

Ár bhFeidhmíocht Ag Amharc Siar, Ag Dul Chun Cinn

Our Performance Looking Back, Going Forward



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down
District Council

Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down and South Armagh

The Local Government (NI) Act 2014 sets out a general duty of improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils must put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions.



Looking Back

Assessment of Performance 2025-26

Every year, we are required to publish an Assessment of Performance to demonstrate whether planned improvements have been achieved. The Assessment of Performance sets out progress against the current 'measures of success' within the:

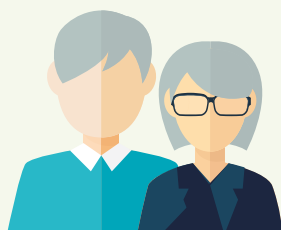
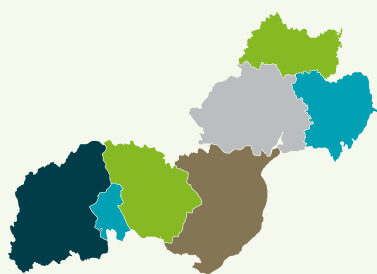
- **Corporate Plan 2024-27**
- **Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26**
(including the statutory performance indicators and standards)

Our performance has been tracked against set targets and trends over time, using the legend below.

Status	Trend
 Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved	 Performance has improved since the previous year
 Target or objective partially achieved / likely to be achieved / subject to delay	 Performance is similar to the previous year
 Target or objective not achieved / unlikely to be achieved	 Performance has declined since the previous year

*Where appropriate, a 10% variance when compared to the previous year's performance has been applied.

Our District, Our Organisation, Our Performance



District

Population: 183,115

Households: 68,397

7 District Electoral Areas

41 Elected Members

1,000+ employees

88% of residents are
satisfied with the Council

Community

Life expectancy:

Male: 79.0 years /

Female: 82.9 years

Age Profile: Based on
NISRA Mid-Year Estimates.

0-15 years: 21.7%

65+ years: 18%

87% of residents agree
that their local area is a
place where people from
different backgrounds get
on well together

100% of residents feel safe
during the day, 78% of
residents feel safe after dark

55 Neighbourhood
Watch Schemes

£14.27m awarded through
the Financial Assistance
Scheme since 2015

Tourism

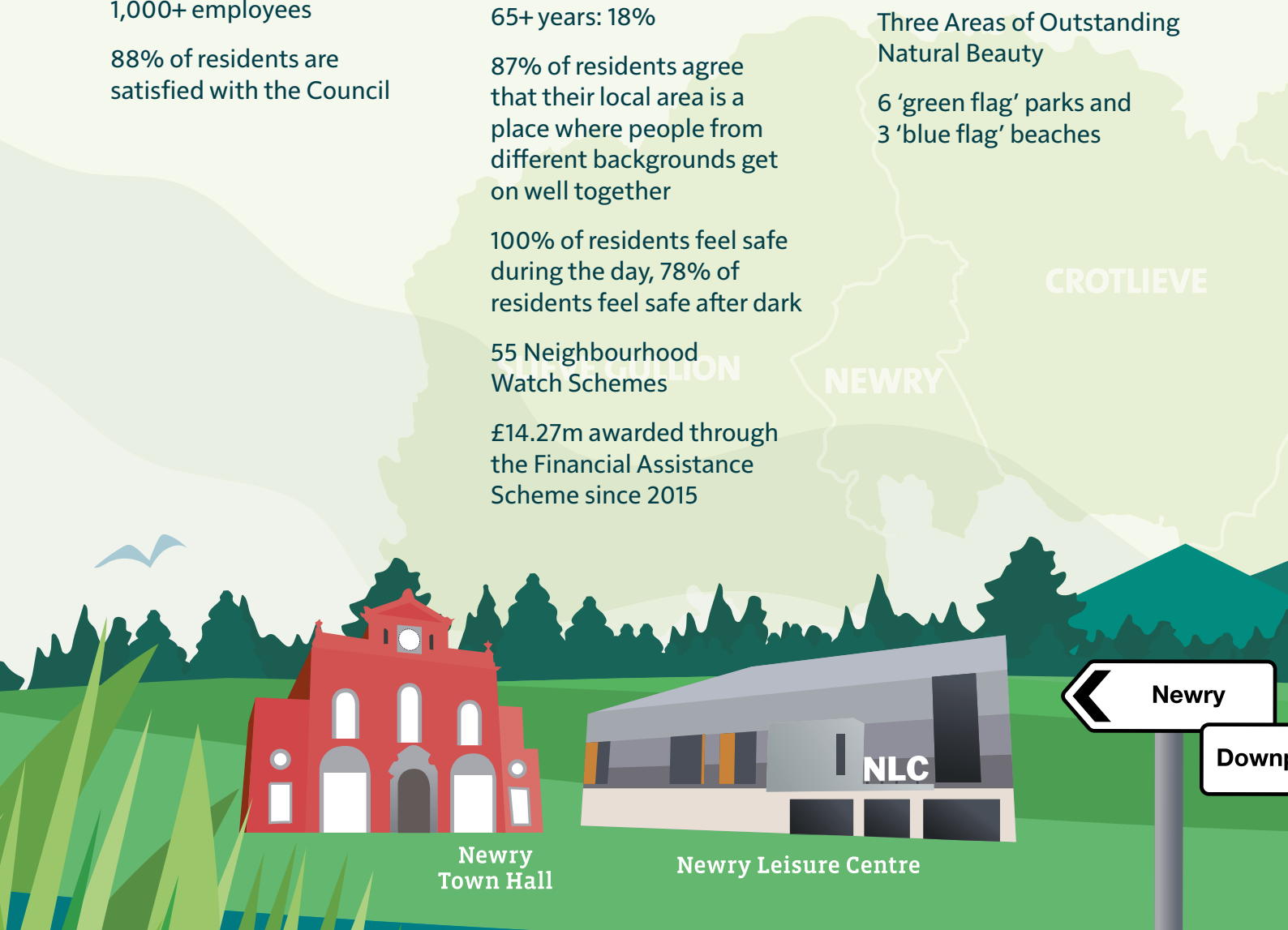
In 2025:

Numbers of overnight
stays 427,157

Level of visitor spend -
£60,817,412

Three Areas of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

6 'green flag' parks and
3 'blue flag' beaches





Health and Wellbeing

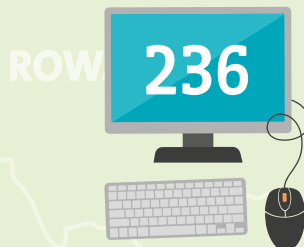
82% of residents feel they are in very good or good health

83% of residents are physically active at least once a week for 30mins

73.5% of customers are satisfied with the Council's six leisure facilities

Over 930,000 paid attendances recorded across our 6 leisure centres during 2025-26

£225,000 of financial assistance funding allocated to sports clubs across the District in 2025-26



Economy

Employment rate: 78.2%

9,525 VAT Registered Businesses

23.1% of the population aged 16 years and over have no qualifications

236 new jobs promoted through business start activity

215 existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions



Environment

Recycling is important to 91% of residents

Top perceived problem for residents: Dog mess and fouling

Recycling rate: 48.3%

100% of Community Clean up requests supported

Fifth lowest level of waste to landfill across all NI Councils



Down Leisure Centre

Down Arts Centre

St Patrick's Monument

Performance at a Glance

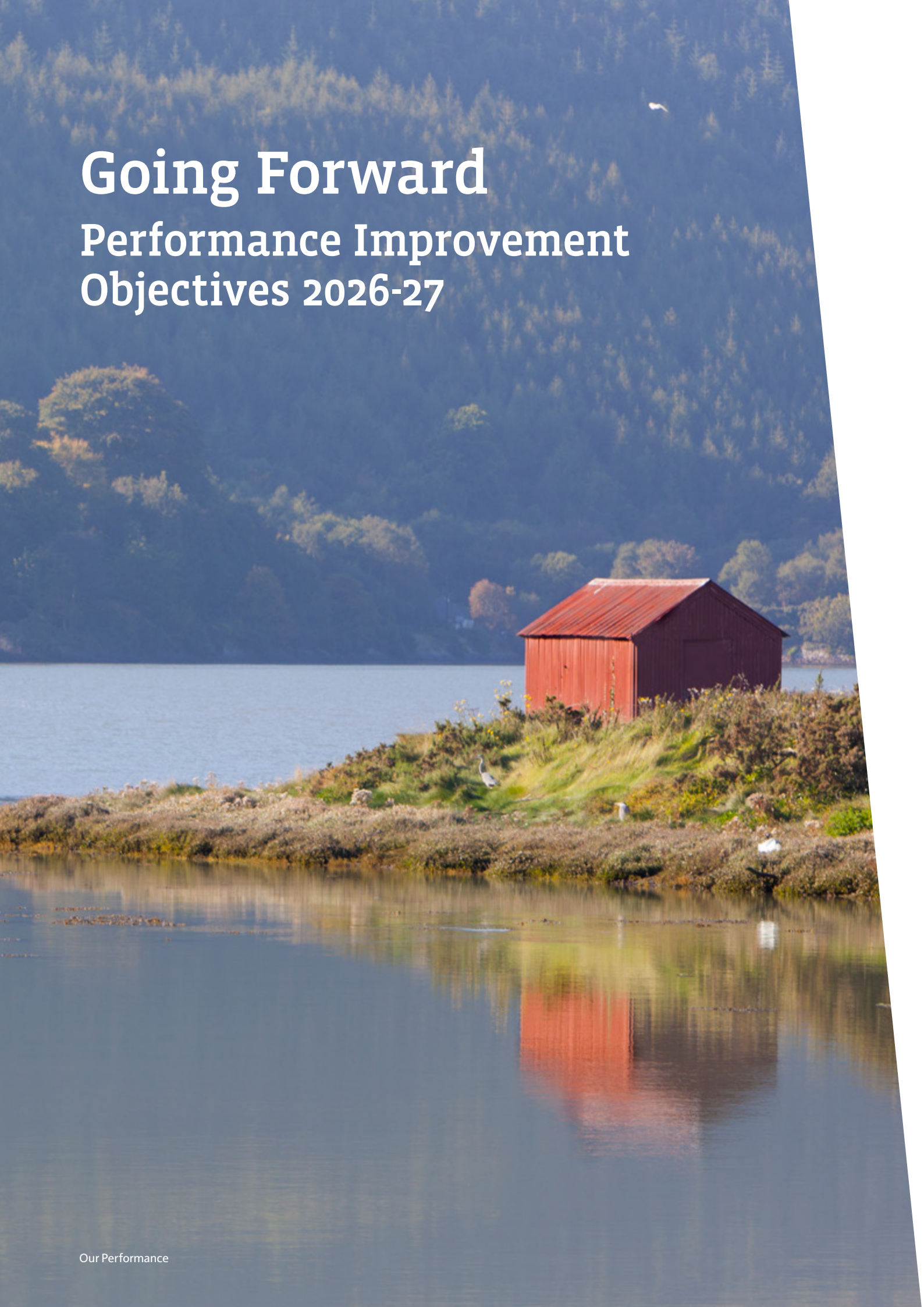
A snapshot of the past year

Performance Improvement Objective	Progress	Status Trend
 We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	26.7% increase in paid attendances at Council leisure centres	😊 ▲
	39% increase in the number of people participating in targeted health programmes	😊 ▲
	£225,000 worth of financial assistance funding was allocated to sports clubs across the District	😊
	11.4% increase in the number of Council leisure centre memberships	😊 ▲
	4 capital leisure projects progressed	😊
	7 play parks upgraded across the District	😊
 We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses and job creation	236* new jobs promoted through business start activity	😊 ▲
	12 new social enterprise businesses supported and 16 new social enterprise jobs created	😊 ▶
	188* new enterprises created as a result of support	😊 ▲
	215* existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions	😊 ▶
	4,719 participants engaged across all 'Go Succeed' activity in 2025-26	😊 ▲
 We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	35 fixed penalty notices issued and 32 paid	😞 ▲
	91% of all fixed penalty notices issued have been paid	😊
	100% of community clean up requests supported	😊
	Decrease in the rate of recycling, to 48.3%**	😊 ▶
	Increase in the amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.	😊 ▼
	10 'Live Here, Love Here' environmental projects supported	▼

Performance Improvement Objective	Progress	Status Trend
 We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change	1 vehicle within the Council fleet that has an alternative fuel source	☹️
	0 Council supported EV charging points installed in 2025-26	☹️
	78% of Council fleet younger than 8 years.	😊 ▶️
	The Baseline Emissions Footprint for Newry Mourne and Down was established and is 5,246 tCO2e (Tonnes of CO2 equivalent)	😊
	2,800 trees planted on Council managed estates	😊 ▲
 We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	During 2025-26, the Council received the second highest number of planning applications across the 11 Councils, behind Belfast City Council.	😊
	The processing time for local planning applications increased from 45.2 weeks in 2024-25 to 45.8 weeks in 2025-26.	☹️ ▶️
	The processing time for major planning applications increased from 29.6 weeks in 2024-25 to 58.8 weeks in 2025-26.	☹️ ▼
	The percentage of enforcement cases progressed within the statutory timescale increased by 10.4% from 47.6% in 2024-25 to 58.0% in 2025-26	☹️ ▲
	The number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more increased from 408 by year end 2024-25 to 519 by year end 2025-26.	☹️ ▼
	The number of enforcement cases in the system for 12 months or more increased from 574 by year end 2024-25 to 644 by year end 2025-26.	☹️ ▼

*The 2025/26 figures are in draft, to be finalised following monitoring and verification of data by Go Succeed lead BCC.

**The 2025-26 data in relation to the statutory performance indicators for waste management remains provisional, as the end of year validated data will not be published by DAERA until Q3 2026-27.



Going Forward

Performance Improvement Objectives 2026-27

Every year, we are required to set performance improvement objectives for the services we provide, and to have in place arrangements to achieve these objectives. These objectives seek to address the issues which matter most to local people, and are:

Linked to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans	✓
Based on existing performance information	✓
Aligned to the seven strategic aspects of improvement	✓
Based on stakeholder consultation and engagement	✓



Objective 1

We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services

What you will see:

- 898,000 paid attendances at our six leisure centres by the end of 2026-27.
- 16,500 people participating in targeted health programmes across the District.
- 9,500 leisure centre memberships recorded.
- 2 play parks upgraded.
- 7 new build and/or upgraded capital leisure projects progressed including Kilkeel Leisure Centre, Newry City Park, Newcastle Centre, Rowallane Multisport hub, Crotlieve Multisport hub, Newry Multisport hub and Newcastle rock pool.
- Financial assistance allocated for sports clubs to the value of £225,000 for capital projects.
- Disability accreditation achieved in an identified tier 1 site.
- 30,000 recorded visits to Donard Park Multisport hub



Objective 2

We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses, job creation and pathways to employment

What you will see:

- 279 business plans created for Start-Up businesses and employer enterprises.
- Over 700 participants engaged across all Go Succeed activity.
- Support provided to 188 existing businesses to progress growth and scaling ambitions.
- 173 new jobs promoted via business start-up activity.
- 12 social enterprise start-ups supported, and 12 social enterprise jobs created.
- 250 directly supported participants on employment pathway initiatives.
- Continued support for new and established local businesses.
- Continued support for the growth of new employment opportunities.
- Continued support to grow a labour market that is economically active and prosperous.



Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents

What you will see:

- Increase in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and paid.
- Responsible dog ownership and reduced levels of dog fouling, littering and illicit dumping.
- Improved opportunities to report dog fouling and identify hotspots for enforcement patrols.
- Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites.
- Opportunities to engage in community clean ups.
- Increased awareness of environmental messaging including recycling, dog fouling and littering.
- Decrease in overflowing bins and reduction of street bin collections.
- A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride.



Objective 4

We will reduce our contribution to climate change by cutting carbon emissions and improving the efficiency of our fleet and buildings

What you will see:

- Council's Climate Change and Sustainable Development strategy launched and published.
- Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan published.
- Annual assessments of the Council's carbon footprint and renewable energy output completed and reported.
- Reduction in Council's carbon footprint.
- Increase in Council's renewable energy generation.
- Continued implementation of Council's fleet replacement programme.
- Reduction in vehicle emissions from Council fleet through transition to HVO.
- New electric vehicles operating within Council fleet.
- New EV charging points installed across the District.



Objective 5

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme

What you will see:

- A more efficient and effective planning service.
- Improved processing times for local and major planning applications.
- Improved processing times for planning enforcement cases.
- Reduction in the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system.
- Validation checklist introduced and processing time for validating planning applications improved.
- A review of representations made during the consultation period for the Draft Plan Strategy.
- A training course developed for Council staff and members in collaboration with Dfl.
- Council's enforcement strategy reviewed and agreed.
- An empowered and motivated workforce.
- Sustainable development and regeneration of the District.

Have your say

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how Council services can be improved in the future. Full copies of the following documents are available to download from our website www.newrymournedown.org as follows:

- **Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27**
- **Assessment of Performance 2025-26**

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

For more information, contact:

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