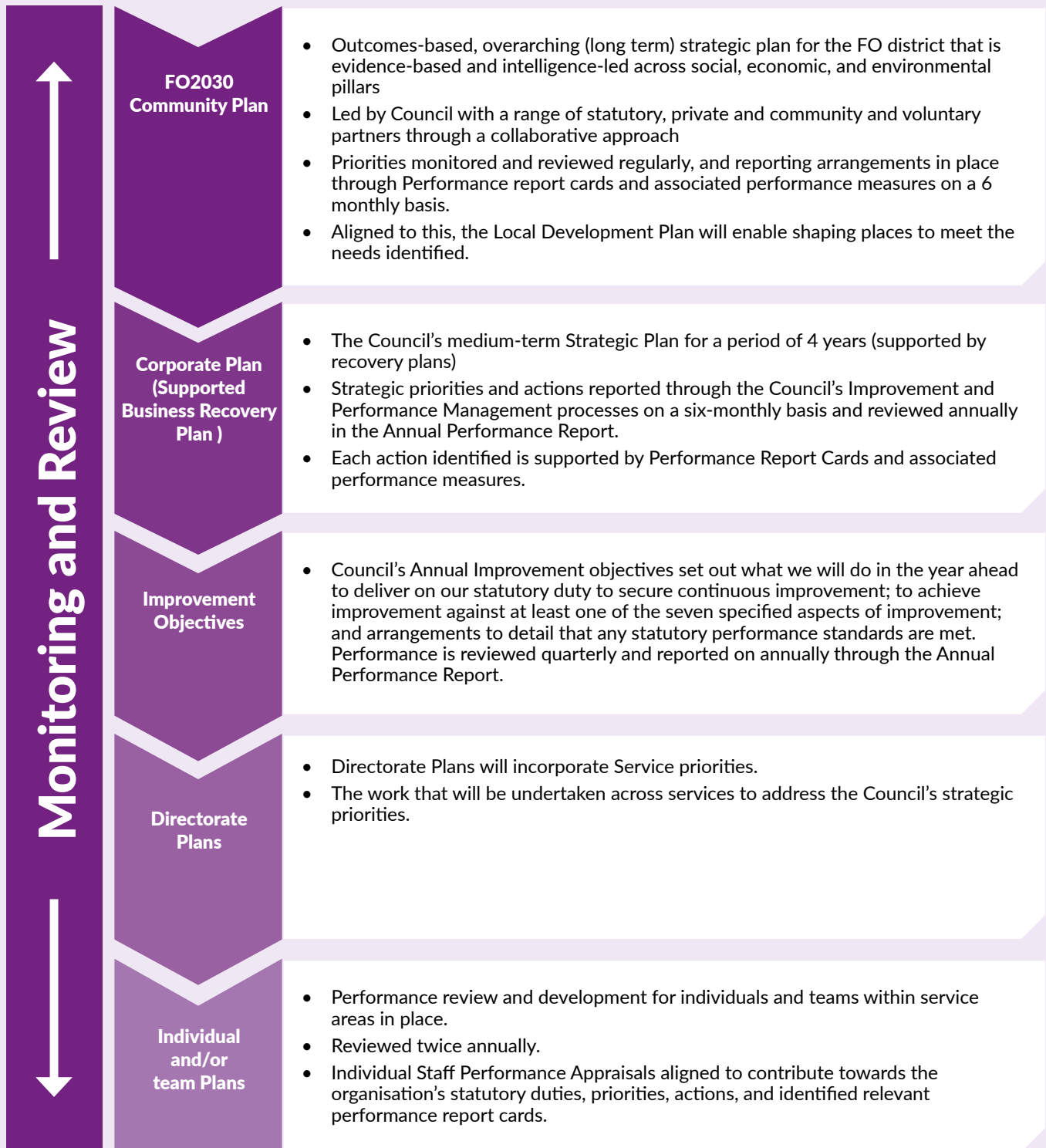
**Innovation**

Striving to achieve continuous improvement is vital to how the Council works with its partners and delivers services on an ongoing basis. The experiences and learning from the COVID 19 pandemic have been incorporated into this approach and when implementing the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-2022. The Council continues to work to deliver responsive services in the places they are needed most, and this will be maximised further in the future through intelligence arising from utilisation of robust data and evidence.

The Council has systems and processes in place which work intrinsically together to support achieving success and ensuring continuous improvement. Its Integrated Strategic Planning Framework supports the Council to deliver efficiently, manage operational risks, and align programmes with the evolving data needs of the district. It is a composite reflection of long, medium- and short-term plans across the organisation (including the Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020-2022) and encourages a collaborative approach to service delivery that works from the bottom up and vice versa.

## Strategic Planning Framework

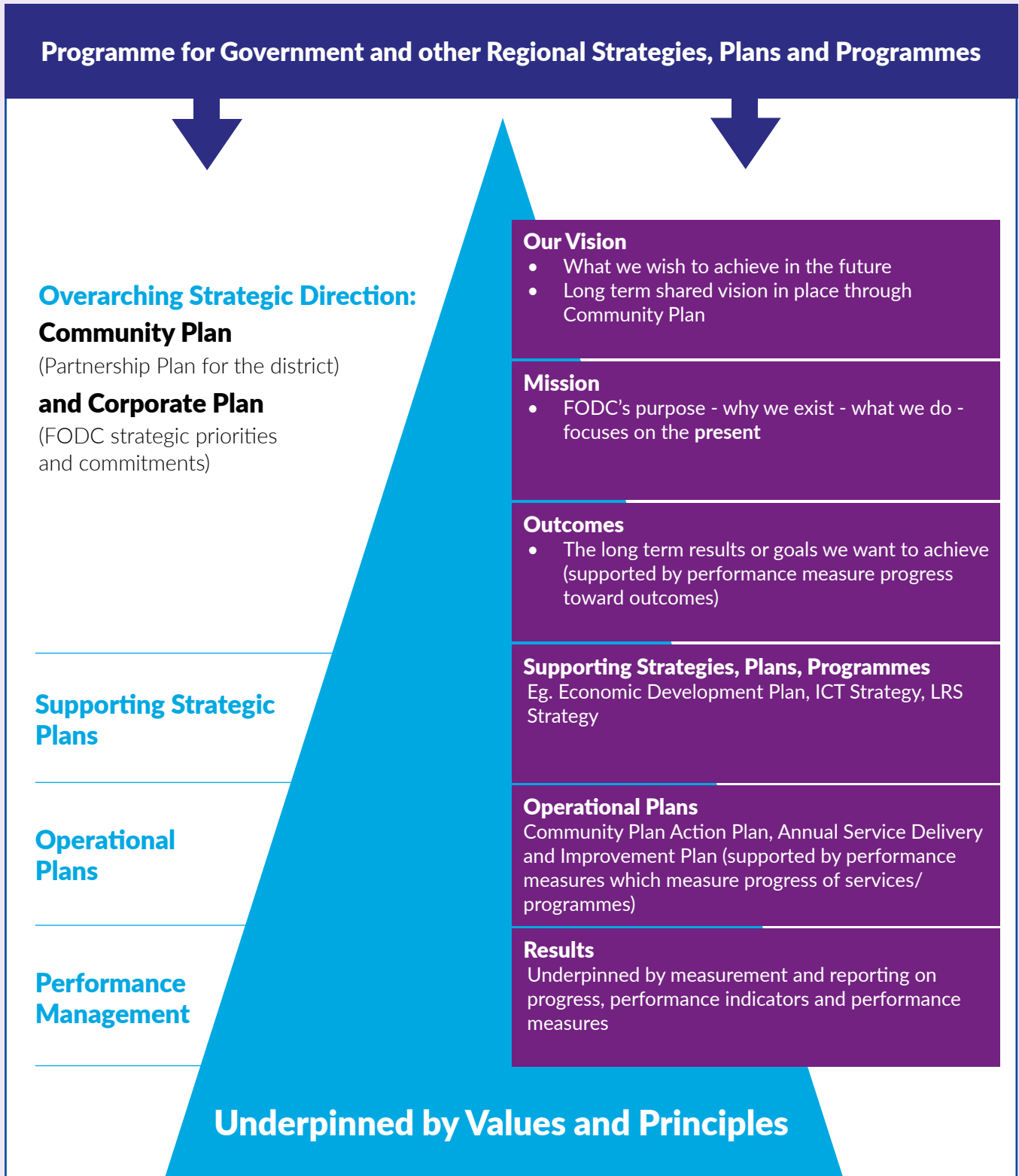
The Council has adopted the following Values to guide our behaviour in the workplace and how we relate to our work colleagues, our customers, our communities and our partners.



The linkages across all plans at strategic, operational and individual levels is paramount as the Council develops a culture that embodies shared responsibility and supports effective communication at all levels of the organisation, whilst promoting the use of data and evidence to demonstrate need and targeted interventions.

## Hierarchy of Strategies and Plans

A hierarchy of strategies and plans is in place and will continue to guide the Council’s strategic policy direction and its service delivery arrangements as outlined below in Diagram: Hierarchy of Strategies and Plans.



Managing and improving performance is not something that should be seen as additional to the day job. It is everyone’s responsibility, forming part of everyday effective management, forward planning and working practice in every area of the Council. This is supported using outcomes-based accountability performance management framework which the Council has adopted, outlined in the diagram: Outcomes Based Approach = Forward Planning and Effective Management.

**Outcomes Based Approach = Forward Planning and Effective Management.**



*Independent scrutiny is provided through the Council's Audit Panel and the Northern Ireland Audit Office.*



## 3.1 Internal Audit and Risk Management

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework, including the system of internal control and arrangements for performance management and improvement.

The Council has taken steps to strengthen its governance processes this year, through the Emergency Management Team in response to COVID 19, continued operation of a Transformation Programme and Working Group in supporting an organisational restructure review (COFORM) and continuation of a Brexit Committee.

During this period of reporting the most significant risks currently relate to uncertainties in delivering an effective response to the pandemic outbreak; not optimising opportunities to mitigate against the impact of the Climate emergency; the enactment of Council decisions; retaining an appropriate profile of services at the local hospitals; and delivering an effective response to the implications of EU Exit. The Audit Panel considers and approves any updates to the associated Risk Management Policy, considers the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements, and seeks assurances that action has been taken on risk related issues identified by External and Internal Audit. The minutes of the Audit Panel are reported through the Policy and Resources Committee to the Council.

Internal Audit is responsible for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of systems of internal control. As part of the Council's shared internal audit service, the Internal Audit function presents the Annual Report and overall Assurance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2021. The Internal Audit function continued to operate during the COVID 19 pandemic and met five times during the financial year. Assurance Audit

Reports (all of which received a Satisfactory Opinion), an Advisory Audit Report and two investigation reports were completed.

The assurance framework requires Directors and Heads of Service to consider annually the adequacy of risk management arrangements, internal controls and wider governance issues within their service areas. It also provides information on the level of compliance with the various elements of the Council's Governance Framework. The Directors and Heads of Services are required to monitor, and keep under review, the operation of internal controls, within their area, and to implement changes, where deemed necessary.

The Audit Panel provides independent assurance to the Council on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and associated control environment. It also provides independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance. The Audit Panel met five times during 2020-21 and satisfactorily discharged its programme of work and is satisfied that the governance arrangements in place are effective and continue to be fit for purpose.

All these processes combine to ensure that the Council effectively manages performance and takes all possible steps to meet the General Duty placed on it to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. The Council's Annual Review of Governance can be viewed on the Council's website at [www.fermanaghomagh.com](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com), alongside the audited accounts for 2020/21 (which will be available by the 30th of September 2021).





**SECTION 4.0**

# COVID 19 Corporate Business and Recovery Plan Progress Update

# 4.0

## COVID 19 Corporate Business and Recovery Plan Progress Update



In March 2020, following the introduction of government restrictions and lockdown measures in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Council rapidly responded alongside statutory and community and voluntary organisations to the unfolding emergency.

As outlined in section one of this document the development and implementation of the Council's two year Corporate Business and Recovery Plan 2020 - 2022 was progressed and a focus on providing necessary support to communities in need, preventing the spread of infection, working in partnership to support the health sector, ensuring critical service areas including waste collection, burials and cemeteries and the registration of births and deaths was maintained, as well as providing the necessary advice and support for businesses and town centres to promote recovery and to support the organisation itself was prioritised. IT services and HR worked tirelessly to provide safe and remote access to enable 325 staff to work from home effectively. Some facilities including leisure, arts and cultural centres and community centres closed and staff were redeployed and furloughed where necessary. Capacity building and training

to enable staff to work virtually on platforms including Webex, Teams and in some incidences, Zoom, was progressed at speed, with FODC the first Council to hold its General Monthly Council Meeting online.

The Business and Recovery Plan 2020- 2022 identified 27 actions and was led and coordinated across the four Directorates in Council: Community, Health and Leisure, Corporate Services and Governance, Environment and Place and Regeneration and Planning. All actions required a collaborative approach to delivery which enhanced communication amongst staff throughout the organisation. An update of all 27 actions can be viewed on the council's website at [www.fermanaghomagh.com](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com). An overview of progress against all 27 actions using the agreed performance rag status identified below is outlined in table: Corporate Business and Recovery Plan Actions

## What we said we would do:

Rag Status	<b>Green</b>	Action achieved/on track to be achieved
	<b>Amber</b>	Action experiencing some issues which are causing delays
	<b>Red</b>	Action not achieved/unlikely to be achieved

Corporate Business and Recovery Plan Actions led and coordinated by:	Number assigned	Number of sub actions	Green	Amber	Red
Community, Health and Leisure Directorate	7	35	26/74%	7/20%	2/6%
Chief Executives and Corporate Services and Governance Directorate	7	20	20/100%	-	-
Environment and Place Directorate	4	23	10/67%	5/33%	-
Regeneration and Planning Directorate	9	15	22/96%	1/4%	-
<b>Overall</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>78/93 84%</b>	<b>13/93 14%</b>	<b>2/93 2%</b>

An overview of each of the key priority areas identified below is outlined in the following sections. Some of the challenges; examples of service delivery and good practice; key performance measures to demonstrate progress and ongoing service needs to address emerging demands, as well as reference to lessons learned is set out in each section.



Priority Area:

### Community needs identified and supported

Supporting individuals and communities.



Priority Area:

### Public Health

Preventing and responding to infection/spread.



Priority Area:

### Businesses and Town Centres

Supporting businesses and places.



Priority Area:

### FODC Business and Service Continuity

# 4.1 Community needs identified and supported

## Supporting individuals and communities

The response of local community groups in Fermanagh and Omagh to the coronavirus emergency has demonstrated the immense contribution that the community and voluntary sector makes to local places. Community participation and support is essential for promotion of health and wellbeing, and we are certainly more aware of the value of social connections, neighbourliness, sense of belonging, and mutual trust that the Community and Voluntary Sector embodies. Communities have demonstrated their resilience over recent months. Not everyone was equally impacted by the pandemic, and those that were already disadvantaged found it challenging to maintain resilience and participate in social networks in the face of the outbreak.

### 4.1.1 Key Challenges Identified

- 1 Poor mental health** - The frequency and length of lockdowns coupled with shielding restrictions, reduced access to services, limited social contact and support networks, with increased risks to mental health.
- 2 Social isolation and vulnerability** - The immediacy and scale of the lockdown impacted on all aspects of everyday life and left many people feeling isolated and vulnerable. It became apparent from an early stage that the urgency and scale of support and interventions required an unparalleled community response from the Council, statutory partners and the community and voluntary sector to support those experiencing the greatest impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and restrictions.
- 3 Families overwhelmed** - Families had to cope with the stress of quarantine and social distancing. School shutdowns led to home-schooling and postponement of exams. Parents experienced increased pressure to work from home, to keep jobs and businesses running as well as to take care of schooling children at home at the same time, while caregiver resources including grandparents and the wider family were restricted.
- 4 Digital Divide** - As virtual service provision became the new norm the digital divide within communities became even more apparent. Poor broadband access, poor digital literacy skills, as well as limited access to devices became evident.
- 5 Financial insecurity** - Business closures and job loss, the furlough scheme and economic decline increased food poverty, fuel poverty and overall financial stability. Foodbanks experienced a 10-fold increase in requests for support.

## 4.1.2 Examples of what we did...

### Development of Community Hub

A community hub was established and resourced by employees from across the Council who were working from home. Working with partners, including those within the Western Health and Social Care Trust, Public Health Agency, DfC and Advice NI, the hub assisted approximately 2,600 people requiring support including access to food, be-friending services, and general information on local support available across a multitude of areas. More than 17,000 food parcels were delivered to households across the district. The support received from Council Volunteers and our partners Easilink, Fermanagh Community Transport, the Red Cross and DAERA was critical in ensuring the transportation of parcels to vulnerable households across the district.

### Grant aid support

Throughout 2020/21 the Department for Communities allocated additional funding through the Community Support Programme to support the COVID Community Response across the district. This funding was allocated by the Council to support community led and collaborative partnership responses to assist the most vulnerable because of the pandemic and included a number of targeted initiatives promoting financial inclusion, access to food, volunteering and a 'Warm Well and Connected' fund. The Council worked closely with local foodbanks, conferences of St Vincent De Paul, generalist advice providers, the community and voluntary sector, and other networks/support organisations to deliver a range of funded programmes.

### Information Sharing/Building Capacity

The Community Services Team collated information as a resource to help people identify local support including for example, food provision including foodbanks, transport providers and community support groups operating in the area. A team of Community Liaison Officers were deployed to work closely with the community and voluntary sector to ensure access to available funding, the development of risk assessments, enhance referral pathways, to support self-care and sustain service provision.

### Connecting People through digital platforms

South West Age Partnership (SWAP) was funded by Fermanagh and Omagh PCSP to roll out a 'Let's Get Connected' project to get older people online using 4G enabled tablets. The tablets were allocated, with training to support participants



using the tablets and getting online. The tablets had a sim card like that used for mobile phones which meant users did not have to have broadband in their homes to access the internet. The pilot project made 12 tablets available for a 3-month loan period to older residents in the district. Online training support and several online classes for participants funded through Place EE and Age Friendly were also provided as part of the project. (Picture of Let's Get Connected packs provided content).

## Virtual Service Provision

Service delivery was adapted with meetings and activities moving online which enabled residents to partake in Council programmes virtually by developing and enhancing digital engagement using Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, including insights into the history of the district from the Museum and Heritage Service, summer schemes, physical activity, community, and arts programmes. Residents and those from further afield were also able to enjoy events such as the switching on of the Christmas lights in Omagh and Enniskillen and the 'live' programme delivered by the Ardhowen Theatre and Strule Arts Centre in conjunction with local artists who performed live through the platform of Facebook.

## Supporting older people

Positive Ageing Month is a month-long campaign of events and activities for older people that recognises and celebrates the contribution older people make to their communities and the wider society. This year, a mixture of activities took place that enabled older people to connect both virtually through online events and physically where this was permissible within the COVID 19 guidelines. A comprehensive programme of events was developed that encouraged older people to take the five steps to well-being; Be Active, Give, Connect, Keep Learning and Take Notice.




### 4.1.3 Key performance measures




**17,000**  
food parcels delivered to shielded residents across the district

Physical activities and cultural arts and heritage programmes moved online with  
**240,000 views**

**£10,579.74**  
grant aid supported **23** groups towards volunteers' costs



**2,621**  
residents supported through the Community Hub



**£366,198.55**  
grant aid administered to **188** organisations involved in community response



**1,561**  
Participants attended coaching sessions on site with safety regulations implemented




Christmas Cheer Initiative delivered to **1850** vulnerable older people

## Community needs identified and supported



Play Strategy approved by Council in January 2020 and initial Play Plan developed for the district to promote outdoor play

**Family Focus**  
activities for Summer Schemes, Halloween, Christmas, Seachta na Gaeilge and St Patrick's Day delivered on-line



Education programmes and on-line resources at Marble Arch Caves and Enniskillen Museum with **719** participants taking part virtually, onsite and through outreach work



**Age Friendly**  
Conference took place in March 2021 via zoom and 60 older people attended.

Advice Services provided  
**11,923** clients with benefits advice and financial support



**60** Community and Voluntary organisations supported  
Community capacity building programme

**£20,000**  
funding provided to St Vincent De Paul to provide Fuel Vouchers to support those in fuel poverty



### What our customers said:

'This food parcel has been most welcome and has saved me from going to the shops over this very dangerous time' 😊

**Food Parcel Scheme Participant**

'Only for the food parcel I received today I would not have been able to feed my two children'

**Foodbank Client**

'Thank you for the wellbeing boxes, the kids were so excited and there was so much in them'

**Beneficiary of the well-being boxes delivered in partnership with Action Mental Health and CYPSP**

'My two teenagers and myself, want to express how thankful we are for your kindness. The food was amazing, and we made a few yummy dinners. Everything in the box was so well balanced, from fresh bread and fruit. We wish to return that truly amazing gift when we find our feet.'



**Food Parcel Scheme Participant**

'We are all missing our weekly exercise sessions and seeing people, the gentle exercise classes on a Monday morning via Zoom are a great way to keep active and in touch. Thank you' ❤️

**Participant in a virtual activity programme**

#### 4.1.4 What we need to continue to do, and lessons learned ...

**Community infrastructure** - the Community and Voluntary sector played a key role in the response to COVID 19 at a local level and has demonstrated the value of a strong community infrastructure. As we recover from the pandemic ongoing support for this sector will be hugely important as new needs emerge at a local level, particularly in the rural areas of our district where poverty and deprivation can be masked by the lack of data and evidence.

**Supporting those in need** - the considerable levels of poverty and social isolation within our district will continue to worsen as furlough comes to an end, job losses continue, and benefit allowances are reduced. It is important that referral agencies continue to work across organisational boundaries to develop programmes and initiatives that target those most in need and provide long term solutions.

**Joined up working** - the pandemic highlighted the importance and advantages of joined up working with other statutory bodies and the community and voluntary sector. This partnership approach has already paid dividends with programmes now being drawn up and delivered jointly with the WHSCT and the Public Health Agency, in association with the community and voluntary sector. Whilst the relationships always existed, the close working which was required during the pandemic has shown all stakeholders that more can be achieved by collectively delivering and investing in relationship building. This will be a significant priority for community, health, leisure, arts and cultural activity as we provide better services to our citizens in the future.

**Adapting delivery** - as the regulations change and our facilities re-open, many of the programmes that worked well, and resources developed as part of the virtual offering will continue online within a 'blended' approach to programme delivery.



## 4.2

# Public Health

## Preventing and responding to infection/spread

The Council's Environmental Health Service has a statutory role across a range of functions including health and safety, food control, public health, housing, consumer safety and environmental protection. The service also delivers functions around planning and development control and health improvement.

### 4.2.1 Key Challenges Identified

- 1 New skills**

The Environmental Health Service had to adapt quickly with the onset of Covid to satisfy the increased demands of the public and businesses. The service has also had to be flexible and agile, working remotely from home with a blend of office-based support, to ensure effective and efficient service delivery.
- 2 Enabling informed decisions**

The past year has seen some of the most severe restrictions many of us are likely to see in our lifetime. The situation is continually changing and one of the many challenges faced by the EHS is to keep abreast of the latest changes to regulations and guidance, so that consistent and correct advice is given to members of the public and businesses who contact the department looking for assistance, or to make a complaint. The Council was designated on 25 May 2020, to enforce certain provisions of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (NI) 2020 in conjunction with the PSNI.
- 3 Increased demand for services**

Before the pandemic, much of the work of the EHS was proactive/programmed, ie, carrying out routine Food/Health & Safety inspections while about 30-40% was reactive, dealing with service requests/complaints etc. The Covid pandemic increased the emphasis on reactive work as businesses tried to adapt to the changing regulations introduced by the NI Executive. At the beginning of the first lockdown, the EHS was inundated with queries from businesses about whether they could remain open or if they had to close. There were also numerous queries from businesses to determine if they could remain open in some capacity by altering their business model, as many were concerned for their future survival. Many complaints were also received from members of the public about potential contraventions of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (NI) 2020. Proactive visits were not possible as many of the premises the EHS have enforcing authority responsibility for were closed. Initial visits were carried out to the essential retail outlets that were permitted to open to assess how well the Covid-19 controls, such as social distancing and hygiene measures, were being implemented on the ground.
- 4 Close contact services**

As we emerged from lockdown during the summer of 2020, the close contact services, eg hairdressers, beauticians etc, were contacted by Government Departments to provide evidence they had adequate controls in place. New ways of working by requesting evidence of compliance remotely, to minimise time required on site were trialled quite successfully. At that time, some joint visits were carried out with the PSNI to assess conditions in bars and hotels that were permitted to open. The Safety Certificates for sports grounds were amended to reflect change to their safe capacities for spectators when the appropriate social distancing measures are in

place. In the latter end of 2020, as the number of cases began to increase in the community, new queries came into the department, eg the action a business needs to take if a member of staff tested positive. The EHS acts as an agent on behalf of the Public Health Agency (PHA) for local communicable disease cases, eg food poisoning/food borne illness investigations, and the Council's role during this pandemic has been to follow-up with local businesses where positive cases have been identified. The service has also assisted with community clusters in identifying potential sources locally and acting as a conduit for information to and from the PHA.

5

### Ensuring public protection

The Environmental Health Service has a regulatory role in consumer protection and during the pandemic, has supported local businesses producing hand sanitiser and PPE for consumer use, making sure that the products comply with local manufacturing standards and legislative requirements and that the products placed on the market are safe and provide the necessary protections being claimed.

## 4.2.2 Examples of what we did...

### Collaborative practice

Throughout the course of the past year the EHS has kept up to date with the ever-changing landscape of restrictions and relaxations, through daily contact and communication with a range of stakeholders both internally and externally. The Environmental Health profession across Northern Ireland used their support network to maximum effect not only providing information and advice to colleagues in all 11 Councils, but also attending meetings, consulting on legislative changes and sector specific guidance on behalf of SOLACE and The Executive Office.

Internally, the communication channels with colleagues in Emergency Planning, Health and Safety, Community Services, Economic Development and right across the Council including for example contacts within stores to access PPE, IT provision, etc has been excellent.

### Skilled staff

The Environmental Health Service has, over the past 5 years, ensured that Environmental Health Officers are multi skilled and are trained across a range of functions. This has proved invaluable as these highly trained Officers have been able to respond to the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic very quickly. In addition, a team of principal and lead officers have provided expert advice and support for the EHOs and have provided the links with regional networks and other stakeholders to ensure that all current information is cascaded to the entire team.

Arrangements are in place, between the PSNI and the Council, in respect of provision of advice, information and the enforcement of the regulations in the licensed/hospitality sector.

### Enforcement of legislation

The service carried out targeted joint visits with PSNI colleagues in the licensed/hospitality sector and local contacts have been established for updating on complaints/issues with premises etc. The Environment Health Service has also focused resources on various business sectors according to the restrictions and the graduated relaxations. Where possible, the service has contacted businesses in advance of the relaxations and anticipated reopening of the sector to advise them of any changes/additional requirements they need to have in place to ensure compliance with the legislation.

### 4.2.3 Key performance measures

 <p>Service Requests increased by <b>60%</b> for Environmental Health Services with <b>2852</b> requests received</p>	<p><b>850</b></p> <p>advice requests for service in relation to COVID 19</p> 	<p><b>98</b></p> <p>Home energy assessments carried out</p> 	
<p><b>1500</b></p>  <p>on site monitoring visits and inspections of business premises carried out to ensure compliance with health regulations</p>	<p><b>24</b></p>  <p>participants took part in virtual Slow Cooker project to promote nutritional awareness</p>	 <p><b>105</b></p> <p>virtual visits facilitated for under 5s in relation to home safety home safety.</p>	
 <p><b>130</b></p> <p>remote Covid assessments were facilitated with businesses</p>	<h2>Public Health</h2>		<p><b>100</b></p>  <p>virtual visits facilitated for clients over 65 in relation to home safety</p>
<p>Project to upskill older people in the use of technology for recreational and health purposes 'Let's Get Connected' Project provided with telephone training on the use of iPads.</p>	<p>Programme of activities delivered during <b>Positive Aging Month</b> using virtual platforms and direct participation in line with Government Guidelines</p> 	<p>Pilot project delivered in partnership with <b>Volunteer Support Organisations</b> to promote formal registration and continued opportunities for volunteers involved in the volunteer response</p>	
 <p>Covid response campaign developed with <b>10-point key messaging</b> around 4 themes: Keep Safe: Support local: Stronger Together and Thank you</p>	<p><b>Food poverty</b> working across the district set up with foodbanks, advice services and referral agents</p> 	<p><b>1200</b></p> <p>Businesses signed up to the Confidence Marketing Scheme</p> 	

#### 4.2.4 What we need to continue to do, and lessons learned ...

**Promote agility in approach and ensure regional communication processes are robust** - Councils very often throughout this pandemic have learned of changes to restrictions and legislation when it has been announced via the media. This has been a source of frustration for the EHS as many businesses and members of the public who have contacted the service have expected Officers to provide assurance/ advice and guidance on these matters.

**Continue to support staff** - Officers have had to build their own personal resilience in dealing with challenging situations and interacting with businesses and the public. The service will ensure that staff are suitably trained and adhere to continual professional development guidelines, thereby providing a competent workforce that is capable of adapting to the future challenges of this pandemic.

**Timely information provided** - The EHS will continue to liaise with colleagues and stakeholders on the most current restrictions/relaxations and provide the necessary support to local businesses and the public in a timely manner.

**Capitalise on partnership working** - The importance of partnership working with statutory agencies, businesses and the public has certainly paid dividends in providing an effective public health response to the Covid crisis. This collaboration will prove vital as we recover.



## 4.3

# Businesses and Town Centres

## Supporting businesses and places

The Fermanagh and Omagh economy is one which is largely self-contained with a high number of SMEs, up to 85% of local businesses employ less than 5 people with many operating as sole traders. Business Support is a particular priority for FODC as a means of supporting and maintaining SMEs and the high levels of business start-up and entrepreneurship in the district. Despite the unprecedented government support schemes that have been introduced since the Covid 19 lockdown, the economy has suffered and businesses across all sectors have had an uphill struggle to sustain business activity. While the FODC area has existing strengths in manufacturing, construction, agri-food and tourism, there has also been a need to encourage growth locally in new and emerging sectors, to support businesses to adapt their business models and to work with regional and sub-regional partners to identify new business support approaches.

### 4.3.1 Key Challenges Identified

- 1 Impact on the High Street**  
Restrictions imposed on all town centres meant that the vibrancy and footfall of our town centres was dramatically reduced. The impact this has had on business and service providers, their owners, managers, and staff has been extensive. Many adapted by introducing an online presence and changes in shopping patterns have added to the existing challenges already being experienced by town centres and retailers generally.
- 2 Tourism and hospitality sector has been significantly impacted**  
It is estimated that it will take at least 5 years for NI tourism performance to return to pre-pandemic 2019 levels and there is a risk that some tourism and hospitality businesses will not survive the impact of Covid-19. This will of course add to the levels of unemployment and reduce levels of spend in the local economy.
- 3 The impact on mental health of business owners**  
Beyond the business itself, the pandemic and recurrent restrictions have negatively impacted mental health and wellbeing of business owners, entrepreneurs and the self-employed. This is also of significance in economic terms given the potential impact on the willingness or ability of people to start and grow new business.
- 4 EU EXIT Preparation**  
The uncertainty and disruption arising from EU Exit and the introduction of the Northern Ireland Protocol has been an added challenge for local businesses who have responded pragmatically and positively. However, the ongoing shortages affecting the supply chain and driving up prices is continuing to be a challenge alongside labour market shortages.

## 4.3.2 Examples of what we did...

### Developed Town Centre Recovery Plans

Two Town Centre Recovery Plans were developed for Enniskillen and Omagh town centres which focused on five key themes: Business Support, Improving User Experience, Events and Animation, Marketing and Communications, and Improving our Spaces and Places. Regular meetings of Town Centre Recovery Groups in both key urban centres are ongoing to inform and monitor progress of these plans. A number of urban capital projects are also being delivered including an urban garden in Omagh and resurfacing of the Buttermarket in Enniskillen.

### Grant funding for businesses and places

Department for Communities and DAERA funding supported the actions within the Town Centre Recovery Plans. Business Support funding through COVID 19 Business Recovery Grant Aid supported 151 urban businesses with £240k funding and 121 rural businesses to the value of £177k. A second funding call was opened in April 2021. Other actions supported through funding included a new Place Brand for Omagh and Enniskillen, capital projects to deliver improvement works that increase accessibility and encourage walking and cycling, the development of an urban garden encouraging the use of a green space in an urban centre and progressing plans to enhance the sense of arrival with new gateway features in each urban town. In totality, the Council will deliver funding of over £1m to support town centre recovery.

### Retail Heroes Awards competition in the District launched

This year, more than any other year, the retailers of the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area demonstrated tremendous resilience and resourcefulness in the way they carried on their businesses in unprecedented and extremely challenging times. The awards were devised as a means of acknowledging efforts in ensuring that businesses adapted to new ways of service delivery because of the restrictions which were introduced by the Northern Ireland Executive to help curb the spread of COVID 19. Businesses across the retail and hospitality sector took all precautions to make the shopping experience as safe as possible in towns, and villages across the district for all their staff and customers. 950 businesses took part in the competition. The winner of the Retail Heroes Award was Fermanagh Cottage Industries, based in Enniskillen. The runner-up was Mo's newsagents, in Fintona. The positive impact both businesses made to their respective communities and their commitment to ensuring the safety of the shopping experience for their customers, often going over and above what would be normally expected to ensure that the customer's every need was met was acknowledged.



## Using online platforms to deliver services

The COVID-19 lockdown presented immediate challenges for arts and entertainment venues and providers and, with no clear sign of when restrictions would be lifted, those businesses in Fermanagh and Omagh faced months of inactivity, potentially impacting on their longer-term success and viability. The Council recognised the potential of mobilising this community, with its high levels of creativity, organisational skills, and experience of bringing people together to support the district and its residents through the COVID-19 crisis. Just as importantly, the Council understood culture would be a positive avenue to rebuilding confidence, enthusiasm, and sense of community spirit once the district looks towards recovery. The respective arts venues promoted activities and engagement online.

## Continued to deliver ASPIRE Programme

A Recovery Plan was agreed to ensure the range of employability support continued to be available and accessible during lockdown and periods of social restrictions. ASPIRE moved traditional classroom based learning and one-to-one support to remote provision using online platforms, email, and mobile phone applications. All participants were contacted to identify individual circumstances and an appropriately personalised plan of action was implemented. ASPIRE delivered a range of online qualifications and skills development sessions and classes using recorded sessions on Google Classroom accessible to participants 24 hours a day, introduced live classes streamed into participants' homes and remotely supported participants with one-to-one job search, interview skills and mentoring which included cognizance of participants' health and well-being needs. Socially distanced learning was re-introduced during periods when restrictions eased, and a hybrid blended approach implemented. This year a total of 141 participants from across the district enrolled on the programme with 74 people gaining paid employment and an additional 14 progressing to further and higher education. 76 Level 1 qualifications were achieved with 90 industry specific training courses attended.

## Recognition for 'Enterprising Enniskillen'



Enniskillen was recognised in the prestigious Bank of Ireland Begin Together Awards 2020 as runner-up in its population category, coming in second to Ballina, Co Mayo.

This was the first time that the scheme was open to towns and cities in Northern Ireland with a prize fund of £180,000 across 10 categories the awards aimed to support towns locally and across the island of Ireland as they reboot and recover from the impact of COVID-19.



ASPIRE was recognised by the Open College Network in the category of Advancing Learning through Innovation which recognised the efforts of the team to deliver learning during Covid-19.

### 4.3.3 Key performance measures

**Begin Together AWARDS**

Enniskillen recognised as 'Enterprising Town' in Bank of Ireland Begin Together Awards

**1100** 


Town Centre engagement and data gathering received in August 2020

**155** 

consultation responses informed the development of 2 Town Centre Recovery Plans which focuses on 5 key themes: Business Support, Improving User Experience, Events and Animation, Marketing and Communications, and Improving our Spaces and Places.

Programme of Virtual workshops delivered to support SMEs post EU Exit



**FULL** 

Fibre NI project being rolled out across the district

**422** 

Businesses benefited from webinar support with good levels of satisfaction reported

**£ 151**

Urban businesses supported with over **£240k** Recovery Grant Aid and 121 rural businesses with over **£177k**

**Businesses and Town Centres Supporting Businesses and Places**

**£137,600** 

funding provided to Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism to promote the district's tourism product

**Virtual Christmas Light Show** with 

**70,000** views and 1000 comments

**632** 

Mentoring days delivered with businesses through business support programmes

**1250**

businesses signed up to the Council's Covid 19 Confidence Mark initiative which provided advice and guidance on introducing safety measures and adhering to C19 guidance

 **12**

Live and Local @ Lunchtime Music Events in town centres

 **43**

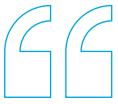
tourism businesses in receipt of mentoring

Village Regeneration Schemes completed in Magheravleely, Drumquin, Dromore and Lisnaskea with investment totalling almost **830k**

Ongoing delivery of Enniskillen Public Realm Scheme with **5m<sup>+</sup>** Investments

Facilities at Gortin Glen Forest Park **2m<sup>+</sup>** Continued Investment





## What our customers said:

'10/10 for the Light Show it was captivating.' 🤩

**Christmas Light Show participant**

'A friend has a child with disabilities and the light show was so easy to go and watch without issue.'

**Christmas Light Show participant**

Thank you so much for supporting us through the Multimedia Support Programme. Some of our footage even made it into the recent Explore Omagh and the Sperrins TV ad on UTV which would never have been achievable for us. 😎

**Multimedia Programme participant**

"Loved the webinar today, plenty of food for thought and delivered in a way that was easy to understand. Thank you".

**Yes, You Can webinar attendee**

### 4.3.4 What we need to continue to do, and lessons learned ...

**Building confidence and agility** - across all sectors in terms of navigating through the COVID 19 restrictions, returning to a more stable trading environment, and ensuring the safety of workplaces for employees and for customers alongside adapting to new ways of working and new business models

**Influencing policy and programmes** - engaging with regional and other partners towards the development of supportive policy and programmes which recognise that SMEs are the backbone of our local and regional economy and that there is a need to work with them to address the challenges of economic recovery and job creation

**Delivering investment** - working with our partners, including Government departments and bodies such as Invest NI, Tourism NI and the High Street Task Force, to bring investment to the district in terms of our existing and new businesses and to showcase the district as an attractive place to live, work and invest. Through the Mid South West Growth Deal we aim to work in partnership to deliver on our Regional Economic Strategy which focuses on supercharging economic growth across the Fermanagh and Omagh, Mid Ulster and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council areas and to address long standing productivity and infrastructural challenges.

**Workforce and skills** - over the past year, many people have been removed from the labour market due to furloughing and business closures. There is a need to support people to re-train and return to work as well as to address labour and skills shortages in key sectors. Working with government partners to address long-standing issues such as access to affordable childcare will also be essential in re-building our economy. The new Labour Market Partnership for the district provides an opportunity to identify local solutions.

## 4.4

# FODC Business and Service Continuity

Business Continuity Plans are documented procedures that guide organisations to respond, recover, resume and restore the continuity of critical/prioritised services and functions in the event of an emergency or disruptive incident. The scope of a Business Continuity Plan includes arrangements for the loss of staff, loss of accommodation/workplace, loss of information communication technology (including access to data), and loss of key supplies and suppliers. Covid has provided an unprecedented test of business continuity for all organisations including the Council. The response from the council and partners has been significant.

### 4.4.1 Key Challenges Identified

- 1 Continuing to build our online capability securely**

The onset of the Coronavirus pandemic meant the Council had to completely change the way it operated. Digital transformation was instrumental in ensuring that citizens could access services at a time when they needed them most. The Council made tremendous strides in enabling home working, delivering transformative changes which previously would have taken months in a matter of days and weeks. We need to continue to be responsive to change and to ensure that we have addressed all risks in terms of digital safety and cybersecurity as far as possible.
- 2 Engaging with and informing staff in a volatile environment**

Levels of fear and anxiety associated with the pandemic were evident across society and also in workforces. Supporting staff and keeping them informed during this period on updated regulations, plans and policies was paramount. Promoting health and safety, including good mental health and wellbeing across all of our teams was a priority.
- 3 Meeting statutory obligations**

with restrictions in place and staff and resources stretched during this period it was recognised that 'normal service provision' had to adapt and that a flexible approach was required in respect of meeting all statutory obligations. This included migrating our Council and Committee meetings to an online platform and ensuring public access via online channels.
- 4 Building capacity and skills**

New challenges and demands expected of the Council during these times required new approaches. Ensuring that staff had the capability to respond effectively was essential and there was a need to invest in effective provision of training, advice and communication. This will also be a core element of the Council's approach to recovery.

#### 4.4.2 Examples of what we did...

### Staying connected with our customers

During 2020-21, the Council's Connect Centres (Enniskillen and Omagh) were mainly closed to the public due to Covid-19 lockdown requirements however, Customer Service Advisors (CSAs) continued to provide support remotely and in office facilities in line with Covid-19 legislation and guidance. Alternative forms of communication were introduced for customers including Webchat functionality and increased use of email [info@fermanaghomaghamagh.com](mailto:info@fermanaghomaghamagh.com). The Council also has in place a Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure, through which customers can provide feedback on their satisfaction levels with the Council's service delivery. Customers can provide feedback through email, telephone, letter, face to face, via the website or Facebook. The Leisure Centres, Arts Centres and Registration Services have specific customer satisfaction/comments recording processes in place. The feedback received from all these sources is used to inform service delivery and improvements.

### Ensuring effective management of change and transformation

Building on the initial phase of change related to local government reform, the Council recognises that further transformational change is required within specific service areas and the organisation generally in the context of changing national, regional and local priorities and to deliver in partnership on the Community Plan for the district. The current focus of this work in 2020-21 has been an Organisational Review which has progressed through consultation and is now moving into full implementation in 2021/22. This work is supported by a leadership capacity building programme which is in development. The Council recognises that Climate Change represents a significant challenge for the future. It has recently agreed a Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and is currently working to develop the Action Plan to support this work.

### Measured satisfaction of service provision

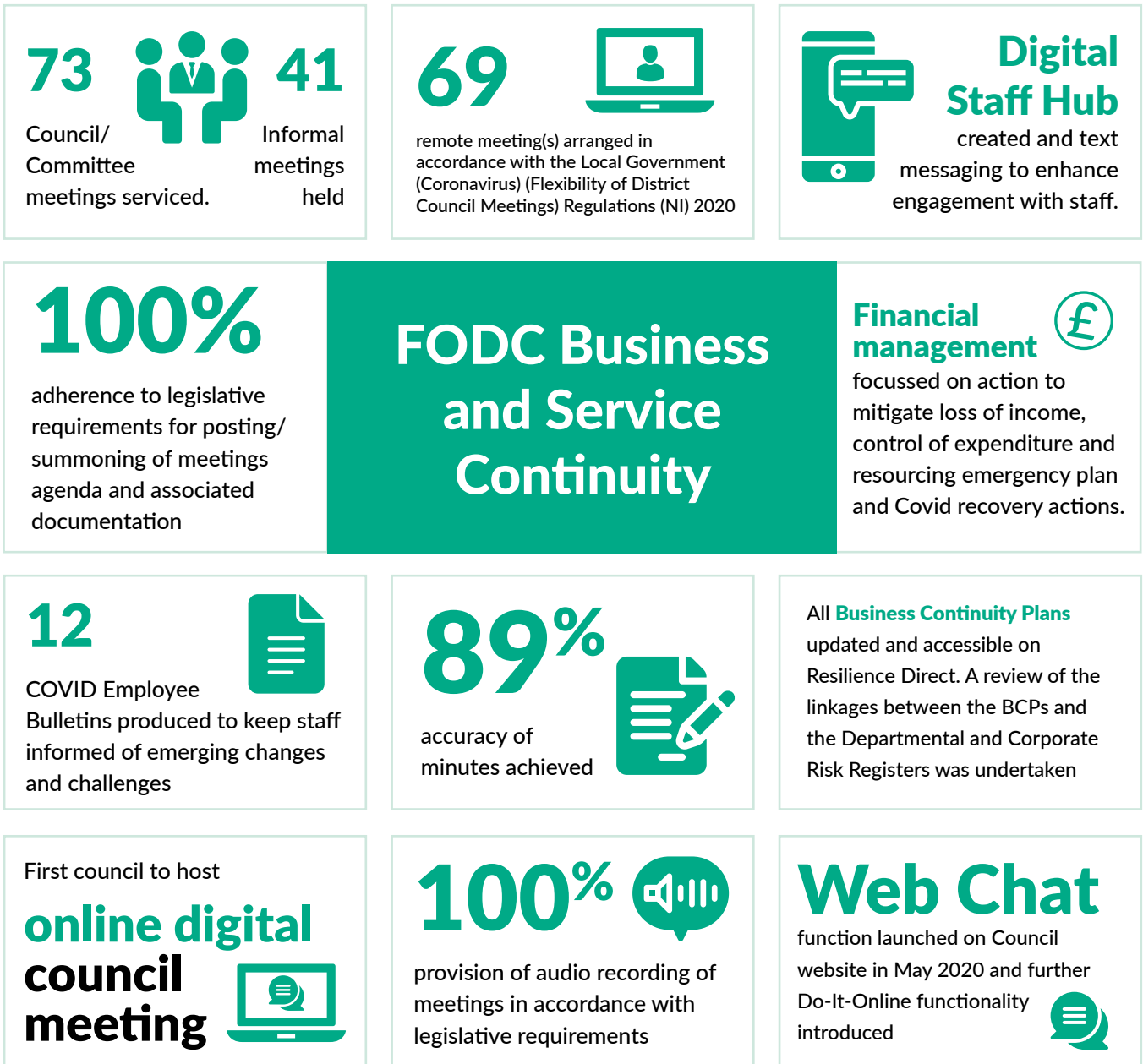
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council conducted a second Residents' Survey early in 2021 and will continue to use the information and data provided by the Residents' Survey to inform service delivery, engagement with residents and service users. The objectives of the survey were two-fold. The Residents' Survey provided data against a range of performance indicators and helped to fill gaps in existing data, including data on issues such as wellbeing and communication that were not available. The survey provided a wide range of valuable statistical data which can be used as a baseline for gauging future quality of services and service user satisfaction. The overall residents' satisfaction rating for the Council was 84%, an increase on the 70% satisfaction level recorded in 2017/18.

## Implementation of Key COVID 19 communications

The Council's Marketing and Communications Strategy sets out how the Council's communications activities are managed and aims to ensure that communications between the Council and its stakeholders are planned, coordinated and appropriate to intended audiences.


Key messages remain current however were supplemented with interim Covid-19 recovery key messaging as follows set out in diagram: **Key messages to recovery on page 2.**


### 4.4.3 Key performance measures



**Medium Term Financial Planning**  
 fully considered in context of 2021/22 Estimates and rates setting process.

**Going concern considerations** satisfactorily addressed in 2019/20 audit.



**FULL** 

in year budget review completed for 2020/21 as part of Covid-19 response

**Local Development Plan Consultation**



on the Draft Plan Strategy proposed changes completed

Review of **Grant Aid** 


provided to communities and businesses completed

**Good Relations Strategy** 

and online **Action Plan** for 2021 - 2024 developed


**Digital Collaboration and Communication' Programme**

delivered by South West College to elected members and officers 

**93.3%** 

risk assessments of private water supplies completed

Resident's Survey Completed with the overall residents' satisfaction rating for the Council **84%**, an increase on the **70%** satisfaction level recorded in 2017/18. 

**Climate Emergency** 

declared and **Climate Change Strategy** developed and agreed

**1474** 

births registered

**1140**

deaths registered

**268** 


**Marriages**

**2** 


**Civil Partnerships**

**580** 

**NEW** Instagram followers

**789** 

**NEW** Twitter followers

Increase of **4,173** 

Facebook page likes with over 8 million combined reach

#### 4.4.4 What we need to continue to do, and lessons learned ...

**Embed Community Planning approaches** - building on the recent Carnegie Report 'Building a Wellbeing Framework in NI' recommendations, in partnership with Government departments, work to continue to embed a community planning approach into local government plans and policies and progress the wellbeing framework in NI

**Digital Capability** - as transformative ways to work continue to develop in the workplace and flexibility of approach continues, develop a Digital strategy which address risks around cyber security.

**Forward Planning** - take account of emerging regional policy direction, e.g., the NI Executive's 'Building Forward; Consolidated Covid 19 Recovery Plan' to inform our own plans for moving forward into the recovery phase.

**Management of Resources** - the Council has had a challenging year in terms of reduced levels of income and additional costs arising from new challenges. As we move towards recovery, it is expected that there will be fiscal pressures facing the economy as a whole and potentially pressures on public sector budgets. We must be efficient and prudent in terms of the management of our budgets and our financial planning to ensure that we can continue to serve our communities effectively.



SECTION 5.0

# Monitoring Performance using Data



mathematics, a graph is a representation of a set of objects where some pairs of the objects are connected by lines.

## 5.0 | Monitoring Performance using Data

The performance management framework of the Council is underpinned by the provision and interpretation of intelligence which supports evidence-based decision making.

The Council's commitment to the adoption of evidence based decision making has been key in developing a robust performance culture during the pandemic; it has underpinned transparent and successful decision-making processes that are targeted and benefit those most in need during these challenging times. It has also ensured that service provision is monitored and continuously improved upon where necessary and where new challenges emerge.

Performance monitoring is essential to understand how the council is doing in relation to its indicators and performance measures that have been assigned by regional government and set by the Council itself. The following sections outline progress against statutory indicators and self-imposed performance measures for the financial year 2020/2021.

### 5.1 | Statutory Indicators

Under the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, statutory performance indicators and standards have been set as part of the performance improvement arrangements for district councils. Performance measures have been specified for the functions of:



**Economic  
Development**



**Planning**



**Waste  
Management**

The aim of statutory indicators is to promote improvement of service delivery and provide comparison against other councils in NI. The information is currently collated by the Department for the Economy, Department for Infrastructure and Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, respectively and published on their websites. Once released to Council, this information is published for citizens and other stakeholders to assess Council's performance in these areas. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's performance against these indicators (progress and direction of travel) is outlined in the following tables, also included is performance benchmarking data in comparison with the other 10 Councils in NI where information is available.

As previously discussed in this report the challenges and restrictions introduced because of COVID 19 have affected performance across all service areas and therefore performance against indicators reflects this experience.



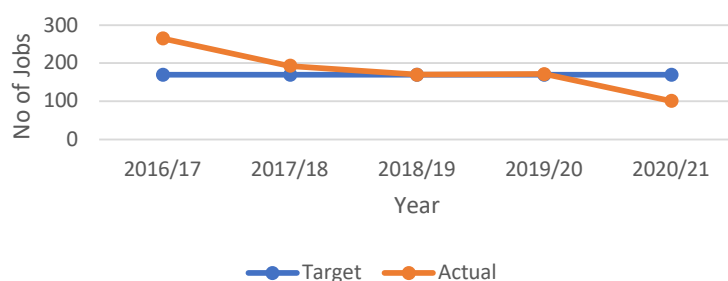
Statutory Indicator	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		

**Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client led business plans under the Department for the Economy Regional Start Initiative or its successor programmes**

ED1: The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity	170	170	170	172	170	101	X	FODC is ranked Joint 10th of 11 and 1 of 4 Councils not to meet this target due to COVID 19 restrictions.
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**Performance Analysis:** Performance was negatively impacted by COVID19 restrictions during 2020-2021 however over the lifetime of this programme the overall target to create 525 jobs was exceeded with 529 jobs created in the programme period.

ED1: The Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity



**We will improve by:**

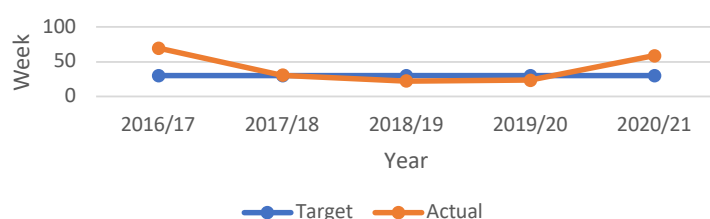
- Provision of business start-up grants (and restart) administered and implemented, and advice provided
- Provide support to businesses on how to successfully adhere to health regulations and continue to support them to put in place risk assessments and processes where applicable.
- Implement the GO FOR IT programme.

**An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning [Development Management Regulations (NI) 2015(a)]**

P1: The average processing time of major planning applications	30 weeks	22 weeks	30 weeks	23.4 weeks	30 weeks	58.6 weeks	X	FODC is ranked 5th out of 11 councils. The average for all councils is 61.4 weeks. None of the 11 councils met the 30 week target set with Mid and East Antrim the closest at 39.2 weeks.
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**Performance Analysis:** The Planning service has continued to operate however, COVID-19 has had implications on the service's ways of working and the planning team has required additional flexibility in carrying out their duties. Planning practice in the traditional form has changed and staff are adapting. 4 Major applications received, 7 less than last year. 2 issued with processing time of 58.6 weeks.

P1: The average processing time of major planning applications



**We will improve by:**

- Building capacity of staff to work in new ways including digitally.
- New processes in place to access information more robustly whilst working from home.
- Implementation of Council's Digital Safeguarding Strategy in section

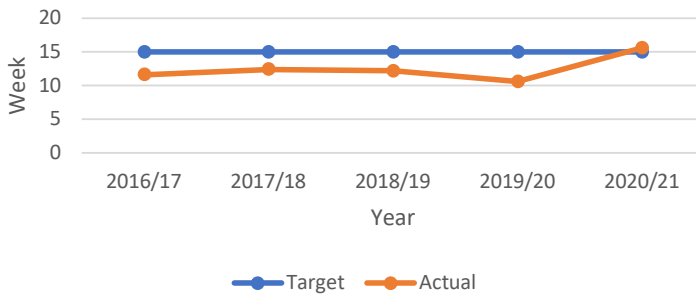
Statutory Indicator	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		

**Local applications means an application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and any other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under that Act)**

P2: The average processing time of local planning applications	15 weeks	12.2 weeks	15 weeks	10.6 weeks	15 weeks	15.6 weeks	X	FODC is ranked 4th out of 11 councils. The average for all councils is 17.8 weeks.
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**Performance Analysis:** The processing time for local applications was 15.6 weeks which is just short of the 15-week target.

P2: The average processing time of local planning applications



**We will improve by:**

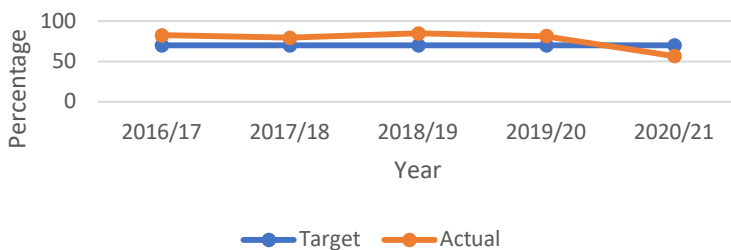
- Building capacity of staff to work in new ways including digitally.
- New processes in place to access information more robustly whilst working from home.
- Implementation of Council's Digital Safeguarding Strategy in section

**Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or under any orders or regulations made under that Act)**

P3: The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks	70%	84.9%	70%	81.1%	70%	56.6%	X	FODC is ranked 10th out of 11 councils. The average for all other councils is 69.9%.
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**Performance Analysis:** Although the enforcement processing target of 70% of enforcement cases being closed in 39 weeks was not met, 182 cases were closed. 56.6. % of cases were concluded in 39 weeks which is lower than the NI average of 69.9%.

P3: The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks



**We will improve by:**

- An enhanced focus on enforcement duties required
- Review of current service arrangements to be undertaken

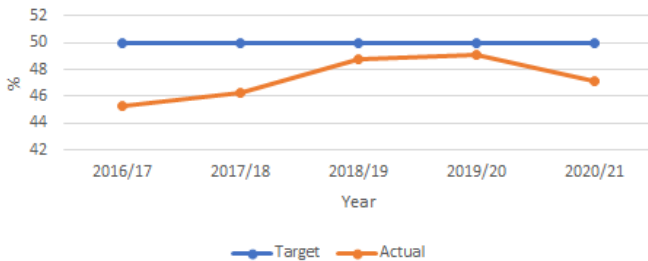
Statutory Indicator	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		

**Household waste is as defined in Article 2 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997(a) and the Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013(b)**

W1: The % of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse).	50% by 2020 (FODC target set of min of 1% increase pa)	48.75%	50% by 2020 (FODC target set of min of 1% increase pa)	49.1%	50% by 2020 (FODC target set of min of 1% increase pa)	47.13% (This figure has not been validated by the Dept.)	↓	FODC is ranked 4th out of 11 councils. The average for all councils is 17.8 weeks.
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**Performance Analysis:** The impact of COVID with closure of sites has caused a decline in the waste recycling figure across all councils, although verified comparative data is not yet available meetings throughout the year between DAERA and other councils have discussed this issue regularly as a key challenge for this financial year.

W1: The % of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)



**We will improve by:**

- The recycling rate has stabilised and returned to pre-covid level.

- The Northern Ireland Waste Strategy is being prepared through DAERA which will provide a route map for improved recycling rates along with the Extended Producer Responsibility Guidance.
- Adoption and implementation of the Waste Strategy when published by DEARA
- Adherence and implementation of action to support the Extended Producer Responsibility Guidance
- Marketing and promotion of responsibilities through promotion of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Utilising social media platforms i.e Zero Waste Week 6th September 2021 in partnership with the Northern Ireland Resources Network.

**Local Authority collected municipal waste is as defined in section 21 of the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003(c)**

W2: The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.	< 14,675 tonnes	13,677	< 13,781 tonnes	13,478	< 13,781 tonnes	14,410 (This figure has not been validated by the Dept.)	↑	n/a
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**Performance Analysis:** Although this has increased in this financial year the Council is working to close its landfill site at Tullyvar.

W2: The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled



**We will improve by:**

- Ensure the use of biodegradable packaging in the retail and business sector in Fermanagh an Omagh is progressed.
- Work with the business sector and residents to reduce food waste.
- Promote a Fermanagh and Omagh campaign to reduce waste in the District in general.
- Diversion to Refuse Derived Fuel Energy Recovery.

Statutory Indicator	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comparison with other Councils												
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual														
<b>Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings is the total amount of local authority collected municipal waste which has been collected by a district council</b>																				
W3: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings	n/a	55,931 tonnes	n/a	55,233 tonnes	n/a	58,108 tonnes (This figure has not been validated by the Dept.)	X	n/a.												
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Increased levels attributed to the COVID Stay at Home/Work from home guidance with house and Garage clearances and a general increase in overall waste. The total waste arising increased by 3.9% but the recycling rate only dropped by 1.8%. Waste arisings is an indeterminant figure and we must fulfil our statutory obligation to collect municipal waste within the district.</p>																				
<p>W3: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings</p> <table border="1"> <caption>W3: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Tonnes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2016/17</td> <td>53800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017/18</td> <td>53800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018/19</td> <td>55931</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>55233</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>58108</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Year	Tonnes	2016/17	53800	2017/18	53800	2018/19	55931	2019/20	55233	2020/21	58108	<p><b>We will improve by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing and promotion of responsibilities through promotion of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Utilising social media platforms i.e Zero Waste Week 6th September 2021 in partnership with the Northern Ireland Resources Network.</li> </ul>			
Year	Tonnes																			
2016/17	53800																			
2017/18	53800																			
2018/19	55931																			
2019/20	55233																			
2020/21	58108																			

## 5.2 Self Imposed Performance Measures








Performance measures related to the Business and Recovery Plan 2020/21 have been gathered across a range of service areas and functions. In addition to those measures, the Council is committed to publishing performance information in relation to a range of corporate and service areas on an annual basis.

Performance measures are drawn from two sources of information, ie APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) – denoted by black text; and internal FODC indicators – denoted by blue text in the table below. APSE figures provided remain subject to change as work is ongoing across the sector to update these. Again, the challenges experienced in delivering services during the pandemic is reflected in performance and where targets have obtained a red rag status a note of explanation is outlined under the table, alongside the performance measure reference.

(NB: ± denotes that information is not directly comparable or n/a that it is not available/ applicable)

FODC Self Imposed Performance Measure	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comment/ comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
C1: Net cost of Council services per head of population	< or = estimated cost of £316.29	£314.61	< or = estimated cost of £325.75	£318.99*	< or = estimated cost of £333.77	£321.09*	✓	FODC has the lowest non-domestic rate of 22.125p and the sixth lowest domestic rate of 0.3718p for 2020 -2021.
C2: % of net expenditure v budget (incl transfers)	Within budget	99.47%	Within budget	97.92%*	Within budget	96.20%*	✓	±
* all financial figures are based on 'Unaudited' information.								
C3: Residents' overall satisfaction	n/a	70%	n/a	n/a	n/a	84%		±
C4: Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence	No more than 10.5 days per employee	10.44 days	Improve on previous year	13.77	Improve on previous year	9.69	✓	The latest comparative data for NI Local Government sector is 13.9 days last published in 2018-19, with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council recording the lowest level of sickness absence
PSS 1.3 Number of Access to Information requests granted within timeframe as % of those received	96.5%	93%	95%	92.8%	93%	92%	✗	*See explanatory note below

FODC Self Imposed Performance Measure	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comment/ comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
FN: % of undisputed creditor invoices paid within 10 days	Maintain/improve on 58%	80%	Maintain/improve on 80%	81%	Maintain/improve on 80%	80.18%	✓	The latest comparative data available is for 2018/19. FODC ranks 2nd out of 11 councils
FN: % of undisputed creditor invoices paid within 30 days	Maintain/improve on 87%	94%	Maintain/improve on 94%	94%	Maintain/improve on 94%	94%	✓	n/a
CS(PI)2: Total number of advice client contacts	Maintain/improve on 22,520	31,391	Maintain/improve on 31,391	24,545	Maintain/improve on 24,545	11,923	✗	*See explanatory note below
FI(PI)1: Number of grants and bursaries issued	Maintain/improve on 543	620 (524 grants + 96 bursaries)	Maintain/improve on 620	600 (513 grants + 87 bursaries)	Maintain/improve on 600	648 grants No bursaries	✓	±
LRS(PI)1: Number of customers using leisure facilities (indoor and outdoor across 4 centres)	Maintain/improve on previous year	1.86m	Maintain/improve on previous year	1.95m	Maintain/improve on previous year	119,270	✗	*See explanatory note below
LRS(PI)2: Level of customer satisfaction with Leisure Service	Maintain/improve on previous year	89.3%	Maintain/improve on previous year	87.7%	Maintain/improve on previous year	No Customer satisfaction survey completed due to the service being closed for most of the year	✗	*See explanatory note below
PI04a Active Participants in Arts events per head of population	Maintain/improve on previous year	0.03	Maintain/improve on previous year	0.03	Maintain/improve on previous year	0.1	✓	n/a
PI04b Active Participants in Heritage events per head of population	n/a	0.18	Maintain/improve on previous year	0.22	Maintain/improve on previous year	0.1	✗	n/a

FODC Self Imposed Performance Measure	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comment/ comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
PIO2c % of business plan applications approved for a 'business start-up' against number of business start-up enquiries made within the financial year	n/a	54.4%	Maintain / improve	69.58%	Maintain / improve	50.8%		APSE indicate that of 4 councils that submitted data FODC has ranked 2nd with the highest 61.3%, and average 51.22%* *See explanatory note below
BCL(PI)1: % of domestic full plans applications receiving Building Control assessment within 15 working days from date of receipt	80%	78%	80%	87%	80%	84%		APSE indicate that of 3 councils that submitted data FODC has achieved the highest output score with the average 69.17% and the lowest 46.22%
BCL(PI)2: % of non-domestic full plans applications receiving Building Control assessment within 35 working days from receipt	75%	65%	75%	78%	75%	76.86%		APSE indicate that of 5 councils that submitted data FODC is ranked 4th with the average 72.97% and the highest 84.98%
BCL(PI)5: % of licensing applications processed within 60 days from receipt of completed applications	80%	89%	80%	86%	80%	89.47%		±
BCL(PI)8: % responses to dog attacks within 1 working day	95%	100%	95%	97%	95%	98.47%		±
BCL(PI)9: Animal Welfare Service - % of priority 1 calls met within 1 working day	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		±
PIO1b: % of Environmental Health service requests responded to within 3 days	Maintain/improve on previous year	85.96%	Maintain/improve on previous year	86.99%	Maintain/improve on previous year	94%		APSE indicate that of 5 councils that submitted data FODC ranked 3rd with the average 94.37% and lowest 91.95%.

FODC Self Imposed Performance Measure	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		RAG Status	Comment/ comparison with other Councils
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
PI02c: Net cost of 5 core Environmental Health functions per head of population	Maintain /improve	£7.33	Maintain /improve	£8.87	Maintain /improve	£9.53	X	APSE indicate that of 5 councils that submitted data FODC ranked 5th with the average £7.28 and the lowest £4.29. * See explanatory note below
EH(PI)10: Response times to all communicable disease notifications from PHA	100% within 1 day (0.5 day for Ecoli notif's)	100%	100% within 1 day (0.5 day for Ecoli notif's)	100%	100% within 1 day (0.5 day for Ecoli notif's)	100%	✓	n/a
PI07a: Local Authority and Community Playgrounds per 1000 children under 14	n/a	4.3	Maintain/improve	4.59	Maintain/improve	4.59	✓	APSE indicate that of 3 councils that submitted data FODC has achieved the highest output score with the average 2.98 and the lowest 1.18
PI09a Tidy NI cleanliness index (CI) score	Maintain	75.00	Maintain	n/a	Maintain	n/a		n/a

## Explanatory notes

Explanatory notes for indicators where performance was below target or fell below the 2020/21 standard:

### (i) PSS1.3

Number of Access to Information requests granted within timeframe as % those received: this target was narrowly missed due to the continued increase in the number of requests received, the cross-cutting and complex nature of a number of the requests, and the delays posed by the home working arrangements as a result of COVID 19 which resulted in an initial reduction in the response rate.

### (ii) CS(PI)2

During COVID 19 advice services were not able to progress tribunals and appeals for clients. Court services were shut down and service provision restricted to protect staff. Services resumed in late July 2020 virtually, but in some circumstances this approach was not suitable for vulnerable clients. This has created a reduced number of advice service client contacts reflected in the performance above, but it is projected that this backlog will present an increase in demand in 2021-2022 when services are fully reinstated.



**(iii) LRS(PI)1**

The pandemic has been devastating for the fitness and leisure sector with over 8 months of closure and just 121 days of suppressed trading since 25 July 2020, which has significantly impacted the number of users reflected in the figures for 2020- 2021. Since reopening centres in July 2020 customers have shown great commitment and adherence to safety standards and government operating guidance, helping to reassure employees and the public that their pool, fitness class, or leisure centre, is a safe place to work in and a safe place to exercise.

**(iv) LRS(P)2**

In leisure services, no customer satisfaction surveys were able to be carried out as services were closed for 8 months out of 12 months of the year. It will be a key focus in financial year 2021-2022 to ensure customers feel safe and satisfied with safety measures put in place at all council leisure facilities. Customer feedback will be closely monitored and where feasible, suggested enhanced interventions will be fully supported.

**(v) PI02c**

**% of business plan applications approved for a 'business start-up' against number of business start-up enquiries made within the financial year** - 65 Business Plans completed in 2020/21. Due to COVID 19 impact, outcomes were reduced between April – July 2020. The Northern Ireland Business Start Up Programme which was a 3.5-year programme completed on 31 March 2021 and overall programme targets were to deliver 854 Business Plans. The Council successfully achieved this overall target and delivered 860 Business Plans over the lifetime of the programme.

**(vi) PI02c:**

Net cost of 5 core Environmental Health functions per head of population. The increased costs are attributable to a variety of factors; loss of income during the pandemic, alongside the need for an additional number of staff to support implementation of new assigned duties including the support provided to the Community Hub, reopening of businesses, as well as EU Exit implications. There are some year-on-year additional costs which are impacting this measure.

**(vii) PI04b**

**Active Participation in Heritage events per head of population** - The pandemic has had devastating effects for the Arts and heritage sector with over 8 months of closure and just 121 days of suppressed trading, despite online platforms providing some level of service this needs further development.

**(viii) PO19a**

Tidy NI cleanliness index (CI) score. The Northern Ireland Amenity Council Best Kept awards competition was not held in 2020 or 2021 due to the pandemic. The Council looks forward to participating in future competitions and is working hard to maintain the current high standards that has seen much success in previous years.

**SECTION 6.0**

# Financial Overview 2020/21



## 6.0 Financial Report and Summary Financial Statements 2020/21

The Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 have been prepared in a form directed by the Department for Communities in accordance with Regulations 3(7) and (8) of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (the Regulations). The Audited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 will be published on the Council's website by 30th September 2021 at <https://www.fermanaghmagh.com/your-council/financial-statements/>

A summary of the actual Income and Expenditure for 2020/21 compared with the Estimates for the year, alongside a copy of the Balance Sheet is extracted in the tables below:

	2020/21		
	Actual (£)	Estimated (£)	Variance (£)
<b>Net Income and Expenditure *</b>	<b>34,286,178</b>	<b>36,143,000</b>	<b>(1,806,822)</b>
Transfers to/from Reserves	6,550,000	708,500	5,791,500
Transfers to Reserves (future specified spend)	3,140,443	-	3,140,443
Financing of Capital Expenditure			
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,242,763	1,265,000	(22,237)
Loan interest	326,303	335,000	(8,697)
Direct Revenue Financing	1,100,363	700,000	400,363
<b>Total net expenditure to be funded</b>	<b>46,646,050</b>	<b>39,151,500</b>	<b>7,494,550</b>
Central government grant support *	3,839,173	3,053,645	785,528
Rates income	36,942,693	36,097,855	844,838
Covid-19 Related Funding *	6,059,594	-	6,059,594
<b>Total Grant and Rates Income</b>	<b>46,841,460</b>	<b>39,151,500</b>	<b>7,689,960</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>195,410</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>195,410</b>

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2020 £
Fixed Assets	133,477,880	131,555,022
Intangible Assets	120,000	120,000
Investment Properties	8,500,301	6,760,701
Long-Term Debtors	1,484,927	668,413
<b>LONG-TERM ASSETS</b>	<b>143,583,108</b>	<b>139,104,136</b>
Inventories	373,118	389,965
Short-Term Debtors	15,342,527	13,136,117
Short-Term Investments	4,500,000	7,500,000
Cash and Cash Equivalents	20,765,598	12,448,647
Assets Held for Sale	595,607	476,507
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>41,576,850</b>	<b>33,951,236</b>
Bank Overdraft	-	1,014,300
Short-Term Borrowing	739,093	902,862
Short-Term Creditors	9,330,627	7,167,733
Provisions	106,533	96,533
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>10,176,253</b>	<b>9,181,428</b>
Provisions	4,702,389	4,524,167
Long-Term Borrowing	4,530,255	5,269,349
Other Long-Term Liabilities	59,196,000	42,697,000
<b>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</b>	<b>68,428,644</b>	<b>52,490,516</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>106,555,061</b>	<b>111,383,428</b>
<b>USABLE RESERVES</b>		
Capital Receipts Reserve	164,117	154,117
Capital Grants Unapplied Account	5,961,671	8,108,725
Capital Fund	4,879,256	3,860,228
Renewal and Repairs Fund	4,789,177	4,254,737
Other Balances and Reserves	11,627,224	5,175,877
General Fund	3,987,563	3,792,153
	<b>31,409,008</b>	<b>25,345,837</b>
<b>USABLE RESERVES</b>		
Capital Adjustment Account	90,500,434	85,070,551
Revaluation Reserve	44,317,801	44,600,734
Pensions Reserve	(59,196,000)	(42,697,000)
Capital Receipts Deferred Account	1,539,927	706,269
Accumulated Absences Account	(1,020,532)	(862,573)
Provisions Discount Rate Reserve	(995,577)	(780,390)
	<b>75,146,053</b>	<b>86,037,591</b>
<b>NET WORTH</b>	<b>106,555,061</b>	<b>111,383,428</b>

**SECTION 7.0**

# Rural Proofing our Plans and Policies



## 7.0 Rural Proofing our Plans and Policies

Fermanagh and Omagh is a predominantly rural district except for the two main towns of Enniskillen and Omagh.

The Council area is home to

**117,337**  
people

with approximately

**70%**  
of the population living in  
rural areas



The Council recognises that a significant % of its population live in dispersed rural communities and ensures that plans, policies and procedures developed and implemented take account of the needs of all its people across urban and rural areas.

### What is the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016?

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (the Act) came into operation for government departments and district councils on 1 June 2017. The Act requires policy makers and public authorities to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing, or revising policies, strategies, and plans, and when designing and delivering public services.



### How has the Act supported better outcomes for rural dwellers?

The Act has helped to further highlight and document the Council's commitment and approach in delivering better outcomes for rural dwellers, ensuring that a formal process is in place in developing, adopting, implementing, and revising policies, strategies, and plans, and designing and delivering public services that considers rural data and evidence in decision making processes.

The Act has encouraged the need to further endorse the Council's evidence-based approach and to review data at local level in rural areas. This approach encourages considering implications of policies and service provision on, for example, levels of deprivation, social isolation and or poor health which can sometimes be masked by the lack of available data at district level. It also has encouraged engagement with communities to gain additional information where data gaps may be present and local knowledge beneficial. The outcome is that tailored policies, plans, and services are delivered and reconfigured to meet actual demands.

The Council has delivered training to relevant staff across all departments to build their capacity and support the approach adopted. Resources have been compiled and made available on the Council Intranet to support staff to effectively complete Rural Needs Impact Assessments. Committee Report templates continue to ensure that Rural Needs are an integral part of the section which outlines the resource implications of the recommendation.



## How much did we do?

To fulfil the Council's obligations under Section 1 of the Act, 12 Rural Needs Impact Assessments have been completed by officers within Fermanagh and Omagh District Council for the year 2020/2021. A summary of the activities and how due regard has been upheld is provided below, however the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2020/2021 can be viewed in full at Sustainable Development – Fermanagh & Omagh District Council ([fermanaghomagh.com](http://fermanaghomagh.com)):

### Key

- Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016<sup>1</sup>.
- The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to<sup>2</sup>.
- 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<sup>3</sup>.

## 1 Development of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Safe Driving at Work Policy

### Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas

In recognition of the restrictions imposed by the lack of broadband connectivity, additional regard was taken in relation to supporting communications with employees who were likely to be driving in rural areas on a regular basis through the provision of two-way radios and also through the ability to communicate via the Fusion in-cab Route Optimisation software.

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## 2 Development of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Estates Strategy 2020 - 2030

### Cross-cutting

The Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area is the largest geographical area of the 11 Councils but has the lowest population. The Estates Strategy is designed to support and enable service delivery across a geographically large district with a dispersed population. The development of the Estates Strategy is likely to impact positively upon people in rural areas by striving to ensure that their needs are taken account of and addressed in the delivery of Council services.

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## 3 Development of The Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark Development Plan

### Cross-cutting

Prior to the creation of the Geopark Development Plan, taking cognisance of the Council's evidence based approach, consultation took place with a range of stakeholders to identify need and inform future direction and solutions. Stakeholder engagement included representation from



rural areas including local enterprise and community partnerships. The feedback received was used to inform and shape the Development Plan and its associated actions/programmes. One of the objectives identified within the Plan in relation to the Stakeholder Engagement pillar is to increase the sense of ownership of and commitment to the Geopark by local communities and businesses, facilitating and enabling them to leverage social and commercial opportunities from the designation.

#### 4 **Revision of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's ICT Policies and Procedures for Employees**

##### Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas

The Procedures will apply equally whether the ICT equipment is in use in rural or urban areas. In relation to poor broadband connectivity, the Council has lobbied consistently for the necessary funding for infrastructural improvements in the area. ICT staff have been able to improve connectivity to the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark through investment in the installation of a reliable private circuit. In relation to improving connectivity for staff working from home, ICT staff have worked with colleagues from Funding and Investment on a cross-council consortium bid to successfully secure funding from Wave 3 of the Local Full Fibre Network Programme.

#### 5 **Revision of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Memorial Benches and Trees Policy**

##### Other: Access to a Council initiative

No rural needs identified. The policy will be implemented consistently across urban and rural areas of the District.

#### 6 **Revision of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Procurement Policy**

##### Cross-cutting

No rural needs were identified. The policy will be implemented consistently across urban and rural areas of the District.

#### 7 **Development of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Plan to reopen Public Conveniences following their closure during the Covid-19 Pandemic.**

##### Other: Access to services

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has considered the needs of those people who live or work within the rural areas of the District, particularly in relation to access to services. The first phase of the Re-opening Plan is supportive of the two main retail centres within the District, which will also benefit people who live in rural areas who form the customer base for such outlets. The next three phases facilitate the opening of twelve Public Conveniences in rural areas, which will further support both rural businesses in those areas, and the customer base

for local retail outlets. The potential for the re-opening of the remaining Public Conveniences will be actively monitored. Any decisions made will consider staffing availability, the feasibility of ensuring safe operations for both staff and the public wishing to access the site, and future changes to relevant regional or national guidance.

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## 8 Development of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Plan to reopen Household Waste Recycling Centres following their closure during the Covid-19 Pandemic (Apr 2020)

### Other: Access to services

The Council has considered the needs of those people who live or work within the rural areas of the District, particularly in relation to access to services.

Consequently, the Phased re-opening plan, facilitates the opening of four rural recycling centres which will allow people from the nearby rural communities to access the service without being dependent on having to travel to Enniskillen or Omagh. It is important to note that the plan is based on current guidance and regulation relating to unnecessary travel. The potential for the re-opening of the remaining rural recycling centres will be actively monitored. Any decisions made will consider staffing availability, the feasibility of ensuring safe operations for both staff and the public wishing to access the site, including traffic management arrangements, and future changes to relevant regional or national guidance.

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## 9 Development of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Social Media Policy for Councillors

### Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas

No rural needs were identified. The Policy will be implemented consistently across the Council and should not impact upon people in rural areas differently to people living in urban areas.

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## 10 Feasibility Review and Economic Appraisal of District Play Park Provision

### Cross-cutting

The development of a Play Park Provision Plan for the District aims to ensure that people living in rural areas have access to open space and play areas for the adequate development, health and wellbeing of children and young people, regardless of their physical or mental abilities. The Plan recognises that play spaces have the potential to increase the opportunity for children and young people to connect with and be part of the community, especially where play facilities are provided in areas which are open and accessible to everyone. The Plan has been the subject of widespread consultation and the Council is keen to work with the Community and Voluntary Sector to address evidence-based need.

**11** Development of a Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Corporate Sponsorship Policy

Cross-cutting

No rural needs were identified. The Policy will be implemented consistently regardless of whether the applicant is rural or urban based.

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**12** Development of the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Events and Festivals Strategy 2020-2025

Cross-cutting

No rural needs were identified. The Strategy and Action Plan will be implemented consistently regardless of whether the applicant is rural or urban based.

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Fermanagh & Omagh  
District Council  
Comhairle Ceantair  
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Fermanagh and Omagh Council is committed to continuously improving its services and listening to its customers. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year on any service area or policy decision.

You can get involved and participate in consultations being conducted by, or on behalf of the Council. Meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to the public, except for those times when sensitive or confidential issues need to be discussed. Or simply get in touch and tell us your issue, concern or when we have done well. We love to hear positive feedback too.

If you have any comments, would like any further information, or would like a copy of this plan in an alternative format please contact us using one of the methods outlined below:

-  **In writing:**  
Community Planning Team:  
The Grange, Mountjoy Road,  
Lisnamallard, Omagh  
Tyrone, BT79 7BL  
United Kingdom
-  **Telephone:**  
0300 303 1777
-  **Email:**  
info@fermanaghomagh.com
-  **Live web chat:**  
Available on our website  
during office hours,  
Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm
-  **For people who are deaf or are hard of hearing:**  
SignVideo - <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/signvideo/>
-  **A Councillor**  
Councillors contact details can be found at  
[www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/councillors](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/councillors)

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For additional information on your Council,  
please visit our website  
[www.fermanaghomagh.com](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com)

