

1. INTRODUCTION

The Consultation on Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's **Draft Performance Improvement Plan** for 2021/22 closed on **2 June 2021**. The Improvement Objectives and associated work strands consulted upon were:

Improvement Objective	Related Council Actions
1. We will invest in a range of environmental programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Undertake tree planting schemes to increase woodland and tree cover in the district. (ii) Continue to promote the food waste collection service alongside promotion of the Reduce/Reuse/Recycle message. (iii) Continue to implement energy management initiatives with focus on main buildings and ensuring that consistent processes are in place to collect and monitor accurate data on energy usage to support achieving a reduction in energy consumption. (iv) Develop the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and commence implementation.
2. We will increase participation in Council led health, wellbeing, and cultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Utilise the partnerships formed during Covid-19 to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable people through pilot programmes in the Omagh and Erne East DEAs. (ii) Identify and deliver virtual and community-based programmes maximising uptake and abiding to the Northern Ireland Executive Guidelines around COVID-19 and relaunch programmes in Leisure, Arts and Communities when safe to do so. (iii) Continue to work in partnership to deliver the Age Friendly Action Plan.
3. We will deliver initiatives aimed at reducing disadvantage and supporting all of our citizens to achieve their potential through business start-up or securing sustainable employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Work with statutory and community partners to deliver funded programmes in line with programme parameters- delivery of the Aspire Programme (supporting access to employment). (ii) Delivery of the Entrepreneurship/ Business Start Up Programme. (iii) Conduct a review of the LOAF programme and evaluate potential for further rollout in 21/22.
4. We will invest in and promote our tourism products and experiences to attract visitors to our district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Develop a Visitor Experience Development Plan for the district. (ii) Invest in and promote our key tourism products and activities. (iii) Develop, agree, and promote Place Brands for Omagh and Enniskillen increasing footfall numbers in both main towns. (iv) Deliver the Rural Tourism Collaborative Experience Programme through two clusters 'Connecting with Cuilcaigh' and 'Steeped in the Sperrin's'. (v) Develop the partnership on the Devenish Island Experience with Historic Environment Division, Waterways Ireland, and key stakeholders.

Consultation responses could be submitted in writing (either by email, letter, or the online comment facility on the Council website – Performance Improvement page) or via the online survey. Social Media campaign analytics (sponsored content on Facebook and Instagram) indicate that a reach of **19,868** was achieved, with **379** post links. There were **523** Twitter impressions. There were **36** responses to the online survey. There were **4** response received via email. At the close of consultation, a total of **40** responses were received.

2. OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

A. What is your main interest in responding to this consultation? *(Tick all that apply)*

Citizen/ ratepayer	34
Local business	3
Community group	2
Statutory sector	2
Voluntary sector	3
Other	1
Total	45

(Drawn from online survey only, note that respondents could choose more than 1 option)

B. Levels of Support for Improvement Objectives and Actions (drawn from online survey):

Consultation Question (Online Survey)	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
3. Did you find the draft Corporate Improvement Objectives easy to understand?	89%	-	11%
4. Do you think that the proposed Improvement Objectives detailed are appropriate for our district?			
4.1 Improvement Objective 1 (Environmental Programmes)	81%	8%	11%
4.2 Improvement Objective 2 (Health, Wellbeing and Cultural Events)	83%	3%	14%
4.3 Improvement Objective 3 (Business Start-up/ employment)	78%	14%	8%
4.4 Improvement Objective 4 (Tourism products)	83%	6%	11%
5. Do you think that the proposed Improvement Actions, aligned to the objectives, are appropriate for our district?			
5.1 Undertake tree planting schemes to increase woodland and tree cover in the district (IO 1)	83%	9%	8%
5.2 Continue to promote the food waste collection service alongside promotion of the Reduce/Reuse/Recycle message (IO 1)	86%	11%	3%
5.3 Continue to implement energy management initiatives with focus on main buildings and ensuring that consistent processes are in place to collect and monitor accurate data on energy usage to support achieving a reduction in energy consumption (IO 1)	75%	11%	14%
5.4 Develop the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and commence implementation (IO 1)	0%	100%	0%
5.5 Utilise the partnerships formed during Covid-19 to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable people through pilot programmes in the Omagh and Erne East DEAs (IO 2)	72%	19%	9%
5.6 Identify and deliver virtual and community-based programmes maximising uptake and abiding to the Northern Ireland Executive Guidelines around COVID-19 and relaunch programmes in Leisure, Arts and Communities when safe to do so (IO 2)	87%	8%	5%
5.7 Continue to work in partnership to deliver the Age Friendly Action Plan (IO 2)	86%	8%	6%
5.8 Work with statutory and community partners to deliver funded programmes in line with programme parameters- delivery of the Aspire Programme (supporting access to employment) (IO 3)	78%	11%	11%
5.9 Delivery of the Entrepreneurship/ Business Start Up Programme (IO 3)	78%	17%	5%
5.10 Conduct a review of the LOAF programme and evaluate potential for further rollout in 21/22 (IO 3)	44%	50%	6%
5.11 Develop a Visitor Experience Development Plan for the district (IO 4)	78%	14%	8%
5.12 Invest in and promote our key tourism products and activities (IO 4)	86%	6%	8%
5.13 Develop, agree, and promote Place Brands for Omagh and Enniskillen increasing footfall numbers in both main towns (IO 4)	72%	14%	14%
5.14 Deliver the Rural Tourism Collaborative Experience Programme through two clusters 'Connecting with Cuilcaigh' and 'Steeped in the Sperrin's' (IO 4)	75%	14%	11%
5.15 Develop the partnership on the Devenish Island Experience with Historic Environment Division, Waterways Ireland, and key stakeholders (IO 4)	67%	22%	11%

C. Related Comments and Suggested Responses:

The following specific comments were received in relation to the proposed Improvement Objectives and related actions through both the online survey and emails.

Improvement Objective	Overview of Comments Received
1. We will invest in a range of environmental programmes	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Very welcome. (ii) Need for more recycling bins in the town, in the parks, removal of the black bins. (iii) Request for advertisement of the freecycle and TerraCycle group on Facebook on council website and at recycling centres. (iv) Better labelling of bins to explain what goes in each bin colour. (v) Need to be mindful with energy management of how any actions might affect the public such as people with a learning disability or those who are partially sighted. <p>Undertake tree planting schemes to increase woodland and tree cover in the district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (vi) Preserve existing trees and hedgerows and avoid any cutting in nesting season; mindful of impacts of weed killer on verges. (vii) Greater focus needed on increasing levels of recycling. (viii) Planting of native, broadleaf trees is needed to encourage biodiversity and care needed where planting occurs. <p>Continue to promote the food waste collection service alongside promotion of the Reduce/Reuse/Recycle message:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ix) Education on recycling. Info on how waste sites work and visits for school groups and interested parties. (x) We need more litter picking initiatives. (xi) Enforcement needed for not recycling. (xii) More sorting of waste at recycling centres and making items available to others who can use them. <p>Implement the Energy Management Policy commencing with our main buildings and ensuring that a methodology and processes are in place to collect and monitor consistent data and evidence relating to energy usage so as to support achieving a reduction in energy consumption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (xiii) Diversifying away from fossil fuels needed; promotion of wind and solar energy. (xiv) Consider improved roofing insulation and use of solar panels on Council buildings, such as the Lakeland Forum. (xv) Turn off building/town lights after 11pm to help wildlife.
2. We will increase participation in Council led health, wellbeing, and cultural activities	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Promotion should be more inclusive of all age groups as not everyone online and encompassing more varied activities and venues. (ii) Focus needed on mental health and those most impacted by pandemic, eg, those with a learning disability. (iii) Working together with different groups within the community such as those with a learning disability really helps promote diversity. (iv) Befriending services might be helpful.

	<p>(v) Council buildings being available on Saturday and Sunday mornings for groups to use.</p> <p>(vi) Development of mountain bike trails in Fermanagh.</p> <p>Utilise the partnerships formed during Covid-19 to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable people through pilot programmes in the Omagh and Erne East DEAs:</p> <p>(vii) Should include children in these pilot programmes.</p> <p>Identify and deliver virtual and community-based programmes maximising uptake and abiding to the Northern Ireland Executive Guidelines around COVID-19 and relaunch programmes in Leisure, Arts and Communities when safe to do so:</p> <p>(viii) Importance of face to face groups instead of virtual.</p> <p>Continue to work in partnership to deliver the Age Friendly Action Plan</p> <p>(ix) Important to also provide youth activities.</p>
<p>3. We will deliver initiatives aimed at reducing disadvantage and supporting all of our citizens to achieve their potential through business start-up or securing sustainable employment</p>	<p>General comments:</p> <p>(i) Suggest that no 3 is reworded to 'We deliver initiatives to build the economic strength of the district, including those furthest from the labour market'</p> <p>(ii) More support needed for newly established businesses to ensure sustainability.</p> <p>(iii) Need for businesses to be allowed to open again.</p> <p>Work with statutory and community partners to deliver funded programmes in line with programme parameters- delivery of the Aspire Programme (supporting access to employment):</p> <p>(iv) Great programme and benefitted a family member.</p> <p>(v) Importance of offering youth apprenticeships.</p> <p>Delivery of the Entrepreneurship/Business Start Up Programme:</p> <p>(vi) Continuous support needed (beyond start up)</p> <p>(vii) Wider support needed to encourage entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Conduct a review of the LOAF Programme and evaluate potential for further rollout in 2021/22:</p> <p>(viii) Not clear what the LOAF Programme is.</p>
<p>4. We will invest in and promote our tourism products and experiences to attract visitors to our district</p>	<p>General comments:</p> <p>(i) Welcome the overall investment in Tourism which benefits the wider community; needs to be a priority following pandemic.</p> <p>(ii) Need to protect our environment and reduce pollution to promote tourism including opposing gold mining in the Sperrins, harmful farming practices, reduction in littering and dog fouling.</p> <p>(iii) Improve access for angling by provision of access roads, lanes and stands.</p>

	<p>(iv) More advertising of attractions and utilisation of them.</p> <p>(v) Greater access to the area by motorhomes, eg, Invest in Aire facilities/allow overnighting in empty car parks in central locations to encourage spend.</p> <p>(vi) Potential development of Lough Navar to include mountain bike trails, walks and children's area.</p> <p>(vii) Consider attractions such as an outdoor cold water swimming lido.</p> <p>Develop a Visitor Experience Development Plan for the district:</p> <p>(viii) Attract more visitors to the Fermanagh waterways and lakes.</p> <p>(ix) Towns need to be open on a Sunday for visitors.</p> <p>Invest in and promote our key tourism products and activities:</p> <p>(x) Preservation of attractions and associated ecosystems.</p> <p>(xi) Consider toilet provision at Lough Navar and Cuilcagh Boardwalk.</p> <p>(xii) More investment and advertising on the Fermanagh Waterways, attracting tourists from the Shannon and Shannon-Erne waterways.</p> <p>(xiii) Welcome the investment in the area, particularly for walkers.</p> <p>Develop, agree, and promote Place Brands for Omagh and Enniskillen increasing footfall numbers in both main towns:</p> <p>(xiv) Consider making Enniskillen Town Centre a pedestrianised zone.</p> <p>(xv) Need to identify new uses for town centres.</p> <p>Deliver the Rural Tourism Collaborative Experience Programme through two clusters 'Connecting with Cuilcaigh' and 'Steeped in the Sperrins:</p> <p>(xvi) Sperrins should be afforded the highest level of protection including opposition to gold mining.</p> <p>(xvii) Emphasis should be on sustainability.</p> <p>Develop the partnership on the Devenish Island Experience with Historic Environment Division, Waterways Ireland, and key stakeholders:</p> <p>(xviii) Opportunities to promote Devenish Island more widely.</p> <p>(xix) Consider provision of toilets and disabled access.</p>
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D. Suggestions for Future Improvements:

1. What improvements would you like to see Fermanagh and Omagh District Council make in the future? (associated list of Council services provided)
2. Further Comment? Please use the following space to provide any further feedback relating to the Draft Corporate Improvement Objectives or future priorities for improvement which you feel should be considered

NB: these are drawn from the online survey and responses received on email.

Suggestions received:

What improvements would you like to see Fermanagh and Omagh District Council make in the future? Further Comments.

General

- (i) Reduce rates for domestic and commercial properties.
- (ii) A number of requests for road improvements/footway improvements.
- (iii) Provision of information in different formats such as easy read and braille. Greater publication of what is happening.
- (iv) Appoint Disability Champions.

Waste and Recycling

- (i) Council should consider promoting a "Refuse, Repair, Reduce, Upcycle" strategy which minimises industrial production. This includes adhering to incoming UK legislation surrounding improved product design.
- (ii) The Council should support or pilot repair cafés and freecycle centres/working with Terracycle.
- (iii) We need greater transparency about recycling levels and where the goods end up.
- (iv) More public recycling bins, removable of black bins.
- (v) More bins around public jetties, promoting Fermanagh as a tourist attraction for boating holidays and water activities.
- (vi) Stricter enforcement of what is recycled needs to be implemented; should not have glass in recycling bins.

Parks and Open Spaces

- (i) Preservation of already existing wild meadows, trees and hedgerows that occur naturally. More "No Mow May" wild meadows need to be mandated.
- (ii) A strict reduction in pesticides use on Council land e.g. grass roadside verges and fruit trees needs to be implemented.
- (iii) Greater fines and deterrents for people/organisations who destroy trees and hedges, especially during the nesting season. This involves implementing and enforcing existing legislation.
- (iv) Stricter litter and dog litter controls to maintain tranquillity at tourist and beauty spots.
- (v) Increase in public seating in towns for use by elderly.
- (vi) Increased funding for street cleansing to reduce weeds on footpaths.

Building Control

- (i) Consider reducing/cutting parking prices.
- (ii) Consider if adequate town centre parking is available in Enniskillen.

Planning

- (i) Agricultural buildings e.g. slatted roof houses, should be minimised and absolutely forbidden on hillsides or near streams and rivers. Land drainage should be discouraged in order to preserve natural wetlands.
- (ii) Less development in rural areas.
- (iii) Greater environmental controls.
- (iv) Council should consider the impacts of Fracking as it could put tourism in this area at risk.
- (v) Concern that Retail and Leisure parks will directly affect town centre economy.

Tourism and Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Economic and tourism development outside of Enniskillen and Omagh along with improvement in road network. (ii) Economic Development and Tourism needs to be resourced appropriately and work should be completed collaboratively with relevant stakeholders; adoption of relevant metrics. (iii) Better road structures & less congestion will encourage tourism in itself. (iv) Development of cross border tourism links between South Fermanagh with Donegal and Leitrim. (v) Funding provided to tourism business which offer sustainable options i.e. reusable cups, wildlife sanctuaries etc.
Leisure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) More activity for teenagers. Skate Park, bowling alley. (ii) More inclusive leisure sports, arts and culture facilities for all age groups and religions. (iii) Sports development for an angling hub. (iv) Refurbishment of Ardhowen Theatre.
Environmental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Concerns regarding pollution of waterways.
Community Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Youth worker within the council - youth consultations to develop services, activities, events & services which are youth friendly.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) in light of the high level of support for the four proposed Improvement Objectives for 2021/22 and the respective actions, that these are agreed as outlined in the consultation, subject to the following amendments:
 - Improvement Objective 1, Action 1: Inclusion of the word 'native' ie Undertake 'native' tree planting schemes to increase woodland and tree cover in the district;
 - Improvement Objective 2, Action 3: amend from 'continue to work in partnership to deliver the Age Friendly Action Plan' to 'continue to increase opportunities for older people to participate in health and wellbeing activities';
 - A number of amendments to proposed performance measures are agreed as outlined in the final draft Performance Improvement Plan 2021/22.
- (ii) specific comments in relation to existing or future service delivery or improvements are referred to the relevant Director or Head of Service for consideration/attention or, where appropriate, to external agencies.