



**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

**CORPORATE SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

***POLICY AND COMMUNITY
PLANNING***

***BUSINESS PLAN
2021/22***

FUNCTIONS OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

1. Corporate Policy

- Development and review of the Council's Council Strategy
- Development and review of the Council Constitution
- Development of Policy Initiatives and provide assistance and support to the policy making processes of Council.

2. Community Planning

- Evidence gathering and analysis of data for an evidence informed community plan
- Facilitate capacity building and culture change re community planning
- Initiate consultation, engagement and communication initiatives with stakeholders
- Develop appropriate delivery mechanisms to achieve the outcomes identified within the Community Plan.
- Develop and establish performance monitoring and reporting mechanisms for the community plan/delivery plan.

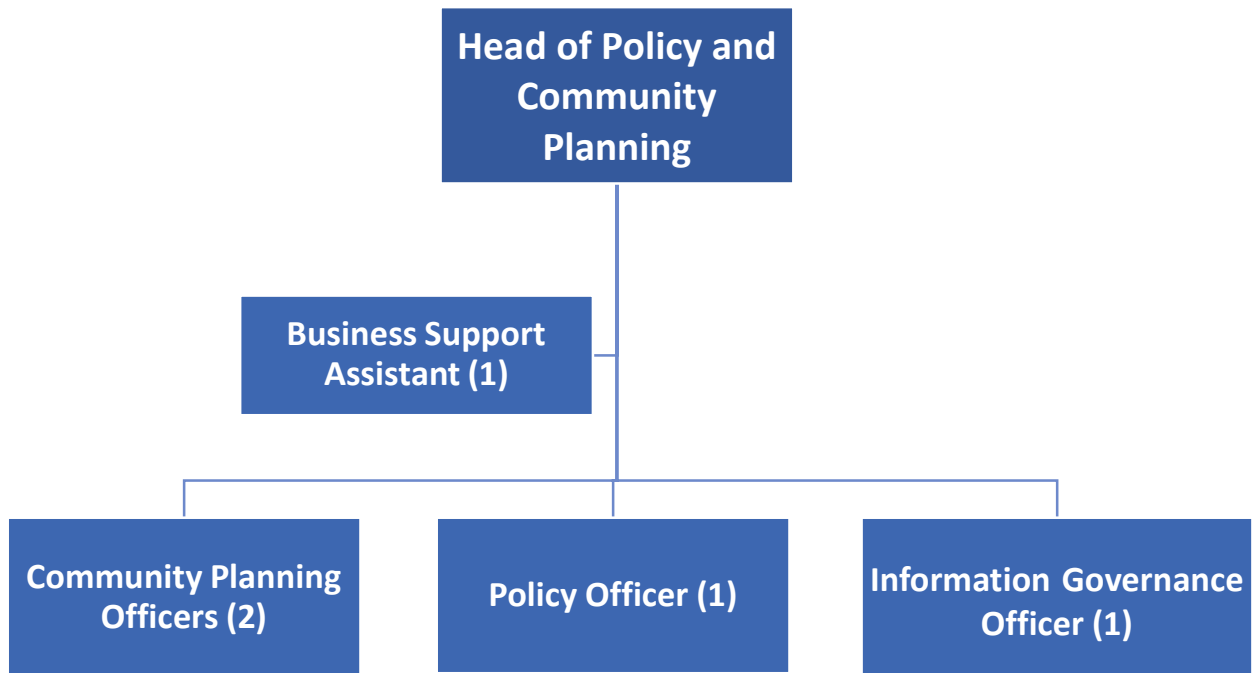
3. Information Governance

- Ensure Council complies with access to information legislation such as Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act and Environmental Information Regulations.
- Development of a corporate records management strategy and framework with associated policies, procedures and systems.
- Development and implementation of a Disposal and Retention Schedule for Council

4. Equality and Diversity

- Develop and implement strategies, policies and initiatives to promote equality of opportunity and appreciation of diversity within Council
- Ensure Council meets its legal obligations in relation to equality and diversity
- Ensure the Council meets its obligations in relation to the disability duties.

**POLICY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1. THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE ARE TO:

- 1.1 Ensure that the Council delivers its services in accordance with its legal obligations and best practice relating to equality and diversity and develops/implements strategies, policies and initiatives which promote equality and diversity within the Council.
- 1.2 Ensure the Council meets its obligations in relation to the promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life.
- 1.3 Support the development and implementation of the Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan which includes evidence gathering, community engagement activities, performance management and putting in place governance and reporting mechanisms.
- 1.4 Develop and implement an information management strategy and framework for the Council which ensures Council compliance with a range of access to information legislation.
- 1.5 Develop and implement a records management strategy and framework for the Council with associated policies, procedures and systems, ensuring that it supports the priorities and statutory obligations of the Council.
- 1.6 Support the development of relevant strategies, policies, procedures and systems to support the priorities and statutory obligations of Council.

2. COUNCIL STRATEGY:

Aligned with the following Council Strategic Aims and Objectives:

- Cohesive Leadership
- Improvement and Innovation
- Healthy, Active and Engaged Communities
- Local Economy
- Climate Change and Our Environment.

3. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT:

The functions of the service are shaped primarily by a range of legislative obligations such as the Local Government Act 2014, S75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the

Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

4. RESOURCE CONTEXT:

The functions of the service are facilitated by a small team of 6 people and, given the current financial situation, the budget for the service has been amended slightly for the 2021/22 financial year to a total budget of £349,267 (due to the omission of a member of staff's salary in the previous years budget). Salaries and wages for staff make up the bulk of the Department's budget.

5. INTERNAL CONTEXT:

The policy, equality and information governance functions of the service are primarily corporate in nature and require the co-operation and input of officers across the Council, for example in relation to dealing with requests for access to information, screening of policies, etc.

6. EXTERNAL CONTEXT:

The Community Planning function is externally influenced by legislation and by statutory guidance issued by the Department for Communities. It also requires input from and external reporting to statutory partners and the general public.

7. SWOT ANALYSIS AND PESTLE ANALYSIS:

A SWOT Analysis and a PESTLE Analysis were undertaken in relation to the Policy and Community Planning Department in order to identify issues which could potentially impact on the business planning process, with the following results:

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledgeable and skilled team of staff able to use their initiative to take forward projects. • Established systems and process in place which underpin the functions of the service area. • Positive relationships established with a range of internal and external stakeholders. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small team of staff – unforeseen or long term absence can have a detrimental impact on the work of the service area. • Lack of co-operation internally and externally can impede progress of actions.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can access best practice ideas from other Councils. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing use of legal actions taken against Council which impact on the service area, eg compliance issues.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can provide positive PR opportunities for Council. • Can help develop a robust and effective Council Strategy. • Can help deliver positive change for people in Causeway Coast and Glens area through community planning activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on resources through the budgeting and rates setting process within Council.
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<p>POLITICAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme for Government currently being developed which will have implications for the Community Planning process. • Introduction of legislation re Irish and Ulster-Scots language obligations. 	<p>ECONOMIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of economic indicators/Brexit on community planning activities. • Challenges to financial resources both internal and external. • Setting of central government budgets could potentially have an impact on the ability to progress community planning initiatives.
<p>SOCIO-CULTURAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased lobbying by special interest groups which impact particularly on the equality agenda. • An ageing population in CC&G which will impact on community planning and equality. 	<p>TECHNOLOGICAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technological developments which can help provide better customer accessibility to Council services, for example the introduction of SignVideo.
<p>LEGAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection issues yet to be clarified post Brexit transition year. • Increasingly complex requests and complex guidance from ICO on a range of access to information issues. • Increased likelihood of legal challenge to various decisions of Council. 	<p>ENVIRONMENTAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater emphasis on climate change/environmental issues and indicators will impact on community planning activities and initiatives. • Use of Rural Needs Assessments in policy development work within Council.

8. PRE-REQUISITES AND EXTERNAL DEPENDENCIES

The following outlines the pre-requisites and external dependencies which could potentially impact or influence this Business Plan (predicated on certain things being in place):

- The Equality Forum is reconstituted and meeting quarterly.
- The S75 consultee database has been reviewed and updated.

- ICT systems will support any new technology introduced, such as SignVideo.
- The Community Planning Partnership continues to work together effectively.
- The revised/updated Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan are both agreed and in place.
- Sufficient resources are made available to the Department to enable it to function effectively.

9. ASSUMPTIONS:

- 9.1 Sufficient resources will be available to enable the Department to function effectively.
- 9.2 Community Planning baseline data can be reviewed and updated as required.
- 9.3 A process for the management of requests for access to information is in place.
- 9.4 Processes for S75 screening and Rural Needs Assessments are in place and such screening is actively taking place within Council.

10. BUSINESS PLAN RISKS:

- 10.1 Failure to meet commitments in Council Equality Scheme leading to litigation and loss of reputation.
- 10.2 Failure to meet commitments in Disability Action Plan leading to litigation and loss of reputation
- 10.3 Failure to maintain the Council Constitution leading to failure to meet statutory obligations.
- 10.4 Compromised/loss of Special Category Personal Data leading to litigation, loss of reputation and possible fines.
- 10.5 Complaints made to the ICO regarding how the Council has dealt with requests for access to information – subsequent risk to Council's reputation.
- 10.6 Community Planning monitoring and reporting mechanisms not adhered to or not effective leading to possible failure of progress of community planning process.
- 10.7 Community Planning Partnership not operating effectively, eg because of lack of co-operation among partners.

- 10.8 Data analysis underpinning community planning monitoring and reporting systems not effective.
- 10.9 S75 systems and processes not adhered to resulting in challenge to Council's policy work.
- 10.10 Rural Needs Assessments not carried out as required resulting in public challenge to Council's policy work.

11. BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- 11.1 Ensure that the Council addresses equality and diversity issues in accordance with its legal obligations and best practice and develops/implements strategies, policies and initiatives which promote equality and diversity within the Council.
- 11.2 Ensure the Council meets its obligations in relation to the promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life.
- 11.3 Maintain, facilitate and participate in the development and implementation of the Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan.
- 11.4 Develop and implement an information management strategy and framework for the Council, including an effective records management strategy and framework.
- 11.5 Support the priorities and statutory obligations of Council by developing and maintaining relevant strategies, policies, procedures and systems.

Directorate	Corporate Services
Service Area	Policy and Community Planning
Reporting Year	2021/2022

Business Plan Objective 1

Ensure that the Council addresses equality and diversity issues in accordance with its legal obligations and best practice and develops/implements strategies, policies and initiatives which promote equality and diversity within the Council.

Work Stream	Actions	Outcome(s)	Budget £	Timescale	KPI's	Progress	RAG Status
Equality and Diversity	Address a range of statutory strategic equality and diversity issues (as outlined in the Equality Action Plan).	<p>Council services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people and communities in CC&G.</p> <p>Raise awareness of equalities issues and tackle prejudices, both internally and externally. Through equality articles and communications promoting equality.</p> <p>Attract, recruit, retain and progress a diverse range of</p>	0	April 2021 to March 2022	<p>Increase the no of equality screening exercises undertaken by 30% on the previous year.</p> <p>Increase the no of Rural Needs Assessments undertaken by 30% on the previous year.</p>	<p>Work has been undertaken to address a number of these actions, eg an Equality Tool Kit has been prepared, data used for screenings has been reviewed, updated and enhanced.</p> <p>Staff have received training on both equality and rural screening and this has raised awareness and improved the quality of screening exercises.</p> <p><i>Equality Screening:</i> During April 20 to March 21 there were 17 equality screenings completed.</p>	

		<p>employees in a culture which celebrates diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>An Equality tool kit available for all staff.</p> <p>Undertake active engagement with S75 groups every quarter, eg with equality forum.</p>				<p>From April 21 to date there have been 8 equality screenings completed with a further 2 at sign off stage.</p> <p><i>Rural Needs Assessments:</i> During April 20 to March 21 there were 5 rural assessments completed. From April 21 to date there have been 7 rural assessments completed.</p>	
	<p>Develop and implement a range of communication, information and engagement activities designed to positively improve levels of interaction on equality and diversity issues (as outlined in the Equality Action Plan).</p>	<p>Provide a working environment where employees are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.</p> <p>Design and undertake a staff survey to determine any new equality issues encountered as a result of covid-19.</p>	500.00	April 2021 to March 2022		<p>Regular items on equality and diversity have been prepared and included in Staff News (over 11 items to date).</p> <p>The Equality Forum has been reformed and meetings held on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Continued promotion of equality issues in conjunction with the Diversity Champion.</p>	
	<p>Work with Departments of Council to positively impact on levels of understanding of equality and diversity issues among Council staff (as</p>	<p>Establish a staff engagement network.</p>	0	April 2021 to March 2022		<p>Work is on-going with Council Departments in relation to S75 activities and consultations, eg advice and guidance given by</p>	

	outlined in the Equality Action Plan).	Ensure all individuals on the S75 Consultation list are aware of all consultations added to the website. Improve data used in Equality screenings				Equality Officer, training provided as required. Consultation training for officers is scheduled for the first quarter of 2022. A policy review process has been implemented to ensure policies are up to date, with regular consideration; of equality and diversity issues and impacts.	
	Improve participation levels among under-represented groups when consulting on and developing Council's activities and services (as outlined in the Equality Action Plan).		1,000	April 2021 to March 2022		Section 75 consultee list reviewed and updated. Section 75 consultees included in all Council consultation exercises. Equality Forum also circulated with copies of new consultations from Council.	
Work Stream	Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Innovation • Healthy, Active and Engaged Communities 						
Work Stream	Link to Community Plan						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Thriving Economy • A Healthy Safe Community 						

- A Sustainable Accessible Environment

[Link to Performance Improvement Plan](#)

Business Plan Objective 2

Ensure the Council meets its obligations in relation to the promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life.

Work Stream	Actions	Outcome(s)	Budget £	Timescale	KPI's	Progress	RAG Status
Equality and Diversity	Develop and implement measures to improve access to Council services by people with a disability (as outlined in the Council's Disability Action Plan).	<p>Support the participation of people with a disability in Council events and programmes.</p> <p>Support the ability of people with a disability to access and receive information about Council services.</p> <p>Promote and encourage the provision of additional changing places toilet facilities in the Borough.</p>	2,000.00	April 2021 to March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of users of the sign video service by 20% • Measure the number of audits and action plans completed using the Every Customer Counts format. 	<p>Work undertaken to again publicise the availability of Sign Video as a tool for sign language users to communicate with Council.</p> <p>Work undertaken with the Events Team to look at enhancing participation by disabled people in Council events and programmes.</p> <p>Additional changing places toilet facilities being provided in the Borough by the Environmental Services Directorate.</p> <p>Every Customer Counts audits expanded to include</p>	

		<p>Encourage the expansion of the SignVideo service across Council.</p> <p>Encourage the expansion of Every Customer Counts Audits.</p>				<p>all public toilets in the Borough. Also working with the Town Centre Manager to look at encouraging local businesses to take up this initiative.</p>	
	<p>Develop and implement initiatives to promote awareness of and positive attitudes to people with a disability (as outlined in the Council's Disability Action Plan).</p>	<p>Better promotion of equality for people with a disability.</p> <p>Develop an accessible communication section in the staff portal.</p> <p>Increase staff understanding of RADAR keys and their use.</p> <p>Support the Diversity Champion to raise awareness through specific campaigns.</p>	1,000.00	April 2021 to March 2022		<p>Number of articles have been provided for Staff News on a range of disability issues.</p> <p>Inclusion of the Equality and Diversity Champion in a number of specific campaigns.</p> <p>Work being undertaken on the issue of RADAR keys as part of the Every Customer Counts initiative.</p>	

		<p>Provision of articles on various disabilities.</p> <p>Staff trained on equality and diversity issues.</p>					
	<p>Develop and implement a range of initiatives to promote engagement and participation by people with a disability (as outlined in the Council's Disability Action Plan).</p>	<p>Higher levels of participation by people with a disability in public life.</p> <p>Staff trained to be disability friendly.</p>	500.00	April 2021 to March 2022		<p>Equality Forum reformed and now meeting on a quarterly basis. Includes representatives from a number of disability groups.</p>	
	<p>Develop and implement a range of initiatives to mainstream issues relating to disability within Council (as outlined in the Disability Action Plan).</p>	<p>Better promotion of equality for people with a disability.</p> <p>Improved support for people with a disability in relation to employability.</p> <p>Capacity of the organization to understand the needs of people with a disability.</p> <p>Promotion of positive attitudes</p>	0	April 2021 to March 2022		<p>Number of articles provided for Staff News on a range of disability issues.</p> <p>Working with OD/HR to develop appropriate training for staff.</p>	

		<p>towards people with a disability.</p> <p>Staff awareness of how to declare a disability and what reasonable adjustments are. Promote the use of positive images of people with a disability in Council campaigns.</p>						
Work Stream	Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and Transformation • Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities 							
	Link to Community Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Thriving Economy • A Healthy Safe Community • A Sustainable Accessible Environment 							
	Link to Performance Improvement Plan							

Business Plan Objective 3

Support the development and implementation of the Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan which includes evidence gathering, community engagement activities, performance management and putting in place governance and reporting mechanisms.

Work Stream	Actions	Outcome(s)	Budget £	Timescale	KPI's	Progress	RAG Status
Community Planning	Management and facilitation of the Causeway Coast and Glens Community Planning Strategic Partnership.	Effective implementation of the CC&G Community Plan.	2,000.00	April 2021 to March 2022	Attendance Improvement by members (Increase by 10%)	The Community Planning Strategic Partnership continues to meet regularly with meetings held on a quarterly basis. During the pandemic these meetings were facilitated on a virtual basis.	
	Provision of training and development opportunities for Community Planning Action Leads and Community Planning partners for progression of performance monitoring and reporting in relation to Community Planning Delivery Plan Actions for CC&G.		2,500.00	April 2021 to March 2022	Participation Improvement by members (Increase by 10%)	Continuous development of performance monitoring and reporting in relation to Community Planning actions. Quarterly reporting mechanism in place.	
	Development and implementation of a monitoring, review and internal reporting mechanism for implementation of the CC&G Community Planning Delivery Plan.		2,000.00	July 2021 to March 2022	Promptness of returns to meet requested deadline (Improve by 10%)	Monitoring, review and reporting mechanism in place. Quarterly reports are provided by Action Leads and then reported on to the Partnership on a quarterly	

						basis by the Thematic Leads.	
	Review of CC&G Community Plan		1,000.00	April 2021 to June 2021		Due to the pandemic the Dept for Communities agreed that a full review of the Community Plan could be postponed with the Partnership undertaking its own review to ensure the Community Plan was still fit for purpose. This was completed by the Partnership in June 2021 with no major adjustments required. The full review is now scheduled for 2022.	
	Review of Community Planning Data Analysis Report		3,000.00	June / July 2021		Review of Baseline report complete.	
	Collaborative training, awareness raising sessions and events across the themes of the CC&G Community Plan. Promotion of inter-professional interactions across the themes of community, health, the environment, tourism and the economy.		2,000.00	April 2021 to March 2022	Participation Improvement (Increase by 10%)	The pandemic meant that a number of collaborative training/events planned for 2021-22 have not taken place.	
	Participative and innovative community engagement and consultative activities in		1,000.00	April 2021 to March 2022	Participation Improvement (Increase by 10%)	A Community Engagement Platform providing Community and Voluntary sector representation has	

	support of Community Planning in CC&G					been established. The Co-Chairs of the Community Engagement Platform are members of the Community Planning Partnership. Continue to explore Innovative techniques and methodologies such as Participatory Budgeting.	
	To further develop engagement opportunities with young people of CC&G through a 'Youth Voice' initiative.		1,000.00	April 2021 to March 2022		Youth Voice established in partnership with EA Youth Services. Project Steering Board based on interagency partnership established and 26 young people committed to a two-year programme.	
	Preparation of Public Statement of Progress for Community Planning in collaboration with Community Partners. Publication and launch of Public Statement of Progress in Causeway Coast and Glens.		1,500.00	April to November 2021		Statement of Progress complete and approved by Community Planning Partnership. To be published by end of November 2021.	
Work Stream	Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Innovation • Healthy, Active and Engaged Communities • Local Economy • Climate Change and Our Environment 						
	Link to Community Plan						

- A Thriving Economy
- A Healthy Safe Community
- A Sustainable Accessible Environment

[Link to Performance Improvement Plan](#)

Business Plan Objective 4

Develop and implement an information management strategy and framework for the Council (including an effective data protection regime and records management strategy and framework).

Work Stream	Actions	Outcome(s)	Budget £	Timescale	KPI's	Progress	RAG Status
Information Governance	Continue to develop and update guidance papers on data protection legislation utilising ICO guidance and case law and review existing policies and procedures as required.	Compliance with a range of access to information legislation.	0	April 2021 to March 2022	Increase number of requests responded to within 20 working days from 85% to 90%	On-going work continuing on providing guidance papers and review of relevant policies and procedures.	Yellow
	Update Council information governance policies taking into account ICO issued guidance and relevant case law.	A records management strategy which supports the priorities and statutory obligations of Council.	0			On-going work continuing on updating information governance policies and procedures.	Yellow
	Continued involvement in the operation of the Information Security and Management Group.		0			Due to pandemic ISMG did not meet. Work to reconvene this Group to be undertaken when DPO appointed.	Red

	Maintain effective day to day management of information access requests.		0			A total of 395 requests for access to information have been received from 1 st April 2021 (as of 9/11/21). Current response rate for requests = 91% closed within 20 working days.	
	Inform staff of information governance and records management issues and key points of relevant policies and procedures.		0			Information provided to staff when necessary on information governance and records management issues. Also includes relevant articles in Staff News.	
	Identify training requirements for Council staff in relation to information governance and records management policies and procedures.		Training budget held by OD/HR			Liaise with OD/HR in relation to training needs as required. On-line training currently available for staff on data Protection issues.	
Work Stream	Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Innovation 						
	Link to Community Plan						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Thriving Economy • A Healthy Safe Community • A Sustainable Accessible Environment 						
	Link to Performance Improvement Plan						

Business Plan Objective 5

Support the priorities and statutory obligations of Council by developing and maintaining relevant strategies, policies, procedures and systems.

Work Stream	Actions	Outcome(s)	Budget £	Timescale	KPI's	Progress	RAG Status
Policy Development	Facilitate a regular review of the Council Corporate Strategy.	Have a strategic direction in place for Council.	2,000	Sept 2021		Review of Corporate Strategy scheduled for February/March 2022.	
	Review and amend Council Constitution on a quarterly basis.	Council achieves relevant statutory obligations. A policy resource is available to staff.	0	April 2021 to March 2022		Quarterly reviews undertaken and reports brought to Council as appropriate. Full annual review undertaken in October/November.	
	Review the log of adopted Council policies and develop a resource on the Staff Portal to provide easy access to these policies.		0	April 2021 to July 2022		Review of log undertaken on a regular basis. Work on the Staff Portal still to be undertaken.	
Work Stream	<p>Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive Leadership • Improvement and Innovation <p>Link to Community Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Thriving Economy • A Healthy Safe Community • A Sustainable Accessible Environment <p>Link to Performance Improvement Plan</p>						