



September 14th, 2023

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 14th September 2023 at 6:00 pm in Microsoft Teams & Downshire Civic Centre.

Committee Membership 2023 - 2024

Councillor L McEvoy **Chairperson**

Councillor C Enright **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor J Brennan

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor R Howell

Councillor T Kelly

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor D McAteer

Councillor A Mathers

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Agenda

1.0 Introduction and Apologies

Councillor McAteer

2.0 Declaration of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from SPR Committee Meeting held on 17 August 2023

[Draft SPR-Action Sheet arising from 17 August 2023 \(002\).pdf](#)

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Notices of Motion

4.0 Newry City Park - Peace Plus Funding

At the August 2023 Council meeting a Notice of Motion was tabled by Councillor Lee - Surginor as set out below: "Noting the Council has failed to deliver on previously agreed motions to submit funding bids for the Newry City Park to the Levelling up and Shared Island Fund, council will now urgently prepare a capital funding bid to the Peace plus programme for the remainder of funding required to complete all phases of the project and deliver the world class park that was promised to ratepayers; and for full Council to approve this motion as deadline for this application is Tuesday 5th September 2023 at 5pm."

[SPR Committee 14 Sep 23 NOM Peace Plus.pdf](#)

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[Appendix A InvestmentArea_1_4_CallDocument.pdf](#)

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5.0 Notice of Motion – Funding of Projects

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Cllr Savage Seconded by Cllr Finn at the September 2023 Council meeting: - "Council recognises the challenges in securing funding for landmark capital and community projects across the district and agrees to establish a Standing Sub-Committee of Council Officers and nominated Councillors tasked with overseeing the identification of funding streams relevant to Council capital and community projects and the timely delivery of funding applications.

[SPRC - Notice of Motion - Sept 2023.pdf](#)

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For Consideration and/or Decision




6.0 Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 and Disability Action Plan 2023-2027

[Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 and Disability Action Plan 2023-2027.pdf](#)



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[Appendix 1 - NMDDC Equality Action Plan 2023-2027_.pdf](#)




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 <i>Appendix 2 - Disability Action Plan 2023-2027.pdf</i>	<i>Page 57</i>
 <i>Appendix 3 - Consultation analysis - draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2027.pdf</i>	<i>Page 75</i>
 <i>Appendix 4 - Consultation analysis draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2027_.pdf</i>	<i>Page 80</i>

7.0 Public Consultation on the proposed draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan

 <i>SPRC Report - Consultation Draft EVAWG Framework 2023-30.pdf</i>	<i>Page 85</i>
 <i>evawg-teo-consultation NMD Council.pdf</i>	<i>Page 89</i>

8.0 Assessment of Performance 2022-23

 <i>SPR Cover Report Assessment of Performance 2022-23.pdf</i>	<i>Page 120</i>
 <i>Appendix 1 - Assessment of Performance 2022-23_.pdf</i>	<i>Page 123</i>
 <i>Appendix 2 - NMD Looking Back Going Forward 2022 2023.pdf</i>	<i>Page 202</i>

Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

9.0 Mobile device, voice and data services contracts

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 <i>SPR Sept 2023 - Mobile Device and Services.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
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10.0 Lease of lands at Barcroft Community Centre, Newry

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 <i>SPR Report 14 Sept 2023 for Lands at Barcroft Community Centre Newry.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>Map SPR Report 14 Sept 23.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>

11.0 Lease of The Old Gasworks Site, Newry

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 ***Report SPR 14 September 23 - Unit known as former Gasworks Site Newry.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Map of Old Gasworks Site Newry (NM419-G-1-00).pdf*** ***Not included***

12.0 Kilkeel Leisure Centre - Capital Build Project

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 ***SPR - Kilkeel Leisure Centre Capital Project.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 1 KLC Condition Report.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 2 - KLC Business Case.pdf*** ***Not included***

13.0 IFA/DCMS – Funding – Kilkeel Training Pitch

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 ***SPR - IFA-DCMS Funding - Kilkeel Training Pitch.pdf*** ***Not included***

14.0 Surplus Assets Update

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 ***SPR Surplus Assets Report Sept23_ (002).pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Copy of Appendix A Overview Sept 23.pdf*** ***Not included***

15.0 Tyrella Beach Amenity Building

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act

(Northern Ireland) 2014 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business

 **1. SPR - 14 Sept - Tyrella Amenity Building - vf.pdf** **Not included**

 **Appendix 1 - SPR Business Case Tyrella Amenity Building.pdf** **Not included**

16.0 Downpatrick Regeneration Projects

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **2. SPR - 14 Sept 23 - Regen Schemes - Church Street DeCourcy Place - vf.pdf** **Not included**

 **2a. Business Case - Short Form DeCourcy Place Church Street - FINAL.pdf** **Not included**

17.0 Animal Welfare Funding

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) - and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business; Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a government department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.

 **Animal Welfare Funding.pdf** **Not included**

 **Appendix 1.pdf** **Not included**

FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

18.0 Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet - 7 September 2023

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SFWG Action Sheet 07092023.pdf** **Not included**

For Noting

19.0 Sustainability Section Update

 **SPR Report Sustainability 09.2023.pdf**

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20.0 Mournes Gateway Project

 *SPR Agenda Item - 14th Sept 2023 - NoM - MMGP.pdf*

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21.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on Friday 30th June 2023

 *Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Mtg 30.06.2023.pdf*

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Invitees

- Cllr Terry Andrews
- Cllr Callum Bowsie
- Mr Caolain Boyd
- Cllr Jim Brennan
- Cllr Pete Byrne
- Mr Gerard Byrne
- Cllr Philip Campbell
- Mr Andrew Cassells
- Cllr William Clarke
- Mrs Linda Cummins
- Cllr Laura Devlin
- Ms Louise Dillon
- Cllr Cadogan Enright
- Cllr Doire Finn
- Cllr Aoife Finnegan
- Ms Joanne Fleming
- Cllr Conor Galbraith
- Cllr Mark Gibbons
- Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
- Cllr Glyn Hanna
- Cllr Valerie Harte
- Cllr Roisin Howell
- Cllr Jonathan Jackson
- Cllr Geraldine Kearns
- Miss Veronica Keegan
- Mrs Josephine Kelly
- Cllr Tierna Kelly
- Cllr Cathal King
- Cllr Mickey Larkin
- Cllr David Lee-Surginor
- Cllr Alan Lewis
- Cllr Oonagh Magennis
- Mr Conor Mallon
- Cllr Aidan Mathers
- Cllr Declan McAteer
- Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
- Cllr Andrew McMurray
- Catrina Miskelly
- Mr Colin Moffett
- Cllr Declan Murphy
- Cllr Kate Murphy
- Cllr Selina Murphy

Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
.....
Cllr Michael Rice
.....
Mr Peter Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Michael Savage
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
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Sarah Taggart
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Paul Tamati
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
.....
Mrs Marie Ward
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ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2023

SPR/065/2023	Notice of Motion – Mournes Gateway Project	It was agreed Elected Members approve to adopt the Notice of Motion as amended: "This Council notes with concern the continued lack of clarity regarding the Visitor Centre located at Thomas' Mountain and 'Gondola' elements of the Mourne Gateway Project. Council will; revisit the stakeholder engagement process and undertake a robust consultation on the project with residents, workers and businesses within the district via the project board for approval and actively investigate and develop alternatives to the Mourne Gateway Project which will both meet the funding criteria while enhancing this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Officers to bring back a paper to Committee that provides a full and comprehensive update on the status of the project thus far. A schedule of key stakeholder and interested parties should be provided as part of this update."	J Kelly/A Patterson	Report being brought to September SPR	Y
SPR/078/2023	Lease of The Old Gasworks Site, Newry	It was agreed to defer this item.	P Rooney	Report being brought to September SPR	Y

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 17 AUGUST 2023

SPR/098/2023	Officer Report on Notice of Motion – Memorial to Crossgar’s Titanic Victim, James McGrady	It was agreed to bring the report back to the Equality and Good Relations Reference Group for further investigative work. It was also agreed that the word ‘memorial’ be removed from the original notice of motion.	C Moffett	To be considered at Councillors’ Equality & Good Relations Reference Group meeting October 2023	N
SPR/099/2023	Revised Terms of Reference for Councillors’ Equality and Good Relations Reference Group	The revised Terms of Reference of the Councillors Equality and Good Relations Reference Group were agreed.	C Moffett	Agreed	Y
SPR/100/2023	New Council Complaints Handling Procedure – Implementation of Northern Ireland Public Sector Ombudsman (NIPSO) Model Complaints Handling Procedures Parts 1-3	It was agreed to adopt the model MHCP as published by NIPSO and replace its current policy documents with the customised version attached to the officer’s report within the period of 6 months from the publication date as required.	G McBride	Agreed	Y
SPR/101/2023	Review Records Management Policy and Procedure	It was agreed to approve the revised Records Management Policy and Procedures	E Cosgrove	Agreed	Y

SPR/102/2023	Council Decision-Making Process	It was agreed to note the process maps and narratives for dealing with Notices of Motion at both Council and Committee Meetings. It was also agreed to bring back updated maps to reflect the discussions at the meeting and any further changes to wording or the order of the flowchart that Members have they should email through to the Democratic Services Manager.	J Kelly/S Taggart	Report to be brought to October SPR.	N
SPR/103/2023	Business Continuity Policy	It was agreed to approve the Business Continuity Policy as attached to the officer's report	C Boyd	Agreed	Y
ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014					
SPR/104/2023	Sale of No 13 and No 15, The Square, Ballynahinch	It was agreed to accept the highest offer and proceed with the sale of the site.	C Boyd	Agreed	Y
SPR/105/2023	Proposed Renewal of a Licence of Lands at Castle Park, Newcastle to National Westminster Bank for a Mobile Bank Unit	It was agreed to grant a Licence to National Westminster Bank permitting them to operate a mobile banking unit at Castle Park each Thursday from 10am until 12pm for a further 2-year period subject to a yearly Licence Fee as set out in the officer's report.	P Rooney	Agreed	Y
SPR/106/2023	Proposed Lease of Area for Mobile Phone Installation at Downpatrick HRC Site	It was agreed to defer decision to establish whether a planning application has been submitted on the site.	P Rooney	Deferred - To be brought back after consideration by Planning Committee	N

SPR/107/2023	Kilkeel Bowling Pavilion	The final cost estimate was agreed for the refurbishment and upgrade of Kilkeel Bowling Pavilion as per section 4.1 of the officer's report.	P Tamati	Agreed	Y
SPR/108/2023	Director Recruitment	<p>It was agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the recruitment for Director: Sustainability & Environment; Confirm decision in relation to 2.4 of the officer's report; Confirm to human.resources@nmandd.org nominations to the selection panel for Director: Sustainability & Environment and Director: Active & Healthy Communities, by Monday 4 September 2023, together with availability for training; Agreed also to seek permission for 3 Elected Members to be appointed to both recruitment panels; In the case of more than 3 nominations, it was noted that a Party Leaders meeting be called. 	C Miskelly	Agreed	Y
SPR/109/2023	Consent to Assign Lease of Lands at Ballykinlar	It was agreed to consent to the assignment of the lease from the Playgroup to the Group identified in the officer's report, subject to the consent of the Head Landlord. It was also agreed to amend or waive the clauses in the Sublease to permit the new tenant to use the lands as an office to carry out its functions.	P Rooney	Agreed	Y
SPR/107/2023	Kilkeel Bowling Pavilion	The final cost estimate was agreed for the refurbishment and upgrade of Kilkeel Bowling Pavilion as per section 4.1 of the officer's report.	P Tamati	Agreed	Y

FOR NOTING – This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014				
SPR/110/2023	Quarter 1 Management Accounts – 2023/24	It was agreed to note the Quarter 1 2023-24 Management Accounts	G Byrne	Agreed Y
SPR/111/2023	Belfast Region City Deal – Annual Report	It was agreed to note the BRCD Annual Report for 2022/23.	J Kelly	Agreed Y
SPR/112/2023	Staff Matter – Sustainability & Environment	It was agreed to note the content of the officer's report, including the closure of the canteens since March 2020.	A Cassells	Agreed Y
SPR/113/2023	Newry Leisure Centre (NLC) Swimming Pool	It was agreed to note the content of the officer's report with a further report to be tabled at Council to agree a programme of works and closure arrangements of Newry Leisure Centre swimming pool.	P Tamati	Agreed Y

FOR NOTING			
SPR/114/2023	<p>Statutory Reporting – Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period April-June 2023 and NMDDC Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2022-23</p>	<p>It was agreed to note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period April-June 2023. It was further agreed to note Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report for the period 2022-2023 for submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland by 31 August 2023.</p>	<p>C Moffett</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Y</p>
SPR/115/2023	Sickness Absence	<p>It was agreed to note the contents of the report and to note the following measures in relation to sickness absence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence data is analysed and reported on a quarterly basis to both the Senior and Corporate Management Teams to identify opportunities for targeted interventions. • Sickness Absence forms part of the Corporate Risk Register and performance monitored on the Corporate Dashboard. • A tender for a new Occupational Health Service is due to close on 17 August 2023. 	<p>C Miskelly</p> <p>In relation to the query regarding the last staff survey undertaken by the Health & Wellbeing, the survey reported that a total of 368 participants, or approximately 38% of the Council workforce, responded (anonymously).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Y</p>

SPR/116/2023	Draft NILGA Corporate Plan 2023-2027	It was agreed to note the officer's report and members to respond with any feedback to NILGA regarding Corporate Plan 2023-2027 by Thursday 31 August 2023.	S Taggart	Noted	Y
SPR/117/2023	Closed/Open Reporting	It was agreed to note that staff have been reminded of the need to review the contents of each report in line with the relevant sections of the legislation it was agreed that officers should do all in their power to bring matters that can be brought into open session, but with legal, commercial information being considered in closed session.	J Kelly	Noted	Y

END

Report to:	SPR Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 th September 2023
Subject:	Newry City Park - Peace Plus Funding
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Paul Tamati Assistant Director Leisure & Sport

For decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.0	Purpose and Background		
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u> The report is to seek committee approval for the recommendations as outlined in Section 3.1 of the report</p> <p><u>Background</u></p> <p>At the August 2023 Council meeting a Notice of Motion was tabled by Councillor Lee-Surginor as set out below:</p> <p><i>"Noting the Council has failed to deliver on previously agreed motions to submit funding bids for the Newry City Park to the Levelling up and Shared Island Fund, council will now urgently prepare a capital funding bid to the Peace plus programme for the remainder of funding required to complete all phases of the project and deliver the world class park that was promised to ratepayers; and for full Council to approve this motion as deadline for this application is Tuesday 5th September 2023 at 5pm."</i></p> <p>The motion was referred to SPR committee</p> <p>As Councillors you are familiar with the Council's ambitious capital plan and will be aware that Council officers are continually horizon scanning for funding to support the delivery of the plan, creating investment and improving services across the District.</p> <p>Since Newry, Mourne and Down District Council was formed on the 1 April 2015, Council has secured approximately £25m in funding to support the completion of a number of significant capital projects with a gross cost of £105m up until March 2023.</p> <p>On the 6 February 2023, Members would be aware that Council approved an ambitious Capital Programme with a gross cost of £155m. Council has already secured £64m of funding to support the completion of the multi-year Capital Programme. Further funding has been secured since February 2023.</p> <p>In relation to the Newry City Park, Councillors are briefed on this project via the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board and the Newry City Park Stakeholder Group. A verbal update was provided on the current position in relation to the release of funding at the August 2023 Council meeting.</p>		

2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>The Outline Business Case for the park has been reviewed by Department for Communities economist and a presentation was made to a casework committee on the 3 July 2023 and was well received. Following this, Council is currently awaiting formal approval from the Executive Office's Department of Finance which is anticipated in the coming weeks, and if approved will unlock the £16.2 million of complementary funding for the project. The Council has also agreed to underwrite a further £2.4 million which will deliver a 15-acre City Park as part of Phase 1.</p> <p>Currently the project has been progressed to the conclusion of RIBA Stage 2 and Council is in the process of procuring and subsequently appointing an Integrated Consultancy Team to take the scheme through from Stage 3 to completion of the project which is planned for May 2027.</p> <p>Any further application for funding whether to Peace Plus or other funds would be for Phase 2 of the project and this element of the project has not been developed further than master plan/concept at this stage.</p> <p>Peace Plus is a programme managed by SEUPB on behalf of the European Union and is the 6th iteration of European structural funds to support cross border projects. East Border Region and the Council have held a series of workshops and information events across 2022/23 to identify potential Peace Plus funding applications.</p> <p>The Peace Plus Programme has a call document entitled Investment Area 1.4 Reimagining Communities which states the programme duration is 2021 to 2027 (see Appendix A). The application deadline is 7 September at 5pm and for ease of reference I have set out below the criteria that any application should meet.</p> <p>SECTION 6 PROJECT ASSESSMENT 6.1 Pre-requisites to assessment. Due to the capital works nature all applicants must demonstrate the following pre-requisites before proceeding to assessment against the project selection criteria.</p> <p>Evidence that requisite consents and permission are in place or in process (process means it must be submitted to the relevant authority with a clear decision pathway), examples below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning approval, listing consent, impact on conservation area, environmentally sensitive areas approvals • Evidence of fit within the Local Development Plan designations. • Evidence that planning is not needed for certain developments (or parts of them) or falls with delegated limits, permitted development, etc • Evidence of appropriate land title and or lease agreements being in place prior to Steering Committee. • Have suitable underwriting methods should project costs overrun. The Lead Partner must be able to demonstrate sufficient cashflow to deliver the project during the lifetime of PEACEPLUS funding, taking account of claims processing times and the nature of significant financial claims being paid in arrears as well as the financial capacity to support the future running costs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the Letter of Offer and with the approval of the Steering Committee, a condition may be added stating a deadline by which time planning approval must be in place. <p>The project at this time does not satisfy all the prerequisites as set out above. Councillors will be aware that a planning application has not been submitted for the project at this stage.</p> <p>Council has previously been provided with the programme of delivery for the project (see below):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="263 515 1444 929"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Table 6.3: Project timeline</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Activity</th> <th>Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>OBC approved by DfC & DoF</td> <td>August 23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Design Team (ICT) procured</td> <td>September 23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Application for Schedule Monument approval</td> <td>September 23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Planning application</td> <td>July 24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Planning approval</td> <td>March 25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contractor Procured</td> <td>July 25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Works</td> <td>July 25-May 27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Completion date</td> <td>May 27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Council is committed to the delivery of this project and is actively working to ensure the delivery of Phase 1, utilising all the external funding within the above project timeline.</p> <p>The above information is provided as a rationale for the current position with regards to this matter. While the criteria would not be met for this particular funding stream, you can be assured of our ongoing dedication to sourcing eligible funding opportunities for the Newry City Park.</p>	Table 6.3: Project timeline		Activity	Date	OBC approved by DfC & DoF	August 23	Design Team (ICT) procured	September 23	Application for Schedule Monument approval	September 23	Planning application	July 24	Planning approval	March 25	Contractor Procured	July 25	Works	July 25-May 27	Completion date	May 27
Table 6.3: Project timeline																					
Activity	Date																				
OBC approved by DfC & DoF	August 23																				
Design Team (ICT) procured	September 23																				
Application for Schedule Monument approval	September 23																				
Planning application	July 24																				
Planning approval	March 25																				
Contractor Procured	July 25																				
Works	July 25-May 27																				
Completion date	May 27																				
3.0	Recommendations																				
3.1	Council officers continue to work with the Department to secure the Dof funding approval and work with all stakeholders and partners to deliver the project under the direction of the NCCR Programme board.																				
3.2	Council officers will continue to investigate potential funding sources for all projects within the Council Capital Plan and progress the development of projects to a stage where they are eligible for submission to the relevant fund.																				
4.0	Resource implications																				
4.1	N/A																				
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)																				
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>																				

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> <p><i>Pre-planning application consultation ongoing.</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix A: Investment Area 1.4 Reimagining Communities
8.0	Background Documents

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PEACEPLUS

Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government

**INVESTMENT AREA 1.4
RE-IMAGING COMMUNITIES
CALL DOCUMENT**

PEACEPLUS Programme 2021-2027

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1. The PEACEPLUS Programme

PEACEPLUS (the Programme) is a unique cross-border structural funds programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous society in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. It represents the European Union's commitment to supporting the peace process across the region, with the first PEACE Programme launched in 1995.

PEACEPLUS represents an investment of €1.144bn in support of projects that promote peace and reconciliation and contribute to cross-border economic and territorial development. It will contribute to a more peaceful, prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland and will leave a lasting legacy. It will build upon previous PEACE and INTERREG Programmes by combining these two funding streams into one cohesive new programme.

PEACEPLUS is supported by the European Union, the UK Government, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government. It is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). PEACEPLUS comprises six themes, which encompass 22 individual investment areas.



The call for applications should be read in conjunction with the following:

- PEACEPLUS Programme and associated Programme Overview
- The Programme Manual
- Practical Guide for Applying for Funding

Please consult these documents before completing the application form as they contain essential information to assist you in making the best application possible. These documents are available on the SEUPB website – www.seupb.eu

Key information on submitting an application, troubleshooting guides and FAQ resources have been provided on the PEACEPLUS Portal – peaceplussupport.seupb.eu

SECTION 2

DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION

The PEACEPLUS Programme is making a call for applications under Theme 1:

Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities - Investment Area 1.4

EU Policy Objective: A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights

EU Specific Objective: ISO4.4. PEACEPLUS Re-imagining Communities

This **objective** will create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services, which will benefit and embed peace and reconciliation.

It will **result** in an increase in the number of individuals and groups regularly accessing new or reimagined shared spaces, which have been co-designed on a cross-community basis and spending recreational time or accessing services therein.

2.1 What does the Investment Area "Re-imagining Communities" seek to achieve?

Re-imagining Communities is a programme of transformative re-imagining projects, which will create new shared spaces for use by all communities; or increase the shared usage of existing facilities. It will result in an increased number of individuals and groups utilising shared spaces and accessing shared services.

The PEACE Programme has helped to increase cross-community and cross-border integration across the programme area by investing in the creation of shared spaces and services. This has included iconic spaces which have created prominent physical symbols of a changing society, as well as shared spaces developed by interface communities on a cross-community basis. This has led to significant and sustained attitudinal change in key areas across the programme area.

There is an opportunity to build upon this model to:

- Provide diverse communities with the support and resources to self-determine and co-design transformative shared, inclusive spaces and services on a cross-community and/or cross-border basis within their areas; and

- Facilitate the re-imagining of existing facilities (including those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic), with an emphasis on those areas which have been most impacted by the conflict, in a way which will deliver maximum social and economic benefits.

It will be important to develop innovative programmes of activity and service provision which maximise the cross-community and/or cross-border usage of the shared spaces. The programme should have an equal emphasis upon the creation of new and re-imagined community spaces within urban and rural areas.

2.2 Anticipated Actions

It is anticipated that the Programme will fund the following types of actions:

- Actions which will enable key representatives and leaders of different communities to collaborate and co-design re-imagining projects on a cross-border and/or cross-community basis, which will result in significant social and economic regeneration and transformation;
- Actions which will result in the re-imagining of existing spaces; including the removal of sectarian symbols and emblems to encourage increased shared usage and deliver significant peace and reconciliation outcomes for the entire community;
- The development of re-imagined and new facilities which will accommodate social enterprise and social innovation projects, which will benefit the entire surrounding community through cross-community usage; this should include facilities left vacant post the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The development of new and inclusive shared spaces, which will have a transformative effect on local areas and enable shared usage by groups and individuals from different community, cultural and political backgrounds; particularly within those communities which have been most impacted by the conflict and experience poverty, inequality and social exclusion as a direct result;
- The development of shared facilities and programmes which enable significant and sustained multi and inter-generational usage on a cross-border and/or cross-community basis and include a focus on minority groups;
- Programmes which address the levels of sectarianism and racism which prevent shared usage of spaces and access to shared services; and
- Programmes which support the sustained cross-community usage of new and re-imagined community spaces and facilitate access to shared services. These programmes may encompass a wide range of thematic areas including children and young people; health and wellbeing; social enterprise; tourism and heritage; education; arts and culture; and sport and recreation.

SECTION 3

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

3.1 Who is eligible to apply

- a. National, regional and local authorities;
- b. Regional and local development agencies, chambers of commerce;
- c. Universities, colleges, higher education, research institutions;
- d. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- e. Sectoral agencies and business support organisations;
- f. Voluntary sector organisations;
- g. Other relevant public-like organisations contributing to the development of the programme area;
- h. Private sector – specifically micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large companies.

Please note the above is not an exhaustive list, other bodies may be considered eligible.

3.2 Programme Area

The programme area for PEACEPLUS is:

- Northern Ireland;
- The border counties of Ireland (Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo).

This is the core programme area. The programme, however, has flexible geography beyond its administrative borders called a functional area. This allows for organisations and institutions not based in the core programme area to get involved in projects by linking with partners within the core area. The benefits of such collaborations must be significant for the core programme area.¹

¹ Refer to the PEACEPLUS Programme Manual - Applicants from Outside the Programme Area

SECTION 4

THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

PEACEPLUS Performance Framework is designed to measure and monitor the overall performance of the Programme. All activity supported as part of the PEACEPLUS Re-imagining Communities Programme - Investment Area 1.4 - must contribute to the achievement of the output and result indicators established for this part of the Programme.

Building on the experience of the PEACE IV programme objective 3.1: Capital Development to Create Shared Spaces, PEACEPLUS continues to support the increase of cross-community and cross-border integration across the Programme area by investing in the creation of shared spaces and services. As demonstrated in previous PEACE Programmes, shared spaces lead to significant and sustained attitudinal change in key areas across the Programme area.

All applicants will be required to demonstrate how their proposed project represents 'a capital shared space jointly developed and implemented' and will achieve the involvement of a target number of 'participants from different communities engaged jointly within new shared spaces'.

4.1 Output and associated Result indicators

The regulations state that all investment areas (specific objectives) supported by PEACEPLUS must consist of the following:

1. Output and result indicators for each specific objective
2. Milestones for output indicators to be reached by 2024
3. Targets for output and result indicators to be achieved by 2029

The output and result indicators at Programme level for the Investment Area are presented in the table below:

Output Indicators				
ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone 2024	Target Value 2029
PSO1.4	Capital shared space jointly developed and implemented	Shared spaces	0	10

Result Indicator			
ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target Value 2029
PSR1.4	Participants from different communities engaged jointly within new shared spaces	Participants	50,000

4.2 Achievement of Outputs and Results²

It is expected that 10 capital shared space developments will be jointly developed and implemented, providing infrastructure for programmes that result in 50,000 participants from different communities engaged in meaningful and purposeful contact.

The creation of shared space is about breaking down the barriers of territory and developing spaces, sometimes simply a building that both traditional communities of Protestants and Catholics can have access to and indeed share as well as the newer communities of Northern Ireland and the Border Counties. Shared spaces are used by all sections of the community, they are developed and managed in a manner that respects the rights, equality and diversity of all. The change will be reflected in how parades, flags, emblems, graffiti and other related issues impact on the public space. This will involve changes in both attitudes and behaviour with a corresponding reduction in segregation. The Programme will support the development of capital build projects that demonstrate tangible progress in developing shared space and building a shared society. Projects will be designed to have a transformative effect locally as well as having a regional significance. Projects will incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, including measures to minimise carbon emissions.

Different communities relate to persons of different religious belief, ethnic or racial group. Initiatives should evidence commitment to tackling real and complex issues, such as racism and sectarianism, which prevent the benefits of a united and shared community being realised. Meaningful and purposeful contact should be worthwhile and have a function, it should result in the participation of shared activities.

Each output and result for the investment area will be considered achieved once a new shared space is open/becomes operational with evidence of joint activity or joint usage

² The applicant should refer to the PEACEPLUS Performance Framework for full detail on the measurement of outputs and results – this is included at Annex 1

occurrence within. Usage should primarily be on a 60/40 cross-community split. In exceptional cases, where projects present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence, SEUPB may accept thresholds lower than the 60/40 proposed for projects based in Northern Ireland.

Due to the population demographics of the Border Region of Ireland (BRI), unless otherwise agreed with SEUPB, an 80/20 cross-community threshold is acceptable. In exceptional cases, where projects present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence, SEUPB may accept thresholds lower than 80/20 in the BRI.

Usage is also encouraged by people from other communities including minority ethnic communities and those of different racial backgrounds and new communities. Further to this, where either the 80/20 BRI or 60/40 NI cross-community split is too difficult to achieve, SEUPB will consider including participants from minority ethnic communities and those of different racial backgrounds within the lower threshold group. However, as with the BRI and NI splits above, such projects will need to present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence.

4.3 Responsibilities regarding evaluations

In addition to reporting the achievement of output and result indicators, the Project has the responsibility to contribute to, and facilitate, the PEACEPLUS programme evaluations and as such projects should build capacity for it (note that evaluations will be longitudinal, lasting several years, and may require access to and support to engage with stakeholders and participants). This responsibility may involve (but not limited to):

- Engaging with evaluators appointed by the SEUPB and supporting the impact evaluations, with data collection (including data held by the LP and new data collected during the evaluation), provision of information, facilitating access to key stakeholders/participants and visibility actions.
- Gathering and providing data for evaluation indicators set by the SEUPB and/or the evaluators appointed by SEUPB (primary measures). The SEUPB and/or the evaluators may engage with the projects to agree these indicators and means for measurement.
- Projects may set up specific indicators and achievement objectives for their project (secondary measures), in this case projects should inform the SEUPB and evaluators of the data they are collecting and if relevant provide it.
- Use the tools and mechanisms provided by SEUPB for data collection and reporting.

The evaluation indicators (primary and secondary measures) will be put in place during the implementation period of the programme. In due time, the SEUPB and/or the evaluators will communicate evaluation responsibilities to the Lead Partners. Good quality, reliable longitudinal evaluations require excellent working relationships between all parties and this basic principle will be a priority in all SEUPB commissioned impact evaluations.

Every project proposal will be expected to have a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Administration Officer and Finance Officer to assist with the project delivery returns to SEUPB.

4.4 Contribution to the Horizontal Principles

The PEACEPLUS Programme is underpinned by three Horizontal Principles: Sustainable Development; Non-Discrimination and Equality between Men and Women; and Equal Opportunities. Pro-active contribution to and support of these Principles should be part of every successful project funded by the Programme. The Programme Manual and additional guidance documents on the Horizontal Principles will provide specific information on how to ensure your project contributes to sustainable development and equality in line with the Programme commitments. Please note that the assessment value for contribution to sustainable development has increased from 5% in the previous Programme to 10% under PEACEPLUS. This is in recognition of the continued commitment to sustainability and the natural environment.

SECTION 5

APPLICATION PROCESS

A one stage process will be in place for this call. Full details of the assessment process, including admissibility criteria is also available in the Programme Manual and other associated guidance.

SECTION 6

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Pre-requisites to assessment

Due to the capital works nature all applicants must demonstrate the following pre-requisites before proceeding to assessment against the project selection criteria

- Evidence that requisite consents and permission are in place or in process (process means it must be submitted to the relevant authority with a clear decision pathway), examples below;
 - Planning approval, listing consent, impact on conservation area, environmentally sensitive areas approvals
 - Evidence of fit within the Local Development Plan designations
 - Evidence that planning is not needed for certain developments (or parts of them) or falls with delegated limits, permitted development, etc
- Evidence of appropriate land title and or lease agreements being in place prior to Steering Committee.
- Have suitable underwriting methods should project costs overrun. The Lead Partner must be able to demonstrate sufficient cashflow to deliver the project during the lifetime of PEACEPLUS funding, taking account of claims processing times and the nature of significant financial claims being paid in arrears as well as the financial capacity to support the future running costs.
- At the time of the Letter of Offer and with the approval of the Steering Committee, a condition may be added stating a deadline by which time planning approval must be in place.

6.2 Project selection criteria

Applications will be assessed and scored against seven core criteria. Please refer to the **PEACEPLUS Programme Manual** which contains the operational definition of these criteria and the sub-criteria linked to them. Individual investment areas may have additional call specific requirements, where this is the case, they will be detailed under the relevant criterion below:

(a) The operation will have to demonstrate how they contribute to the PEACEPLUS programme objectives and the results and outputs of the theme.

- In order to differentiate from smaller scale initiatives supported under Local Authority Action Plans, applications under the PEACEPLUS Re-imaging Communities Programme are expected to be in excess of €2 Million.
 - Projects must demonstrate compliance with the Town Centre First policy in Ireland and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement on Town Centres and Retailing in Northern Ireland³
 - The animation of the space must be clearly articulated to allow for cross-community engagement.
- (b) Quality of the project design
- Projects will incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, including measures to minimise carbon emissions.
- (c) Quality of cross-community and cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value;
- (d) Quality of the project team, partnership and implementation arrangements;
- The project must ensure sufficient human resources to fulfil the management, monitoring and evaluation, financial, communication and administration responsibilities of funded projects.
- (e) Value for money;
- Applicants will have to demonstrate the necessary financial resources and mechanisms to cover operation and maintenance costs, so as to ensure the financial sustainability of the project.
- (f) Contribution towards sustainable development;
- Projects must ensure that an environmental impact assessment or a screening procedure is undertaken and that the assessment of alternative solutions has been taken in due account.
 - As the expected lifespan of infrastructure projects are at least five years, an assessment of expected impacts of climate change must be carried out and evidenced.
 - Soil sealing (The destruction or covering of the ground by an impermeable material) should be limited as far as is possible, proposals must make clear how it will address this issue within the application.
- (g) Contribution towards equality,
- Projects must ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities, gender equality and take account of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (including Section 75 in Northern Ireland)

³ [The Strategic Planning Policy Statement | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](#).

- Project must incorporate a Changing Places Toilet facility⁴.

SECTION 7

CALL DETAILS, BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE

7.1 Call Timeline

A total value of €75 million has been allocated to this call and projects are expected to be over €2 Million. Proposals will have to meet the pre-requisites before submitting the applications.

- Opening Date: 15 June 2023
- Closing Date: **7 September 2023 at 5pm**
- Steering Committee Date: No later than 21st March 2024

7.2 Budget and Co-Finance Rate

The total value of €75 Million available under this call consists of €60 million ERDF and €15 million governmental match.

Grants are available to cover 100% of the eligible costs of the project. 80% of the grant will be provided through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the remaining 20% from Government (Accountable) Departments in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Projects/Partners may wish to bring additional match funding into the project, applicants should seek further advice from SEUPB on this before the call closes.

The level of grant aid may be adjusted to take due account of state aid or UK subsidy controls⁵ and/or anticipated future revenue streams. Please consult the Programme Manual for further details.

⁴ [Changing Places Toilets must be provided in new public buildings – Murphy | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](http://www.changing-places.org/). <http://www.changing-places.org/>

⁵ From 1 January 2021, all subsidies provided by public authorities in Northern Ireland have had to comply with either the EU State aid rules or the subsidy control chapter of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement and any other international subsidy commitments. Public authorities should note that in some cases both regimes could apply to a scheme if beneficiary companies are from sectors both within and outside the scope of the NI Protocol.

7.3 Re-imbusement of Funding

Grants and payments of the eligible costs related to the delivery of the project will take the following forms based on category of costs:

- (a) Reimbursement of staff cost on a real costs basis⁶ using a fixed percentage of the gross employment cost. The exception for using fixed percentage methodology is when staff costs relate to zero-hour contracts or similar. In these cases, the reimbursement of staff costs is based on the hourly rate stated in the employment agreement;
- (b) Reimbursement of costs actually incurred and paid (real cost basis) for external expertise and services, equipment, and infrastructure and works;
- (c) Flat-rate financing for overheads, and travel and accommodation costs.

How the funding is reimbursed needs to be taken into account when preparing and submitting the project budget. Please, refer to the PEACEPLUS Programme Manual for further information on eligible types of expenditure under each cost category, how to calculate and claim them.

Successful projects will be issued with a Letter of Offer in Sterling or Euro.

7.3.1 Flat Rate

Office and administration costs (overheads) will be funded at a flat rate of 15% of direct staff costs. When entering the budget into Jems, applicants must select the flat rate in the "Partner Budget Options" for each partner. For claiming and reimbursement, the flat rate will be automatically calculated in Jems.

Travel and accommodation costs will be funded at a flat rate of 7% of direct staff costs. No justification is required. When entering the budget into Jems, applicants must select the flat rate in the "Partner Budget Options" for each partner. For claiming and reimbursement, the flat rate will be automatically calculated in Jems.

Costs related to these two cost categories must not be declared under other cost categories. For further information on how to budget and claim using flat rates above refer to the PEACEPLUS Programme Manual.

⁶ The notion of real costs concerns the actual expenditure incurred and paid by a beneficiary in relation to the project. Claiming and reimbursing in real cost basis involves a verification based on supporting documents provided by the beneficiary for each reported expenditure.

SECTION 8

8.1 Contact Us

For general enquiries about this call please visit the new 'PEACEPLUS Support Portal' where we have provided a range of support for applicants.

On the support portal applicants can access key information on submitting an application, troubleshooting guides and FAQ resources. Projects can also raise support tickets through the portal, should they require further assistance or guidance. The PEACEPLUS Support Portal can be accessed peaceplussupport.seupb.eu

Annex 1 Performance Framework Methodology - Investment Area 1.4

Output Indicators:

Indicator Code	PSO1.4
Indicator title	Capital shared space jointly developed and implemented
Measurement Unit (from fiche)	Shared spaces
Operational definitions and concepts to apply the indicator in PEACEPLUS	<p>The indicator measures capital shared space developments jointly developed and implemented.</p> <p>New or re-imaged shared spaces should provide infrastructure for programmes that result in meaningful and purposeful contact between persons from different communities.</p> <p>Capital developments Financial capital invested into new or re-imaged shared spaces. These capital development projects include land, buildings, parks and peace line interface barriers regeneration.</p> <p>Shared spaces The creation of shared space is about breaking down the barriers of territory and developing spaces, sometimes simply a building that both communities can have access to and indeed share.</p> <p>Shared space is used by all sections of the community, they are developed and managed in a manner that respects the rights, equality and diversity of all. The change will be reflected in how parades, flags, emblems, graffiti and other related issues impact on the public space. This will involve changes in both attitudes and behaviour with a corresponding reduction in segregation.</p> <p>The Programme will support the development of capital build projects that demonstrate tangible progress in developing shared space and building a shared society. Projects will be designed to have a transformative effect locally as well as having a regional significance. Projects will incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, including measures to minimise carbon emissions.</p> <p>Meaningful and Purposeful contact Contact between people from different communities should be worthwhile and have a function, it should result in the participation of shared activities.</p> <p>Different communities Relates to persons of different religious belief, ethnic or racial group. Initiatives should evidence commitment to tackling real and complex issues,</p>

	such as racism and sectarianism, which prevent the benefits of a united and shared community being realised.
Achievement	<p>Achievement should be recorded after a new or re-imaged shared space is open / becomes operational and provides evidence of shared usage.</p> <p>Shared spaces should primarily be used on a cross-community and/or cross-border basis, with variation between participating groups of the two main community backgrounds not normally more than 20% (i.e. a 60/40 cross-community split). For example, if a shared space is used by 50 people from a Catholic background, it should have a variance of no more/less than 20% (10 people) from a Protestant background. As the shared space is used by 50 people from a Catholic background, it should also be used by no less than 40 and no more than 60 people from a Protestant background.</p> <p>In exceptional cases, where projects present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence, SEUPB may accept thresholds lower than the 60/40 proposed for projects based in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>However, due to the population demographics of the Border Region of Ireland (BRI), unless otherwise agreed with SEUPB, an 80/20 cross-community threshold is acceptable. In exceptional cases, where projects present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence, SEUPB may accept thresholds lower than 80/20 in the BRI.</p> <p>Usage is also encouraged by people from other communities including minority ethnic communities and those of different racial backgrounds. Further to this, where either the 80/20 BRI or 60/40 NI cross-community split is too difficult to achieve, SEUPB will consider including participants from minority ethnic communities and those of different racial backgrounds within the lower threshold group. However, as with the BRI and NI splits above, such projects will need to present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence.</p>
Any exceptions in its application and conditions of achievement (if relevant)	n/a
Result indicator related	PSR1.4: Participants from different communities engaged jointly within new shared spaces

Result Indicators:

Indicator Code	PSR1.4
Indicator title	Participants from different communities engaged jointly within new shared spaces
Measurement Unit (from fiche)	Participants
Operational definitions and concepts to apply the indicator in PEACEPLUS	<p>This result indicator measures the total amount of participants engaged jointly in the usage of new or re-imaged shared spaces.</p> <p>The joint engagement is defined as meaningful and purposeful contact between persons from different communities:</p> <p>Meaningful and Purposeful contact</p> <p>Contact should be worthwhile and have a function, it should result in the participation of shared activities.</p> <p>The meaningful and purposeful contact can take place through a single event (e.g. conferences, workshops), or a multiple event (e.g. tournaments, courses). If it is a multiple event (i.e. has several sessions), the participation in each individual session should not be counted but the participation in the multi-event as whole. Within the application form the beneficiary should detail the amount of people targeted for each type of event and minimum requirements for contact hours and duration. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>1500 people will engage in art workshops (single event - 3h/workshop)</u> • <u>500 people will engage in sport tournaments (multiple event – 30 over 10 weeks)</u> • <u>80 people will engage in weekend outdoor trips (single event - 30h/trip)</u> <p>Different communities</p> <p>Relates to persons of different religious belief, ethnic or racial group. Initiatives should evidence commitment to tackling real and complex issues, such as racism and sectarianism, which prevent the benefits of a united and shared community being realised.</p> <p>Shares Spaces</p> <p>The creation of shared space is about breaking down the barriers of territory and developing spaces, sometimes simply a building that both communities can have access to and indeed share.</p> <p>Shared space is used by all sections of the community, they are developed and managed in a manner that respects the rights, equality and diversity of</p>

	<p>all. The change will be reflected in how parades, flags, emblems, graffiti and other related issues impact on the public space. This will involve changes in both attitudes and behaviour with a corresponding reduction in segregation.</p> <p>The Programme will support the development of capital build projects that demonstrate tangible progress in developing shared space and building a shared society. Projects will be designed to have a transformative effect locally as well as having a regional significance. Projects will incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, including measures to minimise carbon emissions.</p>
Achievement	<p>For a participant to be counted towards achievement, they should engage in a joint activity or joint usage occurrence in a new or re-imaged shared space.</p> <p>The project will be accountable to deliver the meaningful and purposeful contact as established in the application form.</p> <p>Shared spaces should primarily be used on a cross-community and/or cross-border basis, with variation between participating groups of the two main community backgrounds not normally more than 20% (i.e. a 60/40 cross-community split). For example, if a shared space is used by 50 people from a Catholic background, it should have a variance of no more/less than 20% (10 people) from a Protestant background. As the shared space is used by 50 people from a Catholic background, it should also be used by no less than 40 and no more than 60 people from a Protestant background.</p> <p>In exceptional cases, where projects present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence, SEUPB may accept thresholds lower than the 60/40 proposed for projects based in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>However, due to the population demographics of the Border Region of Ireland (BRI), unless otherwise agreed with SEUPB, an 80/20 cross-community threshold is acceptable. In exceptional cases, where projects present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence, SEUPB may accept thresholds lower than 80/20 in the BRI.</p> <p>Usage is also encouraged by people from other communities including minority ethnic communities and those of different racial backgrounds. Further to this, where either the 80/20 BRI or 60/40 NI cross-community split is too difficult to achieve, SEUPB will consider including participants from minority ethnic communities and those of different racial backgrounds within the lower threshold group. However, as with the BRI and NI splits above, such projects will need to present a well-argued case supported by robust evidence.</p>

Any exceptions in its application (if relevant)	<p>The joint engagement (a joint activity or joint usage occurrence) can be a single event, or a multiple event. If it is a multiple event (i.e. has several sessions), the participation in each individual session should not be counted but the participation in the multi-event as whole.</p> <p>Considering the importance of maintaining shared spaces live to contribute to the communities and peace and reconciliation, participations are to be counted once each time an individual engages in a joint activity or joint usage occurrence in a new or re-imaged shared space.</p> <p>Cross-border exemption: As under this specific objective the actions and indicators are supporting peace and reconciliation, the cross-border dimension of the delivery is optional⁷.</p>
Output indicator related	PSO1.4: Capital shared space jointly developed and implemented

⁷ In line with Article 23(3) ETC Regulations. This has been confirmed by the European Commission's representatives.

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources (SPR) Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 September 2023
Subject:	Notice of Motion – Funding of Projects
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly Director Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Cllr Savage Seconded by Cllr Finn at the September 2023 Council meeting: -</p> <p>"Council recognises the challenges in securing funding for landmark capital and community projects across the district and agrees to establish a Standing Sub-Committee of Council Officers and nominated Councillors tasked with overseeing the identification of funding streams relevant to Council capital and community projects and the timely delivery of funding applications.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee will meet monthly and report to the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee which will agree the Terms of Reference of the Standing Sub-Committee in October 2023 for approval at the November 2023 Full Council Meeting."</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>Since Newry, Mourne and Down District Council was formed on the 1 April 2015, Council has secured approximately £25m in funding to support the completion of a number of significant capital projects with a gross cost of £105m up until March 2023.</p> <p>On the 6 February 2023, Members would be aware that Council approved an ambitious Capital Programme with a gross cost of £155m. Council has already secured £64m of funding to support the completion of the multi-year Capital Programme. Further funding has been secured since February 2023. The identification of funding is very important to the Council in the delivery of its services and capital investment programme.</p> <p>One Option is to set up a new standalone sub-committee reporting to the SP&R as detailed above.</p> <p>Alternatively the identification of funding streams could be discussed, monitored and reported to the Strategic Finance Working Group (SFWG).</p>
2.2	<p>The SFWG is the working group that meets to consider funding and financial issues as well as capital projects. The actions coming from the SFWG are brought to the SPR Committee, which is the decision making committee.</p>

	The SFWG agendas can be amended to include "Funding Streams". Terms of Reference can be amended accordingly. This would allow funding streams to be given more focus at these meetings.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	That SPR Committee consider and agree the proposal to add identification of funding streams to SFWG agendas.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	The use of the SFWG meetings would not have any further resource implications as this working group already meets on a regular basis.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
	<p>1. General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>2. Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>3. Proposal initiating consultation</p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)

<p>6.1</p>	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>None</p>
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Background Documents</p>
	<p>None</p>

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 September 2023
Subject:	Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 and Disability Action Plan 2023-2027
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to consider the consultation analyses and approve the Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 and Disability Action Plan 2023-2027.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attached Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 sets out the Council's commitment to ensuring it fulfils its statutory obligations regarding Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. • The attached Disability Action Plan 2023-2027 sets out how Council intends to meet its Disability Duties in relation to Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006.
1.2	<p>Section 75 of the NI Act 1998</p> <p>Section 75 (1) states that public authorities in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, material status or sexual orientation; ➢ Between men and women generally; ➢ Between persons with a disability and persons without; and ➢ Between persons with dependents and person without. <p>Section 75 (2) states that public authorities in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial groups.</p> <p>To fulfil its Section 75 statutory duties, the Council has developed an Equality Scheme which has been approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. It outlines corporate responsibilities, legal commitments and specific actions, and Council must provide an Annual Report on Progress to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland by 31 August each year.</p> <p>As set out within Section 2 of Council's Equality Scheme, Council is required to develop an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This will enable Council</p>

	<p>to identify potential functional areas for further or better discharge of its Section 75 statutory duties and inform its key strategic actions.</p> <p>Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006</p> <p>Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 requires the Council, in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and • to encourage participation by disabled people in public life. <p>It is a requirement of the above legislation that Council has a plan showing how the public authority proposes to fulfil the disability duties. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland recommends that public authorities consult on their plans before they submit them.</p>
1.3	<p>As set out within section 1.2, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is required to produce action plans which detail how Council meets its Equality and Disability statutory duties and obligations.</p> <p>The draft Disability Action Plan and draft Equality Action Plan were prepared by the Corporate Policy Section and considered by Council's Corporate Management Team, Senior Management Team and Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee (15 December 2022).</p> <p>Both draft documents were subject to a 12-week public consultation during the period 20 March 2023 to 12 June 2023. The public consultation was advertised in the local newspapers, promoted on the Council's social media channels, and circulated to our equality consultee list.</p> <p>During the consultation period Council utilised the Living Well Together engagement platform and facilitated a workshop with the Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Council.</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>Thirty-six responses were received for the draft Disability Action Plan. The majority of responses received were extremely positive with consultees agreeing to the themes and actions planned for the next three years.</p> <p>Twenty-seven responses were received for the draft Equality Action Plan. The majority of responses were extremely positive with consultees '<i>agreeing to strongly agreeing</i>' to the principles detailed in the plan.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	Members are asked to consider the consultation analyses and approve the Disability Action Plan 2023-2027 and the Equality Action Plan 2023-2027.
4.0	Resource implications

4.1	It is envisaged that the implementation of the actions detailed in the Disability Action Plan and Equality Action Plan will be met through the allocated Council budgets.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> <p><i>The Draft Disability Action Plan and Draft Equality Action Plan has both been subject to a 12 -week public consultation.</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>

	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☒
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1: Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 Appendix 2: Disability Action Plan 2023-2027 Appendix 3: Consultation analysis – Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 Appendix 4: Consultation analysis – Disability Action Plan 2023-2027
8.0	Background Documents
	None.

Plean Gníomhaíochta ar son an Chomhionannais 2023-2027

Equality Action Plan 2023-2027



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Foreword

Welcome to the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Action Plan 2023-2027. This plan sets out the Council's commitment to ensuring it fulfils its statutory obligation regarding Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Section 75 (1) states that public authorities in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, material status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependents and person without.

Section 75 (2) states that public authorities in carrying out its functions relation to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial groups.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to the fulfilment of its Equality duties in all parts of its organisation and this action plan sets out how it intends to do so.

Councillor Valerie Harte
Chairperson of Newry, Mourne
and Down District Council

Marie Ward
Chief Executive of Newry,
Mourne and Down District Council

Equality and Diversity Framework

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Action Plan is set within the context of the Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland's Equality and Diversity Framework.

The framework outlines five key principles which assist Council to meet its equality and diversity obligations.

The 5 principles are as follows:

Principle 1: Ensuring we work in a non-discriminatory environment, promote equality, and model best practice in equality and good relations

It is everyone's responsibility to:

- Treat everyone equally and with dignity and respect
- Think about how our actions affect others
- Help people change for the better through example by challenging unacceptable behaviour and language
- Be knowledgeable by taking personal responsibility for training around equality and diversity and good relations (mandatory training for all elected members, Council staff and managers in place)

Principle 2: Ensuring all our decisions are based on evidence to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations

We will:

- Ensure that all policies, projects and programmes of work are screened and where appropriate, impact assessed
- Publish all screening outcomes including any mitigation or alternative policies considered
- Involve the customers of the council, trade unions, business sector and voluntary and community sector on an on-basis to assist us in the review and development of existing and new policies

Principle 3: Providing access to services, facilities and information

We will take steps to improve access to services, facilities and information and to be open about what we can and cannot do:

We will:

- Involve customers and stakeholders in the design, prioritisation and review of services
- Monitor and review services regularly to identify any under-representation or discrimination
- Make sure information is accessible using Plain English and other accessibility standards
- Provide alternative formats, translations and interpreters when needed
- Make sure buildings are accessible and welcoming to all
- Make sure meetings and events are easy to access

Principle 4: Recruiting and employing people fairly

The Council will make sure that we provide equality of opportunity to all in employment.

We will:

- Use non-discriminatory job criteria
- Take positive action to ensure a diverse workforce
- Apply fair selection procedures
- Monitor and review employment practice
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Support staff through appropriate networks

Principle 5: Responding to and learning from complaints and incidents in a positive and proactive way

Everyone has a right to complain about discrimination and harassment in good faith, without being victimised at any time.

We will:

- Handle complaints and grievances properly
- Resolve matters positively
- Respond to incidents of prejudice or hate crime

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 has been developed to ensure all the proposed positive actions identified are related to the five principles of The Local Government Staff Commission's Equality and Diversity framework.

Equality Action Plan 2023-2027

Principle 1: Ensuring we work in a non-discriminatory environment, promote equality and model of best practice in equality and good relations

Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations Statutory Duty Compliance	To continue to develop an understanding of the Council's duty to promote Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations	Develop an Equality and Good Relations training programme and guidance for staff and elected members to embed an Equality and Good Relations culture and ethos across the organisation	Number of training sessions/programmes delivered. Attendance figures of elected members participating in Equality and Good Relations training programmes	Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Policy Human Resources (Learning and Development) Active and Healthy Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement 	Ongoing
		Examples of training programmes will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality Scheme and Section 75 statutory duties Disability Duties 	Attendance figures of staff participating in Equality and Good Relations training programmes		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality screening • Consultation and engagement • Policy development • Good Relations • Disability awareness 	<p>Evaluation and feedback from staff and elected members</p>	<p>Corporate Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Improvement • Corporate Planning and Policy (Corporate Policy) 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Bi-annually (April & October)</p>
	<p>To integrate objectives and targets relating to the Section 75 statutory duties into Council's Departmental and Business plans.</p>	<p>Council has considered all S75 categories in the development of Corporate Strategic and Operational business plans</p> <p>Review of Corporate Reporting template which will map Officers' consideration of Section 75 in Council decision-making</p>			

		<p>To utilise the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group as a facilitated discussion forum for Elected Members to address contentious and sensitive issues</p>	<p>Number of meetings of the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group held</p>	<p>Chief Executive Office Corporate Policy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>Information on Equality and Good Relations for new staff</p>	<p>Number of induction sessions held</p>	<p>Human Resources Corporate Policy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>Council 'light up' civic buildings on recognised days to support and raise awareness of equality / disability related issues</p>	<p>Number of times a civic building is 'lit up'</p>	<p>Chief Executive Office</p>	<p>4 events per year</p>

		<p>To promote the role of the Council's Diversity Ambassadors</p>	<p>Number of people who engage with Diversity Ambassadors</p>	<p>Corporate Policy</p>	<p>October 2023</p>
		<p>Implementation of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan</p>	<p>Number of participants in Good Relations funded programmes</p> <p>Quarterly and annual reports to The Executive Office</p> <p>Number of people accessing the services of the Ethnic Minority Support Centre</p>	<p>Active and Healthy Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually & Quarterly</p> <p>Annually (August)</p>

Principle 2: Ensuring all our decisions are based on evidence to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality and good relations					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
Equality Screening	To ensure that all policies and procedures are equality screened, i.e. to assess the likely impact of the policy on the promotion of Equality of Opportunity and/or Good Relations	All current and new policies are screened before council approval and implementation	Quarterly policy screening reports tabled at SPR Committee Annual report produced for Equality Commission NI Reports uploaded to council website and forwarded to equality consultee listing	All Directorates Corporate Policy	Quarterly Annually (August) Quarterly
		Guidance and support to staff on policy screening process	Number of screening training sessions provided per year	Corporate Policy	Ongoing Minimum of one

		Training provided for staff on the policy screening process			dedicated training course / year
		To promote and raise awareness of the Council's Policy Development Framework	Policy Development Framework communicated to staff biannually	Corporate Policy	Ongoing
		To promote and raise awareness of the Council's Guidance for reviewing Council policies	Guidance on policy reviews communicated to staff biannually	Corporate Policy	Ongoing
Effective Consultation and Engagement in line with Section 75 principles	To provide corporate guidance and establish a robust process for consultation and engagement	To review and refresh Council's Consultation & Engagement Framework	Production of a toolkit	Corporate Policy Evidence and Research	March 2024
		Review Equality consultee list annually	Updated Equality consultee list	Corporate Policy	Annually (As per Equality Scheme – September each year)

Principle 3: Providing access to services, facilities and information					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timescale
Monitoring	To have relevant Section 75 data available	Directorates to establish a system to collate relevant Section 75 data Engagement between Corporate Policy Section and relevant directorates to identify gaps in monitoring information	Appropriate and relevant up to date data available to determine effectiveness of service provision	All Directorates Corporate Policy Evidence and Research	Ongoing To review data annually (April)
Access to information	Information on council services is accessible to all parts of the community	Develop the corporate website ensuring it meets all accessibility requirements	Availability of an accessible corporate website	Corporate Services • Corporate Planning and Policy (Corporate Comms and Marketing)	October 2025

<p>Access to services and facilities</p>	<p>Services and facilities are accessible to all parts of the community</p>	<p>Review of council facilities to ensure they are accessible to all members of the community</p>	<p>Percentage of Council owned facilities meeting the requirements of the 'Every Customer Counts' accessibility checklist</p>	<p>All Directorates</p>	<p>Annually (April)</p>
<p>Advocating and influencing others</p>	<p>To positively contribute on equality matters</p>	<p>To maintain Shop Mobility Scheme delivered by the Newcastle Centre and Delamont Country Park</p>	<p>Numbers of people using service</p>	<p>Active and Healthy Communities</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Advocating and influencing others</p>	<p>To positively contribute on equality matters</p>	<p>Elected Members' civic leadership role advocating with others for the benefit of all people of the district</p>	<p>Number of appointments to external partnerships and Community Planning Partnership</p>	<p>Democratic Services / Community Planning / Corporate Policy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Principle 4: Recruiting and employing people fairly					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timescale
Workforce diversity	To ensure that Council provides Equality of Opportunity to all in employment	Integration of Section 75 statutory duties within job descriptions		Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources 	Ongoing
		Workforce monitoring related to Article 55 Reviews	Annual report to ECNI Submission of three yearly Article 55 Report to ECNI	Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources 	Annually To report every 3 years
		Research, evaluate and monitor under representation of Section 75 categories within the workplace through analysing recruitment and selection data and the	Relevant section 75 workforce data	Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources Corporate Policy 	September 2023 / Ongoing

		<p>current workforce profile</p> <p>Continue to facilitate requests for reasonable adjustments within the workplace</p>	<p>Number and type of requests for reasonable adjustments</p>	<p>Chief Executive Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence and Research <p>All Directorates in conjunction with Safety, Health & Emergency Planning Section</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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Principle 5: Responding to and learning from complaints and incidents in a positive and proactive way					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timescale
Support, advice, guidance and assistance	Complaints are addressed in a positive manner and realistic timeframe	Implementation of Council's Complaint Processes	Number of complaints	Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration and Customer Services 	Ongoing Annually (As per Equality Scheme – August)
	Ensure people with a disability can access the Council's complaints/ comments procedure	Provide a range of accessible formats for people to forward complaints/comments to Council	Number of Section 75 complaints	Corporate Policy	Ongoing
				Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration and Customer Services 	Ongoing
				Corporate Policy	

How the Equality Action Plan will be published

Following consultation and submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this plan will be available by contacting:

Corporate Policy Section
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Monaghan Row
Newry
BT35 8DJ
Telephone: 0300 013 2233
corporatepolicy@nmandd.org

The Equality Action Plan can be accessed on the Council's website at:

<https://www.newrymournedown.org/corporate-policy-and-equality>

The plan will be available in alternative formats upon request.

Plean Gníomhaíochta um Míchumas 2023-2027

Disability Action Plan 2023-2027



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Foreword

Welcome to the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Disability Action Plan for 2023-2027 which sets out how we as a Council intend to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities who live in, work or visit our district.

This is Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's third Disability Action Plan, and it has been designed to ensure that Council fulfils its statutory obligations in compliance with section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

The Disability Discrimination Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

This plan outlines the actions and processes which we as a Council will undertake to ensure issues facing people with disabilities and their carers are effectively mainstreamed within Council decisions and service delivery.

Councillor Valerie Harte

Chairperson of Newry, Mourne and Down
District Council

Marie Ward

Chief Executive

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 requires the Council in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
 - encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
- 1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan which outlines how Council will fulfil its duties in relations to its functions.
- 1.3 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's commitment is detailed in the Disability Action Plan in this report. It outlines the following:
- the issue to be addressed
 - the outcome wanted
 - the positive action to be undertaken
 - the measure which will determine success
 - the department responsible for addressing the issue and
 - the anticipated timeframe for action

2. The Role of Council and its functions

- 2.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is the third largest Local Government Authority in Northern Ireland. With an electorate of 182,073 it covers South Armagh and parts of County Down. It incorporates two areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has an extensive coastline stretching from Strangford Lough to Carlingford Lough and borders the counties of Louth and Monaghan in the Republic of Ireland.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has 41 Elected Members representing the following 7 District Electoral Areas:

- Crotlieve
 - Downpatrick
 - Newry
 - Rowallane
 - Slieve Croob
 - Slieve Gullion
 - The Mournes
- 2.2 Elected Members provide civic and political leadership and oversee the day to day running of the Council, representing the interests of their constituents

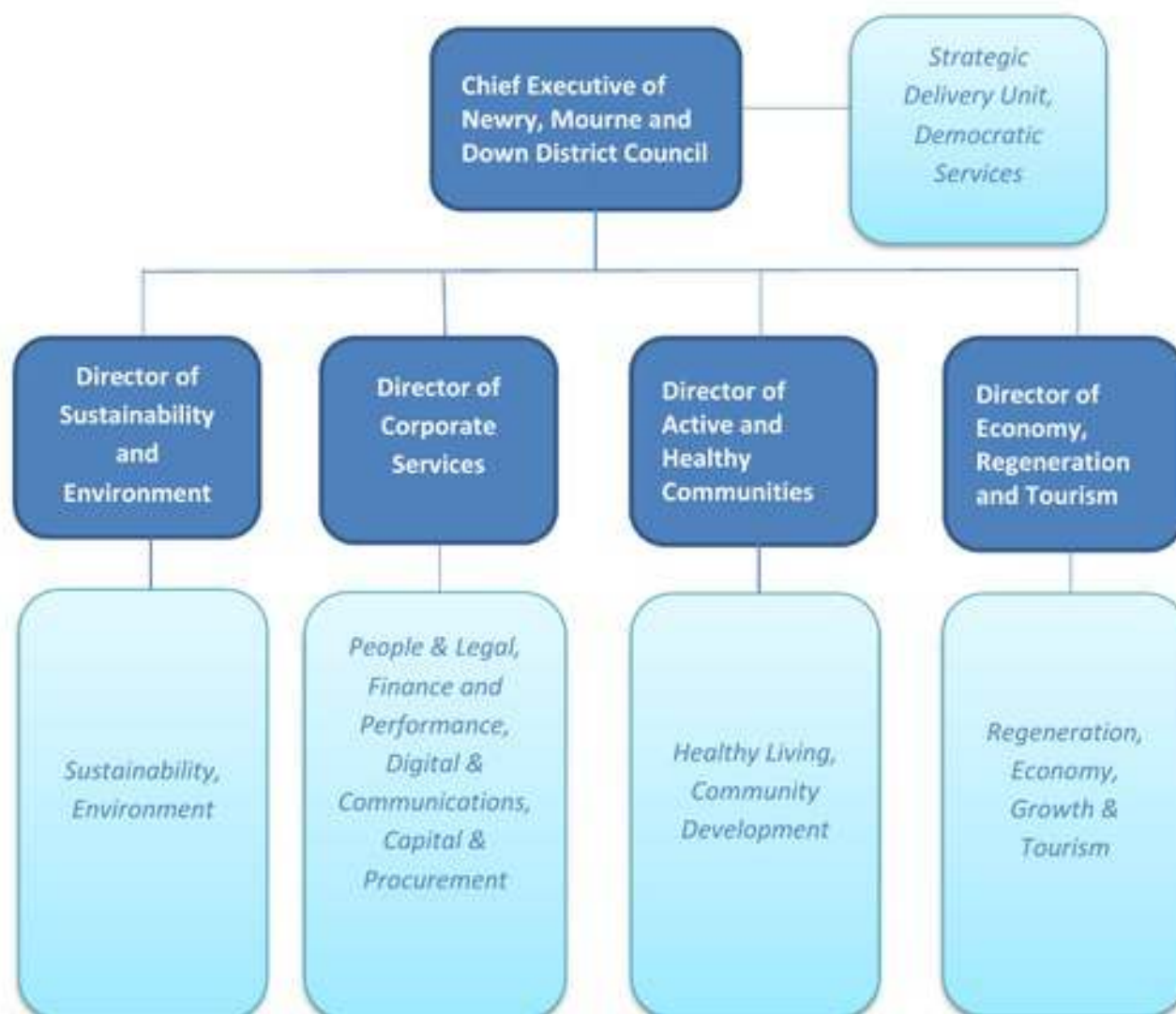
and ensure the views of people across Newry, Mourne and Down are reflected in the Council's decisions and how services are delivered.

2.3 In addition to the Council's Monthly meeting, the business of Council is conducted across 4 Directorates and their four committee meetings each month. These directorates are:

- Economic Regeneration and Tourism
- Active and Healthy Communities
- Sustainability and Environment
- Corporate Services

2.4 The structure, functions and responsibilities of each directorate are detailed in the following diagram.

1. Council structure



3. Public life positions for which the Council has responsibility

- 3.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has responsibility for a number of public life positions on council committees.

Examples of these include:

- Peace Plus Partnership
- District Electoral Area Forums
- Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- 3.2 The Council also appoints Elected Members to external organisations.

Examples of these include:

- APSE NI Executive Board
- Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
- Community Planning Partnership
- Local Government Partnership on Traveller issues

4. The Council's commitment to the effective implementation of the disability action plan

- 4.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of the plan in all parts of the organisation. Overall responsibility for determining policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Elected Members, and with the Chief Executive who will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that the Council complies with our disability duties.

- 4.2 As part of its corporate planning process, the Council has identified the promotion of equality of opportunity and incorporating disability duties as part of its corporate plan. These will be reflected at all levels of strategic planning within the Council including individual staff objectives and business plans. Progress on meeting objectives, including those relating to the disability duties will be monitored and reported upon at the most senior level within the organisation. The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer will monitor and report on this annually. A formal report of progress on meeting the objectives relating to the disability duties will be included in the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

5. Internal Arrangements

- 5.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has 41 Elected Members. They meet monthly in full session and frequently in committees and sub-committees.

- 5.2 The Chief Executive oversees the work of the Council's four Directorates through the Senior Management Team.
- 5.3 The Council is committed to fulfilling the statutory responsibilities contained in its Disability Action Plan in all parts of the organisation. The Council's Corporate Policy Section provides specialist support and advice to Council and Officers on matters relating to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations, disability duties, policy development and rural needs. The Head of Corporate Policy will ensure the implementation of the actions in the Disability Action Plan, and the Corporate Policy and Equality Officer will be the main point of contact.

6. Effective Engagement

- 6.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to engaging effectively with relevant groups in the implementation, monitoring and review of this plan. This will be undertaken through meetings with key stakeholders and advertising through the Council's social media and the local press.

7. Annual Report

- 7.1 The Council will prepare an annual report on the implementation of its Disability Action Plan. The annual report will be included as part of the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of the Equality Scheme. This will be made available on the Council's website.

8. Five Year Review

- 8.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council will carry out a five-year review of its plan, in consultation with the Equality Commission for NI.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council carried out a 12-week public consultation in the development and review of its Disability Action Plan 2023-2027 during the period 20 March 2023 to 12 June 2023.
- 9.2 The draft plan was advertised on the council's website, newspapers and through social media where comments were sought from individuals and organisations.
- 9.3 The Disability Action Plan is a living document. Consultation on the Disability Action Plan is on-going via engagement with key stakeholders and service users. Comments and suggestions on the plan are welcomed at any time.

- 9.4 The Council has sought to ensure the involvement of people with disabilities by consulting with representative groups at both regional and local levels.
- 9.5 The Council consults regularly with a range of local and regional groups of people with disabilities and those representing them. This includes Action Mental Health, Employers for Disability NI, IMTAC, Autism NI, Cedar Foundation and Disability Sports NI.
- 9.6 Barriers to consultation continue to be removed by ensuring accessibility of documents in appropriate formats. To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where an exact request cannot be met, we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided. Consideration is given to how best to communicate information to young disabled people as well as considering additional dimensions such as ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and religious belief.

10. Action Measures

- 10.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council positively promote attitudes towards disabled people and encourage their participation in public life. These include:
- Activity Officer – Role is to provide participation opportunities for people with disabilities in sport and recreation;
 - Employee opportunities in conjunction with USEL;
 - All interviewers participating in the Council's recruitment and selection process are aware of disability duties;
 - All current and proposed policies are screened in accordance with the Council's Equality Scheme to ensure that they do not have adverse impact on any of the nine equality categories;
 - Autism Friendly initiatives in Council facilities and events;
 - Delivery of Shop Mobility Scheme in Newcastle and Delamont Country Park;
 - Provision of an assisted bin collections.

11. Timeframe for the implementation for the Action Measures

- 11.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's revised Disability Action Plan is for the period 2023 to 2027.

Disability Action Plan					
Awareness & Understanding					
ISSUE	OUTCOME	POSITIVE ACTION	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
Disability Awareness and Training	To continue to embed an understanding of the council's due regard duty with regards to Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006	Develop a Disability Awareness training programme for all staff and elected members to ensure that council is aware of its responsibilities under the legislation Examples of training programmes will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Duties • Disability Awareness, Autism Friendly, • Dementia Friendly, • Brain Injury Awareness Appropriate and relevant training on disability duties for officers participating	Number of training sessions/programmes delivered Attendance figures of elected members participating in the Disability Awareness Training Attendance figures of staff participating in the Disability Awareness Training Evaluation and feedback from staff and elected members.	Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Policy • Learning and Development SMT Chief Executive Office	Ongoing and reviewed annually

		<p>recruitment and selection panels</p> <p>Continue to provide disability awareness induction training to new staff</p> <p>Relates to both Disability Duties</p>	<p>Monitor the impact of the training programme on service delivery.</p>		
		<p>All policy makers within Council to take into consideration the disability duties when proposing or revising policy</p> <p>Relates to Disability Duty 1</p>	<p>All new and revised policies will ensure compliance with disability duties.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>Council Officers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
Engagement					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
Engagement	Continue to engage with disability organisations	Corporate Policy to engage organisations and investigate opportunities to undertake collaborative working	New initiatives undertaken	Corporate Policy	Ongoing

			Relates to both Disability Duties			
			Continue to provide employment opportunities/work placements for people with disabilities Relates to Disability Duty 2	Number of people employed	Human Resources	Ongoing
			Elected Members' civic leadership role advocating with others for the benefit of all people of the district. Relates to both Disability Duties	Number of appointments to external partnerships and Community Planning Partnership	Democratic Services / Community Planning / Corporate Policy	Ongoing
Promotion						
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timescale	
Positive Promotion	Raise the profile of Council's Diversity Ambassadors	To undertake a PR campaign internally and externally to promote the role of and assistance	Number of people who engage with Diversity Ambassadors	Diversity Ambassadors	October 2023	

		given by the Council's Diversity Ambassadors		Council Officers	
		Relates to Disability Duty 1		Elected members	
Continue to raise awareness and positively promote disability	District Electoral Area Forums to host events supporting residents and organisations		Number of events held	DEA Officers	Ongoing and reviewed annually
	Relates to both Disability Duties				
	Chairperson of Council continue to support charities as part of their annual programme		Number of charities supported	Chief Executive Office	Annually
	Relates to Disability Duty 1			Chairperson	
	Council continues to 'light up' civic buildings on recognised days which support and raise awareness of disability related issues		Number of times civic building is 'lit'	Chief Executive Office	Minimum 4 events per year

			Relates to Disability Duty 1				
			To maintain the Shop Mobility Scheme delivered by the Newcastle Centre and Delamont Country Park Relates to both Disability Duties	Numbers of people using the service	Active and Healthy Communities	Ongoing	
			To develop an online directory of local support organisations. Relates to Disability Duty 1	To have available on Council website	Corporate Policy	October 2024	

Access					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timescale
Access to information	Information on council services is accessible to all parts of the community	Production of a corporate 'Making Information Accessible' Guide for staff Relates to Disability Duty 1	Number of council publications available in a variety of formats Number of requests for information in alternative formats	Corporate Policy	June 2024
		'Making Information Accessible' training sessions to be delivered across Council Relates to Disability Duty 1	Number of Council officials participating in 'Making Information Accessible' training sessions	Corporate Policy	October 2024
		DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY Develop the corporate website ensuring it meets all accessibility requirements Relates to Disability duty 1	Availability of an accessible corporate website Accessibility Statement on Website	Corporate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Communications and Marketing 	October 2025

<p>Access to services and facilities</p>	<p>Services and facilities are accessible all parts of the community</p>	<p>Providing accessibility information Information provided on accessibility of buildings and events made available on Council website Relates to both Disability Duties</p>	<p>Information available on website</p>	<p>All Directorates</p>	<p>April 2024</p>
<p>Access to services and facilities</p>	<p>Services and facilities are accessible all parts of the community</p>	<p>Ensuring our new buildings shall be fully compliant with the Building Regulations and DDA compliant Relates to both Disability Duties</p>	<p>Building of a new Civic Centre and new Theatre and Conference Centre in Newry.</p>	<p>Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate</p>	<p>December 2025</p>
<p>Access to services and facilities</p>	<p>Services and facilities are accessible all parts of the community</p>	<p>Review of council facilities to ensure they are accessible to all members of the community Relates to both Disability Duties Council to meet the requirement of the Equality Commission's</p>	<p>Percentage of Council owned facilities meeting the requirements of the 'Every Customer Counts' accessibility checklist</p>	<p>All Directorates</p>	<p>Annually - April</p>

	<p>'Every Customer Counts' initiative</p> <p>Relates to both Disability Duties</p> <p>Continue to provide programmes in Council facilities and events to support people with disability e.g. dedicated autism friendly programmes.</p> <p>Relates to both Disability Duties</p>	Number of people participating in programmes and events	All Directorates	Ongoing	
	<p>Review and promote the usage of the Council's Buddy Card Scheme.</p> <p>Relates to both Disability Duties</p>	Number of people availing of initiative	Active and Healthy Communities	June - Annually	

Complaints	Ensure people with a disability can access the Council's complaints/ comments procedure	Provide a range of accessible formats available to make a complaint re council services Relates to Disability Duty 1	Number of complaints	Corporate Services – Administration and Customer Services Corporate Policy	Ongoing June – Annually
Workforce					
Issue	Objective	Positive Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timescale
Workforce diversity	To better understand workforce profile	Investigate the opportunity for engagement between Corporate Policy and HR to develop a Section 75 workforce profile and identify number of employees of Council with disabilities Relates to Disability Duty 1	Relevant section 75 workforce data	Corporate Services – HR and Corporate Policy	Ongoing

		<p>Continue to facilitate requests for reasonable adjustments within the workplace</p> <p>Relates to both Disability Duties</p>	<p>Number and type of requests for reasonable adjustments</p>	<p>All Directorates in conjunction with Safety, Health and Emergency Planning Section</p>	<p>June – Annually</p>
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13. How the Disability Action Plan will be published

- 13.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this plan will be available by contacting:

Corporate Policy Section
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council,
Monaghan Row,
Newry
BT35 8DJ
Telephone: 0300 013 2233
corporatepolicy@nmandd.org

The availability of the Disability Action Plan will be advertised in all local papers in the district as well in council's social media, and can be accessed on the Council's website at:

<https://www.newrymournedown.org/corporate-policy-and-equality>

- 13.2 In accordance with Council's Equality Scheme, the plan will also be available in alternative formats upon request, where reasonably practicable. Where an exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.
- 13.3 The Council acknowledge individuals may experience different barriers according to their impairment, and through our ongoing work with people with disabilities, representative groups and carers will ensure appropriate ways to communicate the Plan.
- 13.4 The Plan will be highlighted through press releases, on social media, through email and meeting directly with disability organisations, representative groups and individuals.
- 13.5 In accordance with the Council's Bilingualism Policy, the Plan will be available in the Irish Language upon request. Consideration will also be given to requests to produce the Plan for people who speak a minority language.
- 13.6 In addition, employees will be made aware of the Disability Action Plan and how their duties and responsibilities assist the Council meet its obligations.

Appendix 3: Consultation analysis – draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2027

Background

Public consultation on the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 began on the 20 March 2023 for a twelve-week period.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 75 (1) states that public authorities in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, material status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependents and person without.

Section 75 (2) states that public authorities in carrying out its functions relation to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial groups. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to the fulfilment of its Equality duties in all parts of its organisation and this action plan sets out how it intends to do so.

The draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2027 is set within the context of the Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland's Equality and Diversity Framework. The framework outlines five key principles which assist Council to meet its equality and diversity obligations.

The consultation was advertised in local press, council's social media channels and emailed to the council's dedicated equality consultee database. Council also availed of the Living Well Together engagement platform to engage the community. A consultation workshop also took place in May 2023 with members of the Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Council. 27 responses were received.

Findings

1. Key Principles

With regard to the Key Principles, respondents were asked if the five key principles are the right ones for the next four years?

Key Principles



The following table sets out consultees' responses as to what level they agreed with the principles.

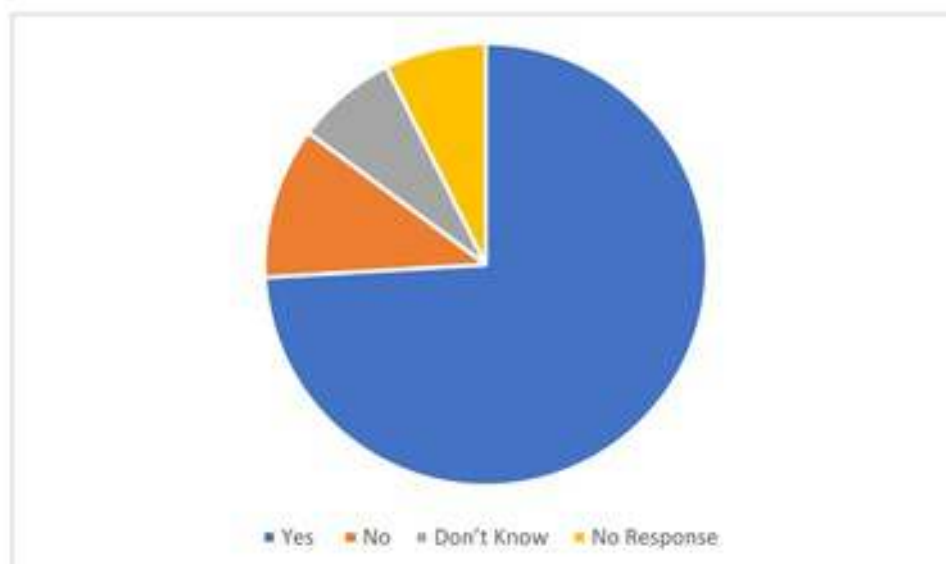
Key Principle	Response
<i>Ensuring we work in a non-discriminatory environment, promote equality and model best practise in equality and good relations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 respondents agreed • 1 respondent disagreed
<i>Ensuring all our decisions are based on evidence to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 respondents agreed • 1 respondent disagreed
<i>Providing access to services, facilities and information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 respondents agreed • 1 respondent did not know
<i>Recruiting and employing people fairly</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 respondents agreed • 1 respondent did not know
<i>Responding to and learning from complaints and incidents in a positive and proactive manner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 respondents agreed • 1 respondent did not agree

Respondents were then given the opportunity provide further comments in relation to the above. Comments included the following:

- *'Some of the principles are difficult to understand'*
- *'Additional support needs for minorities and people with disabilities'*
- *'More needs to be done to promote equality and discriminatory actions'*
- *'Lack of transparency. No accountability to rate payers on how money is used. No public park. The Council ignores the results of expensive consultants if it does not fit with what they want to do.'*
- *'The Council does not endorse any of the five principles, just another expensive white elephant.'*
- *'You do not respond to complaints or acknowledge emails. Therefore you are discriminating against rate payers who pay your wages.'*
- *'I think more needs to be done to promote equality within the Protestant and Catholic community. Notably Annalong and Kilkeel. It is totally outrageous in this day and age that the Protestant community get the upperhand with regard to flags and parades etc....if everything is meant to be moving on.'*
- *'Questions are not easily understood – especially question 2, it needs reworded.'*

2. Issues and positive actions

Next respondents were asked about the issues and positive actions detailed within the draft equality action plan 2023-2027. Respondents were asked the following, Thinking about the proposed issues and positive actions, overall do you think they will ensure Council fulfils its statutory obligations in relation to Section 75 equality of opportunity and good relations statutory duties?



Thinking about the proposed issues and positive actions, overall do you think they will ensure Council fulfils its statutory obligations in relation to Section 75 equality of opportunity and good relations statutory duties?

- 20 respondents agreed
- 3 respondent disagreed
- 2 respondents did not know
- 2 respondents did not respond

Finally, respondents were asked if they are aware of any equality of opportunity, good relations or rural implications associated with the draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2027.

Comments received included the following:

- *'People in rural areas can be discriminated more.'*
- *'People in rural areas are more marginalised.'*
- *Council have not supported campaign to maintain emergency services in Daisy Hill Hospital - ignoring rural needs of rate payers'*

Council response:

- The majority of responses were extremely positive with consultees 'agreeing to strongly agreeing' to the five principles detailed in the plan.
- The Equality Action Plan details positive actions to ensure Council fulfils its statutory obligations regarding Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
- Implementation of Council's Good Relations Action Plan is referenced within the Equality Action Plan 2023-2027.
- Council has a Complaint, Comment and Compliment Policy and takes all complaints seriously. In addition, Section 8 of Council's Equality Scheme sets out our complaint procedure related to alleged failure to comply with our equality scheme.
- In line with the statutory duty obligations set out within the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 Council undertakes rural needs impact assessments. A report is submitted annually to DAERA detailing these.
- Council is committed to evidence-based decision-making which includes the use of equality screening and rural needs impact assessment.
- In relation to consultee comments regarding issues outside of Council's competence e.g. health services, Council and Elected Members continue to play a civic leadership role advocating with others for the benefit of all people of the district.

Recommendations and actions:

- To update the plan to reference the Shop Mobility Scheme in Delamont Country Park.
- To update the plan to reflect Elected Members' civic leadership role advocating with others for the benefit of all people of the district.
- No further amendments to the positive actions detailed within the draft equality action plan 2023-2027.

Appendix 4: Consultation analysis – draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2027

Background

Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006) places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

These are collectively referred to as 'the disability duties'.

It is a requirement of the above legislation that Council has a plan showing how the public authority proposes to fulfil the disability duties. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland recommends that public authorities consult on their plans before they submit them.

This report presents the findings from a statutory 12-week public consultation on Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2027 began on the 20 March 2023 for a twelve-week period.

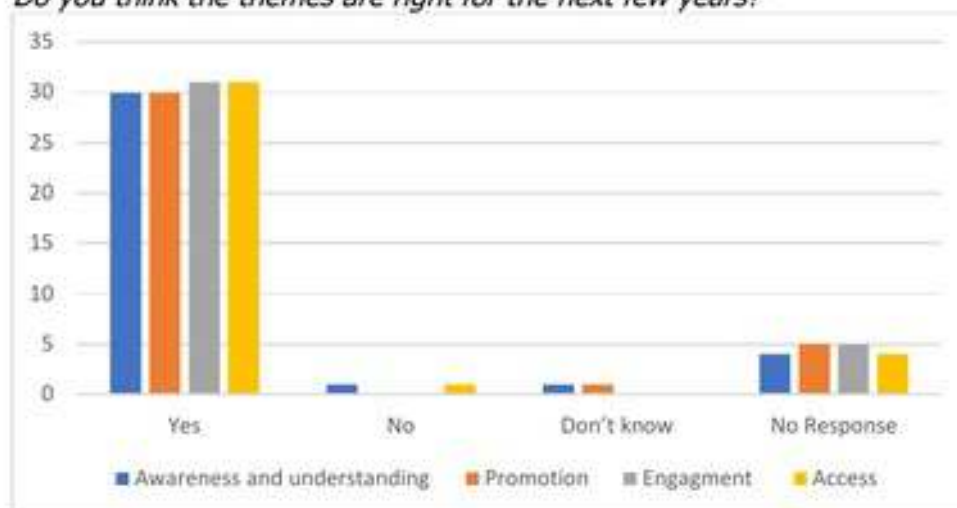
The public consultation was advertised in local press, council's social media channels and emailed to the council's equality consultee database. Council also availed of the Living Well Together engagement platform to engage the community. A consultation workshop also took place in May 2023 with members of the Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Council. 36 responses were received.

Findings

1. Proposed themes

Respondents were asked if the themes detailed within the draft disability action plan are the correct themes for the 2023-2027 period.

Do you think the themes are right for the next few years?



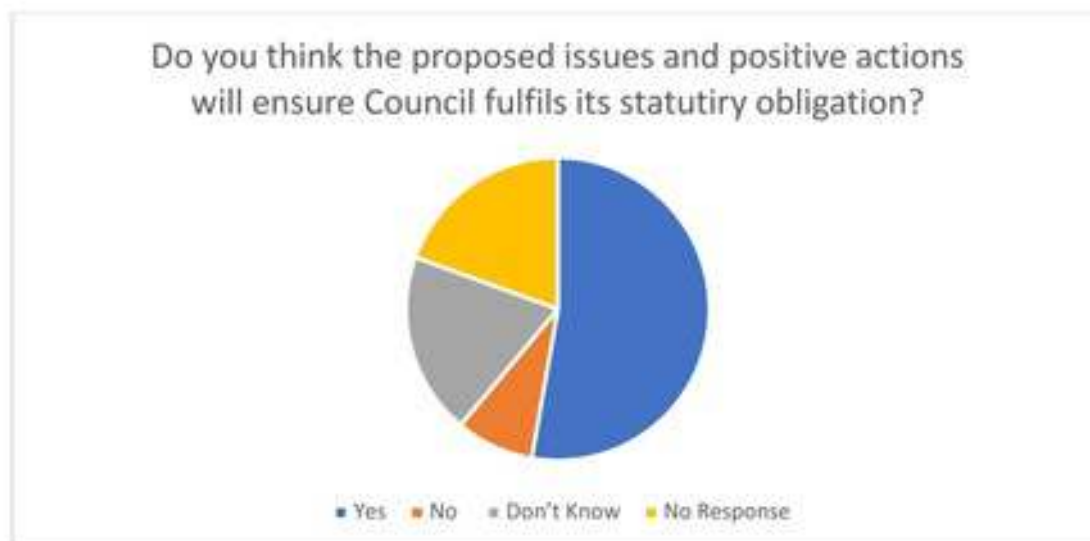
The following table sets out consultees’ responses as to what level they agreed with the themes?

Theme	Response
Awareness and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 respondents agreed • 1 respondent disagreed • 1 respondent did not know • 4 did not respond
Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 respondents agreed • 1 respondent did not know • 5 did not respond
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 respondents agreed • 5 did not respond
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 respondents agreed • 1 respondent disagreed • 4 did not respond

Analysis indicates that the majority of respondents believe the themes set out within the draft disability action plan are the right themes for the next three years.

2. Issues and proposed positive actions

Respondents were asked if the identified issues and proposed positive actions will enable Council fulfil its statutory obligations in relation to the disability duties.



- 19 respondents answered yes
- 3 respondents answered no
- 7 respondents stated that they did not know
- 7 did not respond to this question

Analysis indicates that the majority of respondents believe the issues and positive actions set out within the draft disability action plan are the right ones for the next three years.

3. Comments / suggestions

Consultees provided the following comments in relation to the proposed themes:

- *'Pleased to see specific reference to brain injury awareness'*
- *'The plan is good but will it be actioned? Are there diversity ambassadors and who are they?'*
- *'Is there a Shop Mobility scheme?'*
- *'Access to fitness trained staff to assist and recommend exercise'*
- *'Access to beach for paddling and swimming'*
- *'Themes are steps in the right direction'*

Consultees provided the following comments in relation to the issues and proposed positive actions:

- *'Staff training is a positive in the right direction- but will it be mandatory for all staff'*

- *'No detailed actions on how Council will support unpaid carers and local disability sport'*
- *'We need Changing Places in every town'*
- *'More engagement with groups'*
- *'Barriers have been made that are difficult to break through now. Participation of people with disabilities is something that is still very difficult to achieve due to barriers'*
- *'We discussed the new initiatives like autism friendly and every customer count, these should be available for everyone in the Council area'*
- *'No reference to supporting collaborative working among support organisations. Need for directory of local support organisations. No reference to lack of transport for Pwd [people with disability]. No reference to need for provision of special housing accommodation for Pwd. No reference to relationship with SHSCT No reference to need to support Daisyhill hospital's continued existence'*

In relation to the question as to whether they were aware of any equality of opportunity, good relations or rural needs implications associated with the draft disability Action Plan 2023-2027 respondents provided the following comments:

- *'There are financial implications to this and it will be disability services that may be cost due to the cost of living crisis and budget cuts. Its hard to be in a rural area/town as disabled as nothing is really there to help them'*
- *'People with disabilities have to move to urban areas for accessibility and there's a lot of financial complications'*
- *'Need Changing Places, accessible beaches, accessible countryside (not a gondola, safe road marking, accessible parking, and more help with young people'*

Council response:

- The majority of responses received were extremely positive with consultees agreeing to the themes and actions planned for the next three years.
- The Disability Action Plan details positive actions which outlines the Council's commitment to training, awareness raising and access to information, services and facilities.
- Council has recently appointed five Diversity Ambassadors (four Elected Members & one Officer).
- Council delivers Shop Mobility schemes with Newcastle Centre and Delamont Country Park.
- Council currently provides programmes and activities at facilities and events to support people with disability.

- Legislation advises that all new buildings that meet the criteria must include Changing Places toilets.
- Consideration will be given to developing an online directory of local support organisations.
- In relation to comments regarding functions outside of Council's competence e.g. transport, housing, health Elected Members continue to play a civic leadership role advocating with others for the benefit of all people of the district.

Recommendations and actions:

- To update the plan to reference the Shop Mobility Scheme in Delamont Country Park.
- To update the plan to develop an online directory of local support organisations.
- To update the plan to reflect Elected Members' civic leadership role advocating with others for the benefit of all people of the district.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 September 2023
Subject:	Public Consultation on the proposed draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gary Scott (Safeguarding Coordinator)
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gary Scott (Safeguarding Coordinator)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	The Executive Office is consulting on the proposed draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan.
1.2	Violence, abuse and harm against women and girls cuts across all generations, all communities, and all spheres of our society. It exists everywhere, in our schools, universities, workplaces, sports clubs, faith communities, homes and families, online communities, and in our public spaces. Violence, abuse and harm against women and girls happens everywhere, every day and impacts on how women and girls live, work, and socialise.
1.3	Wellbeing for all is at the heart of what Government aims to deliver in Northern Ireland. Violence against women and girls, in all its forms, is a critical obstacle to achieving this goal of wellbeing for all. It is damaging to women, girls, men and boys. Stopping violence against women and girls by changing the attitudes, behaviours, and social norms that accept and enable it, can create a future that is not only better and safer for women and girls, but more just, equal, and respectful for everyone.
1.4	This draft Strategic Framework is a long-term plan, to tackle this challenging and deep-rooted issue facing our society today setting the agenda for all of government and society in Northern Ireland to end violence against women and girls. Its key aim is to work together as partners across every sector of society to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls with a focus on root causes.
1.5	Council response to this consultation is attached at Appendix 1.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	Council is committed to the principle that Abuse, Violence and Sexual Violence is unacceptable behaviour and everyone has the right to live free from fear and abuse.
2.2	The consultation document outlines a seven-year (2023-2030) Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls, building on the evidence received, and the key issues identified through the Call for Views consultation process, which took place in 2022. Setting the agenda for all of government and society to end violence against women and girls, as a living document, it will be adapted according to emerging needs.
2.3	The framework identifies 4 broad themes and 6 outcomes required to end violence against women and girls. The outcomes are grouped under the four themes: 1. Prevention; 2. Protection & Provision;

	<p>3. Justice System; and 4. Working Better Together</p> <p>The emphasis of this Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is on the theme of prevention.</p>
2.4	<p>The six outcomes are:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Changed Attitudes, Behaviours, and Social Norms. Outcome 2: Healthy, Respectful Relationships. Outcome 3: Women and Girls are Safe and Feel Safe Everywhere. Outcome 4: Quality Frontline Services, Protection, and Provision for Victims and Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls. Outcome 5: A Justice System which has the Confidence of Victims, Survivors and the Public in its Ability to Address Violence Against Women and Girls. Outcome 6: All of Government and Society Working Better Together to End Violence Against Women and Girls</p> <p>Members will find full details including the priority areas within each outcome contained within the draft Consultation hard copy response at Appendix 1.</p>
2.5	<p>The draft Action Plan is a foundational one underpinning the work for the remainder of 2023/24 and consists of a series of key actions developed to lay the foundations of the current work to bring about meaningful change and effective delivery, and which the Strategic Framework can build upon in subsequent years.</p>
2.6	<p>The draft Foundational Action Plan details a number of actions under each of the four theme areas of Prevention, Protection & Provision, Justice System and Working Better Together. Members will find full details of these actions contained within the draft Consultation hard copy response at Appendix 1.</p>
2.7	<p>It is important the views of Council, as representative of those within our electoral areas, in how best we as a society can protect and prevent harm against women and girls who are subject to harm abuse and violence are provided as a response within this consultation.</p>
2.8	<p>Members should note responses to this consultation are submitted on-line therefore the document response provided is for the purposes of this report however, the actual response will be submitted electronically through the Executive Office website.</p>
2.9	<p>Proposals for the Strategic Framework and Foundational Action Plan are subject to the views of the Executive who will be responsible for final approval.</p>
2.10	<p>Council supports the strategic framework with no significant comment</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>Members are recommended to agree the consultation response on the draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan (Appendix 1)</p>
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	<p>There are no resource implications</p>
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

	<p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p>Proposal initiating consultation</p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Impact Assessment have both been completed by the Executive Office and are accessible through links provided in the background documents as at 8 below.</p>
6.0	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p>
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not Applicable to Council - completed by the Executive Office as below at 8 – links in Background Documents – Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Impact Assessment If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>
7.1	<p>1. Newry Mourne & Down District Council consultation response - Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan.</p>
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p> <p>The following link provides access to the following supporting documents</p> <p>Draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) and Foundational Action Plan, being led by the Executive Office (TEO) - (provided in hard copy)</p>

[Ending Violence Against Women and Girls | The Executive Office \(executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Members can also view the impact assessments through the following links:

- [Human rights Act Impact assessment](#)
- [Child Rights Impact assessment CRIA](#)
- [Windsor Framework – Article 2\(1\) Impact Assessment](#)
- [Rural Needs Impact Assessment](#)
- [Equality Impact Assessment EVAWG](#)

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

Print Version

Public Consultation Paper
Ending Violence Against
Women and Girls
Strategic Framework &
Foundational Action Plan



Introduction

1. This consultation seeks views on the new draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) and Foundational Action Plan, being led by the Executive Office (TEO).
2. The seven-year (2023-2030) Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls has been co-designed with over 50 partners from across government, community and voluntary sectors and organisations, as well as wider society. Importantly, these partners also include those with lived experience.
3. It sets the agenda for all of government and society here to end violence against women and girls. It is ambitious, long term, and wide reaching. It is a living document and will be adapted along the journey responding to emerging needs.


Consultation

4. The consultation will run for 13 weeks from 04 July 2023 to 03 October 2023.
5. While we want to hear from as many people as possible on as many of the changes as possible, please feel free to comment on as few or as many of them as you see fit.
6. The proposals for the Strategic Framework and Foundational Action Plan are subject to the views of the Executive who will be responsible for final approval.

Alternative Formats

7. An electronic copy of our consultation documents, including an Easy Read version, can be accessed on our main [consultation page](#) (external link opens to a new window / tab).
8. Young people **under the age of 16** are encouraged to use the Easy Read Version and consider completing this under the supervision of an adult.
9. Copies in other languages and formats (including Braille, large print etc.), can be made available on request. If you require the document in an alternative format, or language other than English, please contact us at EVAWG.HaveYourSay@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk, or at the address below.

Responding to the consultation

10. The best way to respond to this consultation is online, through our survey which can be accessed here:
<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/>
(external link opens to a new window / tab)
- 
11. A copy of the survey is also included in this document at page 10.
 12. Completed hard copy surveys and other written responses can be sent by:
E-mail to: EVAWG.HaveYourSay@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
Or, by post to: Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Directorate
A5.18, The Executive Office
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SR
 13. Responses to this consultation are invited for 13 weeks after the consultation launch, and written responses will be accepted up to 03 October 2023.
 14. We look forward to hearing from you. If you want to contact the team about the approach being taken, or if you or a group you are involved with would like to participate in an engagement event, please use the email address provided.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses

15. Following this consultation, the Department may publish all responses (subject to our Moderation Policy), except for those where the respondent indicates that they are an individual acting in a private capacity (e.g. a member of the public).
16. Where it is appropriate or necessary, we will remove email addresses, telephone numbers, and any other personal identifiers from these responses.
17. The Executive Office (TEO) is committed to protecting your privacy. For more information about what we do with your personal data please see our consultation privacy notice. That privacy notice explains how TEO uses the information supplied by you as part of a consultation, what we do with it, the ways in which we will safeguard it, and what your data protection rights are.

18. Your response, and all other responses to this consultation, may be disclosed on request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR); however, all disclosures will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK GDPR.
19. If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential, so that this may be considered if the Department should receive a request for the information under the FOIA or EIR.

Purpose

20. This seven-year (2023-2030) Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG), builds on the evidence received, and the key issues identified through the Call for Views consultation process, which took place in 2022. It sets the agenda for all of government and society to end violence against women and girls. It is ambitious, long term, and wide reaching. As a living document, it will be adapted along the journey according to emerging needs.
21. The **problem statement** that this Strategic Framework is addressing was agreed by our co-design group as,

"Societal culture and systemic attitudes and beliefs enable violence against women and girls".
22. Wellbeing for all is at the heart of what Government aims to deliver in this jurisdiction. The ability to form and enjoy healthy relationships is central to individual wellbeing, and vital to building communities and a society where everyone can thrive. This is something that we want for all our children, and for every individual and community here.
23. Violence against women and girls, in all its forms, is a critical obstacle to achieving this goal of wellbeing for all. It is damaging to women, girls, men and boys. Stopping violence against women and girls by changing the attitudes, behaviours, and social norms that accept and enable it, can create a future that is not only better and safer for women and girls, but more just, equal, and respectful for everyone.

Overview of the Strategic Framework

24. The co-design process to develop the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls began in October 2022. It saw a group of over 50 partners come together from across government, different sectors, and wider society, including intersectional representation and, importantly, those with lived experience, to create a Strategic Framework that has been ***designed with***, not for, our communities and society.

Vision

25. The Vision of the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is

A changed society where women and girls are free from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harm including the attitudes, systems and structural inequalities that cause them.

Aim

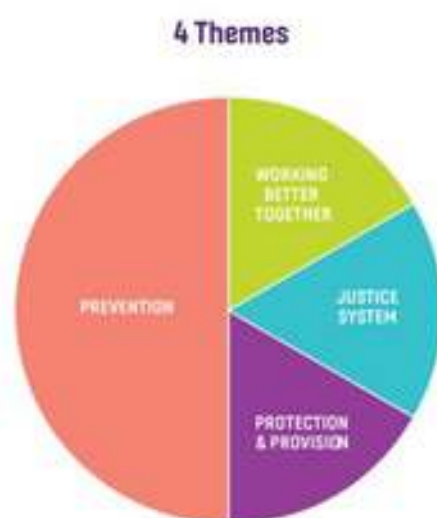
26. The Aim of the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is:

To work together as partners across every sector of society to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls with a focus on root causes.

Four Themes

27. In developing this Strategic Framework our co-design group identified 4 broad themes and 6 big changes or 'outcomes' required to end violence against women and girls. The outcomes are grouped under the four themes:

1. **Prevention;**
2. **Protection & Provision;**
3. **Justice System;** and
4. **Working Better Together**



For illustration purposes only

Prevention

28. The emphasis of this Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is on the theme of **prevention**. Effective prevention can both stop violence from occurring in the first place, such as education and campaigns; as well as interrupt the cycle of violence, like making public transport safer.

29. Our main focus will be on those outcomes associated with prevention:

- Changing attitudes, behaviours, and social norms
- Building knowledge and skills of individuals to form healthy relationships
- Ensuring that women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere.

Outcomes

30. The 6 big changes required to end violence against women and girls identified by our Co-design group were grouped into six outcomes, with priority areas identified under each outcome:

- **Outcome 1: Changed Attitudes, Behaviours, and Social Norms.**
Everyone in society understands what violence against women and girls is, including its root causes, and plays an active role in preventing it.
- **Outcome 2: Healthy, Respectful Relationships.**
Everyone in society is equipped and empowered to enjoy healthy, respectful relationships.
- **Outcome 3: Women and Girls are Safe and Feel Safe Everywhere.**
Organisations and institutions across government and society embed the prevention of violence against women and girls in all that they do so that women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere.
- **Outcome 4: Quality Frontline Services, Protection, and Provision for Victims and Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls.**
Provision of high quality services for women and girls who are victims and survivors of violence against women and girls.
- **Outcome 5: A Justice System which has the Confidence of Victims, Survivors and the Public in its Ability to Address Violence Against Women and Girls.**
In the context of violence against women and girls, a justice system that considers and addresses the needs of people who come into contact with it, holds perpetrators to account, while challenging and supporting them to change, gives victims and survivors a voice and a place in the process, and has the confidence of the public.
- **Outcome 6: All of Government and Society Working Better Together to End Violence Against Women and Girls**
A whole system approach with collaboration and cooperation by default across government departments and with, within, and between the community, voluntary, and other sectors.

31. Each of these Outcomes, and the priorities for delivering them are explained in more detail in our Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls.

Overview of the Foundational Action Plan

32. This Action Plan is a foundational one which establishes our work for the remainder of 2023/24. This approach allows us to make progress in the challenging financial climate this year, and to align our planning cycle with the financial year from March 2024. As we go forward, further conversations will be needed to allow us to advise the Executive on decisions to be taken on budgets and priorities.
33. The Action Plan consists of a series of key actions that were developed to lay the foundations of the work to bring about meaningful change and effective delivery as we move forward, and which the Strategic Framework can build upon in subsequent years.

Impact assessments

34. The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), completed in relation to our Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan, is the first stage in the ongoing monitoring of the inequalities that may be experienced by section 75 groups in respect of ending violence against women and girls. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

What Happens Next

35. A number of public engagement events will be held during the consultation period. Information on these events will be published on the Executive Office website and will be distributed through a newsletter.
36. Following the close of the consultation on 03 October 2023 the responses will be analysed and considered by the EVAWG Directorate.
37. Proposals for the Strategic Framework and Foundational Action Plan are subject to the views of the Executive who will be responsible for final approval.

Moderation Policy

38. In connection with any responses to the consultation and any which may be published we operate a moderation policy to ensure that responses are appropriate and not harmful to others. Moderation is performed in accordance with the terms set out below.
39. Responses that include any of the following may be deleted:
 - threats or incitements to violence;
 - use of obscenity;
 - duplicative or substantially duplicative postings by the same person or entity;
 - postings seeking employment or containing advertisements for a commercial product or service;
 - information posted in violation of law, including libel, condoning or encouraging illegal activity, revealing classified information, or infringing on a copyright or trademark.
40. We value your time and input, and our aim is to accept as many responses as possible, while ensuring that a focused, constructive consultation takes place. To address additional matters as may be warranted, this moderation policy is subject to change.

Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls – Consultation Questionnaire

Overview

In total there are **21** questions in this consultation.

It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

If you or someone you know has been affected by any form of violence referred to in this document, you can seek help from the following:

You can contact the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helpline at any time, free of charge:

0808 802 1414

help@dsahelpline.org

If you are in danger right now

If you are in danger right now you should call 999. If it is difficult for you to talk when you call 999, you can **press 55** on the phone to let the police know that it is an emergency.

- [Women's Aid Federation NI](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [The Rainbow Project](#)
- [PSNI](#)
- [Victim Support NI](#)
- [Men's Advisory Project NI](#)

About You

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Access to Consultation Responses

The Executive Office (TEO) is committed to protecting your privacy. For more information about what we do with your personal data please see our consultation privacy notice.

All the questions in the 'About You', pages are required.

When completing the rest of this consultation, you only need to answer the questions that are most relevant and important to you.

1. Are you responding to this consultation as a member of the public, or on behalf of an organisation?

(Required)

Please select only one option

- A member of the public. *(Please proceed to **question 2.**)*
- On behalf of an organisation. *(Please proceed to **question 8.**)*

About You - A Member of the Public

2a. Within which local council district is your normal place of residence?

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Antrim and Newtownabbey
- Ards and North Down
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast and Glens
- Derry City and Strabane
- Fermanagh and Omagh
- Lisburn and Castlereagh
- Mid and East Antrim
- Mid Ulster

- Newry Mourne and Down
- Prefer not to say

2b. Within your local council district, do you consider yourself to live in a Rural, or Urban area?

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Rural
- Urban
- Prefer not to say

3. Please select your age range:

(Required)

Please select only one option

- 16-17 years
- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65+ years
- Prefer not to say

*An **Easy Read Version** of this consultation is available.
Young people **under the age of 16** are encouraged to use
the Easy Read Version and consider completing this under
the supervision of an adult.*

4a. What is your gender identity?

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Woman/Girl
- Man/Boy
- Non-binary
- Other (Please specify in the box below)
- Prefer not to say

4b. Do you consider yourself to be either a transgender person or a person with a trans history?

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Yes, I do
- No, I don't
- Other (Please specify in the box below)
- Prefer not to say

5. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Other (Please specify in the box below)
- Prefer not to say

6. What is your ethnic group?

Choose one option which best describes your ethnic group or background.

(Required)

Please select only one option

- White
- Irish Traveller
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- African
- Caribbean
- Arab

- Any other ethnic or mixed ethnic group
(please specify in the box below)
- Prefer not to say

If you have selected "Any other ethnic or mixed ethnic group", please specify below.

7. Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

This is the end of this section for those answering as a member of the public. Please proceed to the **Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls section** and **question 10**.

About You - An Organisation

All the questions on this page are required.

8. Please provide the name of the organisation you are answering on behalf of.

(Required)

Newry Mourne and Down District Council

9. Which of the following best describes the sector you operate in? This will assist us in monitoring the range of respondents the consultation has reached.

(Required)

Please select only one option

- Central government
- Local Government
- Statutory body (e.g. health, education, transport, housing etc.)
- Private sector
- Charity / Community / Voluntary sector
- Other (Please specify in the box below)
- Prefer not to say

This is the end of this section for those answering on behalf of an organisation. Please proceed to the **Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls section** and **question 10**.

Strategic Framework

The Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is the blueprint for society wide change to tackle this systemic problem.

10. Do you agree or disagree with our vision?

"A changed society where women and girls are free from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harm including the attitudes, systems and structural inequalities that cause them"

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding our draft vision in the box below.

What is Gender-based violence?

Violence against women and girls is a subset of gender-based

People sometimes think of violence as physical assault only, however violence against women and girls takes many forms.

Violence against women and girls includes:

- *physical, sexual, psychological and emotional violence occurring in the family (including children and young people), in the general community, or in institutions including coercive control and stalking*
- *sexual harassment, bullying, and intimidation in any public or private space*
- *workplace sexual harassment ranging from sexual jokes or comments to unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.*
- *commercial and non-commercial sexual exploitation of women and girls, trafficking, child sexual abuse, so called honour based violence, including female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and so called honour crimes*
- *harmful sexual behaviour which is sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self, or abusive to others*
- *online abuse including cyberstalking, sexual harassment, grooming for exploitation or abuse, image-based sexual abuse*
- *financial abuse such as controlling a woman's or girl's access to their money, taking loans or credit cards in their name or using their money without their consent*
- *everyday harm which includes everyday misogyny, sexist jokes and language, and discrimination.*

11. Do you agree or disagree that Outcome 1 below, will enable us to achieve this draft vision?

Outcome 1 - Changed Attitudes, Behaviours and Social Norms.

Everyone in society understands what violence against women and girls is, including its root causes, and play an active role in preventing it.

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding Outcome 1 in the box below.

This is essential in affecting change in that this will be difficult to achieve, it must be central to the strategy and while aspirational that must not prevent the aim of achieving this outcome.

12. Do you agree or disagree that Outcome 2 below, will enable us to achieve this draft vision?

Outcome 2 – Healthy, Respectful Relationships.

Everyone in society is equipped and empowered to enjoy healthy, respectful relationships.

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding Outcome 2 in the box below.

13. Do you agree or disagree that Outcome 3 below, will enable us to achieve this draft vision?

Outcome 3 – Women and Girls Are Safe and Feel Safe Everywhere.

Organisations and institutions across government and society embed the prevention of violence against women and girls in all that they do so that women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere.

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding Outcome 3 in the box below.

14. Do you agree or disagree that Outcome 4 below, will enable us to achieve this draft vision?

Outcome 4 – Quality Frontline Services, Protection, and Provision for Victims and Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls.

Provision of high quality services for women and girls who are victims and survivors of violence against women and girls.

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding Outcome 4 in the box below.

This is essential in ensuring those women and girls who experience violence are supported to live free from fear from further incidents having engaged services

The services must be effective in practice to increase confidence in they system for any women/girl experiencing violence or anyone impacted by it but it must also support and increase public confidence in that actions being taken by government and statutory bodies is effective.

Any services/provisions or protections must be adequately funded and the funding must be long term and guaranteed. The protection service for victims must also contain services targeting perpetrators where assessed as being a risk - whether or not convicted of violence

15. Do you agree or disagree that Outcome 5 below, will enable us to achieve this draft vision?

Outcome 5 – A Justice System which has the Confidence of Victims, Survivors and the Public in its Ability to Address Violence Against Women and Girls.

In the context of violence against women and girls, a justice system that considers and addresses the needs of people who come into contact with it, holds perpetrators to account, while challenging and supporting them to change, gives victims and survivors a voice and a place in the process, and has the confidence of the public.

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding Outcome 5 in the box below.

The whole system must be effective in practice to increase confidence and enable women/girls experiencing violence to engage with the the statutory organisations.
Holding perpetrators to account must be robust in preventing retaliation and reoffending.

16. Do you agree or disagree that Outcome 6 below, will enable us to achieve this draft vision?

Outcome 6 – All of Government and Society Working Better Together to End Violence Against Women and Girls.

A whole system approach with collaboration and cooperation by default across government departments and with, within and between the community, voluntary and other sectors.

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding Outcome 6 in the box below.

All elements of the strategy must ensure proper and effective collaboration between all sectors, government departments and statutory bodies.
Adequate funding must be in place to ensure all sectors including specifically the community and voluntary sectors and able to effectively engage.

Placing a focus on Prevention

The emphasis of this draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is on prevention.

"Prevention is about addressing the underlying causes of violence against women and girls, to stop it before it occurs."

UN Women, 2012

17. Do you agree or disagree with our approach of focusing on **PREVENTION** to end violence against women and girls?

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding our approach of focusing on prevention in the box below.

Draft Foundational Action Plan

This Action Plan is a foundational one which establishes our work for the remainder of 2023/24. This approach allows us to make progress in the challenging financial climate this year and to align our planning cycle with the financial year from March 2024. As we go forward, further conversations will be needed to allow us to advise the Executive on decisions to be taken on budgets and priorities.

Draft Foundational Action Plan

Actions falling under the theme of **Prevention**:

1. Develop a society wide communications and engagement strategy to change attitudes, behaviours and social norms.
2. Adopt the Task Group Sprint Model to consider the needs (including Intersectional needs) of specific groups.
3. Establish a forum to coordinate work on equipping and supporting families, children and young people to enjoy healthy, respectful relationships using the curriculum (including Relationships and Sexuality Education), policies and practices in early years, schools and community sector.
4. To embed structures and processes which give space for young people's voices to participate and influence decision makers in ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) work.
5. Establish a cross sectoral Further and Higher Education working group to develop a plan to address EVAWG on and off campus.
6. Establish a cross-sectoral workplace forum (including unions, Labour Relations Agency, employers' organisations and other professional bodies) to develop workplace policy toolkits/ guidance and to promote workplace training/ best practice in professional standards on EVAWG, Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) to lead good practice in public sector.
7. Support the cross-sectoral group addressing EVAWG issues in the hospitality sector and the night-time economy.

Actions falling under the theme of **Protection & Provision**:

8. Map and undertake gap analysis of violence against women and girls (VAWG) provision in general frontline services to help inform further policy development and service delivery.
9. Map and undertake gap analysis of VAWG provision in specialist frontline services including a review of referral gateways to help inform further policy development and service delivery.

Actions falling under the theme of Justice System:

10. Develop further tools for communicating information on the justice system and processes to improve information sharing and enhance confidence amongst victims/survivors in support of implementation of the Victim and Witness Strategy.
11. In the context of care and protections for victims in the Justice system:
 - (a) evaluate agreed interventions that are providing support to victims to access the Justice System;
 - (b) support research on victim attrition rates in serious sexual offences and domestic abuse cases, as part of implementation of Gillen Programme and Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy.
12. Explore with partners options to create specialism in VAWG cases in court proceedings including information provision for juries.
13. Undertake a review of international best practice perpetrator prevention and management systems to inform policy development and practice in support of the review under the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy.
14. Undertake a review of trends in aggravating and reinforcing factors of VAWG to inform policy development and practice.

Actions falling under the theme of Working Better Together:

15. Create a Knowledge and Network Hub within the Executive Office (TEO) to provide an accessible central resource on EVAWG research, data & evaluation and communication & engagement.
16. Establish a cross sectoral group located within the Knowledge and Network Hub to develop and lead the programme of EVAWG work on data and evaluation.
17. Through the Knowledge and Network Hub, develop and deliver an agreed annual EVAWG research programme with advice and support from a cross jurisdictional panel of academic research experts.
18. Through the Knowledge and Network Hub create reference groups to engage with lived experience, service provision, and academic research expertise in the development of the EVAWG work programme.

19. Create a five jurisdiction officials forum to share best practice and encourage cross jurisdictional shared learning.
20. NICS will identify and implement mechanisms including Programme for Government (PfG) to mainstream opportunities to EVAWG in public policies and strategies at all levels.
21. Develop funding strategy for sustainable EVAWG work across departments and other sectors.
22. In order to build widespread support for a changed society where women and girls are free from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harm including the attitudes, systems and structural inequalities that cause them - to seek endorsement of EVAWG strategic framework and active participation in the whole of society programme of actions by political and civic leaders.

18. Do you agree or disagree that these are the right actions to take in our draft Foundational Action Plan?

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments you wish to make regarding our draft Foundational Action Plan in the box below.

Impact Assessments

The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), completed in relation to our draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and draft Foundational Action Plan, is the first stage in the ongoing monitoring of the inequalities that may be experienced by section 75 groups in respect of ending violence against women and girls. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

We have also completed other impact assessments and screenings in accordance with best practice. All Impact Assessments can be viewed on the [Executive Office website](#) (external link opens to a new window / tab).

19. Do you agree or disagree with the way the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out?

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

20. Do you agree or disagree with the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?

Please select only one option

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Are there any other issues or inequalities that you believe need to be considered in the EQIA?

Next Steps

We have an opportunity to make a generational change that will improve life for everyone here.

In the past, violence against women and girls was a hidden problem. But now, women and girls with experience of violence are telling their stories, young people are asking why we can't do things differently, people across our communities are saying that we can and must change our culture and attitudes so that violence against women and girls becomes history.

Many thanks for taking the time to respond to this consultation.

21. If you or your organisation would like to receive our newsletter, to keep up to date with our work to end violence against women and girls, please provide a contact email address in the box below.

We will not publish the contact details of individual respondents.

Gary.Scott@nmandd.org

For further information, please contact:

**Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Directorate,
A5.18, The Executive Office
Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate,
Belfast BT4 3SR**

EVAWG.HaveYourSay@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 September 2023
Subject:	Assessment of Performance 2022-23
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director: Finance & Performance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catherine Hughes – Acting Head of Performance and Improvement

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	X	For noting only	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			<p>Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires District Councils to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Through the Act, the Council has a statutory requirement to produce and publish an Assessment of Performance before 30 September each year. The legislation states that the Assessment of Performance must outline the Council's progress in relation to the General Duty of Improvement, as well as planned improvements against the previous year's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance improvement objectives • Statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management • Self imposed performance indicators
2.0			Key issues
2.1			<p>The Assessment of Performance 2022-23 is attached at Appendix 1 and therefore provides an overview of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's progress in meeting the General Duty of Improvement • Achieving the 'measures of success' within the Corporate Plan 2021-23 • Achieving the 'measures of success' within the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23 • Meeting the statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management <p>Where possible, performance has been tracked against set targets, trends over time and compared with other local authorities across Northern Ireland. It should however be noted that comparisons with previous years should be considered within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent impact on Council service provision. Progress has also been aligned to the outcomes within the Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down and reported accordingly throughout the Assessment of Performance.</p>
2.2			<p>Each year, the Council produces the user friendly, accessible document 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward', which summarises the retrospective Assessment of Performance and forward-looking Performance Improvement Plan. This document is attached at Appendix 2.</p>

2.3	<p>There is a statutory requirement to publish the Assessment of Performance 2022-23 on the Council's website by 30 September 2023. The Assessment of Performance will form a key part of the Performance Audit and Assessment which is carried out by the NIAO, and focuses on the following six themes, using a compliance based approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General duty to improve • Improvement objectives • Consultation on improvement duties • The Improvement Plan • Collection of information relating to performance • Use and publication of performance information <p>Through the Performance Audit and Assessment, the NIAO will determine how effective and robust the Council's performance management arrangements are, as well as the Council's likelihood to comply with the duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in future years.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	<p>To consider and agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assessment of Performance 2022-23, including the summary document 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward' • That the Assessment of Performance 2022-23 is published by 30 September 2023, before full Council ratification, in order to meet the statutory deadline
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	<p>The cost of the design of the summary document 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward' is £390.00 and is funded through the existing Performance and Improvement budget.</p>
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p>

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> Consultation not required.</p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	<p>Appendix 1: Assessment of Performance 2022-23</p> <p>Appendix 2: Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward</p>
8.0	Background Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (Part 12) • Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 • Corporate Plan 2021-23

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Assessment of Performance 2022-23



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Overall Assessment of Performance 2022-23

The past year has been another challenging year for us all in the district with continued recovery from COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis affecting everyone's life, both at home and at work.

The Council has worked tirelessly to deliver services and ensure they were delivered seamlessly for residents across our district. Our residents and visitors continued to re-connect with the natural beauty of the District as we recorded over 226,000 visits to Warrenpoint Municipal Park and over 225,000 recorded visits to the Council's 10 community trails. We retained blue flag accreditation for our beaches, supported 39 community clean ups and issued more fixed penalty notices to address environmental crime.

We continued to progress and achieve a number of key priorities, in particular the Belfast Region City Deal, encompassing the Mourne Mountain Gateway project, Newry City Regeneration project and the development of the Southern Relief Road. Our Digital Programme of Investment will play a critical role in contributing to economic inclusion and sustainable growth, creating skills and employment for a digital future.

However, whilst much has been achieved, there is still more to do. We recognise where we need to improve and are committed to delivering further improvements e.g., There has been a significant increase in people engaged in targeted health programmes, however there has been a slight decline in recycling, and longer processing times for local and major planning applications. We will continue to focus on what matters most to you - improving the quality of our leisure facilities and services, growing the local economy, improving the cleanliness of our District, improving our sustainability and reducing our impacts in relation to climate change, and improving the performance of our Planning Service.

As we look forward to 2023-24, we will continue to bring more opportunities as our ambition remains for Newry, Mourne and Down to be one of the best places to live, work, invest in and visit.

Introduction

Part 12 of 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. As part of the Act, District Councils are required to:

- Produce and publish an annual Performance Improvement Plan, setting out the performance improvement objectives, which should be aligned to the Community Plan. It should however be noted that, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Councils were not required to publish a Performance Improvement Plan 2020-21.
- Produce and publish an annual Assessment of Performance, outlining the arrangements to secure continuous improvement, demonstrating whether planned improvements have been achieved, analysing year on year performance trends and comparisons with the performance of other Councils, where possible.

The Assessment of Performance 2022-23 provides an overview of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's progress in delivering the following:

General Duty of Improvement

As set out in the Local Government (NI) Act 2014

Performance Improvement Objectives

In the absence of published performance improvement objectives 2020-21 and the impact of COVID-19 during 2021-22, all of the draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22 were carried forward to 2022-23, enabling the Council to use this Assessment of Performance to further establish a baseline and trends to monitor and report progress against the majority of the 'measures of success' which underpin the performance improvement objectives 2022-23.

1. We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces
2. We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs
3. We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents
4. We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme
5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

As set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015:

- The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity
- The average processing time of major planning applications

- The average processing time of local planning applications
- The percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks
- The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)
- The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled
- The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings

Self Imposed Performance Indicators

The Council has developed a baseline to monitor and report progress against the 'measures of success' which are set out in the Corporate Plan 2021-23.

Corporate Objective	Measure of Success
Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	Number of jobs created and businesses supported through Council programmes
	Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity
	Amount of investment secured by Council
Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities	Number of people participating in targeted health programmes
	Attendance at free play sessions
	Number of attendances at Council indoor leisure facilities
Enhance, protect and promote our environment	Level of street cleanliness across the District (Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Street Cleanliness Index)
	65% of municipal waste recycled by 2030
	Level of compliance with Sustainable Development Duty
Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage	Increased visitor spend
	Increased overnight stays
	Increased visitor satisfaction
Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities	Percentage of residents who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
	Percentage of residents who agree that the Council consults with and listens to the views of local people
	Percentage of residents who feel they can have a say on how services are delivered in their local area
	Number and percentage of financial assistance projects funded and successfully delivered
Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities	Progress against key Belfast City Region Deal projects
	Number of public realm schemes delivered
	Increased business growth and employment

Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	Increased citizen satisfaction
	Compliance with the Duty of Improvement
Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District	Compliance with the duty of community planning / monitor delivery of outcomes with partners
	Percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

Where possible, progress in delivering the 'measures of success' within the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23 and Corporate Plan 2021-23 has been aligned to the Community Plan, in order to demonstrate how the Council is contributing to the achievement of community planning outcomes. The golden thread that exists between the Community Plan, Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23 is highlighted further in Appendix 2.

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing	
All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	
All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	
All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities	

Progress has been tracked against targets, trends over time, and where possible, compared with the performance of local authorities across Northern Ireland, using the legend below. It should however be noted that comparisons with previous years should be considered within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent impact on Council service provision. The Assessment of Performance is instrumental in helping the Council to review progress and identify the key objectives and areas of improvement in the year ahead.

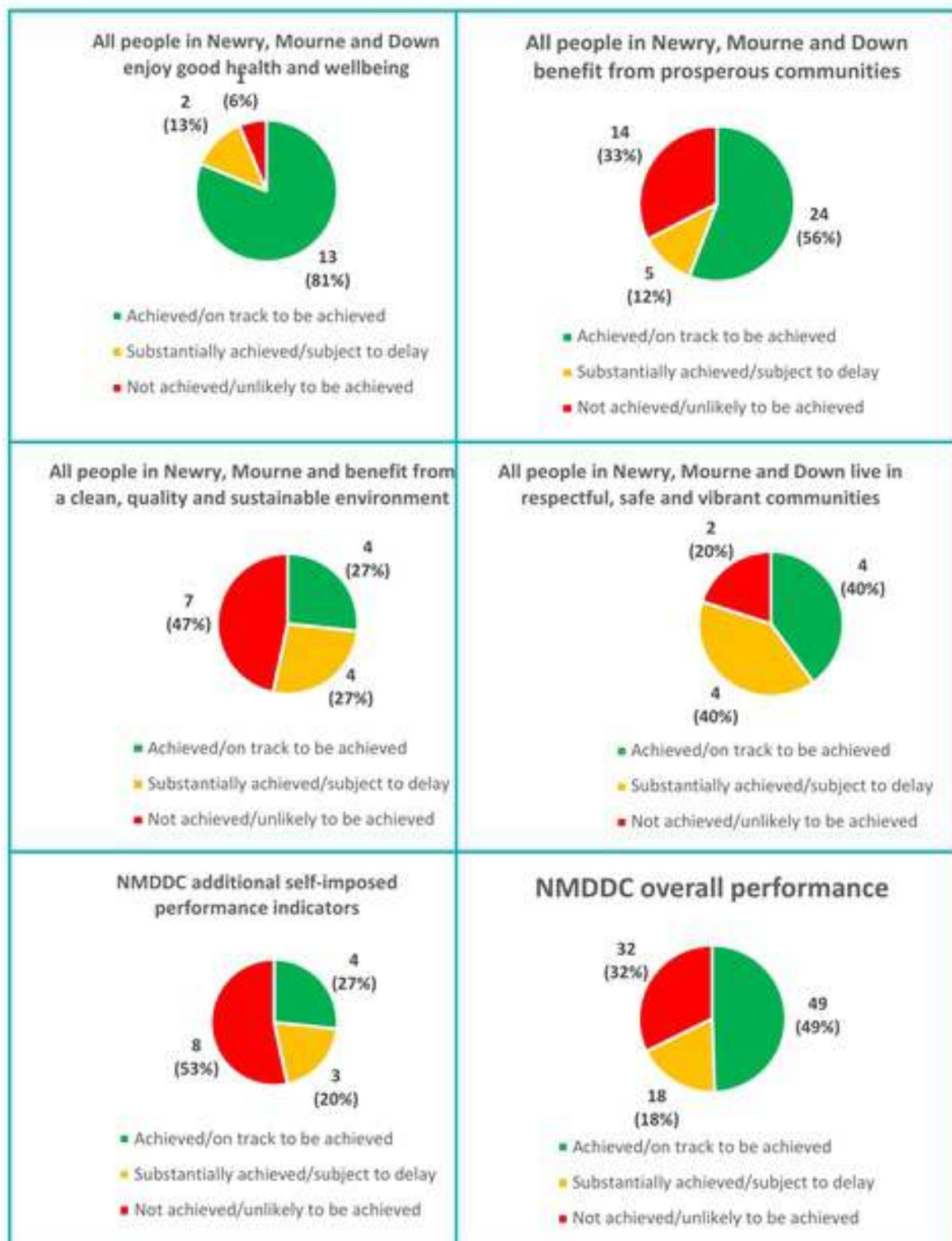
Legend

Status		Trend	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved		Performance has improved since the previous year
	Target or objective substantially 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.

Performance at a Glance

The legend has been applied to the 'measures of success' within the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23, and Corporate Plan 2021-23, in order to provide an overview of progress against the four community planning outcomes and overall performance of the Council.



*Where a 'measure of success' has been allocated a status and trend, both have been counted in the charts

04 / 05

Our District, Our Organisation, Our Performance

District

Population: 182,074
Households: 68,398
7 District Electoral Areas
41 Elected Members
1,000+ employees
88% of residents are satisfied with the Council

Community

Life expectancy:
Male: 78.9 years /
Female: 82.7 years
Age Profile: 0-15 years: 22% / 65+ years: 17%
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
115 Neighbourhood Watch Schemes
18,407 food parcels delivered to vulnerable households
19.6m awarded through the Financial Assistance Scheme since 2015

Tourism

Between 2018 and 2019:
15% increase in visitor numbers, to 516,203
21% increase in visitor spend, to £88.7m
Three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
5 'green flag' parks and 3 'blue flag' beaches

Health and Wellbeing

82% of residents feel they are in very good or good health
81% of residents are physically active at least once a week for 30mins
75.5% of customers are satisfied with the Council's six leisure facilities
221k recorded visits at community trails
226k recorded visits to Warepoint Municipal Park

Economy

Employment rate (Age 16 to 64): 88.5
9,175 VAT Registered Businesses
21% of the population aged 16 years and over have no qualifications
187 new jobs procured through business start activity
359 businesses supported and 1,108 mentoring days delivered through economic development programmes

Environment

Recycling is important to 91% of residents
Top perceived problem for residents: Dog messes and fouling
Recycling rate: 49.6%
360 community clean ups supported since 2018
Second lowest level of waste to landfill across all NI Councils

District

Community

Tourism

Health and Wellbeing

Economy

Environment

Downpatrick Town Hall

Newry Leisure Centre

Newry




Downpatrick














Downpatrick Leisure Centre

Downpatrick Country

St Patrick's Monument

A snapshot of 2022-23:

Performance Improvement Objective	Progress	Status Trend
 <p>We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces</p>	79.8% increase in recorded attendances at Council leisure centres	△
	132% increase in recorded visits to Carlingford Lough Greenway	△
	A further 6% increase in recorded visits at Warrenpoint Municipal Park bringing the total recorded visits to 226,153 in 2022-23.	△
	6.6% increase in recorded visits at community trails	△
	3 'blue flag' beaches and 5 'green flag' parks	😊
	83% of visitors are satisfied with the Council's forest parks	😊
	2 new play parks built and 2 play parks upgraded	😊
	 <p>We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs</p>	187 new jobs promoted through business start activity
12 new social enterprise businesses supported and 12 new social enterprise jobs created		😊 ▷
347 businesses supported and 187 jobs created through the 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales Accelerator' programmes		😊 ▽
Increase in the number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses, birth rate of new businesses and employee jobs		😊
'Make it Local' campaign rolled out		😊
 <p>We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents</p>	110 fixed penalty notices issued and 91 paid	☹️ ▷
	39 community clean ups supported	☹️ ▽
	Decrease in the rate of recycling, to 49.6%*	☹️ ▷
	Second lowest levels of waste sent to landfill across all NI Councils	😊 △
	10 'Live Here, Love Here' environmental projects supported	▽
	Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out	😊

 <p>We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme</p>	£1.26m awarded to 366 projects across 22 thematic areas	
	67% of applications to the financial assistance scheme were successful	
	£524k awarded towards major and minor capital projects	
	49,347 volunteer hours recorded to deliver projects and 256,025 beneficiaries of the scheme	
	5 capacity building sessions delivered to 208 participants	
	99% of applicants are satisfied with the support received from the Programmes Unit	
 <p>We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme</p>	The Council received and decided on the highest number of planning applications across the 11 Councils, approving the second highest number of cases regionally.	
	The processing time for local planning applications increased from 18.8 weeks in 2021-22 to 21.6 weeks in 2022-23	
	The processing time for major planning applications increased from 44.3 weeks in 2021-22 to 89 weeks in 2022-23	
	The number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more increased from 187 in 2021-22 to 228 in 2022-23	
	The number of enforcement cases in the system for 12 months or more has increased from 472 in 2021-22 to 503 2022-23.	

*The 2022-23 data in relation to the statutory performance indicators for waste management remains provisional, as the end of year validated data will be published by DAERA in Q3 2023-24.

General Duty of Improvement

The Council recognises improvement to mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities. During 2022-23, the Council continued to strengthen and embed the arrangements it has put in place to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions, in order to improve the quality of life for all local communities.

Following the Performance Audit and Assessment 2022-23, the Local Government Auditor concluded that:

Improvement planning and publication of improvement information

- The Council has discharged its duties in connection with (1) improvement planning and (2) publication of improvement information in accordance with section 92 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently.

Improvement assessment

- Councils continue to operate in a particularly challenging environment with continued focus on recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, the current cost of living crisis, impacting both on performance and the way in which services are delivered. This changing landscape and refocusing of priorities has impacted my ability to rely on past trends in councils' performance to assess the likelihood of future compliance with Part 12 of the Act. In light of this, I am unable to reach an opinion on whether the Council is likely to discharge its duties under Part 12 of the Act and act in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently during 2022-23.

Arrangements to secure continuous improvement

The Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that community planning outcomes, corporate priorities and performance improvement objectives are being delivered. By demonstrating the alignment that exists between the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan, Directorate Business Plans, Service Plans and Individual Performance, the framework provides a mechanism to manage performance at all levels of the organisation, and ensure the necessary steps are taken to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions.

Over the past seven years, the Council has continued to implement and embed the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework:

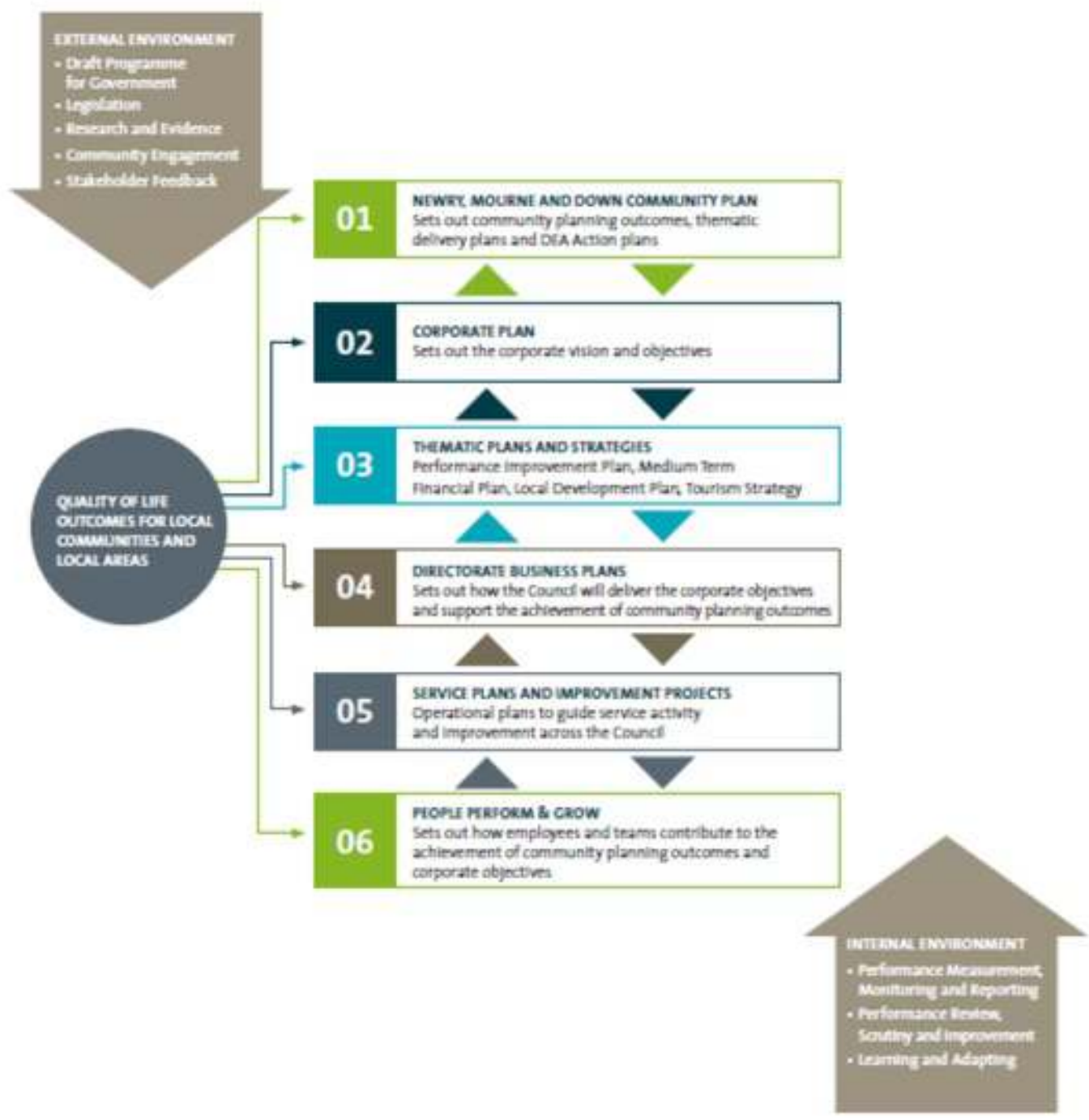
- The Council has developed and agreed integrated planning, monitoring and reporting cycles, which have been aligned to ensure everyone in the organisation is working towards shared objectives, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis. This integrated timeline of activity is outlined in the Business Planning and Performance Management Cycle.
- The governance arrangements at all levels of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework continue to strengthen and embed, with

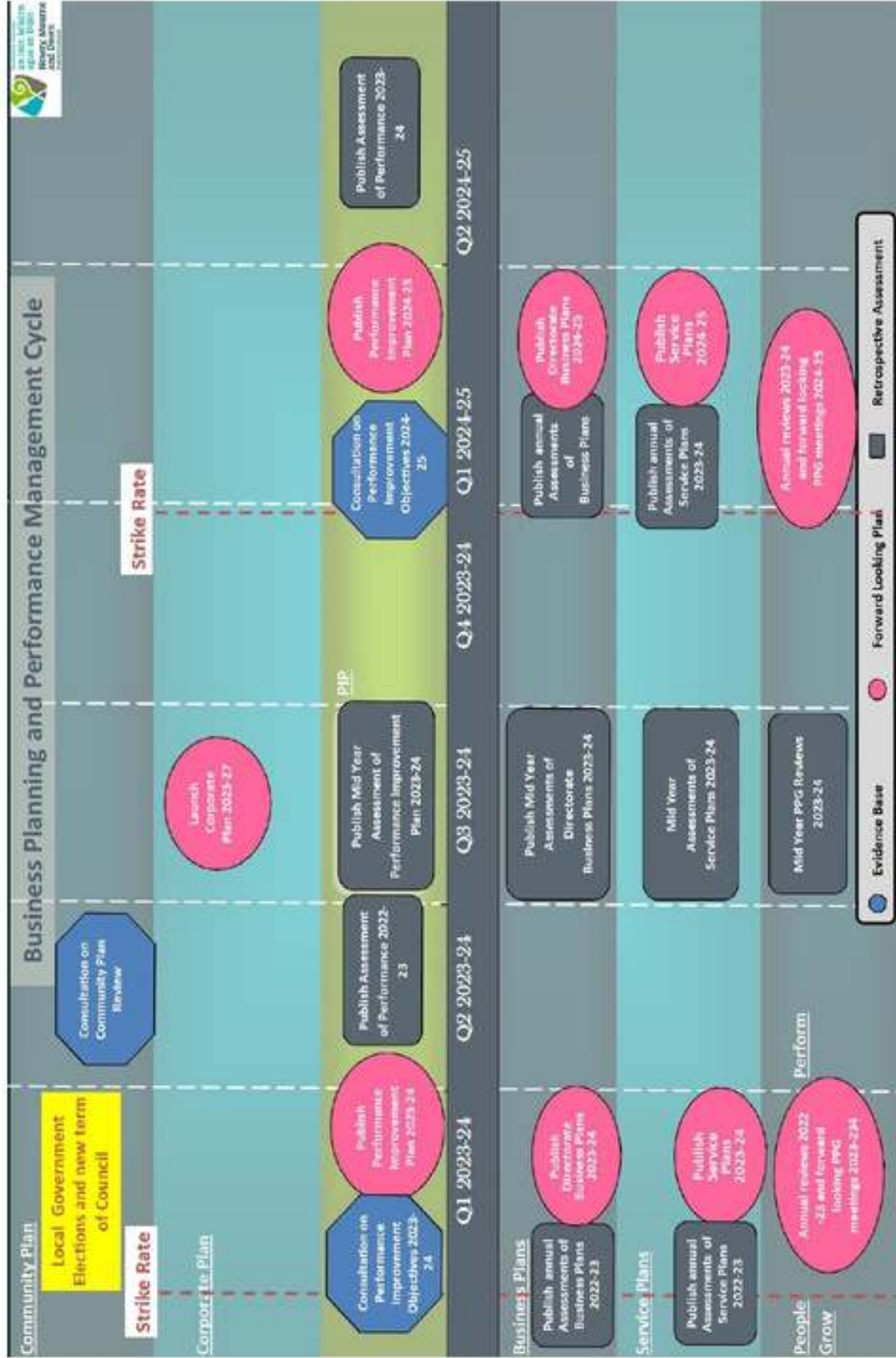
the delivery of the Performance Improvement Plan and Directorate Business Plans being monitored and reported to the Committees of Council and the Senior Management Team on a bi-annual and annual basis.

- A number of Directorates and departments also organised business and service planning sessions to engage officers in reviewing performance during 2022-23, setting direction in 2023-24 and communicating the objectives within the Corporate Plan.
- All departments produced Service Plans in 2022-23, outlining core operational activity and improvement activity which will support the achievement of the objectives within the Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans.
- Individual Performance has been progressed through the 'People Perform Grow' initiative, which seeks to link and align the contribution of employees with strategic objectives. All employees at tier five and above have had an opportunity to participate in People Perform Grow and performance management arrangements have been introduced to support and monitor the effective implementation and roll-out of People Perform Grow across the organisation. The effective implementation of People Perform Grow is monitored through the Corporate Performance Dashboard.
- Through the Corporate Performance Dashboard, progress continues to be monitored and reported against a suite of 18 key performance indicators on a quarterly basis to the Senior and Corporate Management Teams. The performance indicators are aligned to both the Corporate Plan and Corporate Risk Register.
- The Council continues to secure greater alignment across the business planning, performance and risk management arrangements, with the Corporate Risk Register being directly aligned to the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Directorate Risk Registers being aligned to Directorate Business Plans.
- The Performance Improvement Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to secure continuous improvement in the delivery of services, and the objectives seek to bring about improvement across the seven areas outlined in the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.
- The Council has also completed the second Residents Survey to identify and understand perceptions of the Council and the local area as a place to live. The findings from the survey build a robust and reliable evidence base to inform future Corporate Plans, PIP's and Directorate Business Plans ensuring the strategic direction of the organisation is focused on the needs and aspirations of residents.

Further information on the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement and progress in implementing the 'proposals for improvement', which have been put forward by the Northern Ireland Audit Office, is outlined in Appendix 1.

Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and Cycle








Community Planning Outcome

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing

Corporate Objective

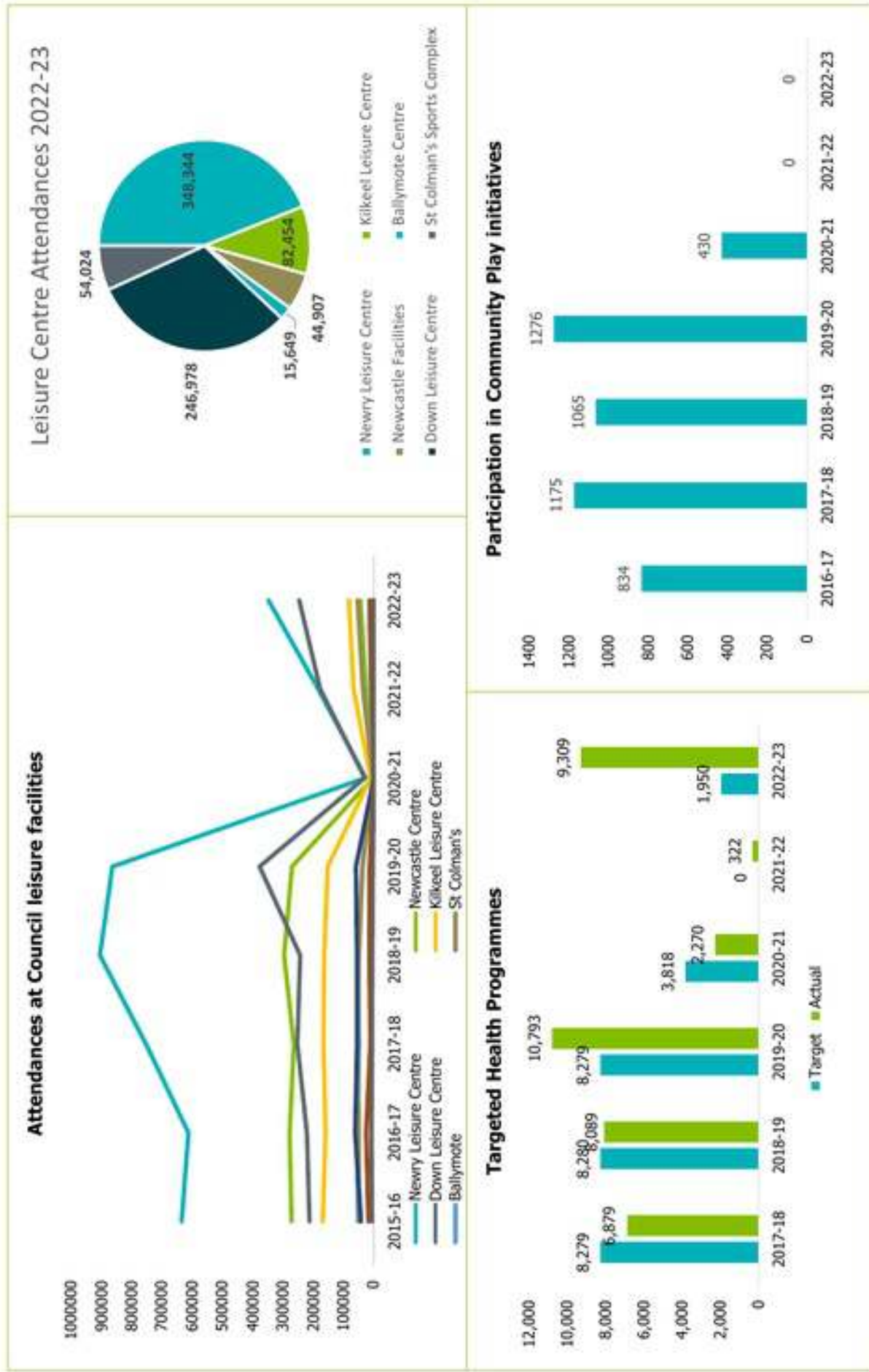
Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities

Key Action	Status	Update
Promote healthier lifestyles, including increased physical activity levels, diet and emotional wellbeing.		<p>By Q3 2022-23 all Council leisure facilities were reopened but post COVID-19 challenges, including staffing resources restricted full opening in some facilities. Where possible however, when all restrictions were lifted, Council returned to providing the full compliment of leisure services.</p> <p>The Council engaged 9,309 participants in several physical activity programmes, including the Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS) which helps clients manage chronic health conditions, Macmillan Move More, which encourages clients to take part in physical activity during and after cancer treatment and NMD Be Active for Life which provides bespoke physical activity opportunities for people who are inactive and at risk of chronic illness. During the summer months 4,370 children and young people also took part in the Councils Summer Activity Programme.</p>
Continue to implement the Leisure Facilities and Play Strategy for the District.		<p>The Council continued to implement the Sports Facility Strategy, delivering maintenance and upgrades at identified sites, including the commencement of a full refurbishment of Kilkeel Bowling Pavilion at an investment of £300,000. The Council also implemented the final phase of the Play Strategy 2017-22, opening two new playparks in Darragh Cross and Teconnaught with a final two upgrades at Kilmorey Park, Newry and Kitty's Road,</p>

<p>Develop and implement a Sports Development and Open Spaces Strategy for the District.</p>		<p>Kilkeel. Across the life cycle of this strategy the Council has completed 6 new play parks, 22 upgrades, 11 consolidations and 10 transformations.</p> <p>The Open Spaces Strategy is being aligned to the wider Planning Departments' Open Space Strategy which is a statutory requirement by all Councils to complete as part of the Local Development Plan.</p> <p>A consultant has been appointed to develop the Sports Development Strategy (now called Physical Activity, Health, Wellbeing and Sports Development strategy) with consultation and engagement being carried out in 2023-24.</p> <p>The Multi Sports Hub review was completed in 2022-23 which allowed Council to establish a capital budget to support the future development of multi sports hubs across the District.</p>
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Measure of Success	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		Status Trend	Explanatory note
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
<p>Number of people participating in targeted health programmes (Everybody Active 2020)</p>	8,279	10,793	3,818	2,270	-	322	1,950	9,309	 	<p>With the ending of the Everybody active programme in 2020, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, participation in targeted health programmes decreased dramatically in 2021-22 to only 322 participants. This figure is also reflective of the vulnerability of those being targeted by these programmes. The lifting of all restrictions during Q1 of 2022-23 however, enabled, in particular, the 'Be Active for Life' programme to operate at full capacity which has seen an increase in participation in targeted health programmes by nearly 9,000 participants.</p>



Attendance at free play sessions	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	<p>Since 2016-17, 4,780 children and young people took part in community play initiatives across the District. Participation peaked in 2019-20 at 1,276 participants and has subsequently declined with no free play sessions offered in 2021-22 or 2022-23 due to budget constraints and the restrictions that related to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Following the significant decrease in the number of attendances at Council leisure facilities during 2020-21 due to the closure of facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent public health guidelines and social distancing restrictions, there was a 494% increase in the number of attendances between 2020-21 and 2021-22. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 the number of people using Council leisure facilities has nearly doubled, increasing by 79.8%. Whilst this remains below pre-pandemic levels by 56% it does reflect the post Covid recovery that has been taking place across the Councils leisure facilities.</p>
	-	1,276	-	430	-	0	-	0	-	0	
Increase in the number of people using Council leisure facilities	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	<p>▽</p>
	1,678,140	1,818,040	1,922,131	75,296	-	447,095	-	803,868	-	803,868	






Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces

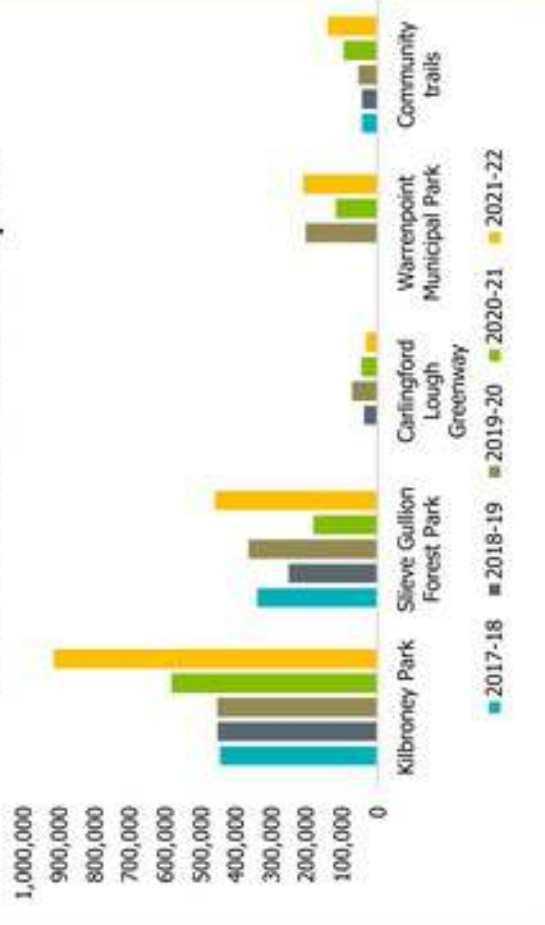
Supporting action	Status	Update
Continue to develop the district's bid to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark designation.		The Council achieved UNESCO Global Geopark designation for Mourne, Gullion, Strangford in May 2023.
Invest in new facilities at Kilbroney Park and Rostrevor Forest, Tyrella beach Delamont Country Park and Camlough Lake.		The Fallows Phase 2 is practically complete with waymarking and interpretation currently being implemented to assist the visitor experience. Planning permission has been approved for new visitor facilities at Tyrella beach and Council will be considering financial provision to deliver this in 2024. The outdoor performance and interpretive space at Slieve Gullion Forest Park is complete and the draft proposals for the viewpoint upgrade, walking trails and visitor information centre at Delamont Country Park are currently being finalised. A Planning application has been submitted for Trail development and enhancement at Delamont Country Park and the trails will be considered for funding opportunities. The Council upgraded the Amenity Building at the caravan/campsite at Castlewellan Forest Park with delivery of Castlewellan Heritage Lottery Fund ongoing. The funding has been secured to deliver a Recreational Hub Facility at Camlough Lake. The project development is progressing with detailed design and securing the necessary statutory approvals.
Explore options to install visitor counters at Delamont Country Park		Options are currently being explored, with procurement due to conclude in Q3 2023-24.

Retain five green flag and three green flag heritage accreditations for the Council's parks		The Council retained green flag accreditation for Kilbroney Park, Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Warrenpoint Municipal Park and Newry Canal and heritage accreditation for Warrenpoint Municipal Park. The Council achieved Green Flag accreditation for Castlewella Forest Park in 2023.
Retain blue flag accreditation for Cranfield, Murlough and Tyrella beaches.		The Council retained blue flag accreditation for Cranfield, Murlough and Tyrella beaches.
Build four new play parks and upgrade three existing play parks		The Council completed two new play parks at Darragh Cross and Teconnaught and two upgrades at Kilmorey Park, Newry and Kittys Road, Killeel. These were the final four projects from the Council's play strategy 2017-2022. Across the life cycle of this strategy the Council has completed 6 new play parks, 22 upgrades, 11 consolidations and 10 transformations.
Identify new community trails to develop in future years		In partnership with Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI), the Council developed a prioritisation plan for community trails as well as a Beach access framework and review of sea swimming at Newcastle Harbour. Council secured planning permission for a new community trail at Corry Wood and an extension at Drumkeeragh Car Park along with continuing to progress 4 new community trails to shovel ready stage.
Promote good visitor management across all Council parks and open spaces.		The Council continued to work with partner agencies to deliver a Social Sustainability campaign which focused on good visitor management by encouraging people to be mindful of their surroundings and consider the impact of their actions on others. This included the #LeaveNoTrace campaign which promoted 7 handy tips to preserve the local area and respect the natural environment.

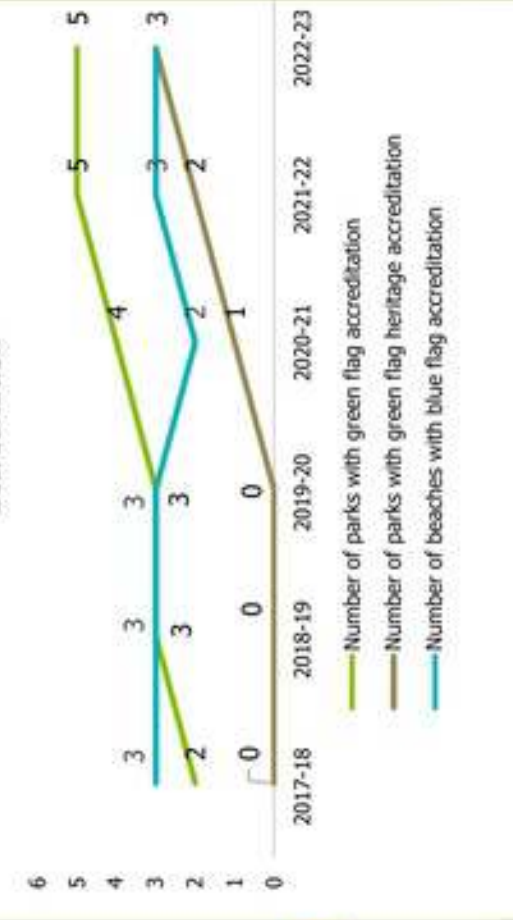
Measure of success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	Explanatory note
Number of recorded visits at:							
Kilbroney Park	453,704	454,848	584,148	915,500	Data unavailable		A pilot on visitor counters across the Council's largest parks concluded with data unavailable for 2022-23. Trends however in outdoor visitors continues to grow. Options are currently being explored, with procurement for new visitor counters due to conclude in Q3 2023-24.
Slieve Gullion Forest Park	253,376	366,444	183,712	462,240	Data unavailable		
Carlingford Lough Greenway	40,219	73,138	47,005	35,021	81,279	△	During 2022-23, 81,279 visits were recorded for the Carlingford Lough Greenway. This represents a 132% increase when compared to 2021-22 and the highest numbers recorded to date.
Warrenpoint Municipal Park	-	205,126	119,600	212,694	226,153	△	
Community trails*	46,044	57,849	96,563	211,718	225,795	😊△	During 2022-23, the Council recorded 225,795 visits to 10 community trails with 13% recorded at Tievnadarragh and 12% at Glasswater Wood Trails. This represents an overall increase of 7% when compared to 2021-22.
Number of parks with green flag accreditation	3	3	4	5	5	😊△	In 2022-23, the Council received five green flags for Kilbroney Park, Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Warrenpoint Municipal Park, Delamont Country Park and Newry Canal, including three green flag heritage accreditations for Warrenpoint Municipal Park, Newry Canal and Castlewalian Forest Park
Number of parks with green flag heritage accreditation	-	-	1	2	3	😊△	
Number of beaches with	3	3	2	3	3	😊	The three Council run beaches of Cranfield Bay, Murlough and Tyrella were also awarded blue flag accreditation in 2022-23.

blue flag accreditation							
Level of satisfaction with the Council's forest parks	-	-	83%	-		<p>In September 2021, the Council carried out a public consultation on its three forest parks (Delamont, Kilbroney and Slieve Gullion) to gauge customer satisfaction with the parks and their associated facilities, as well as how they may be improved going forward. The first year of this survey indicates that 83% of all visitors to the three parks were satisfied with the parks, with 95% of visitors to the parks agreeing /strongly agreeing that visiting the park had a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing. A second Forest parks survey is currently being carried out and is due to conclude at the end of Q2 2023/24.</p>	
Number of new/upgraded play parks	17	9	3	4		<p>During 2022-23, the Council built two new play parks at Darragh Cross and Teconnaught and upgraded two play parks at Kilmorey Road, Newry and Kittys Road, Kilkeel.</p>	

Number of recorded visits at forest parks



Parks and beaches with green and blue flag accreditation



*The methodology for calculating the recorded visits at community trails has been reviewed and finalised and previous years figures have been amended accordingly.




Community Planning Outcome



All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities

Corporate Objective

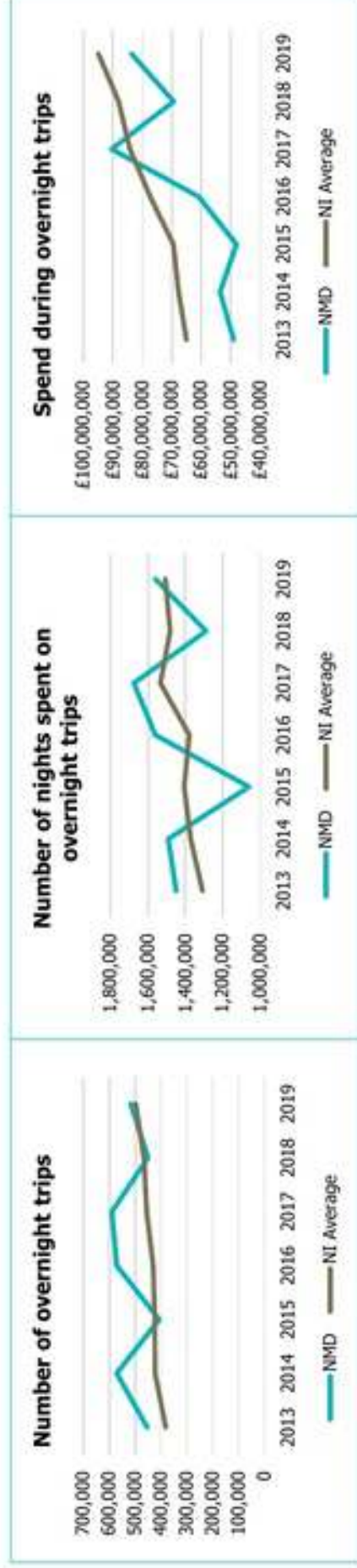
Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage

Key action	Status	Update
<p>Develop the tourism proposition for the district in line with Tourism NI's Experience Brand.</p>		<p>The Council continued to deliver the current Tourism Strategy for Newry, Mourne and Down and completed the development of the new Tourism Strategy 2023-28, which will include a central theme of Sustainable Tourism Growth. This draft Tourism Strategy will now be issued for a 12 week consultation.</p> <p>The Council engaged in a new facilitated programme to work with the Outdoor Adventure sector and have engaged 18 businesses across the District within the Programme, which will seek to support the business and develop new visitor experiences.</p>
<p>Work with Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland, government departments, and the private sector to grow the economic impact of the tourism industry and to address barriers to growth.</p>		<p>Engagement with tourism and hospitality businesses continued during 2022 -23, through business cluster groups, regular industry updates and stakeholder engagement with industry associations. The Council is also working in partnership with tourism businesses, landowners and central Government stakeholders to address long-term sustainability issues in the Mourne Mountains.</p>

Invest in major tourism capital projects that will attract international visitors to NI and the district.		Progress continues on the delivery of capital projects at key tourism sites across the District, including Castlewellan Forest Park, Delamont Country Park, Camlough Lake, and Kilbroney Forest Park. The Outline Business Case and grant funding for the Mournes Gateway project has been approved, as part of the Belfast Region City Deal appraisal process. The next stage of project development will be the development of project design and Full Business Case.
Implement a Sustainable Tourism Growth Plan to ensure responsible development of our tourism offering with respect to environmental, social and economic considerations.		Sustainable Tourism Growth will be a central theme in the new Tourism Strategy 2023-28. The Geopark masterplan has been developed with key actions around Sustainable Tourism development and the bid for UNESCO Global Geopark Status for Mourne Gullion Strangford has been achieved. A suite of resources has been made available online for seven field sites within the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark, with accompanying virtual tours of Camlough, Cranfield and Ballyhorman to facilitate outdoor education.
Continue to develop the district's bid to achieve the UNESCO Global Geopark designation by summer 2021.		The Council achieved UNESCO Global Geopark designation for Mourne, Gullion, Strangford in May 2023.

Measure of Success	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Trend	Explanatory Note
Increased overnights stays	406,302	571,054	589,581	449,953	516,203		Between 2015 and 2019, the number of overnight trips in the District increased by 27%, including an increase of 14.7% between 2018 and 2019. Newry, Mourne and Down accounts for 9.4% of all overnight trips in Northern Ireland, and since 2015, the average number of nights spent in Newry, Mourne and Down also increased by 47.1% to 1,559,810 nights. The average overnight trip per visitor has therefore increased from 2.6 in 2015 to 3 in 2019.
Increased visitor spend	£48,071,493	£60,934,823	£90,432,246	£69,345,336	£83,671,689		Between 2015 and 2019, visitor spend in Newry, Mourne and Down increased by 74%, including a 20.7% increase between 2018 and 2019, which equates to an overall

Measure of Success	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Trend
	Increased visitor satisfaction	-	-	-	-	Satisfaction with Parks 83% (Baseline) Satisfaction with Beaches 67% (Baseline)






*Since 2019 tourism estimates have not yet been published by the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and this report reflects the 2019 Local Government District (LGD) tourism data. NISRA has confirmed that the tourism estimates should not be used on a year on year comparison basis, and should be used as a trend analysis, alongside other local tourism information.

Corporate Objective


Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills





Through the CIO Update	
Key action	Status
Provide a programme of support that will increase growth and investment for new and established businesses across the district.	 <p>The Council continued to deliver direct mentoring support to businesses through a framework of business supported programmes; In 2022-23, across 4 core programmes 347 businesses were supported in their growth plans, 55 programmes/workshops delivered, 2 trade missions facilitated to Dublin and Scotland with 15 participating businesses, and 1 meet the buyer event involving 6 businesses and 60 participants.</p> <p>The expansion of our small business sector is a key priority for Council. In 2022-23, 311 businesses plans for new start-up enterprises were produced, in turn supporting the creation of 187 new start up businesses and promoting the creation of the 187 new employment positions.</p>

		<p>The Council secured £3.8m for investment in Smaller Settlements during 2022-23. This includes investment in four Environmental Improvement Schemes and 7 Revitalisation Schemes. A proportion of £1.3m allocated to the seven revitalisation schemes will provide financial assistance to established businesses to invest in shop front enhancements.</p> <p>Through the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2022-23 which aimed to tackle poverty and social isolation in deprived areas, the Council administered grant aid to 58 businesses to the value of £199,803.</p> <p>The Council delivered the 'Make it Local' promotional campaign, through social media, radio, billboard and print, to highlight the unique business offering across the District and encourage shoppers to shop locally, in store or online. The Council also delivered 24 artisan markets in Downpatrick, Newcastle, Warrenpoint and Newry with 39,360 visitors recorded across all 4 sites during 2022-23.</p> <p>In partnership with the Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency and Down Business Centre, the Council organised NMD Enterprise Week in November 2022, which included a range of face to face and online activities to showcase the entrepreneurial networks and support available for residents and businesses across the District.</p>
<p>Work with partners to enhance employability and skills, provide quality jobs for all our citizens and meet the needs of our businesses.</p>		<p>The Council continued to implement the Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy and is working with partners in the employability, skills and education sectors through the Labour Market Partnership (LMP) in the District. Through the LMP the Council delivered a Work Start Pre-employment Programme to 55 participants; 28 of whom gained employment. Our local Enterprise Agencies were able to engage with 28 local entrepreneurs to offer wrap around mentoring support to new enterprises in the NMD area and supported 27 people into self-employment. Our transport academies have engaged with approximately 70 people and 34 have gained employment to date. Upskilling for Growth over-achieved and surpassed an initial target of 50 participants with 77 participants completing, all of whom achieved a qualification helping encourage</p>

		lifelong learning of NMD residents. The Council delivered 7 employment academies through which 87 participants have been able to gain skills to enter employment and 39 have secured employment. Two job fairs were also held with 660+ attendees and over 70 employers exhibiting their vacancies in the area.
Maximise the district's location as a cross-border gateway to Great Britain, Ireland and international markets.		Council is an active player in the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC), a partnership of the 8 Councils located along the Dublin to Belfast corridor. The DBEC partnership have developed an ambitious 7 year action plan that will seek to establish the corridor as an international centre for growth, progressing opportunities in skills, infrastructure, innovation and R&D, that will position the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor as a prime investment location, enabling access to regional, national and international markets.
Secure investment in infrastructure that enables the future economic growth of the district.		Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI) is a Consortium and a programme made up of 10 of the 11 Northern Ireland Councils. In 2018 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council agreed to undertake the role of the "Lead Council" on behalf of and with the agreement of the Consortium Members. A total of £23.1m of DCMS funding has been drawn down to connect public sector sites with Full Fibre designed to level up public services and speed up the rollout of Ultrafast Fibre across the province. At a Consortium site level, over 887 buildings have been connected to include hospitals, community centres, fire and ambulance stations and council buildings to Gigabit capable (1000mpbs) full fibre. This marks the completion of one of the largest non-state aid public sector broadband projects in Northern Ireland and will make a tangible difference to the lives of families, people and communities across the province. In the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area by March 2023, 68 Council sites (hubs) were connected to the value of £2.3m via FFNI. A further 34 Business Services Organisation (BSO) sites were also connected in the NMDDC area improving the access to Ultrafast fibre. Through FFNI, the connection of public sector hubs will fast track homes and businesses not currently within scope for Ultrafast commercial investments. This future-proofed connectivity will underpin and support a wide range of current

	<p>digital transformation growth deals and SMART City projects which are currently being rolled out across Council areas.</p> <p>FFNI - Establishment of Digital Transformation Flexible Fund</p> <p>Since June 2022 FFNI has been leading on a £3.5M DTFF project for all Councils which will fund micro and small businesses with a Digital Transformation Grant £5k-£20k to fast-track Digital Transformation using emerging technologies. The DTFF Consortium is made up of the 11 local authorities, the FE Colleges, the two Universities, Digital Catapult, Catalyst, DAERA and Invest NI. The project outcomes are job creation/sustainability, new products/services and export potential.</p> <p>FFNI - Mobile Action Plan.</p> <p>The MAP NI was developed by a cross-sectoral working group which included members from central and local government who consulted with stakeholders including industry, UK Government and Occom. Its aim is to identify issues which inhibit the rollout of mobile networks and sought to establish solutions to enable better, faster and more consistent mobile coverage throughout Northern Ireland. This plan has been in development since June 2022.</p> <p>Under MAP, FFNI Ops team are chairing the Council representation in the Northern Ireland Barrier Busting taskforce using existing FFNI Governance arrangements. FFNI has engaged with Solace to request that each council should consider the establishment of an internal working group to support the regional digital champions working group to improve mobile connectivity in district/NI.</p> <p>FFNI – DCMS Shared Rural Network</p> <p>£1 billion deal to improve poor and patchy rural 4G phone coverage was agreed in June 2022. The Shared Rural Network Consortium is made up of FFNI, EE, O2, Three and</p>
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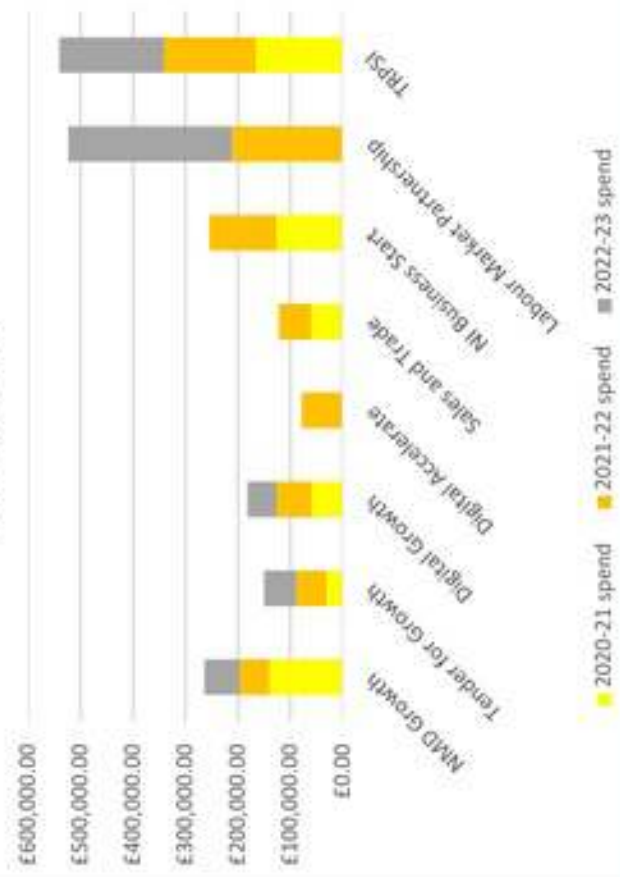
<p>Through the BRCD partnership, implement a series of (1) skills and employment and (2) digital and innovation programmes to meet the needs of the region.</p>		<p>Vodafone, DfE, DAERA, DfE, DfI and Mobiles UK. The SRN is investing in a network of new and existing phone masts through a partnership between the mobile operators and the local/central government.</p>
		<p>The Belfast Region City Deal was signed in December 2021, confirming the commitment of partners to deliver all City Deal proposals. BRCD includes five projects that will transform Newry, Mourne and Down, including a £30m investment in the Mourne Mountains Gateway project, a £93m investment in the Newry Southern Relief Road and an £8m investment in the Newry City Centre Regeneration including £3m on grade A office provision and £5m on public realm schemes, as well as Digital and Innovation projects and Skills and Employment projects.</p> <p>Development of a Regional Innovation Hub (RIH) with health/pharma sector alignment with a focus on connectivity i.e. IoT, Full Fibre, Advanced Wireless began in June 2022. The hub will act as a regional centre to allow Public and Private health sectors to work together to identify challenges and prototype potential solutions and align with other key Digital projects across NI/ROI.</p> <p>Development of SMART places applications through the Infrastructure Enabling Fund.</p> <p>Promotion and monitoring of other BRCD Digital Pillar initiatives such as the Digital Venture Fund, Challenge and Innovation Funds etc.</p>

Measure of Success	2021-22		2022-23		Status Trend	Explanatory Note
	Jobs created	Businesses supported	Jobs created	Businesses supported		
Number of jobs created and businesses supported through Council programmes	202	421	193	359		Through the 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth', 'Sales Accelerator' and the 'Social Economy' programmes, the Council supported 359 local businesses and created 196 jobs during 2022-23. The majority of businesses supported (37%) were delivered through the 'NMD Growth' programme and the number of jobs created (64%) through 'Tender for Growth'. These programmes have now come to the end of their 4 year cycle and are being replaced by a regional wide Entrepreneurship Support Service
Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity	Target >155	Actual 215	Target >155	Actual 187	 	Through the NI Business Start programme, the Council promoted 187 new jobs during 2022-23, exceeding the statutory target of >155 jobs by 39%, and the Council is placed 4/11 amongst Councils in NI. The Council also approved 358 business plans which exceeds the target of 312 business plans by 15% and supported 215 business starts which exceeds the 187 target set by 21%.
Amount of Investment secured by the Council	Investment		2021-22		2022-23	
	Economic Development - Total Value of Funding Contracts Held:		£1.8m	£2.2m		During 2022-23 Newry, Mourne and Down was in receipt of funding contracts to the value of £16.5m in external funding for investment in economic development and regeneration, with the value of these contracts spanning several years. This is an increase of 57% on the value of contracts held in 2021-22. In 2022-23, £3.7m was spent in economic development and regeneration schemes across the District which is a decrease of 23% when compared to the amount of money spent in 2021-22. This is due to several projects closing in March 2023.
	Economic Development - Annual Spend:		£837,390	£695,176		£695k was spent against economic development programmes, six of which are partially funded through the European Regional Development Fund and Department for Economy and two programmes funded via the Department for Communities and the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. The programme delivery for all programmes closed on 31 March 2023 with the exception of NI Business Start. NMDDC in partnership with the 10 Councils in Northern Ireland are collaborating on
	Regeneration - Total Value of Funding Contracts Held:		£8.7m	£14.3m		
	Regeneration - Annual Spend:		£4.0m	£3.0m		

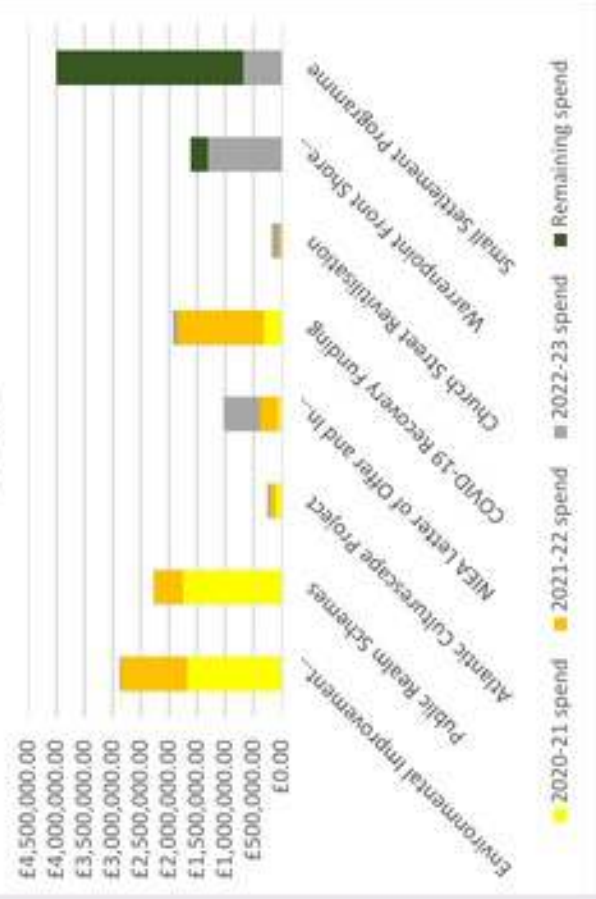
business startup and growth support service for implementation in 2023/2024.

The Council is also delivering several regeneration schemes, which seen £3.0m of investment spent in 2022-23. These are partially funded by the Department for Communities, Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, the Department for Infrastructure, Environment and Northern Ireland Environment Agency. This includes environmental improvement schemes and various projects across the District.

Economic Development - Investment secured and spent by Council



Regeneration - Investment secured and spent by Council












*NI Business Start programme funding secured on 1/04/2021 for a two year cycle, which has now been extended until September 2023.

Corporate Objective

Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities

Key action	Status	Update
<p>Progress the Belfast Region City Deal, ensuring inclusive economic growth for the region.</p>		<p>The Belfast Region City Deal was signed in December 2021, confirming the commitment of partners to deliver all City Deal proposals. BRCD includes five projects that will transform Newry, Mourne and Down, including a £30m investment in the Mourne Mountains Gateway project, a £93m investment in the Newry Southern Relief Road and an £8m investment in the Newry City Centre Regeneration including £3m on grade A office provision and £5m on public realm schemes, as well as Digital and Innovation projects and Skills and Employment projects.</p>
<p>Implement priority projects identified within masterplans and village plans.</p>		<p>In 2021-22 the Council completed public realm schemes, with a combined investment of approximately £4m, in seven rural villages. The final defects period for these same 7 schemes then concluded over the course of 2022-23.</p> <p>During the period 2022-23, the Council also invested £495k in Revitalisation/Shop Front schemes in Church Street, Downpatrick and Lower Hill Street, Newry.</p> <p>Following on from this investment, the Council in 2022-23 extending into 2023-24 has and is continuing to forward £4.3m investment in selected rural areas, through the implementation of four (4) Environmental Improvement Schemes, seven (7) Revitalisation Schemes, and the Make it Local communication and engagement campaign.</p>
<p>Establish a new civic centre, theatre and conference facility that will revitalise Newry City and the wider district.</p>		<p>The Newry City Centre Regeneration scheme will deliver a civic hub, theatre and conferencing facilities and new public realm scheme, revitalising the city centre. The scheme will also create and sustain jobs, increase visitor numbers, and stimulate the local economy. In 2022-23 both projects completed RIBA stage 3 design and submitted applications for planning approval.</p>

<p>Develop a car parking strategy in line with strategic regeneration development needs and sustainability.</p>		<p>The preparation of a tender document for new Enforcement providers commenced in October 2022, in conjunction with AECOM. This tender went out in March 2023 and the Council hope to have this process completed and a new provider appointed by Q3 2023-24.</p>
<p>Progress Downpatrick Regeneration.</p>		<p><u>Irish Street Development</u></p> <p>The Council is working in partnership with DfC to bring forward a mixed-use development project on the former PSNI site and adjacent carpark. The development brief went to market in autumn 2022 and closed in early 2023. Council and DfC are now continuing to meet to discuss the outcome of this process.</p> <p><u>Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) Process</u></p> <p>Downpatrick also went through the MAG process in 22-23, where Council engaged key stakeholders including Elected members, relevant government agencies, Government Departments and key strategic local stakeholders to discuss regeneration priorities for the town centre.</p> <p><u>Church Street, Public Realm</u></p> <p>As part of the Revitalisation Scheme, Council also considered concept designs for a future Environmental Improvement Scheme in Church Street, Downpatrick during 2022-23. Subject to funding from both Council and DfC this will be moved forward towards an outline design and consultation process.</p>

Measure of success	2021-22	2022-23	Status Trend	Explanatory Note
Progress against BRCD projects	Progress underway	Progress underway		The Belfast Region City Deal was signed in December 2021, confirming the commitment of partners to deliver against City Deal proposals. BRCD includes five projects that will transform Newry, Mourne and Down, including the Mourne Mountains Gateway, Newry Southern Relief Road, Newry City Centre Regeneration, Digital and Innovation projects and Skills and Employment projects. Outline Business Cases for Mourne Mountain Gateway and Newry City Centre Regeneration have been approved and a signed contract for funding with the Department for Communities for the latter has been completed. Outline Business Cases for the Southern Relief Road and Digital and Innovation remain in progress. A regionally focused working group has been established to progress investments under skills and employability.
Number of public realm schemes delivered	3	2		During 2021-22, the Council completed the final 3 public realm schemes delivered under the overall Rural Development Programme (RDP) where a total of seven (7) public realm schemes were delivered in Newtownhamilton, Meigh, Hilltown, Annalong, Killyleagh, Dundrum and Ballyhornan. During 2022/23, the Council also completed the 'Public Realm Enhancement Scheme' across its six main urban centres and completed phase 1 of the Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Scheme by April 2023. The Council is also now progressing plans to implement four (4) 'Small Settlement Public Realm Schemes' in Bessbrook, Castlewellan, Saintfield and Rostrevor. These are currently at the design and planning stage.
Increased business growth and employment	9,045 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses	9,175 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses		Since 2015, the number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in Newry, Mourne and Down increased by 19.5%, from 7,675 in 2015 to 9,175 in 2022. This includes an increase of 1.4% between 2021 and 2022 which can largely be attributed to the creation of an additional 180 new micro businesses. The birth rate of new businesses in Newry, Mourne and Down was 620* in 2022, and accounts for 11% of all new business births in Northern Ireland.
	61,203 employee jobs	Data not yet available	-	Between 2015 and 2021, the number of employee jobs across Newry, Mourne and Down increased by 16.9%, from 52,341 to 61,203, which was the 3 rd highest across Northern Ireland, accounting for 7.8% of all regional employee jobs. The BRES (Business Register and Employment

Survey) NI 2022 document which reports this data will not be published until 26 September 2023) and so the 2022 figure is currently not available.

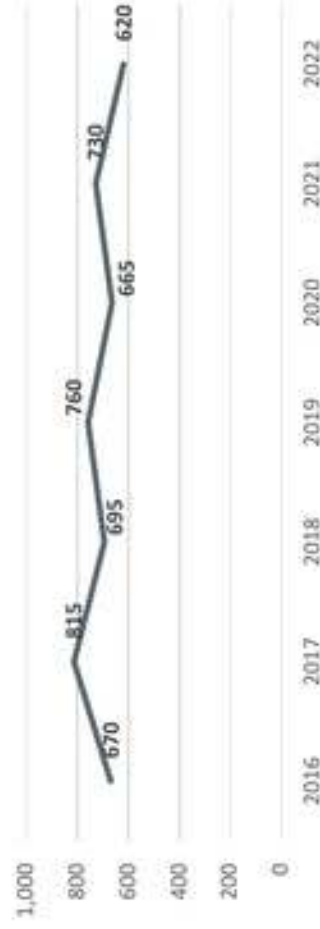


4,675*
job seekers
and out of
work
universal
credit
claimants

3,260
Job seekers
and out of
work
universal
credit
claimants

There was a 30.3% reduction in the number of job seekers allowance and out of work universal credit claimants, from 4,675 in 2021 to 3,260 in 2022, which is the lowest it has been since 2019 but is still above pre-pandemic levels by 23%. This is similar to the regional trend where the claimant count reduced by 27.5% between 2021 and 2022. Newry, Mourne and Down is ranked 7/11 across all Councils for its claimant count annual average.

Birth rate of newly registered businesses in Newry, Mourne and Down



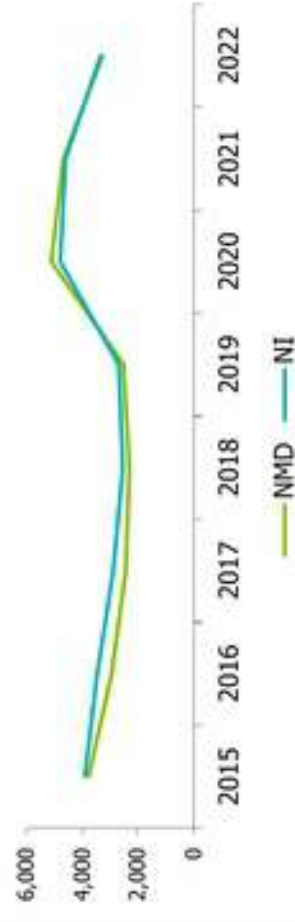
VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Newry, Mourne and Down



Number of employee jobs








Job Seekers Allowance and Out of Work Universal Credit Claimants


















*The 2022 Birth rates data is based on ONS experimental statistics as the NI Business Demography 2022 is not due to be published until January 2024 and may therefore be subject to change.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs

Key action	Status	Update
Roll-out the NMD 'Make it Local' and 'A Place to Work' campaigns to safely stimulate footfall and revitalise our local economy		The Council implemented the 'Make it Local' promotional campaign, encouraging residents to shop locally for products or services, either in store or online, thereby supporting jobs and supply chains which contribute to the economic recovery of the District.
Support the creation of new businesses and promote new jobs through the NI 'Go for It' programme.		The Council exceeded the targets set through the NI 'Go For It' programme, creating 187 new business starts and promoting 187 new jobs, exceeding the statutory target of >155.
Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme.		The Council achieved all targets set through the Social Economy programme, supporting 12 social enterprises, delivering 195 mentoring days, assisting 52 people to gain increased skills for entering employment and creating 34 new volunteering jobs.
Support local businesses and create new jobs through the 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth', 'Sales Accelerator' and 'Digital Surge' programmes		The Council continued to deliver a range of economic development programmes which focused on helping businesses to grow, enhance their competitiveness and digital capabilities and identify new tendering opportunities. Through these programmes, the Council supported 347 local businesses and created 184 local jobs.
Support the creation of new jobs and businesses in coastal areas through SEAFLAG 2.		The Council continued to deliver the SEAFLAG 2 programme, which was extended until March 2023. The programme targets for the number of new jobs and businesses created in coastal areas were exceeded and the programme has now been completed with Letters of Offer issues in 2022-23 with targets that exceed 31 March 2023 being monitored by DAERA.

Measure of success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	Explanatory Note
Number of business plans approved through NI 'Go For It'	300	298	266	358	311	 	Since 2015-16, the Council has consistently exceeded the statutory target of promoting >155 jobs through business start-up activity. 2022-23 however has seen overall performance decline compared to 2021-22, with the number of new business starts and new jobs promoted decreasing by 13%. In 2022-23, Newry, Mourne and Down ranked 3/11 for the number of jobs promoted across NI. Newry, Mourne and Down also approved 311 business plans in 2022-23 placing the Council 3/11 across NI for business plan approvals.
Number of new business starts created through NI 'Go For It'	204	203	181	215	187	 	
Number of new jobs promoted through NI 'Go For It'	184	183	164	215	187	 	For 2022-23 there was supposed to be an updated 'Go for It' programme target for the number of jobs promoted in Newry Mourne and Down:173. However, an amendment to the standard set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 is still awaiting legislative passage and approval.
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	9	10	12	12	12	 	Since 2017-18, the Council has consistently met and exceeded the targets set for the number of new social enterprise start-ups supported and jobs created. During 2022-23, the Council supported 12 new social enterprise start-ups and 20 existing social enterprises, assisted 52 people in increasing their skills for entering employment and created 12 new social enterprise jobs, as well as 34 new volunteering jobs.
Number of social enterprise jobs created	15	12	13	13	12	 	
Number of businesses supported through 'NMD Growth'	79	198	198	167	133	 	Since 2018, the Council supported 783 local businesses through 'NMD Growth', including 133 businesses during 2022-23, exceeding the overall 2022 target set by 27%. The Council has also delivered 30 workshops, 19 thematic

Number of jobs created through 'NMD Growth'	11	42	38	107.5	8.5	 	programmes and 1,168 mentoring days which have supported the creation of 207 jobs, including 8.5 new jobs during 2022-23. NMD Growth Programme delivery closed on 31 March 2023.
Number of businesses supported through 'Digital Growth'	New programmes		96	98	73	 	Since January 2020, the Council has supported 267 local businesses through 'Digital Growth', achieving 95% of the overall 2022 target set. The Council has also delivered 18 workshops, 4 masterclasses and 628.5 mentoring days which have supported the creation of 100.5 new jobs, including 49.5 new jobs during 2022-23. Digital Growth Programme delivery closed on 31 March 2023.
Number of jobs created through 'Digital Growth'			5.5	45.5	49.5	 	
Number of businesses supported through 'Tender for Growth'	New programmes		38	73	58	 	Since June 2020, the Council has supported 169 local businesses through 'Tender for Growth', exceeding the overall 2022 target set. The Council has also delivered 10 workshops and 453.5 mentoring days which have supported the creation of 168.5 new jobs, including 123 new jobs during 2022-23. Tender for Growth programme delivery closed on 31 March 2023.
Number of jobs created through 'Tender for Growth'			7	38.5	123	 	
Number of businesses supported through 'Sales Accelerator'	New programmes			35	83	 	Since the programme launched in September 2021 the Council has supported 118 businesses through 'Sales Accelerator', exceeding the 2022 target set by 144%. The Council has also delivered 57 workshops and 321 mentoring days which supported the creation of 3 new jobs during 2022-23. Sales Accelerator programme delivery closed on 31 March 2023.
Number of jobs created through 'Sales Accelerator'				0	3	 	
Number of new jobs created in coastal areas (SEAFILAG 2)	New programme	2023 Target	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual		As of the close of delivery of the SEAFILAG 2 programme on the 31 March 2023, nine new jobs had been created, exceeding the target of 5.5 new jobs. Two new businesses were also established in Ardglass and Kilkeel.
		5.5	7	9	9		

<p>Number of new businesses created in coastal areas (SEAFLAG 2)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>These represent 100% of the overall target of 2 new businesses being created.</p> <p>Letters of Offer issued during 2022-23 with targets that exceed the 31 March 2023 are now the responsibility of DAERA (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs) who will monitor those targets.</p>																																																																								
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Community Planning Outcome

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment




Corporate Objective

Enhance, protect and promote our environment

Key action	Status	Update
Develop a Circular Economy Plan for the district to make best use of our waste and resources.		A new Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland is being developed by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) which supports the Circular Economy Package measures. This regional strategy will then allow for each Council, including Newry, Mourne and Down to develop its own Circular Economy Plan.
Develop and implement a strategic plan for controlling environmental crime.		The Council's Education and Enforcement Plan has been delayed due to resourcing issues within the section. Once this plan has been developed it will be monitored and reported to the Sustainability and Environment Committee on a quarterly basis. The Council continues to liaise with NIEA in relation to environmental crime. Enforcement Officers are being strategically assigned to identified "hotspots" where there has been an increase in dog fouling and littering offences. However, there is an acknowledgement that recruitment of seasonal enforcement officers has been difficult which may be a consequence of the challenging recruitment market.
Develop and implement the Local Development Plan.		Preparation of the LDP is ongoing. A revised draft plan strategy was agreed by Council in August 2023 and is currently with the Department for Infrastructure. Through the LDP working group and planning committee, work will continue to develop and bring forward papers for proposals relating to the new LDP as per the revised timetable.





<p>Develop a Local Climate Change Adaption Plan.</p>		<p>The development of the Local Climate Adaption Plan which identifies the impact of climate change on a range of operations, including flooding, storms, heat, coastal erosion, heat and drought, is underway. The Council is allowing green spaces to go back to nature, creating habitats for wildlife and designated employees have attended training on climate change to enable them to take adaption and mitigation actions within their sectors. The initial mapping stages of this work have been completed to allow the Council to move towards defining the necessary mitigations. This work must be completed by March 2024.</p> <p>Newry, Mourne and Down was the lead partner for the €9 million CANN (Collaborative Action for the Natura Network) Project which sought to protect and restore protected habitats. The CANN Project reached the finals in the Ecology section of the prestigious Innovation in Politics awards, reinforcing the significance of the project in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. This project which involved 13 partners across three jurisdictions was completed in December 2022. A celebration Event took place in September 2022 to mark the completion and highlight the achievements in protecting both habitats and the biodiversity of the areas involved.</p>
<p>Implement priority projects identified within AONB action plans and protect our biodiversity.</p>		<p>Through delivery of the Ring of Gullion and Strangford and Lecale AONB Management Action plans, priority projects that have been delivered in 2022/23 to protect our biodiversity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Delamont Landscape Restoration Plan, which saw 1000m of native hedgerow reinstated on the agricultural farmland in the country park, and the removal of non-native woodland species from 7 Ha of the ancient woodland in Delamont. • Completion of the 4-year long control program of invasive plant species in the Ring of Gullion. • Support provided to the Slieve Gullion squirrel group, by way of equipment loan and food supplies.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Nestbox week events held in both the Ring of Gullion and Strangford and Lecale. Providing a nest box building workshop for members of the public to attend. • Partnered with ARGUK in the 3-year Dragons in the Hills project to raise awareness of, and conserve and protect our native amphibians and reptiles across the District • Advanced moorings trial ongoing in Strangford lough to protect important blue carbon habitats – the seagrass beds. • Wildlife disturbance training and signage delivered to raise awareness of the importance of protecting our marine wildlife (seals, dolphins & birds from disturbance) This may be from jet skis and other water users, and dogs off leads. • Tyrella dune restoration project – fencing installed at the front of the dunes at Tyrella beach to protect them from further erosion, protecting this important habitat. • 10,000 native trees were given away to local landowners, schools etc. for planting across the AONB's.
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Measure of Success	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		Status Trend	Explanatory Note
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
Level of street cleanliness across the District (KNIB street cleanliness score)	-	64	-	64	-	64	-	Data unavailable		The Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) Cleaner Neighbourhoods Survey for 2022-23 was based on a reduced number of surveys of 397 transects and a reduced geographical spread which included samples from only four Council areas of which Newry, Mourne and Down was not one. Therefore a LEAMS score is unavailable for 2022-23. The regional LEAMS score for this period has increased to 72, up from 66 in 2021-22.
65% of municipal waste recycled by 2030	50% by 2020	53.7%	50% by 2020	51.9%	50% by 2020	49.8%	50% by 2020	49.6%	 	Since 2017-18, the Council increased the overall rate of recycling by 3.5% to 49.6%. This however falls just below the 2020 target of 50%. Unlike the regional trend which experienced a slight increase between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the level of recycling in NMD reduced again during 2022-23 and the Council is placed 8/11 across Northern Ireland.
Level of compliance with sustainable development duty										The Council has made significant progress in addressing the impact of climate change locally. Through the Sustainability and Climate Change Forum, the implementation of the Council's Local Climate Action Plan is underway and the impact of Council operations on the climate is currently being reviewed. The Council is involved in several projects to increase the availability of EV charging points in residential areas, both as a member of the NI consortium and with a specific local initiative. This will result in a minimum of 20 new charging points across our district. The Council has also moved to eliminate, as far as possible single use plastic items from Council premises.






Performance Improvement Objective 3

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

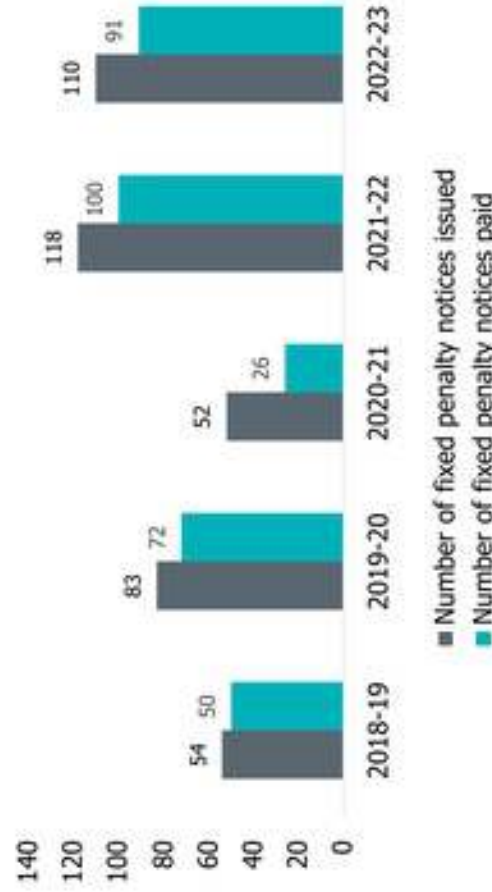
Key action	Status	Update
<p>Address issues around littering, fly tipping and dog fouling by: Implementing the Enforcement Improvement Plan.</p>		<p>Progress in implementing the Enforcement Improvement Plan is monitored and reported to the Sustainability and Environment Committee on a quarterly basis. Key achievements to date include 40,000 dog waste bags purchased to replenish the nine dispenser units erected since December 2021 across the District. and the 'Live Here Love Here' billboard campaign regarding dog fouling and anti-littering has been implemented across the District.</p>
<p>Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity campaigns and dog licenses.</p>		<p>During August 2022, the Council developed and delivered a social media campaign to encourage responsible dog ownership. This recorded an overall reach of 21,272 and engagement of 155. The Council has also included information on responsible dog ownership on dog licenses.</p>
<p>Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of fly tipping along the border area.</p>		<p>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council launched the public awareness campaign "Take it Home" with colleagues from Louth County Council between May and June 2022, to tackle the issue of littering and illegal dumping. The campaign featured a number of short videos featuring memorable messages relating to littering, illegal dumping and fixed penalties with the aim of raising awareness and driving the behaviour change we need across both Districts. The campaign ran across Facebook and Twitter, generating a reach of 26,268 and engagement of 338.</p>
<p>Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres.</p>		<p>Work is ongoing in relation to the review of Household Recycling Centres. The website and HRC site signage has been updated to provide clear guidance to residents on how to sort surplus recyclable waste. In January 2023 a booking</p>

		system was introduced to allow residents to access HRC sites in larger vehicles free of charge.	
Launch the 'mobile app' to enable officers to record incidents of environmental crime across the District.		The pilot mobile app has been renamed as the 'NMDDC Officer Waste Reporting App V1. The app was updated in August 2022 and is currently live with a total of 42 records stored within it.	
Support local community clean ups.		The Council supported 39 community clean ups at a range of locations across the District, including Newtownhamilton, Jonesborough, Grange and Cranfield, however it did not achieve its target number of clean ups during 2022-23.	
Promote the Keep NI Beautiful 'Live Here Love Here' campaign.		The Council continued to participate in the Keep NI Beautiful 'Live Here Love Here' campaign, and 10 grants, with a combined value of £13k were awarded towards local projects. During 2022-23 there were also 147 Adopt A Spots and 6 Healthy Ocean, Healthy Minds events, 'connecting people to blue spaces' carried out across the District.	

Measure of success	2021-22			2022-23		Status Trend	Explanatory Note
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Trend		
LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index)	64	64	64	Data unavailable			The Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) Cleaner Neighbourhoods Survey for 2022-23 was based on a reduced number of surveys of 397 transects and a reduced geographical spread which included samples from only four Council areas of which Newry, Mourne and Down was not one. Therefore, a LEAMS score is unavailable for 2022-23. The regional LEAMS score for this period has increased to 72, up from 66 in 2021-22.
Number of fixed penalty notices issued	83	52	118	110		 	Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 the number of illicit dumping incidents reported to Council increased by 6.3%, from 541 to 575 incidents, whilst the number of littering and dog fouling

Number of fixed penalty notices paid	72	26 (to date)	100	91	 	<p>incidents decreased significantly from 460 to 245 during this period, resulting in a reduction of 46.7%</p> <p>The number of fixed penalty notices decreased by 6.8% in the past year, from 118 in 2021-22 to 110 in 2022-23. 91 of the fixed penalty notices have been paid to date, accounting for 83% of the total issued.</p>
Number of community clean ups supported	94	33	94	39	 	<p>Through the Sustainability and Environment and Active and Healthy Communities Directorates, the Council actively supports clean ups which are carried out by local community groups and residents. Between 2018-19 and 2022-23, the Council supported 360 clean ups across the District, including 39 during 2022-23.</p>
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	34	24	18	10		<p>Since 2018-19, the Council has supported 113 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects, including 10 during 2022-23. Successful projects generally focus on a range of environmental themes including pollution solutions, biodiversity recovery, climate action, littering, dog fouling and community food growing initiatives.</p>

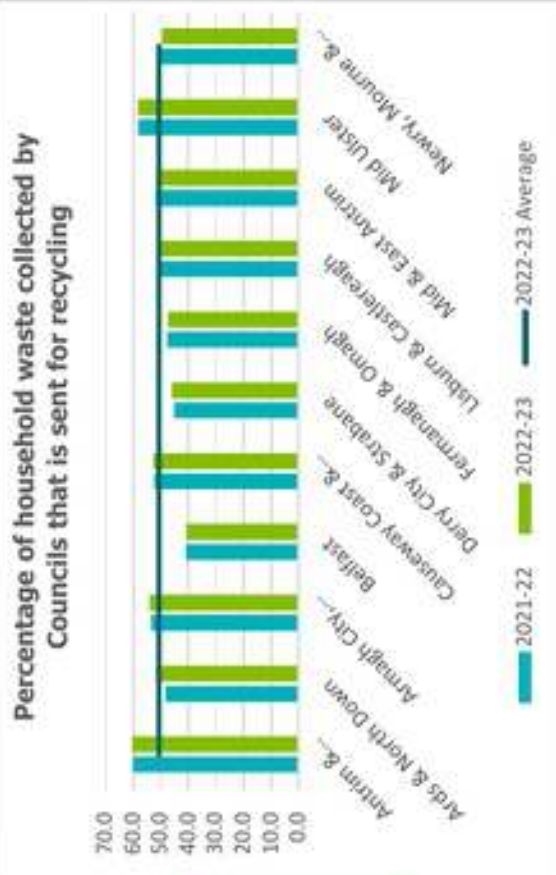
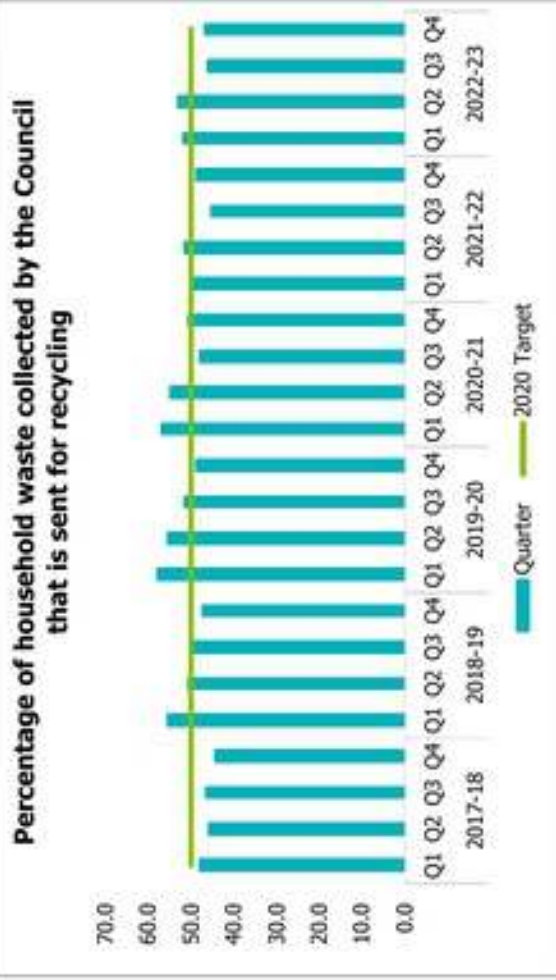
Number of fixed penalty notices issued and paid



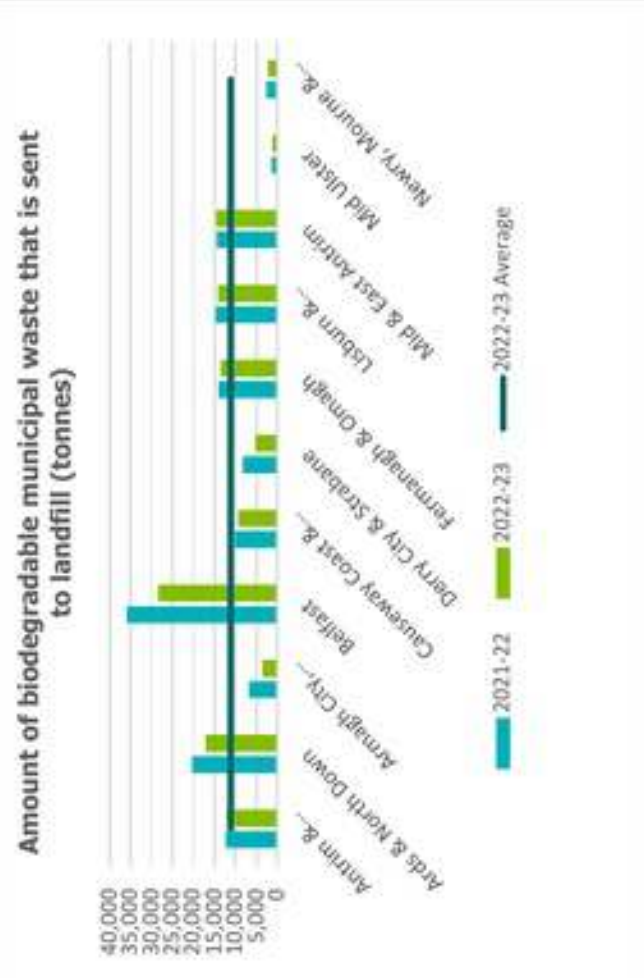
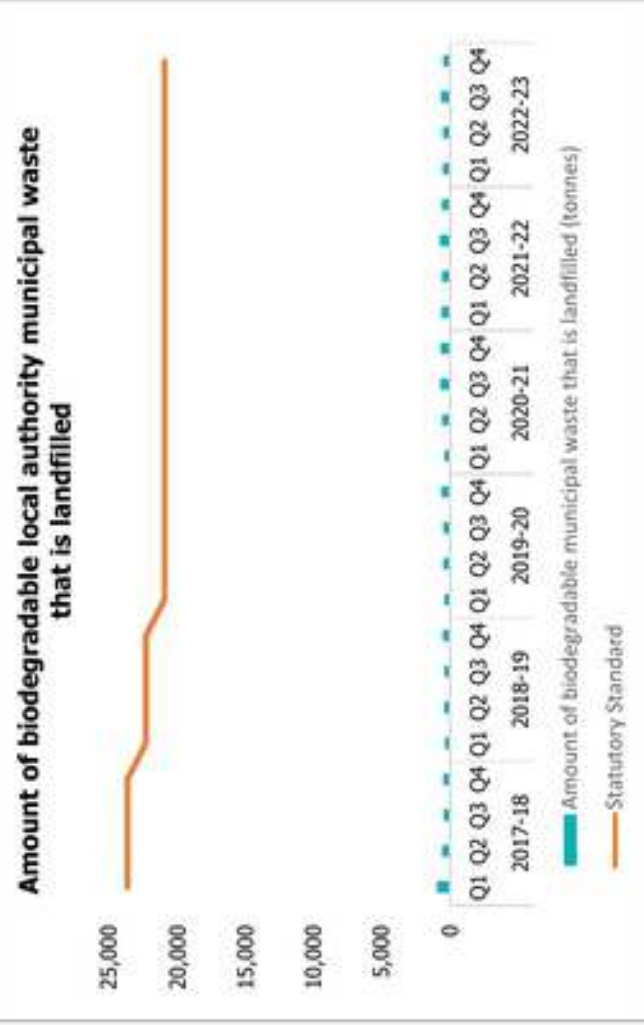
Number of community clean ups supported



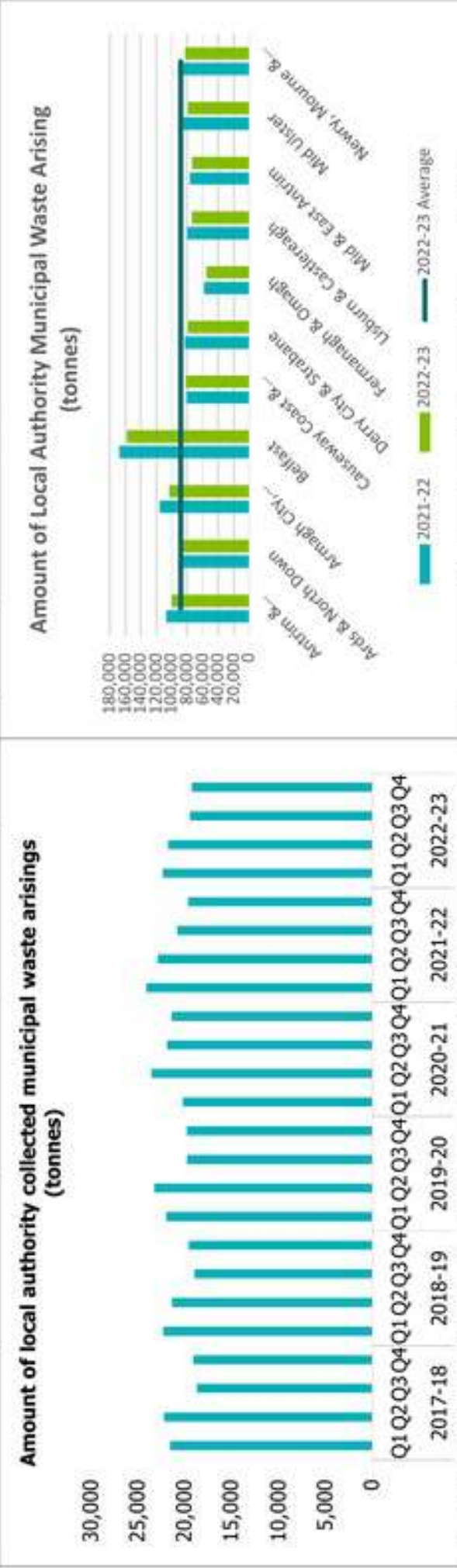
Measure of success	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		Status Trend	Explanatory note
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	50% by 2020	53.7%	50% by 2020	51.9%	50% by 2020	49.8%	50% by 2020	49.6%		Since 2017-18, the Council increased the overall rate of recycling by 3.5%, to 49.6%. This however falls below the 2020 target of 50%. It is also below the 2022-23 regional average of 50.7% and ranks the Council 8/11 across Northern Ireland. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the overall rate of recycling in the District reduced by 0.2%. This is against the regional upward trend over the past year with a 0.6% increase in the overall rate of recycling.



Measure of success	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		Status Trend	Explanatory note
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual		
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	<20,954	2,131t	<20,954	2,538t	<20,954	2,685t	<20,954	2,314t	😊 ⚠️	Since 2015-16, the amount of biodegradable local authority collected municipal waste that is sent to landfill reduced by 85.8%, to 2,314 tonnes, and the Council only used 11% of the 2019-20 Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme allowance**. This falls well below the 2022-23 regional average of 11,099 tonnes and ranks Newry, Mourne and Down 2/11 across Northern Ireland. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, Newry, Mourne and Down recorded a 13.8% decrease (371 tonnes) in the amount of waste that is sent to landfill.



Measure of success	Actual 2019-20	Actual 2020-21	Actual 2021-22	Actual 2022-23	Trend	Explanatory note
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	84,610t	86,900t	87,336t	82,729	▲	Since 2017-18, the amount of local authority collected municipal waste arisings has increased by 1.5% to 82,729 tonnes, which falls below the 2022-23 regional average of 88,386 tonnes. Newry, Mourne and Down is currently ranked 6/11 across Northern Ireland. 2022-23 has seen the first reduction in the amount of Local Authority Collected municipal waste collected since 2019-20, with a decrease of 5.3% experienced between 2021-22 and 2022-23



*The 2022-23 data in relation to the statutory performance indicators for waste management remains provisional, as the end of year data is currently being validated by DAERA, and will be published in Q3 2023-24. There are slight variances between the quarterly figures and the rolling 12 month figures, as outlined in the DAERA reports.

**The 2019-20 NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) target has been included as the Council awaits more up to date targets from DAERA





Community Planning Outcome

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities

Corporate Objective

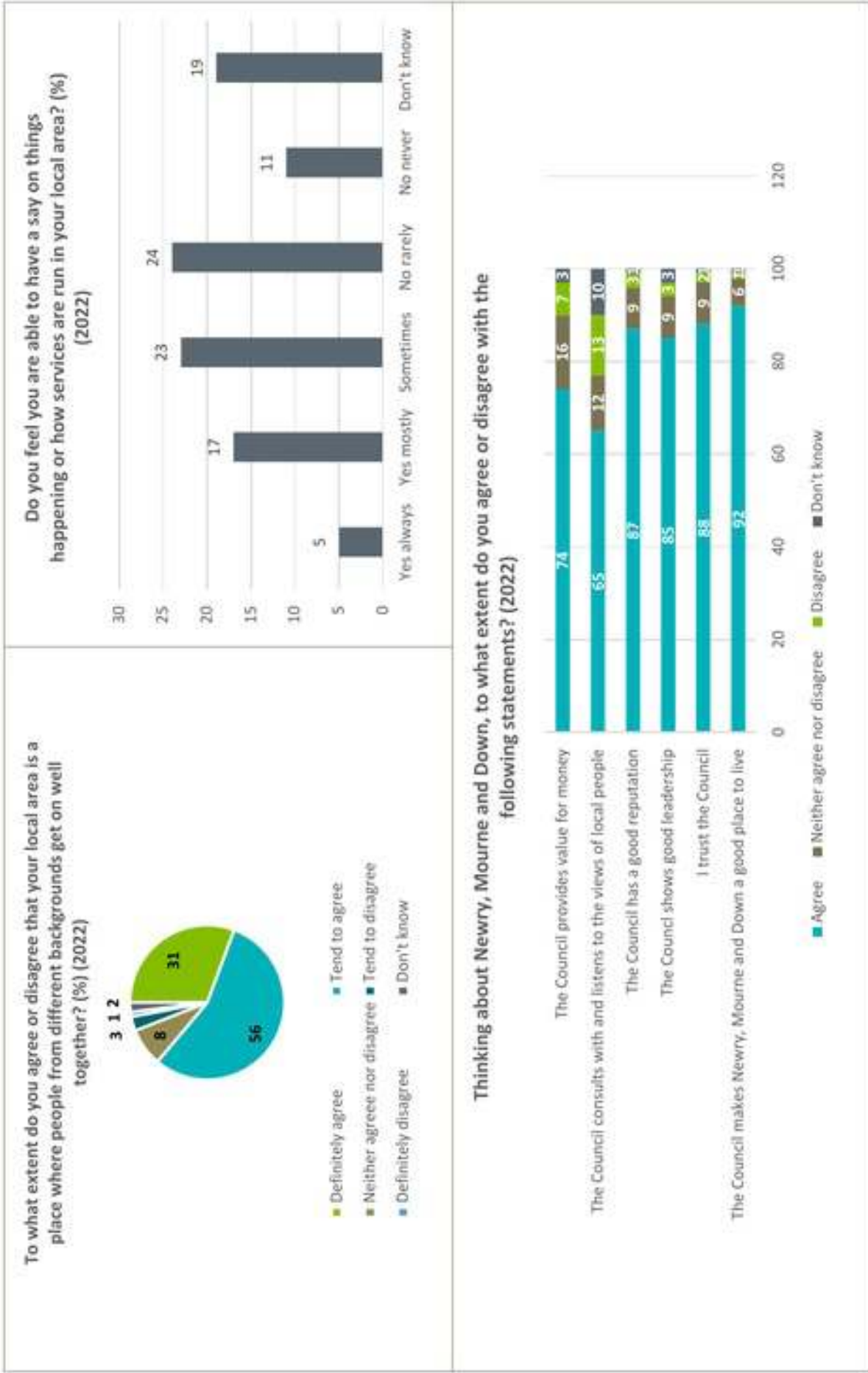
Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities

Key action	Status	Update
<p>Through the process of community planning provide opportunities for communities to have a voice in shaping local services and local areas.</p>		<p>Following the 2021-22 Participatory Budgeting scheme, the Community Planning Partnership hosted three PB celebration events across the District in May and June 2022. These events were for groups to showcase their projects which were funded through the Participatory Budgeting online vote.</p> <p>Speak NMD, the online engagement platform provides citizens with an opportunity to engage with members of the Newry, Mourne and Down Community Planning Partnership, the community and voluntary sector, and other local organisations on a range of current topics, issues and challenges facing the district.</p> <p>Currently the site has 13 live engagements across 10 projects ranging from community assets projects to economic development engagements. There are currently 610 active users of this platform (since November 2022).</p>
<p>Engage and involve partners and communities in</p>		<p>This work is ongoing. The Community Planning team facilitated a number of workshops to review the Community Plan. These workshops engaged all partners including the</p>

developing the district through the implementation of the Community Plan.		Strategic Stakeholder Forum, District Electoral Area Fora, Youth Council and Older Persons Fora. Subsequent to this an internal workshop was held with Council officers. The Partnership has agreed to host a Health and Wellbeing Thematic Summit to review the health and wellbeing activity within the partnership and this is scheduled to take place in Q3 2023-24.
Develop and implement a Community Facilities Strategy.		A draft Community Facilities Strategy has now been developed and will go out for a 12 week consultation in Q2 2023-24.
Promote sustainable and empowered communities through the implementation of the Council Financial Assistance Scheme.		The Council remains committed to investing in the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance (FA) scheme. Since 2015 the Council has awarded £9.5m to 3,061 successful applicants. In 2022-23, 67% of financial assistance applicants were successful with 366 projects benefitting from the Financial Assistance scheme.






Measure of Success	2018 Actual	2022 Actual	Status	Explanatory Note
Percentage of residents who agree that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together	72%	87%	 	In September 2018 and again in September 2022, the Council commissioned a Residents Survey to establish and track a robust and reliable evidence base in relation to resident perceptions about their local area, the performance of the Council and key priorities for improvement in the future. A representative sample of 764 residents were surveyed and revealed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87% agree that the area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, representing a significant increase on the 2018 figure of 72%.
Percentage of residents who agree that the Council consults with and listens to the views of local people	62%	65%	 	

<p>Percentage of residents who feel that they can have a say on how services are delivered in their local area</p>	<p>59%</p>	<p>45%</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% agree that the Council consults with and listens to the views of local people, which is an increase of 3% on the 2018 figure of 62%. The percentage of residents that disagree with this statement however has increased from 11% to 13% during the four year period. 45% feel that they can have a say on how services are delivered in their local area. This represents a significant decrease from the 59% recorded in 2018. <p>Feedback and comparative analysis from the two Residents Survey will be used to inform the development of future plans and strategies, including the Corporate Plan and Performance Improvement Plan.</p>
<p>Measure of Success</p>		<p>2021-22 Actual</p>	<p>Status</p>	<p>Explanatory Note</p>
<p>Number and percentage of financial assistance projects funded and successfully delivered</p>	<p>68.8%</p>	<p>59.4% (366 projects awarded with 330 successfully delivered)</p>		<p>Since 2015-16, the Council has awarded £9.5m to 3,061 successful applications through the Financial Assistance Scheme. This includes £1,255,092.10 being awarded to 366 projects across 22 thematic areas during 2022-23, with the most popular themes being 'community engagement', 'community events and festivals' and 'summer schemes'. Overall, 67% of applications received were successful with 59.4% awarded funding.</p>



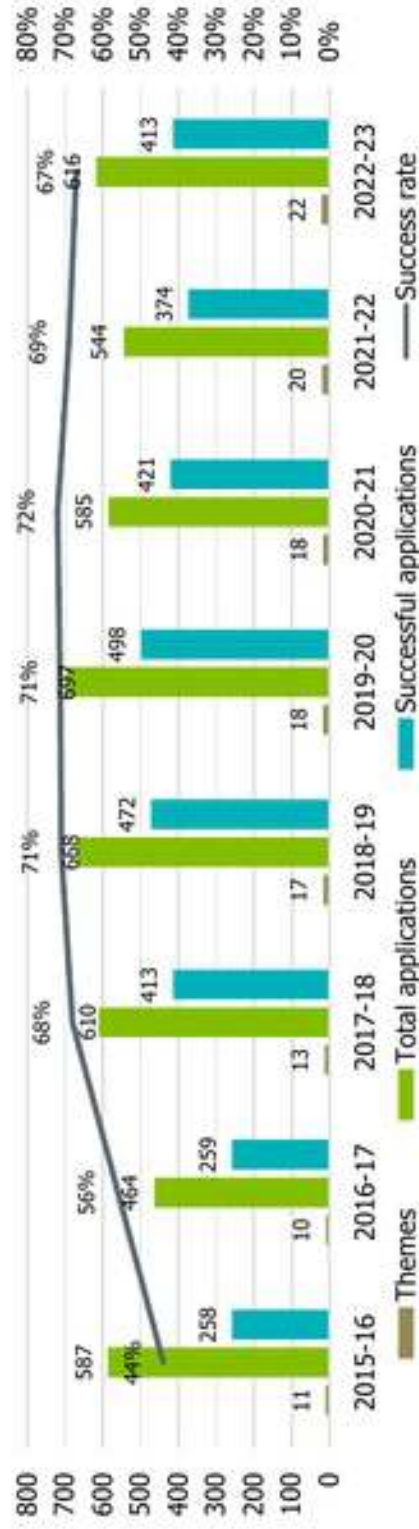
Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme

Key action	Status	Update
Launch 3 financial assistance calls across a minimum of 19 thematic areas to support the delivery of community led projects.		The Council launched three financial assistance calls across 22 thematic areas and awarded £1.26m awarded to 366 projects.
Continue to promote and roll out the Electronic Grant Management System.		The Council has successfully promoted the Electronic Grant Management System to applicants and all applications and claims are now received and processed through the online platform. A recent survey on the Financial Assistance Scheme revealed that 99% of applicants are satisfied with the support received from the Programmes Unit.
Deliver online training and capacity building to support local voluntary and community groups in applying for financial assistance with an emphasis on themes with lower success rates.	 	During 2022-23, 208 participants took part in five capacity building sessions plus a further 53 participants took part in procurement training. Overall, there were 256,025 beneficiaries of the Financial Assistance Scheme and 49,347 volunteer hours recorded to deliver the projects funded.
Promote the online training module to potential applicants, including those who were unsuccessful in 2021-22.		Over 125 views of the online training module took place during 2022-23 which was published on the corporate website.

Measure of success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Trend	Explanatory Note
% of successful financial assistance applications	71%	72%	68.8%	67%	😊 ⚠️	The overall success rate of applications to the Council's Financial Assistance Scheme improved from 44% in 2015-16 to 67% in 2022-23. In 2022-23, 616 applications were made to the Financial Assistance scheme, of which 413 were successful. Of those, 366 applications were awarded £1,255,092.10 in total. Council implemented the 'score and rank' process during this scheme.
% of financial assistance applications funded	71%	64%	68.8%	59.4%	⚠️	Significant shortfalls between the amount of funding available and requested were recorded particularly under 'defibrillators', 'sports development minor capital items', 'sports facilities capital' and the 'jubilee'


Financial Assistance applications received v success rate







Corporate Plan 2021-23: Self imposed performance indicators


Corporate Objective

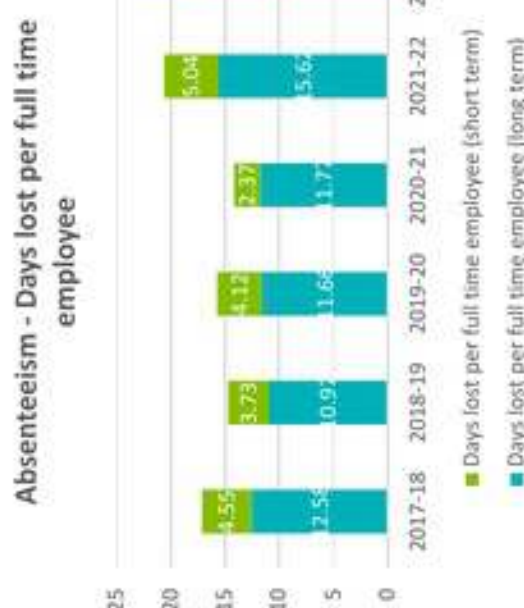
Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Key action	Status	Update
<p>Introduce new, efficient and innovative ways to transform and improve the way we plan, manage and deliver services.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the 1 June 2022 the former system for paying invoices was discontinued and the Pecos and Multiquote systems are now embedded and operational within Council processes. • The CMT working groups are still operational and are providing updates to the Senior Management Team on a regular basis. Some of the key milestones to date include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Customer engagement charter has been developed along with a series of broad service standards. - An Agile Working Policy came into effect in July 2022 - A business case was developed for an EDRMS system in February 2023 and has been submitted for internal consideration. • A mandatory Complaints Handling Procedure developed by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman will be implemented by Council by 1st January 2024. A Complaints Tracker has been developed by Council on Sharepoint to compliment the new Procedure. The Tracker monitors complaints from receipt to completion. It provides management information for internal and external reporting purpose. This allows officers, Councillors and the general public to map response times and volume of complaints. The statistics generated by the Tracker assist in identifying learning and service improvements.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online property certificates service is now provided by Council. A publicity campaign was carried out to promote the service which has since seen the number of solicitors signing up to the service increase from 65% to 95%. • The Council continues to support the development of a new corporate administration model. • A new performance management system was tendered for in February 2023 with an implementation date of November 2023 agreed. <p>The Council continues to identify and introduce new ways to transform local services.</p>
<p>Develop a robust and reliable evidence base to inform decision making, policy development and service provision.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2022-23, a number of surveys were carried out, with the results being analysed for a range of internal and external stakeholders. These include the PeacePlus Residents Engagement survey, staff consultation on the new Corporate Plan including online surveys and focus groups and a museum service provision survey. • During 2022 a second comprehensive Residents Survey was conducted across the District. This survey used stratified sampling, including age, gender, geography ect. to ensure responses were representative and reflective of the Council's population. The survey sought residents views on service provision, emerging priorities within the District as well as gathering key data around health and wellbeing issues. This information will underpin the new Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and Business and Service Plans which sets the strategic direction of the Council. • The review of current indicators within the Community Plan is complete and agreed by the Community Planning Partnership and will be aligned to the indicators within the Programme for Government when it is published. <p>The Council continues to adopt an evidence based and performance led approach to decision-making, policy development and service provision.</p>
<p>Effectively manage performance and align individual contribution</p>		<p>The Council continues to mainstream and embed the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. During 2022-23, Service Plans were</p>

with corporate objectives and better outcomes for all.		developed for all departments and People Perform Grow was extended to employees at tier 5 and above. Through Service Plans and People Perform Grow, the Council is demonstrating the alignment across the hierarchy of plans in place and the significant contribution of employees in achieving the corporate objectives and better outcomes for all.
Support elected members in their leadership role.		<p>The Council continues to support Elected Members in their leadership role, by offering training and development programmes across a range of themes, including Suicide Awareness and Prevention and Dementia Awareness. Elected Members also attended conferences organised by NILGA, National Association of Councillors and APSE.</p> <p>The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson have a designated resource within the Council to support them in fulfilling their role(s) as First Citizen(s). The Chairperson hosted 34 civic receptions and attended 387 official events across the District, including Civic Awards and Civic Recognition Awards for sporting and community groups and illuminating Council buildings and mentoring groups to recognise 'Organ Donation Week', 'Recycle Week' and 'Childhood Cancer Awareness Month' as well as many others. The Chairperson also hosted a Charity Ball which raised over £20,000 of vital funds for four exceptional charities that work right at the heart of the community; including The Southern Area Hospice, Society of Saint Vincent De Paul, Suicide Down to Zero and the Simon Community.</p>
Implement a new neighbourhood model of providing cleansing and maintenance services.		A new District Cleansing service model was agreed in Q2 2022-23. A business case has been approved for additional fleet however resourcing remains an issue which has delayed the implementation of the new service model.

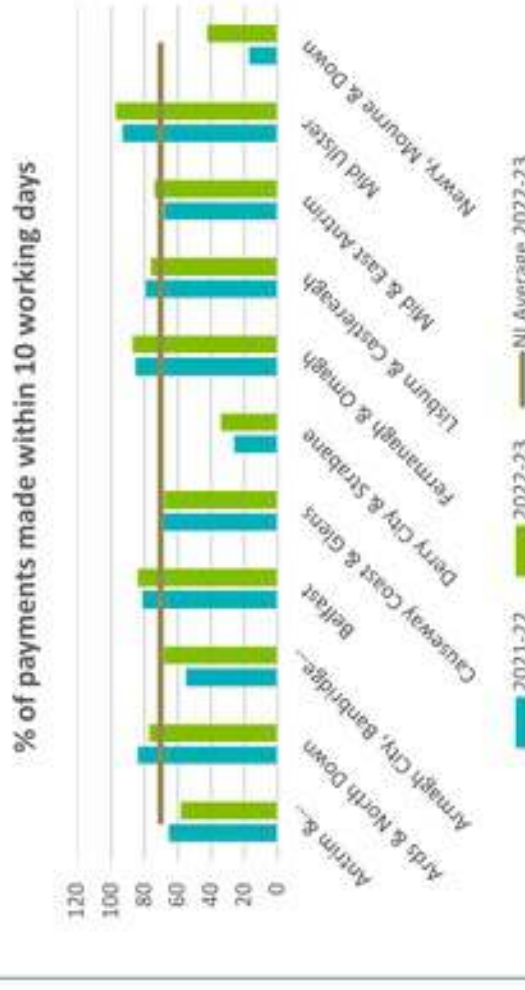
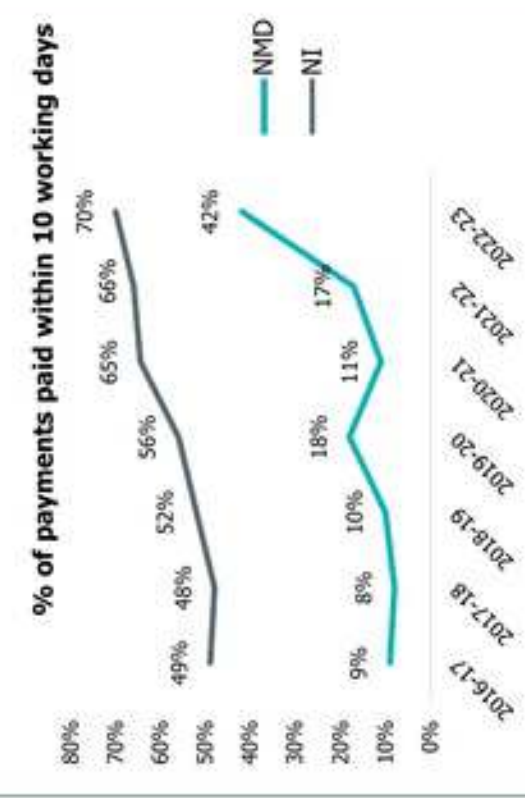
Measure of Success	Status Trend	Explanatory Note
Increased citizen satisfaction		<p>The 2022 Residents Survey revealed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88% are satisfied with the Council overall, an increase of 1% on the 87% figure recorded in 2018. • 92% agree that the Council helps to make Newry, Mourne and Down a good place to live, an increase of 17% on the 75% recorded in 2018. • 88% trust the Council, an increase of 15% on the 73% recorded in 2018. • 74% believe the Council provides good value for money, which is above the GB average of 51% and is an increase of 13% on the 61% recorded in 2018.
Compliance with Duty of Improvement		<p>The certificate of Compliance was received from the Local Government Auditor in relation to the Duty of Improvement 2021-22. The Council is currently progressing the implementation of the 'proposals for improvement' which were put forward by the NI Audit Office, to help improve the arrangements in place to secure continuous improvement and facilitate a performance improvement culture.</p>
Level of absenteeism		<p>During 2022-23, Newry, Mourne and Down recorded 23.26 days lost per full time employee. This represents an increase from 20.66 days in 2021-22, particularly in relation to long term absence, which increased from 15.62 to 18.24 days per employee and is the highest level of long-term absence recorded since 2015-16. Short-term absence decreased marginally from 5.04 days in 2021-22 to 5.02 days in 2022-23. 39.1% of the workforce (407 employees) had no recorded absence during 2022-23, however this represents a decrease when compared to the 42.2% of employees with no recorded absence in 2021-22. This increase in long term absenteeism may partly be attributed to the significant rise in the number of absences relating to stress, depression, anxiety, mental health and fatigue recorded in 2022-23 and may also have contributed to the decrease in the number of the workforce with no recorded absence.</p>
Percentage of payments paid:		<p>Emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council has again made progress in the percentage of payments paid within 10 working days, increasing from 11% in 2020-21 to 17% in 2021-22. This has now increased to 42% in 2022-23 however it</p>

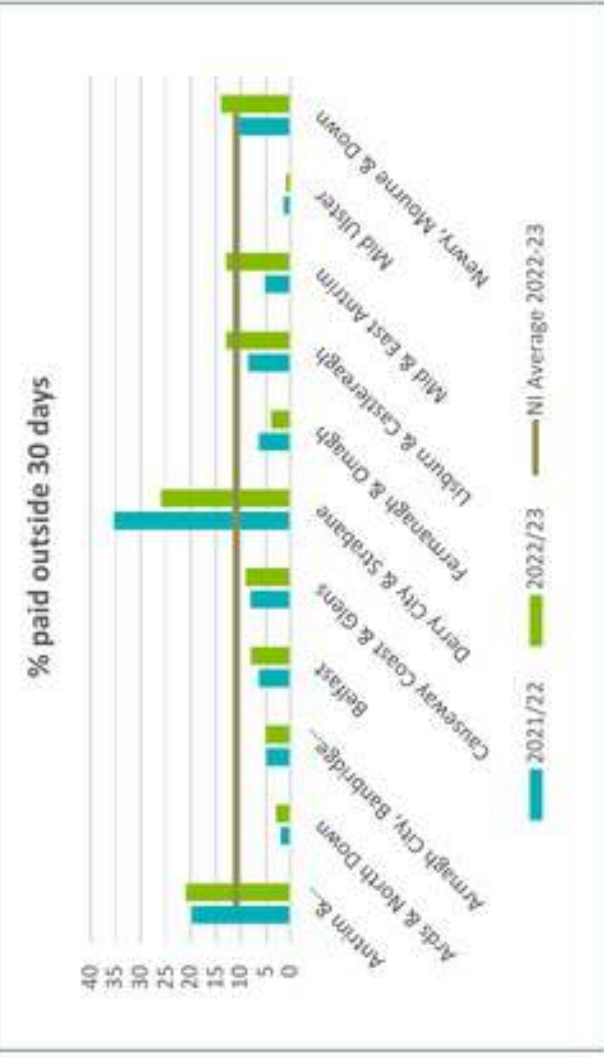
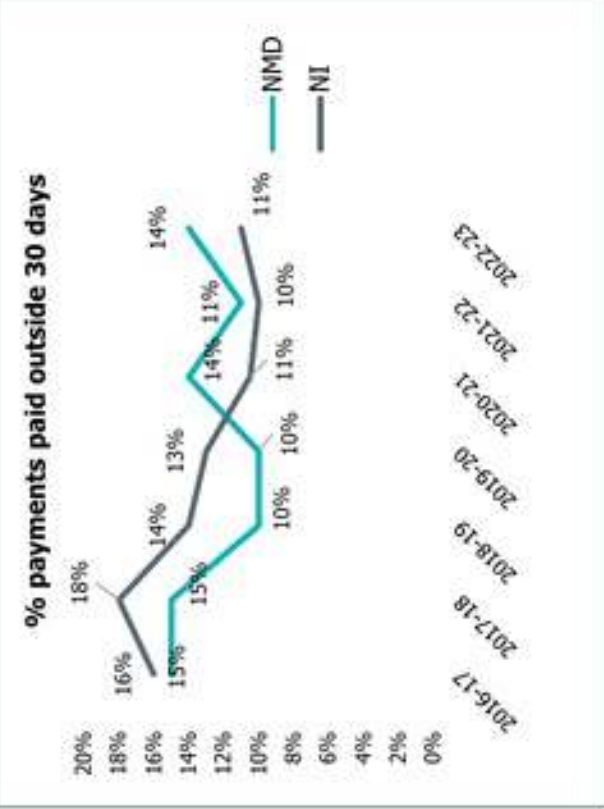
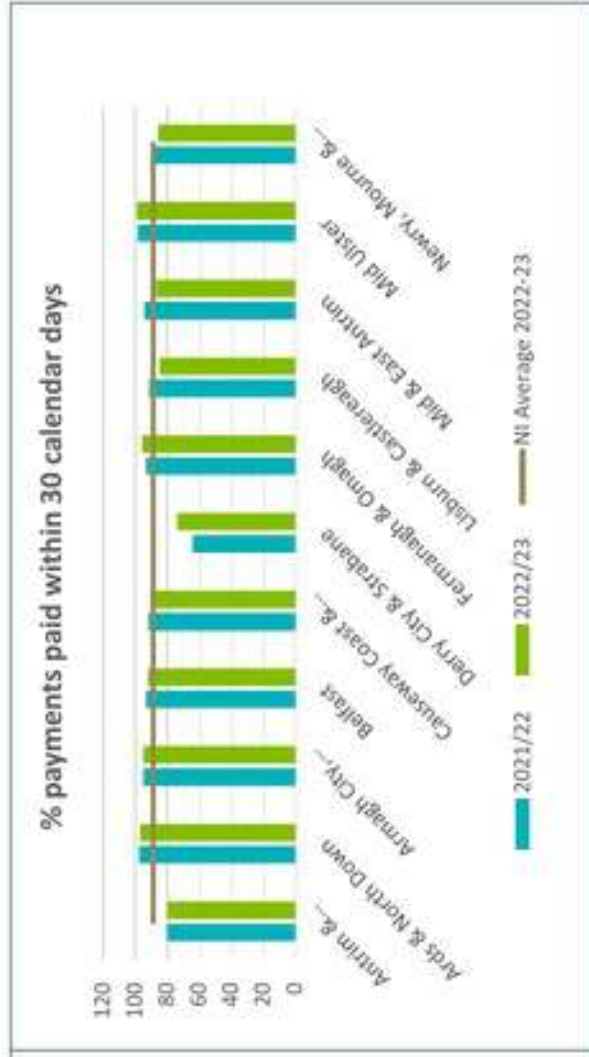
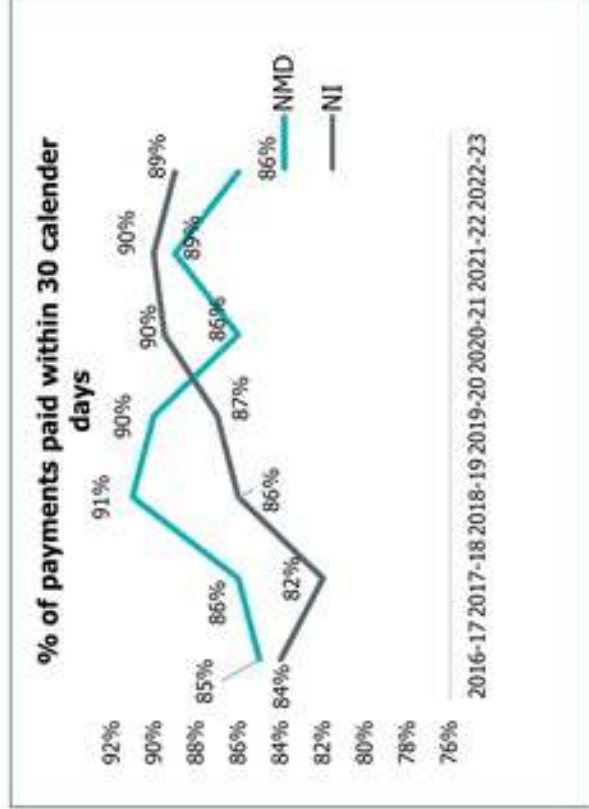


remains one of the lowest across all regional councils ranking NMD 10/11 across Northern Ireland. A slight decrease has been recorded in the number of payments made within 30 calendar days falling from 89% in 2021-22 to 86% in 2022-23. This is below the NI average of 89% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days and ranks Newry, Mourne and Down 9/11 across Northern Ireland. The percentage of payments paid outside 30 days has also seen a slight decline, increasing from 11% in 2021-22 to 14% in 2022-23. This is above the regional average of 11% for payments paid outside 30 days with the Council ranked 9/11 across Northern Ireland.

Although improvements have been made, particularly in relation to the percentage of payments made within 10 working days it should be noted that the new PECOS system which was introduced during 2021-22, has had an impact on the payment of invoices as it continued to become embedded during 2022-23.



Within 10 working days	▲
Within 30 calendar days	▲
Outside 30 calendar days	▲







Corporate Objective

Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District



Key action	Status	Update
<p>Work with partners to implement the Community Plan and deliver better outcomes/improve the quality of life for all.</p>		<p>The Community Planning team facilitated a number of workshops to review the Community Plan. These workshops engaged all partners including the Strategic Stakeholder Forum, DEA Fora, Youth Council and Older Persons Fora. Subsequent to this an internal workshop was held with Council officers.</p> <p>The key priorities that were worked on in 2022-23 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Voice (Youth Council and Conference) • Community Support Partnerships • Sustainable Food Partnership • Labour Market Partnership <p>The Community Co-Ordination Hub and Strategic Stakeholder Forum continue to meet to address emerging social needs.</p> <p>DEA Fora has also contributed to the delivery of the Community Plan outcomes by delivering numerous cross community events and programmes, provision of warm spaces across the District, Community reimaging projects; health and wellbeing awareness raising, and representing Council at local partnerships.</p>
<p>Support elected members in their advocacy role around key local actions.</p>		<p>Elected members are supported in their advocacy roles through the DEA officers who work together with their DEA fora members to identify key local actions relevant to communities and implement programmes, activities and projects that aim to benefit residents and communities.</p>





Measure of Success	Status	Explanatory note
Compliance with the duty of community planning / monitor delivery of outcomes with partners		During 2022-23, the Council continued to comply with the statutory duty of community planning. The Community Planning Partnership met three times during the past year as well as a half day workshop in January 2023. Preparation work has begun on a Community Plan review however this has been delayed due to resourcing issues.
Percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live		The 2022 Residents Survey revealed that 91% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, which is well above the GB average of 81% and is an increase of 1% on the figure recorded in the 2018 Residents Survey. 99% of residents in the Slieve Croob DEA are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, compared to just 59% in the Newry DEA. Older residents are also more likely to be satisfied with their local area as a place to live than younger residents. The top perceived problems identified by residents are dog mess and fouling and rubbish or litter lying around.

Performance Improvement Objective 5

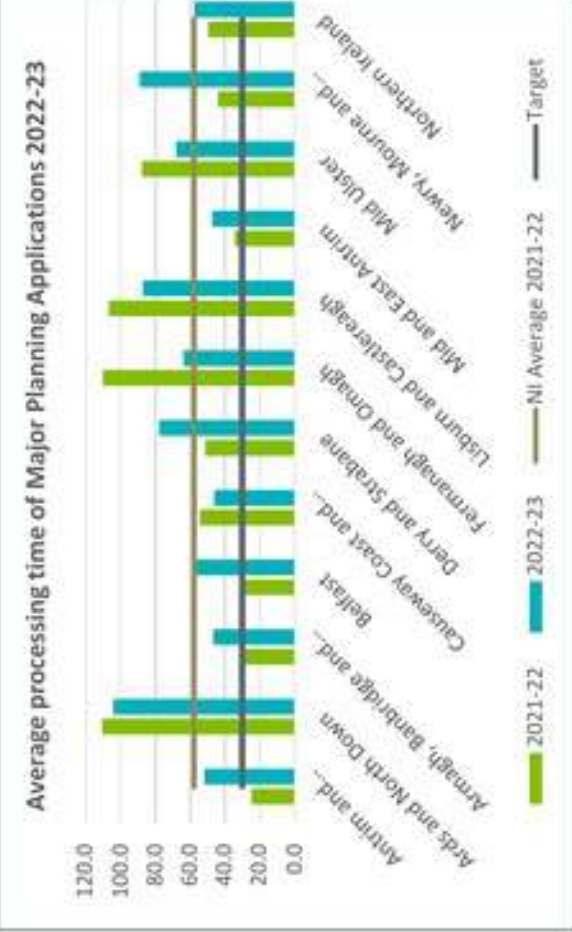
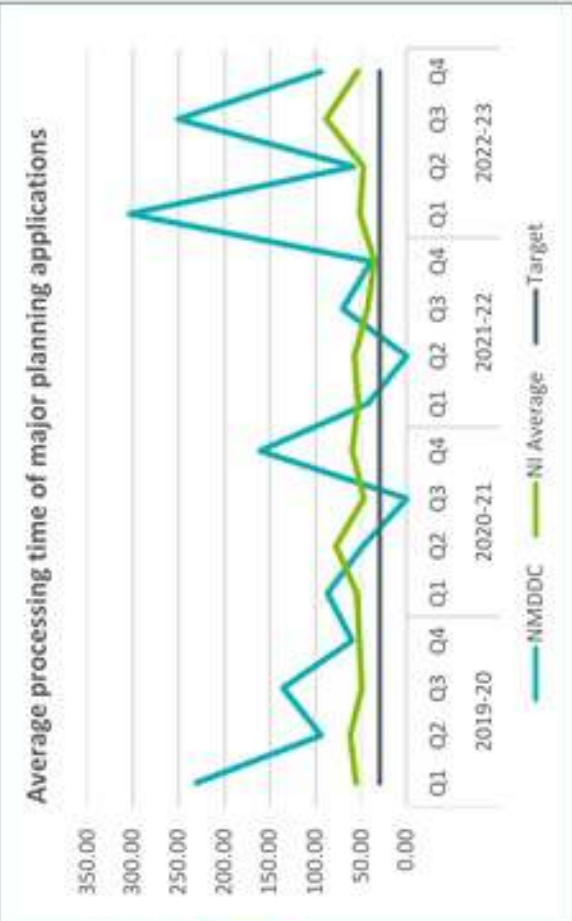
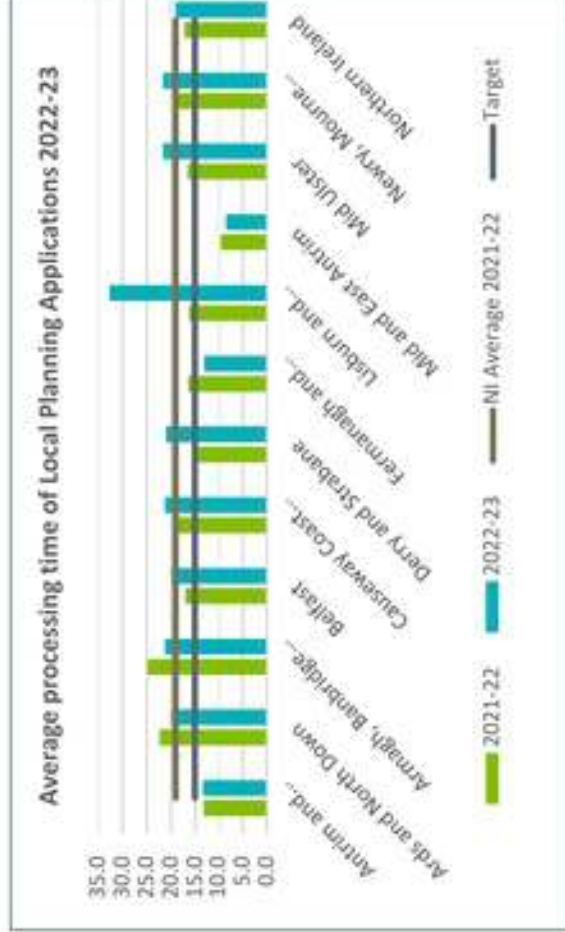
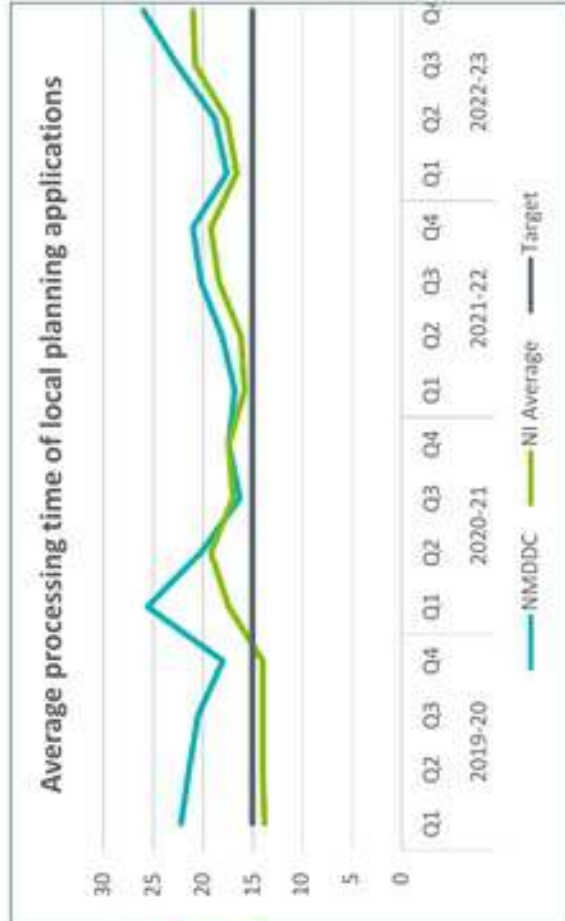
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme

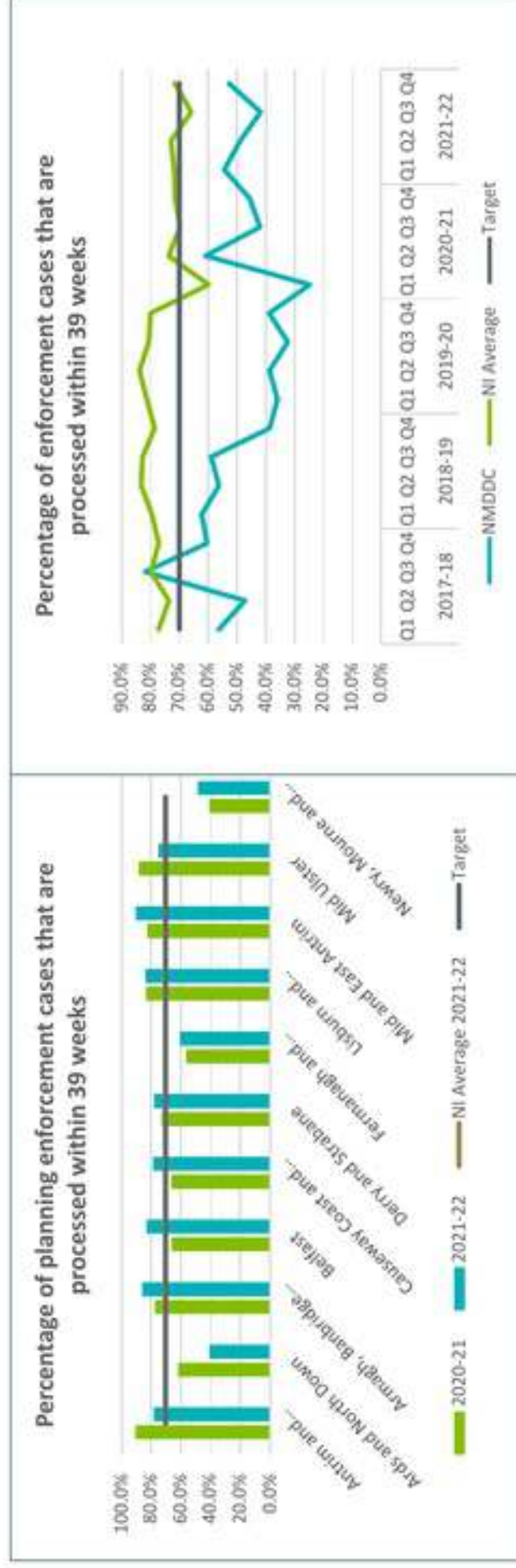
Key action	Status	Update
Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months.		The number of live planning applications which have been in the system for 12 months or more increased by 21.9% between 2021-22 and 2022-23 and the number of enforcement cases in the system for 12 months or more also increased, by 6.6% during this same period. Whilst the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system for over 12 months remains high the Council is committed to continuing to reduce these figures.
Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted.		This work is ongoing and is being assisted with the live regional planning portal which facilitates an online application process.

Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'.		Continuous improvement progresses in this area and a review of departmental service structures is underway. The introduction of the new planning portal has further assisted and supported employees to deliver service improvements.
Effectively implement the new electronic planning system		The new portal is live, and Council is working with agents and architects to review and improve system performance.

Measure of success	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Status Trend	Explanatory Note
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	20.6	19	18.8	21.6	 	During 2022-23, Newry, Mourne and Down received 1,471 local planning applications which is the highest across Northern Ireland but represents a 15.3% decrease when compared to 2021-22. The processing time for local planning applications increased from 18.8 weeks in 2021-22 to 21.6 weeks in 2022-23 which is above the regional average of 19 weeks and exceeds the statutory standard of <15 weeks. Newry, Mourne and Down processed 28.3% of local planning applications within the statutory standard for 2022-23, a decrease of 6.5% compared to 2021-22. The Council is currently ranked joint 10/11 across Northern Ireland for processing local planning applications.
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	94	64.6	44.3	89.0	 	During 2022-23, Newry, Mourne and Down received 7 major planning applications, one less application when compared to 2021-22. The processing time for major planning applications increased from 44.3 weeks in 2021-22 to 89 weeks in 2022-23 which was the highest increase in processing times across all 11 Councils. It is above the regional average of 57.8 weeks and still exceeds the statutory standard of <30 weeks. 9.1% of major planning applications were processed within the statutory standard, ranking the Council 11/11 across Northern Ireland.
Percentage of planning enforcement cases	36.2%	40.9%	48.5%	Data unavailable		The number of enforcement cases concluded and corresponding processing times (statutory target) is not presented in the Northern Ireland planning statistics 2022/23 annual statistical tables. The information will be published at a later date.

progressed within 39 weeks								
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more	183	195	187	228		▽		Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more increased by 21.9%, from 187 in 2021-22 to 228 in 2022-23. Currently NMD has the 5 th highest number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more across Northern Ireland which is a one place improvement on the 2021-22 ranking.
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less	685	857	871	934		▽		Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less increased by 7.2%. Newry, Mourne and Down currently has the highest number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less across Northern Ireland.
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more	620	546	472	503		▽		Since 2019-20 there has been a decrease of nearly 19% in the number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more in Newry, Mourne and Down. However, between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the number of enforcement cases in the system for 12 months or more increased by 6.6%. Newry, Mourne and Down currently has the highest number of live enforcement cases in the system (708) across Northern Ireland, 48.6% of which have been in the system for two years or more.





In addition to the performance measures within the Corporate Plan, the Council continues to develop and agree suites of self imposed performance measures at all levels of the organisation, in line with the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. This is evidenced through the:

- Agreed suites of performance measures within Directorate Business Plans.
- Agreed suites of performance indicators for Arts and Heritage, Building Control, Corporate Services, Community Development, Economic Development, Environmental Health, Environmental Services, Leisure and Planning, through the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE).

As the Council's performance management arrangements continue to mature and embed, the self-imposed performance indicators will be used to manage performance at all levels of the organisation, thereby facilitating a performance improvement culture and delivering sustainable improvements for local communities.




Appendix 1: Progressing the 'proposals for improvement'

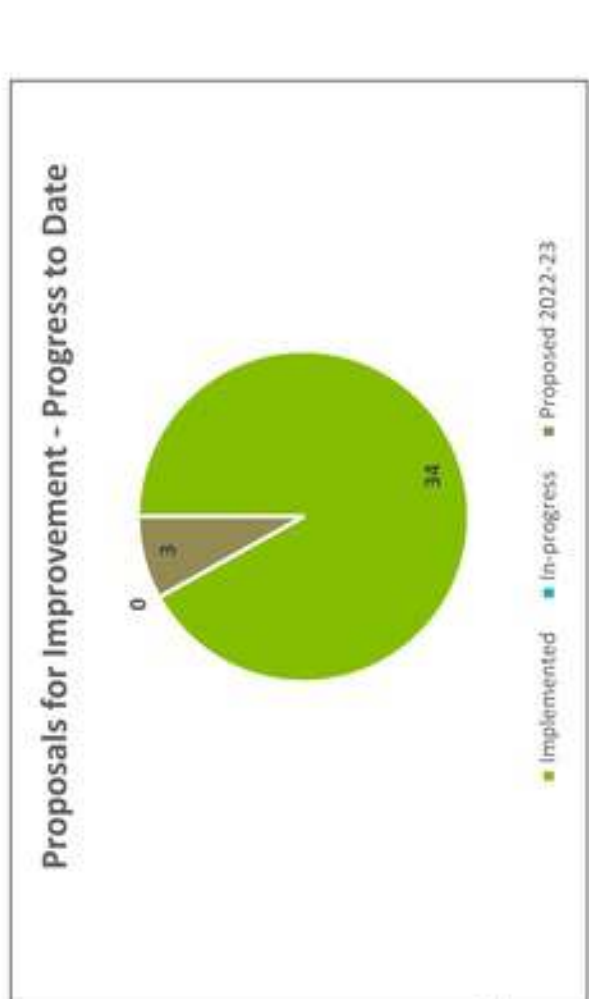
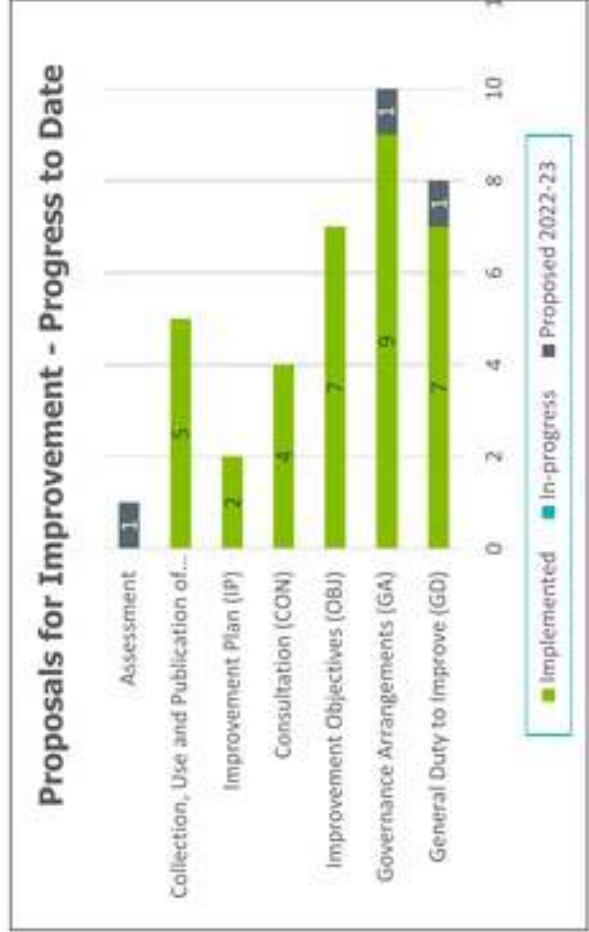
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Performance Audit and Assessments: Proposals for Improvement - Progress Report

For the past five years, the Local Government Auditor has put forward 'proposals for improvement' as part of the annual Performance Audit and Assessments which are carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. The purpose of the 'proposals for improvement' is to support the Council in putting in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. The 'proposals for improvement' are categorised under the seven themes outlined below. This report provides an overview of progress to date in implementing the 'proposals for improvement', using the following legend. It should be noted that the implementation of a number of 'proposals for improvement' has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Themes:

1. General duty to improve
2. Governance arrangements
3. Improvement objectives
4. Consultation
5. Improvement Plan
6. Arrangements to improve
7. Collection, use and publication of performance information

Legend	
Proposal implemented / on track to be implemented	
Proposal partially implemented / likely to be implemented	
Proposal not implemented	




THEME: Assessment

PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT: Council should consider enhancing transparency of the self-assessment report by providing more detailed narrative to allow the reader to better understand how Council has determined the ratings of the trends in performance. Furthermore, where there are downward trends in performance or the Council has assessed targets are not likely to be achieved, appropriate explanations should be included as to how Council intends to address this

The Residents Survey provides robust and reliable datasets for the Council to understand and track resident perceptions of the Council and its services. It is directly aligned to and influences the content of the Corporate Plan and PIP. Best practice indicates that Residents Surveys should be carried out every 3-4 years, as resident perceptions are unlikely to change on an annual basis, and the baseline data is therefore considered 'live' for this period of time. A legend is also provided in all performance reports indicating whether a target has been achieved/partially achieved or not achieved at all and where there has been an upward or downward trend in the figures year on year.



<p>PROGRESS TO DATE</p> <p>A second Residents survey was carried out in September 2022 which allows a comparative and trend analysis with the previous Residents Survey and provides clear transparency in how we are performing as a Council. A status and narrative is provided against every action and measure within the Assessment of Performance and where downward trends are experienced an explanation on how this has occurred is provided where possible.</p>	<p>THEME: General duty to improve</p> <p>PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT: An electronic performance management system would help to achieve long term continuous improvement as it would provide the basis for a more reliable system for identifying and monitoring improvements, as well as creating efficiencies in the process that could free up time to spend on value adding activities</p>	<p>Status</p> <p></p>
<p>Following the approval of the Outline Business case for an electronic performance system by the IT Projects Group in July 2022, a paper was taken to the Senior Management Team (SMT) to seek approval of this report and the recommendation contained within it to 'To commence with a procurement process for the implementation of a performance system'. This was agreed by SMT in December 2022 and in January 2023 a tender process was initiated with a 4 year licence for the system secured in February 2023. Due to the change in ownership and new contracts, the Council's legal and compliance team have been liaising with the team in Advanced to ensure all sides are happy with the content. A date for the implementation of the system has now been agreed for November 2023. In the interim, the Council continues to maintain and manage the excel based performance management system. This system provides an overview of around 200 performance indicators, highlighting trends over time and against target. The performance management system is available for all employees to access on the shared drive.</p>		
<p>PROGRESS TO DATE</p>		
<p>The Council has continued to embed the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, in order to facilitate the effective cascade of strategic objectives across the organisation. The Framework features within the Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and Directorate Business Plans, as well as the guidance for Service Plans and People Perform Grow, demonstrating how employees contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes and strategic objectives. The Performance Improvement Policy continues to provide the content for mainstreaming the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, and was updated in Q3 2022, in line with the 4 year policy review cycle.</p>		
<p>The Business Planning and Performance Management Cycle has also been updated to demonstrate the integrated timeline of activity required to strengthen the alignment across the Framework and facilitate the development, implementation and review of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan, Directorate Business Plans, Service Plans and People Perform Grow.</p>		

The monitoring, reporting and review arrangements at each level of the Framework continue to be mainstreamed and a standard, consistent approach has been developed for performance reporting, using the red/amber/green status. Performance reports are available to a range of stakeholders through the Council's website and Committee reporting arrangements.

Community Plan

The Community Planning team facilitated a number of workshops to review the Community Plan. These workshops engaged all partners including the Strategic Stakeholder Forum, District Electoral Area Fora, Youth Council and Older Persons Fora. Subsequent to this an internal workshop was held with Council officers. A review of the plan will be presented to the Community Planning Partnership in Q4 2023-24.

Corporate Plan

The implementation of the current Corporate Plan 2021-23 is nearing completion. The Council is finalising preparations for the Corporate Plan 2023-27, with an agreed timeline and key milestones to achieve. The implementation of the consultation and engagement programme is well underway, with the second Residents Survey for the District carried out in September 2022, involving a representative sample of residents across the District. The Residents Survey was supplemented by focus groups and workshops, which engaged key stakeholders in the process, particularly Elected Members, employees and the Senior and Corporate Management Teams. This robust and reliable quantitative and qualitative evidence base has been used to inform and influence the strategic objectives, key actions and measures of success within the emerging Corporate Plan.

Performance Improvement Plan

The Council published the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 ahead of the statutory deadline. Three of the performance improvement objectives, supporting actions and measures of success were carried forward from 2022-23. One of the objectives has been amended to reflect improvements achieved and where improvements are now required while another has seen significant progress and was deemed to have been delivered and has therefore been replaced. All were developed and updated in close liaison with officers, approved by the Senior Management Team and Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee, and subject to a public consultation process between March-May 2023.

Directorate Business Plans

Five Directorate Business Plans 2023-24 were developed and approved by the Senior Management Team and relevant Council Committee. Each Business Plan also includes objectives, key actions and measures for success, aligned to specific corporate objectives.

Each Directorate also undertook an assessment of their respective Business Plan 2022-23, which was also approved by the Senior Management Team and relevant Council Committee. Some Directorates are very proactive in engaging employees in reviewing and developing the Business Plan, organising workshops and business planning sessions.

Service Plans

During 2019-20, the Council agreed a corporate approach to developing and mainstreaming Service Plans, as a tool to enable departments to turn plans into action, monitor performance and strengthen the effective cascade of strategic objectives to departments, teams and employees. Service Plans were subsequently introduced in 2021-22 to provide an overview of the operational activity and key improvements that are planned for the year ahead, helping to ensure that teams and employees are working towards shared and agreed objectives. All departments developed a Service Plan during 2022-23, and some departments, particularly the Leisure and Sport Department were very proactive in engaging all employees in the development of the 2023-24 Service Plan.

Individual Performance

During 2019-20, the Council developed Individual Performance through the 'People Perform Grow' pilot, which seeks to align the contribution of employees to the corporate objectives and community planning outcomes, as demonstrated through the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, People Perform Grow was suspended and was subsequently launched during 2021-22 for tier four employees and above. During 2022-23, 'People, Perform, Grow' was rolled out to employees at tier 5. People Perform Grow templates link individual performance objectives with the relevant Service Plan, in order to strengthen the cascade of corporate objectives to all employees across the organisation. An e-learning module and brochure has also been developed to support the effective implementation of People Perform Grow, and performance management arrangements have been introduced, through the 'PPG Tracker', to monitor progress in employee participation in People Perform Grow. Progress is reported through the Corporate Performance Dashboard on a quarterly basis.

The Corporate Performance Dashboard continues to provide an overview of the overall organisational health of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, using a suite of statutory and self-imposed performance measures across a range of key functions. The Corporate Performance Dashboard is aligned to the objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and risks within the Corporate Risk Register. It provides a platform to monitor performance on a quarterly basis, identify areas of good performance, address areas of under-performance and secure continuous improvement in the delivery of key functions. The Corporate Performance Dashboard 2022-23 is made up of 18 performance measures, including the seven statutory performance indicators for economic development, waste

<p>management and planning. These performance measures may change on an annual basis and will continue to be aligned to specific organisational objectives, risks and areas for improvement.</p>	<p>THEME: Governance Arrangements</p> <p>PROPOSAL: The Council should consider using Internal Audit to review the performance improvement arrangements.</p>	<p>Status</p> 
<p>The Council views the annual audit carried out by NIAO around the current Performance Management arrangements to be more than sufficient. The Council recognises the value of engaging the Internal Audit function to identify and deliver improvements, specifically those which do not necessarily fall within the scope of NIAO audit, such as around data validation and monitoring. To this end, in 2018, an Internal Audit of the APSE PI's was carried out and all recommendations were implemented, and an Internal Audit of the Corporate Plan's Performance Indicators took place in Q4 2022-23. The Council have also agreed a 4 year Internal Audit plan in April 2023 with an audit of Performance included for two of those four years with an option to increase if deemed necessary.</p>		
<p>PROGRESS</p> <p>The Council worked with ASM to agree the Terms of Reference for an audit of specific measures of success within the Corporate Plan 2021-23 which took place in Q4 2022-23. The audit identified a number of improvements which could be incorporated within the Council's systems in relation to the performance measures in the 2021-23 Corporate Plan which are currently being looked at and implemented where possible, however based on the information they reviewed, they considered that the existing systems in place for recording and validating data for performance measures in the 2021-23 Corporate Plan were basically sound and provided a satisfactory level of assurance regarding the effective and efficient achievement of the Council's objectives. This process provides assurance that the necessary data collation processes are in place to ensure robust, reliable and accurate datasets are reported in the public domain, ahead of the publication of the new Corporate Plan 2023-27. Performance management training took place for members of the Audit Committee in January 2021, exploring the role of Elected Members in building high performing organisations. Performance and improvement is a standing item on the agenda of the quarterly Audit Committee meetings and has featured as a regular agenda item at the monthly Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meetings. In addition, all Standing Committees of Council consider performance information in relation to their specific functions on an ongoing basis, which is supplemented by the mid year and annual reviews of their respective Directorate Business Plan. Elected Members have also been actively engaged in identifying key local issues and informing the development of the Corporate Plan 2023-27 and Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.</p>		
<p>THEME: Improvement Objectives</p> <p>PROGRESS</p>		
<p>Status</p>		

In 2021-22, the Council adopted five performance improvement objectives, which were carried forward to 2022-23, and updated where appropriate. Three of the 2022-23 performance improvement objectives have been carried forward to 2023-24. One has changed focus to reflect current need and one has been deemed delivered and has been replaced with a new objective. These performance improvement objectives are based on set criteria and are aligned to the outcomes within the Programme for Government and Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down, as well as the strategic objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23. The five performance improvement objectives were endorsed through the public consultation and engagement process which was carried out during Q1 2023-24. These objectives are considered to be more specific, focused and measurable, and were approved by the Senior Management Team and Strategy Policy and Resources Committee in June 2023 and by the Audit Committee and Full Council in July 2023.

1. We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services.
2. We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs
3. We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents
4. We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change.
5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme

The NI Audit Office has confirmed that the performance improvement objectives carried over are legitimate, clear, robust, deliverable and demonstrable, covering a range of Council services that relate to improving Council functions or improving services for communities.

As part of the process to redefine the current suite of performance improvement objectives, the Council reviewed the 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success' which underpin each objective, in order to ensure they remain meaningful and that their achievement can demonstrate improvement. Where possible and appropriate, baseline data for each 'measure of success' has been included in the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24, to demonstrate performance trends over time and targets for improvement have also been agreed.

THEME: Consultation**PROGRESS**

The Council continues to implement a robust and inclusive consultation and engagement process in relation to the development of the annual performance improvement objectives. Overall, the 2023-24 consultation and engagement process resulted in 123 completed surveys and engagement with 27 stakeholders through Section 75 groups, including Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice, Cedar Foundation and Newry and Mourne Older People's Forum. This consultation and engagement process was launched through the NMD Speak online platform, publicised through public notices in local newspapers and supplemented by the 764 responses to the Residents Survey in 2022, and 581 respondents and participants to the Covid-19 survey in 2020. The majority of consultees agreed with the proposed performance improvement objectives 2023-24.

THEME: Improvement Plan**PROGRESS**

The Council published the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24 ahead of the revised statutory timescale of 30 September 2023. The Council has also published the summary document 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward', to provide a user friendly overview of retrospective performance during 2022-23 and the forward looking performance objectives for 2023-24.

THEME: Arrangements to Improve**PROGRESS**

The Council continues to progress, implement and embed its arrangements to achieve the objectives, key actions and measures of success within the Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan, Directorate Business Plans, Service Plans and People Perform Grow. The arrangements to deliver the performance improvement objectives continue to evolve and are supported by Objective Delivery Plans which provide a detailed overview of how the objectives and associated actions are managed, monitored and reported, under the direction of the Senior Responsible Officer.

THEME: Collection, Use and Publication of Performance Information**PROGRESS**

The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework demonstrates the alignment that exists between the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Directorate Business Plans, Service Plans and People Perform Grow. It has been supplemented by an agreed cycle of activity required to embed the Framework across the organisation. All elements of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework are currently being progressed and embedded across the organisation.

Status

In addition to the statutory performance indicators and standards, the Council has developed and agreed suites of self-imposed performance indicators which underpin the Corporate Plan, Performance Improvement Plan and Directorate Business Plans. These plans provide the strategic and operational context for the work of the organisation, and year on year progress against the indicators is monitored and reported through the annual Assessment of Performance, as well as the annual and bi-annual assessments of the Performance Improvement Plan and Directorate Business Plans. The Council has also developed Performance Profiles for each Directorate to present baseline performance information in a meaningful and consistent way, to facilitate a performance led approach to business planning and embed a culture of improvement.

The Council continues to form part of APSE Performance Networks and has collated benchmarking data across a range of services since 2016-17. This information has been analysed and reported to the Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team through the Performance Profiles as well as specific APSE Reports, ensuring a performance led approach to business planning, specifically in relation to Directorate Business Plans and Service Plans. An internal audit of APSE performance indicators was carried out by ASM in November 2018, in order to assess the reliability of the existing benchmarking arrangements and validate the accuracy and integrity of selected APSE performance indicators. The internal audit confirmed that the existing systems in place to validate performance indicators can provide satisfactory assurance regarding the effective and efficient achievement of the Council's objectives and all recommendations have now been implemented.

In November 2019, Newry, Mourne and Down was the first Council in the UK to undertake a full validation of all APSE performance indicators. The purpose of the validation was to assess the adequacy of the data collation processes and accuracy of performance information submitted. The outcome of the audit was broadly 'satisfactory' and the work is ongoing to provide additional assurances in relation to data accuracy and quality.

Through the Assessment of Performance, the Council continues to benchmark performance with other Councils, specifically in relation to economic development, planning, waste management and prompt payments. The Councils also compares year on year performance across a broad range of performance measures within the Corporate Plan and Performance Improvement Plan.

Appendix 2: The Golden Thread

NMD Community Planning Outcomes

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down get a good start in life and fulfil their potential

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality, sustainable environment

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities

NMDDC Corporate Objectives

Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement

Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District

Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities

Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities

Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills

Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities

Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage

Enhance, protect and promote our environment

NMDDC Performance Improvement Objectives

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

We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs

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

We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change

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

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Our Performance Looking Back, Going Forward



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 2022-23

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 2021-23**
- **Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23**
(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

Our District, Our Organisation, Our Performance



District

- Population: 182,074
- Households: 68,398
- 7 District Electoral Areas
- 41 Elected Members
- 1,000+ employees
- 88% of residents are satisfied with the Council

Community

- Life expectancy:**
Male: 78.9 years / Female: 82.7 years
- Age Profile:** 0-15 years: 22% / 65+ years: 17%
- 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
- 115 Neighbourhood Watch Schemes
- 18,407 food parcels delivered to vulnerable households
- £9.6m awarded through the Financial Assistance Scheme since 2015

Tourism

- Between 2018 and 2019:**
- 15% increase in visitor numbers, to 516,203
- 21% increase in visitor spend, to £83.7m
- Three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- 5 '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
- 225k recorded visits at community trails
- 226K recorded visits to Warrenpoint Municipal Park



Economy

- Employment rate (age 16 to 64): 68.5
- 9,175 VAT Registered Businesses
- 23% of the population aged 16 years and over have no qualifications
- 187 new jobs promoted through business start activity
- 359 businesses supported and 1,108 mentoring days delivered through economic development programmes



Environment

- Recycling is important to 91% of residents
- Top perceived problem for residents: Dog mess and fouling
- Recycling rate: 49.6%
- 360 community clean ups supported since 2018
- Second lowest level of waste to landfill across all NI Councils



Performance at a Glance

A snapshot of the past year

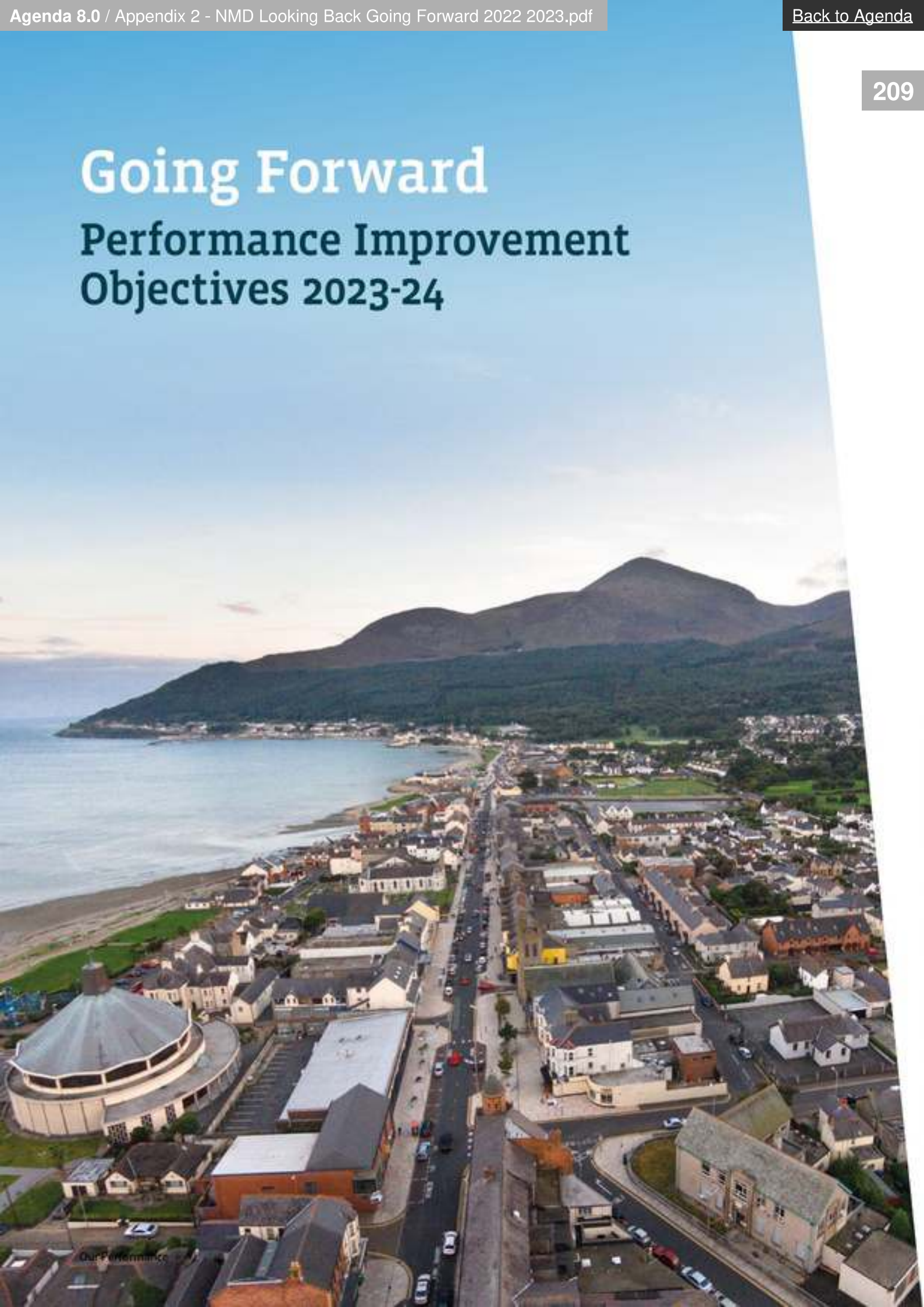
Performance Improvement Objective	Progress	Status Trend
 <p>We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces</p>	79.8% increase in recorded attendances at Council leisure centres	▲
	132% increase in recorded visits to Carlingford Lough Greenway	▲
	A further 6% increase in recorded visits at Warrenpoint Municipal Park bringing the total recorded visits to 226,153 in 2022-23.	▲
	6.6% increase in recorded visits at community trails	▲
	3 'blue flag' beaches and 5 'green flag' parks	😊
	83% of visitors are satisfied with the Council's forest parks	😊
	2 new play parks built and 2 play parks upgraded	😊
 <p>We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs</p>	187 new jobs promoted through business start activity	😊 ▼
	12 new social enterprise businesses supported and 12 new social enterprise jobs created	😊 ▶
	347 businesses supported and 187 jobs created through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales Accelerator' programmes	😊 ▼
	Increase in the number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses, birth rate of new businesses and employee jobs	😊
	'Make it Local' campaign rolled out	😊
 <p>We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents</p>	110 fixed penalty notices issued and 91 paid	😞 ▶
	39 community clean ups supported	😞 ▼
	Decrease in the rate of recycling, to 49.6%*	😞 ▶
	One of the lowest levels of waste sent to landfill across all NI Councils*	😊 ▲
	10 'Live Here, Love Here' environmental projects supported	▼
	Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out	😊

Performance Improvement Objective	Progress	Status Trend
 <p>We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme</p>	<p>£1.26m awarded to 366 projects across 22 thematic areas</p> <p>67% of applications to the financial assistance scheme were successful</p> <p>£524k awarded towards major and minor capital projects</p> <p>49,347 volunteers hours recorded to deliver projects and 256,025 beneficiaries of the scheme</p> <p>5 capacity building sessions delivered to 208 participants</p> <p>99% of applicants are satisfied with the support received from the Programmes Unit</p>	<p>😊</p> <p>😞▶</p> <p>😊</p> <p>😊</p> <p>😊</p> <p>😊</p>
 <p>We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme</p>	<p>The Council received and decided on the highest number of planning applications across the 11 Councils, approving the second highest number of cases regionally.</p> <p>The processing time for local planning applications increased from 18.8 weeks in 2021-22 to 21.6 weeks in 2022-23</p> <p>The processing time for major planning applications increased from 44.3 weeks in 2021-22 to 89 weeks in 2022-23</p> <p>The number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more increased from 187 in 2021-22 to 228 in 2022-23.</p> <p>The number of enforcement cases in the system for 12 months or more has increased from 472 in 2021-22 to 503 2022-23.</p>	<p>😊</p> <p>😞▼</p> <p>😞▼</p> <p>😞▼</p> <p>😞▼</p>

*The 2022-23 data in relation to the statutory performance indicators for waste management remains provisional, as the end of year validated data will be published by DAERA in Q3 2023-24.

Going Forward

Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24



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 local facilities and services

What you will see:

- Increase in the number of paid attendances at our six leisure centres to 750,000 by the end of 2023-24.
- Increase in the number of people participating in targeted health programmes to 9,400.
- Increase in the number of young people participating in targeted health and wellbeing initiatives to 20,000.
- Increase in the number of memberships being taken out to 9,750.
- 225,000 recorded visits to community trails.
- A number of new build and/or upgraded capital leisure projects progressed.
- 'Mystery Visitor' Programme implemented and baseline established.



Objective 2

We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs

What you will see:

- 300 business plans created for Start-Up businesses and employer enterprises
- 190 new Business / employer enterprises supported to start-up
- Support provided to 200 existing businesses to progress growth and scaling ambitions
- 155 new jobs promoted via business start-up activity.
- 12 social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 social enterprise jobs created
- More support for new and established local businesses and more employment opportunities across the District
- The economic recovery of Newry, Mourne and Down is underway, as the District becomes more economically active and prosperous



Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by 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 littering, dog fouling and illicit dumping
- Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites.
- Opportunities to engage in community clean ups and participate in the 'Live Here Love Here' campaign and 'Adopt a Spot' scheme
- Landfill and recycling targets are achieved
- A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride



Objective 4

We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change

What you will see:

- Development of a climate change and sustainable development strategy
- Development of a climate change adaptation plan
- Development of the new Newry, Mourne and Down Biodiversity Strategy (2023-2028)
- New trees planted
- Carbon footprint of Council estate established
- 20 new Council supported EV charging points installed
- Increase in the percentage of younger, less polluting vehicles within the Council fleet
- 10 new electric vehicles ordered for use within the Council fleet.
- 5 new public drinking water fountains erected.



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
- An empowered and motivated workforce
- Increased confidence in the Planning system
- 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 2023-24
- Assessment of Performance 2022-23

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

For more information, contact:

Performance and Improvement
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
O'Hagan House, Monaghan Row, Newry
Co Down, BT35 8DJ

0300 013 2233
performance@nmandd.org

T: 0330 137 4000
info@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

Oifig an Iúir
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road
Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

 /nmdcouncil
 @nmdcouncil

Report to:	SP&R Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 September 2023
Subject:	Sustainability Section Update
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Brian Rankin, Head of Service - Sustainability

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	For noting only	X
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>This Report had been presented to the Sustainability & Environment Committee on 22 August 2023.</p> <p>This Report is also being presented to the SP&R Committee to provide an update on the work being carried out by the Sustainability Section.</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	A summary of some recent areas of work and examples of future actions are noted below. This is not an exclusive list of all actions, but is intended to update on key areas of interest.
2.2	Climate Change on our Risk Register – We are currently reviewing our risk register to consider including Climate Change and identifying key action being undertaken.
2.3	Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and Annual Action Plans – AHC Committee and Council recently approved the development of a strategy and action plan, with a Sustainability and Environment Statement also approved. The new Strategy and first Action Plan are intended to be brought to S&E Committee in March 2024, with engagement with elected representatives planned for later this year. We also intend to appoint a consultant in 2024 to support in identifying our carbon baseline and setting future targets (to align with targets expected from NI's first Climate Action Plan).
2.4	Development of a Climate Adaptation plan – We are working with ClimateNI to deliver a climate adaptation plan for our council, which will look at associated risks relating to climate change and propose actions. This will be completed by the end of March 2024.
2.5	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan - This will follow on from our previous Local Biodiversity Action Plan and will focus on our own estate, alongside raising awareness across the district. It is intended to be completed by end of 2023.
2.6	Transport and Electric Vehicles (EVs) – A number of initiatives are progressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Active Travel Masterplan has been completed and various potential projects and initiatives continue to be considered, with ongoing engagement with DfI.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council continues to operate a cycle to work scheme (there were 16 applicants with an estimated spend of £21,590 in response to our recent call) and have led on training initiatives for staff and local organisations etc. ▪ We are continuing to progress our proposal to pilot electric vans within our fleet, including engaging with NIE on available grid capacity at sites. ▪ As a partner in a shared island project we are considering options to decarbonise our fleet, with a report and recommendations expected by Autumn 2023. ▪ We are involved in 2 projects, with other councils, to provide public EV charging infrastructure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'ORCS' project – we intend to install 18 dual EV chargers (36 chargers/spaces) across our district, to support those who are not be able to install a home charger. ○ 'FASTER' project – we intend to install a number of 'fast' chargers (~50kW) at some of our sites, including some of our leisure centres. <p>Both projects intend to have chargers in place in 2023/24, although are subject to procurement and agreed external funding. Prior to considering other opportunities for public EV infrastructure we would seek to learn lessons from these projects.</p> <p>Council are also engaging with ESB on potential upgrades of their existing public EV chargers on council land.</p>
2.7	<p>Energy Costs, Procurement and Contract Management – Council have a vacant energy post at present and are considering options to fill this position to allow further work in this important area to be taken forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Like all other councils and businesses, we have been impacted by unprecedented rises and volatility of wholesale energy costs in the last two years. However, in recent months these wholesale costs have reduced and so if this trend continues, and no other unforeseen events occur, then we should see a significant reduction in energy costs in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23. ▪ In 2023 our Head of Sustainability led a collaborative procurement exercise across 10 councils, to procure electricity and natural gas. These contracts had an estimated combined contract value at that time of almost £50m. ▪ As an outcome of these procurement exercises we have entered into new contracts for electricity and natural gas. Both run to April 2024 initially, but may be extended for 12 months. Both contracts are based on a variable prices and so council will have benefited from the recent reductions in wholesale energy costs. ▪ Under both contracts the supplier margin is fixed and when compared to the supplier margin of previous contracts this is expected to deliver a saving in the region of £46,500 (in addition to savings related to the drop in wholesale energy costs). ▪ As part of our new electricity contract we have agreed not to purchase 'green electricity' as this would result in an additional significant cost of around £36,000 per year. As an alternative, SMT have approved that this anticipated spend could be used as a budget to undertake work in our council area to reduce local emissions and deliver financial savings. The installation of solar PV at Downpatrick Leisure Centre has been proposed as a potential suitable project with a business case to be progressed. ▪ We are continuing to engage with our current and previous energy providers to ensure energy costs are accurate.
2.8	<p>Renewable Electricity Generation - Council have in the region of 20 sites where solar PV has been installed. A database has been developed and we have taken steps in 2023 to ensure that all available income from 'ROCs' and exported electricity is being received. As noted above, we intend to explore further the option for installing solar PV at Downpatrick Leisure Centre, and we have also committed to carrying out a feasibility study to consider solar farms at our landfill sites.</p>

2.9	<p>Environmental Education and Support - AHC Committee and Council have recently approved the continued support of the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) Live Here Love Here campaign and Eco-schools, at a cost of £28,975, with an SLA to be signed. A proportion of these costs (around £13,000) are allocated to a small grants programme to support local communities in our area.</p> <p>Two of our financial support schemes, totalling £20,000, also relate to the areas of biodiversity and sustainable foods.</p> <p>The sustainability section directly engage with local schools in our area, with initiatives such as annual billboard and youth speak events. We are also seeking to attend various wider events and regularly provide information to staff (to include a regular newsletter).</p>
2.10	<p>Wider Sustainability Initiatives - The sustainability section works on a wider range of initiatives, with examples including Fairtrade promotion, work on single use plastics, engagement with NIWater on their refillution campaign, the recent installation of water fountains, and support for a recent collaborative feasibility study across a number of councils in relation to carbon offsetting.</p> <p>We are also active in the area of sustainable foods and participate in the sustainable food places campaign, supporting local food partnerships. We intend to apply for the sustainable foods partnership bronze award in Autumn and will provide a further update to Committee in relation to sustainable foods in coming months.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	The Committee are asked to note this update on areas of work being carried out by the Sustainability Section.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	The vacant Energy post has been noted, with options being considered on filling this position to allow further work in this important area to be taken forward.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p>

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Proposal initiating consultation Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves Consultation period will be 12 weeks Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <i>Rationale:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed If no, please complete the following: The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs	 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
	None	
8.0	Background Documents	
	None	

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 th September 2023
Subject:	Mournes Gateway Project
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Andy Patterson Assistant Director of Tourism Culture and Events
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Andy Patterson Assistant Director of Tourism Culture and Events

For decision	For noting only	X
1.0	Purpose and Background	
1.1	<p><u>Purpose</u> To note the contents of this report on the actions arising from the adoption of the Notice of Motion on the Mourne Mountains Gateway Project, and approve the recommendations as set out in section 3.1 of this report.</p> <p><u>Background</u> At the SP&R Committee on 15th June 2023 it was agreed to adopt the following Notice of Motion:</p> <p>"This Council notes with concern the continued lack of clarity regarding the Visitor Centre located at Thomas' Mountain and 'Gondola' elements of the Mournes Gateway Project. Council will revisit the stakeholder engagement process and undertake a robust consultation on the project with residents, workers and businesses within the district via the project board for approval and will actively investigate and develop alternatives to the Mourne Gateway Project which will both meet the funding criteria while enhancing this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Officers are to bring back a paper to Committee that provides a full and comprehensive update on the status of the project thus far. A schedule of key stakeholder and interested parties should be provided as part of this update."</p> <p>Following Council ratification in July, Council officers have prepared the following update</p>	

2.0	Key issues						
2.1	<p><u>Project Board</u></p> <p>In response to the agreed motion council officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Revisit the stakeholder engagement completed to date and provide a report back to the Project Board at the next meeting This will be presented at the next project board meeting. • Will develop a stakeholder engagement strategy for the project and present to Project Board for approval as part of the project Governance This will be presented at the next project board meeting. • Will compile a list of key stakeholders for approval at Project Board This will form part of the strategy and be presented at the next project board meeting. • Will bring back a paper to Committee that provides a full and comprehensive update on the status of the project thus far Included within section 2.2 of this report • Will set out the next steps for the project Included within section 2.3 of this report 						
2.2	<p><u>Project Overview</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 1003 1441 2020"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="220 1003 419 1048">Date</th> <th data-bbox="419 1003 1441 1048">Decision</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1048 419 1821">September 2017</td> <td data-bbox="419 1048 1441 1821"> <p>The proposition of a gondola and visitor centre at Thomas Quarry was presented to ERT Committee and Council in September 2017 as part of the 'Vision & Development Plan for the Mourne Mountains Gateway Study.'</p> <p>A public consultation was undertaken and a Review Panel of the following key stakeholders were consulted as part of the long-list of options for inclusion in the project vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Trust • Outdoor Recreation NI • Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs • Mountaineering Ireland • NI Water • NIEA • Forest Service • Newcastle Chamber of Commerce • Mournes Heritage Trust <p><u>See Appendix A:1 - Mourne Mountains Gateway Study – 2017</u></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1821 419 2020">November 2018</td> <td data-bbox="419 1821 1441 2020"> <p>ERT Committee approved the appointment of a consultancy team to develop an Outline Business Case for the Mournes Gateway project for inclusion in the Belfast Region City Deal process.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:2 – ERT Agenda Item: MMGP – 12 November 2018</u></p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Decision	September 2017	<p>The proposition of a gondola and visitor centre at Thomas Quarry was presented to ERT Committee and Council in September 2017 as part of the 'Vision & Development Plan for the Mourne Mountains Gateway Study.'</p> <p>A public consultation was undertaken and a Review Panel of the following key stakeholders were consulted as part of the long-list of options for inclusion in the project vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Trust • Outdoor Recreation NI • Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs • Mountaineering Ireland • NI Water • NIEA • Forest Service • Newcastle Chamber of Commerce • Mournes Heritage Trust <p><u>See Appendix A:1 - Mourne Mountains Gateway Study – 2017</u></p>	November 2018	<p>ERT Committee approved the appointment of a consultancy team to develop an Outline Business Case for the Mournes Gateway project for inclusion in the Belfast Region City Deal process.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:2 – ERT Agenda Item: MMGP – 12 November 2018</u></p>
Date	Decision						
September 2017	<p>The proposition of a gondola and visitor centre at Thomas Quarry was presented to ERT Committee and Council in September 2017 as part of the 'Vision & Development Plan for the Mourne Mountains Gateway Study.'</p> <p>A public consultation was undertaken and a Review Panel of the following key stakeholders were consulted as part of the long-list of options for inclusion in the project vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Trust • Outdoor Recreation NI • Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs • Mountaineering Ireland • NI Water • NIEA • Forest Service • Newcastle Chamber of Commerce • Mournes Heritage Trust <p><u>See Appendix A:1 - Mourne Mountains Gateway Study – 2017</u></p>						
November 2018	<p>ERT Committee approved the appointment of a consultancy team to develop an Outline Business Case for the Mournes Gateway project for inclusion in the Belfast Region City Deal process.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:2 – ERT Agenda Item: MMGP – 12 November 2018</u></p>						

<p>September 2019</p>	<p>An OBC Project Group of key stakeholders was established for Council officers to 'engage with the project group to consult and inform on the development of the OBC and any issues arising around project progression, options appraisals, and critical success factors in the delivery of the OBC.'</p> <p>The key stakeholders included on this OBC Development group included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Northern Ireland • National Trust • Forest Service Northern Ireland • Mourne Heritage Trust <p><u>Appendix A:3- MMGP OBC Terms of Reference and Governance Arrangements - Sept 2019</u></p>
<p>January & April 2020</p>	<p>Workshops were held with key stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the long list options. • To undertake an options assessment. • To secure feedback leading to a short-list of options. • To secure feedback on the potential costs, benefits and risks associated with the short-listed options. <p>Stakeholders involved in the process included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept of Communities • National Trust • Department of the Economy • Mourne Heritage Trust • Tourism NI <p><u>Appendix A:4 - MMGP Options Workshop – Agenda</u></p> <p><u>Appendix A:4a - OBC Project Workshop - Identifying and Assessing Options - 31st Jan 2020</u></p> <p><u>Appendix A:4b - Workshop slides - 31st Jan 2020</u></p> <p><u>Appendix A:4c - Appendix 4c - Key Considerations for Long List Options Workshop Jan 2020</u></p> <p><u>Appendix A:4d - Workshop 2 Agenda & attendees - April 2020</u></p>
<p>April - August 2020</p>	<p>Based on the feedback from key stakeholders in the above workshops, the Economic Case for the OBC was developed. Following monetary appraisal, Option Two (Gondola and Visitor Centre in Thomas Quarry) was identified as the preferred option based on potentially providing the strongest value for money and alignment with critical success factors.</p>

	<p>An Options Framework approach was used as recommended in the HM Treasury Better Business Cases model (HM Treasury link). This method is a manageable and logical way of thinking through options based on a wide-range of factors.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:5 - Final OBC Report on Preferred Option - Aug 2020</u></p>
	<p><u>Options Appraisal – Preferred Visitor Centre & Gondola</u></p> <p>As detailed in the timeline above, a rigorous options appraisal was undertaken to inform the preferred option for developing a visitor centre at the Thomas Quarry site. This options appraisal was informed via input from key stakeholders, including the National Trust, Mourne Heritage Trust, Tourism NI and DfE, and was the accumulation of two years work to identify a long-list of options, narrow this to a short-list, and to eventually select the preferred option to advance to Outline Business Case, which in turn was approved by Council in September 2020.</p>
Sept 2020	<p>Council approved the Mourne Gateway OBC for inclusion in the Belfast Region City Deal programme in September 2020 based on the delivery of a visitor centre and gondola at Thomas Quarry in Newcastle.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:6 & A:6a – SP&R Report August 2020</u></p>
July 2021 to June 2022	<p>Council commissioned an independent review of the OBC project design proposals, with specific reference to environmental and ecological assessments and considerations. The review team undertook further consultation with key stakeholders and project partners; and provides recommendations for consideration on the next stage of the project.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for this work is approved by the OBC Project Group (inc. National Trust, Tourism NI, NI Water, Mourne Heritage Trust, DfC).</p> <p>The group of key stakeholders approve the final report.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:7 – Terms of Reference - Review of Environmental Considerations</u></p> <p><u>Appendix A:7a – Report on the Environmental and Ecological Review of the Mourne Gateway Project</u></p>
September 2021	<p>SP&R Committee approved the inclusion of the financial estimates of £44m for the Mourne Gateway project within the BRCD Deal Document. The report referenced the following detail under resource implications: "No investment decisions or commitments on Capital spend are required at this</p>

	<p>stage. Resource implications are under review as part of the review of the Capital Programme.” This has remained the case since October 2021.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:8 - SPR Agenda Item - 27 Sept 2021 - BRCD Business Cases</u></p>
September 2021	<p>The Project OBC is approved by the Department for Economy Casework Committee.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:9 – Confirmation of DfE Casework Approval of MMGP OBC</u></p>
February 2022	<p>Department of Finance grants condition approval for £29.77 million Belfast Region City Deal funding for the Mourne Mountain Gateway Project, subject to Full Business Case conditions being met.</p> <p><u>Appendix A:10 - DoF OBC Approval - February 2022</u></p>

Progress Since February 2022

Since February 2022 Council Officers have been working with the BRCD Programme Office (Belfast City Council), Tourism NI and DfE officials to progress the Contract for Funding/Funding Agreement for the project as follows.

- Feb 2022 – BRCD Exe Board receive an update on MMGP implementation plan - with operational start date in 2029. TNI also provided an update of implementation plan.
- May 2022 – TNI requested update on timelines. Implementation plan resent.
- June 2022 – TNI request cost review of the project based on updated delivery timelines.
- Aug 2022 – Cost review completed and returned to TNI based on updated delivery timelines. OBC consultant no longer in contract hence time taken for return.
- Sept 2022 – Copy of DoF approval letter received (dated Feb 2022 - attached)
- Since Sept 2022 – several versions of CFF draft received and discussion are ongoing with the Department officials
- 2nd March 2023 – Press Briefing with local journalist on the project progress and next steps
- 3rd March 2023 – MMGP Project Board established.
- 9th March 2023 – Public information day held in Newcastle – 100+ members of the public in attendance.

2.3 Project Milestones & Next Steps

The key milestones for the project are set out below:

Task Number	Milestone	Key Points	Complete by (CY)
1	OBC approval	Casework Committee: 30th September 2021. DoF approval secured February 2022.	Completed
2	Appointment of ICT	Procurement and appointment of Integrated Consultancy Team	Q4 2023
3	Gateway Review	Gateway 2: Procurement Strategy	Q3 2024
4	Planning submission & approval	Planning submission upon finalisation of RIBA stage 3 design. Design development expected to commence immediately after ICT procurement.	Q1 2025 (Submit) Q4 2025 (Approval)
5	Procurement of IST commence	Procurement of IST on RIBA Stage 3 information.	Q3 2025 (Commence)
6	Award of IST contract	Award contract. Stage 4 design to commence after appointment of the contractor (subject to no legal challenges from unsuccessful bidders).	Q2 2026
7	FBC approval	To be submitted following procurement of contractor and before issuing of construction notice.	Q4 2026
8	Gateway Review	Gateway 3: Investment Decision	Q4 2026
9	Construction commences	Construction to commence upon completion of stage 4 design.	Q1 2027
10	Construction completes	Construction completes, including fit out & hand-over (30 months)	Q2 2029
11	Gateway Review	Gateway 4: Readiness for Service	Q2 2029
12	Operational start date	There is a one-year handover period which completes before the building becomes operational.	Q2 2029
13	End of defects period	Release of outstanding retention	Q2 2030

	<p>Once appointed, the ICT will support the delivery of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the Full Business Case for the project. • To undertake a comprehensive stakeholder engagement programme. • To progress the detailed design and capital costs for the project. • To develop the Park & Ride provision for Newcastle and the wider Mourne Area. • To develop a Visitor Management Plan for Thomas Quarry, Glenn River, Donard Wood and the surrounding area. • To assist Council to secure the required lands to deliver the project. • To prepare and submit a planning application for the project. <p>The above requirements will form part of the Full Business Case of the project, which will be subject to approval by DfE/TNI/DoF and Council before an Investment Decision is made & the project is approved to move to full delivery.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To note the contents of this report and associated background documents that can be made available on request.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no resource requirements associated with this report
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.3	Proposal initiating consultation	N/a
	Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be 12 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Rationale:</i>	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service	
	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, please complete the following:	
	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices	
	N/A	
8.0	Background Documents – Available on request	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix A1 - Mourne Mountains Gateway Study – 2017 • Appendix A2 - ERT Agenda Item - MMGP OBC Appointment - 12 November 2018 • Appendix A3- MMGP OBC Terms of Reference and Governance Arrangements - Sept 2019 • Appendix A4 - MMGP Options Workshop – Agenda • Appendix A4a - OBC Project Workshop - Identifying and Assessing Options - Economic Case - 31st Jan 2020 • Appendix A4b - Workshop slides - 31st Jan 2020 • Appendix A4c - Key Considerations for Long List Options - Workshop Jan 2020 • Appendix A4d - Workshop 2 Agenda & attendees - April 2020 • Appendix A5 - Final OBC Report on Preferred Option - Aug 2020 • Appendix A6 - SPR Agenda Item - 18 Aug 2020 - Mournes Gateway OBC • Appendix A6a - SPR Agenda Item - 18 Aug 2020 - Mournes Gateway OBC • Appendix A7 - ToR -Review of Environmental Considerations 	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appendix A7a - Report for Environmental and Ecological Review of the Mourne Gateway Project• Appendix A8 - SPR Agenda Item - 27 Sept 2021 - BRCD Business Cases• Appendix A9 – Confirmation of DfE Casework Approval of MMGP OBC• Appendix A10 - DoF OBC Approval - February 2022 |
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NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting
held on Friday 30th June 2023, 10.00am
Hybrid: Council Chamber, Newry & MS Teams**

In Attendance:**Programme Board Members**

**Councillor Declan Murphy
Councillor Cadogan Enright
Councillor Aidan Mathers
Councillor Doire Finn
Councillor Michael Savage**

NMDDC Officials

**Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director - Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Paul Tamati, Assistant Director - Leisure and Sport
Andy Patterson, Assistant Director - Tourism, Culture & Events
Conor McGeown, Strategic Capital Projects Manager: Capital Projects &
Procurement
Tracie McLoughlin PA**

External Members: Damian Mulholland, DFC

Apologies: Josephine Kelly

NCCR/162: Introduction to New Members

An introduction was made by all those present.

NCCR/163: Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Proposals for appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board for 2023-24 were made:

- a. On the proposal of Councillor A Mathers, seconded by Councillor C Enright it was agreed that Councillor Declan Murphy is elected as the Chair of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board for 2023 -24.

- b. On the proposal of Councillor M Savage, seconded by Councillor D Murphy it was agreed that Councillor Doire Finn is elected as the Vice Chair of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board for 2023-24.

Councillor Declan Murphy chaired the meeting going forward.

EXEMPT ITEMS

NCCR/164: Project Manager Update

C McGeown referred members to Agenda documents 4.1, 4.2, 6.1 and 6.2. He provided an overview and update on the Regeneration Project.

- Budget:
 - Forecast costs based on consultant estimates total £42.8m as approved in the OBC.
 - Total costs incurred to date were over £1.5m which included surveys, reports, consultant fees, compensation events and planning fees.
- Risk Management:
 - NIW have requested a Wastewater Impact Assessment.
 - No further significant adjustments.
- Proposed Programme Timetable:
 - Theatre / Conference
Construction Commence Apr 2024 / Completion Jan 2026
 - Civic Hub
Construction Commence Apr 2024 / Completion Aug 2025
 - Newry City Park
Works Commence July 2025 / Completion May 2027
 - Grade A Office Provision
Dates to be confirmed

Mr Mulholland said good work had been done by officials on all 3 projects and he attended two recent stakeholder events for the Newry City Park and believed they were both very positive. He advised the Newry City Park OBC would be considered by the Dept of Communities Casework Committee next week and if approved, it will be brought before the Permanent Secretary and thereafter to Dept of Finance. Mr Mulholland anticipated a decision in August.

Cllr Enright noted that the Downpatrick and Newry Leisure centre projects had not been built to modern NZEB (nearly zero energy) building standards and have ended up with an energy cost in excess of half a million pounds a year instead of a small nominal cost.

Cllr Enright wanted specific assurances that all sub-projects within this overall project were being planned on the basis of NZEB, in particular the use of heat pumps for heat and PV panels for power and a building envelope requiring a minimal average annual expenditure on energy. Cllr Enright said that to meet Department of Finance guidelines for public sector projects the life-time cost including energy of the new buildings would have to be completed prior to any project approval.

Cllr Enright also formally requested a briefing on the details of the OBC.

Mr Mallon said carbon neutral considerations and sustainability were key elements of the projects.

Cllr Savage welcomed an update by Officers on the OBC as suggested by Cllr Enright. He asked if there were any timeline concerns for example planning challenges. Mr Mallon said officers remain diligent and planning was noted on the Risk Register. He advised that HED have scrutinised all aspects to date in advance of the Planning application and all queries would be noted on the Planning Portal for public viewing.

Cllr Finn also welcomed the suggestion of an update by Officers on the OBC and expressed concern on the proposed closure of the Arts Centre and Town Hall. Mr Mallon said officers and been in regular contact with user groups and would continue to engage offering alternative options and venues.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor A Mathers, seconded by Councillor M Savage, it was agreed to:

a) Note the updates on the:

- Civic & Regional Hub
- Theatre/Conference Facility
- Public Realm
- Grade A Office Space
- Newry City Park.

b) Officers to arrange a meeting of the Programme Board to update members on the NCCR Business Case.

Members came out of closed session

NCCR/165: Newry City Park Project Board Meeting 15th June 2023

AGREED: It was agreed to 'Note' Report of Newry City Park Project Board Meeting held on 15th June 2023.

NCCR/166 Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board (NMD/BRCD)

- 30th March 2023
- 27th April 2023
- 22nd June 2023

AGREED: It was agreed to 'Note' Reports of Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board (NMD/BRCD) held on 30th March, 27th April and 22nd June 2023.

NCCR/167: Next Steps

Mr Mallon said Officers will host an 'in person' Design Workshop at the end of July whereby the Architect will be in attendance and drawings will be available. He advised all Councillors will be invited to attend.

NCCR/168: Date for Next Meeting

Next meeting to be scheduled for 8th September 2023.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

**Approved by Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board.
For Noting at the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee 14th September
2023**