

March 16th, 2022

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 16th March 2022 at 6:00 pm** in **Microsoft Teams (Hybrid)**.

Chairperson - Councillor O Hanlon

Deputy Chairperson - Councillor P Brown

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor H Gallagher

Councillor R Howell

Councillor O Magennis

Councillor D Murphy

Councillor B O'Muirí

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Rice

Councillor M Savage

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor J Tinnelly

Councillor W Walker

Agenda

1.0 Introduction and Apologies

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from SPR Committee Meeting held on Thursday 17 February 2022

 [SPR-Action Sheet arising from 17 February 2022.pdf](#)

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Notices of Motion

4.0 Notice of Motion Re: Irish unity Working Group

Notice of Motion from Councillor Ó Muirí

“That this Council recognises that discussions about a constitutional change are now well underway and that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council have a duty to consult with its ratepayers on this important issue and the implications for the Council area and the wider border corridor. Therefore, this motion calls on the Council to establish a working group on Irish unity and to begin a consultation with ratepayers and community and business representatives to assess views on the issues related to constitutional change.”

For Consideration and/or Decision


5.0 The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) consultation on the proposed Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 and Equality and Human Rights Screening.

 [SBNI Strategy 2022-2026 Report.pdf](#)

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 [SBNI Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Consultation Response Newry Mourne and Down.pdf](#)

Page 10

 [SBNI Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Equality Screening Response.pdf](#)

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Corporate Services

6.0 Surrender of Ballykinlar Playing Fields to facilitate new sports facility at Ballykinlar GAC




 [Surrender of Ballykinlar Playing Fields.pdf](#)

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7.0 Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment 2021-22

 [SPR Cover Report Improvement Audit and Assessment 2020-21.pdf](#)

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 Appendix 1 Correspondence Dorinnia Carville 250222.pdf	Page 35
 Appendix 2 NMD PI Section 95 Report 21-22 - FINAL.pdf	Page 36
 Appendix 3 Audit Certificate.pdf	Page 52

8.0 Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23

 SPR Cover Report Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23.pdf	Page 54
 App 1 Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23.pdf	Page 58
 App 2 Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23.pdf	Page 79

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

9.0 Officer report on request and Notice of Motion – Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee funding programme

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.



Notice of Motion from Councillors Taylor, Lewis and Burgess:

“To ask Council to establish a funding programme to enable local citizens and community organisations across the District to mark the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.”

 Officer report on request and Notice of Motion Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee funding programme.pdf	Not included
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10.0 Request for an Easement for a sewage pipe at Clonallon Park, Warrenpoint

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 Report - Clonallon Park - Easement - 16.03.22.pdf	Not included
 Appendix to SPR report - Clonallon Park - Easement.pdf	Not included

11.0 Boundary rectification request - Lands at Harbour Close, Kilkeel

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.

 ***Boundary rectification request - Lands at Harbour Close Kilkeel.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix - map - rectification of boundary at Harbour Close Kilkeel.pdf*** ***Not included***


12.0 Purchase of land from NIHE for Redevelopment of Playpark and Trojan Horse Community Facility, Downpatrick

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.

 ***Purchase of land from NIHE.pdf*** ***Not included***

13.0 Downpatrick and County Down Railway

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

 ***Downpatrick and County Down Railway.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***10.03.22 FOC DRAFT HEADS OF TERMS AGREEMENT - NMDDC and DCDR.PDF*** ***Not included***

14.0 Non-Current Asset Policy

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.

 ***SPR - NCA policy Cover paper.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 1 - NMDDC Non-Current Asset Policy.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 2 - NMDDC Equality Screening form.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***Appendix 3 - NMDDC RNIA template.pdf*** ***Not included***

 ***202122 NMDDC Review of Asset Management - final.pdf*** ***Not included***

15.0 Support to Neighbourhood Services

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.

 *Support to Neighbourhood Services.pdf*

Not included

16.0 BRCD Memorandum of Understanding

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.

 *BRCD Memorandum of Understanding.pdf*

Not included

 *BRCD MoU _Appendix 1.pdf*

Not included

17.0 Terms and Conditions 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 – 1) Information relating to any individual, 2) information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, 4) 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 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *Terms and Conditions Update (003).pdf*

Not included

 *Copy of Workplan as at March 22 (003).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 RATES SUPPORT GRANT 2021/2022

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.

 *RSG 2021-22 Additional 10m Payment - Letter to Councils.pdf*

Not included

19.0 Management Accounts – 2021/22, Period 9

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.

📄 *SPR - Mgt Acs Cover Paper P9.pdf*

Not included

📄 *Appendix 1 - Management Accounts by Directorate for Period ending 31 Dec 2022.pdf*

Not included

📄 *Appendix 2 - Management Accounts by Assistant Directorate for period ending 31 Dec 2022.pdf*

Not included

For Noting

20.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 10th March 2022

📄 *Minutes of Newry CCR PB Meeting - 10.03.2022.pdf*

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Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Ms Kate Bingham

Mr Caolain Boyd

Cllr Patrick Brown

Cllr Robert Burgess

Cllr Pete Byrne

Mr Gerard Byrne

Mrs Dorinnia Carville

Cllr Charlie Casey

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Dermot Curran

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Cllr Hugh Gallagher

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Roisin Howell

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Ms Nora Largey

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr Alan Lewis

Mr Michael Lipsett

Mrs Regina Mackin

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Gavin Malone

Cllr Cathy Mason

Mr Johnny Mc Bride

Colette McAteer

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Cllr Harold McKee

Patricia McKeever

Cllr Karen McKevitt

Cllr Andrew McMurray

Catrina Miskelly

Mr Colin Moffett

Cllr Roisin Mulgrew
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Cllr Declan Murphy
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Cllr Barra Ó Muirí
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Mr Fearghal O'Connor
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Linda O'Hare
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Cllr Gerry O'Hare
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Cllr Kathryn Owen
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Ms Alison Robb
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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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Cllr Gary Stokes
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Sarah Taggart
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr John Trainor
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Cllr William Walker
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Mrs Marie Ward
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ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – T H U R S D A Y 20 JANUARY 2022

Minute Ref:	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Action taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SPR/004/2022	Notice of Motion - Contactless Payment Solutions to tackle Homelessness	<p>Elected Members agreed to approve the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers to follow up on the cost, security and equality issues outlined at section 2.1 and also conduct further research of suppliers. • Officers will then bring proposals back to Members for consideration before the end of this financial year. • Council explore avenues to roll this out including through the Chairs charitable fund as soon as possible. • Council write to the local bank's or the services that service the governance of the ATM'S about the option of being able to donate through ATM's to charities on a rotational basis. 	G Byrne	Paper to be brought to April SP&R	N

<u>ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – T H U R S D A Y 17 F E B R U A R Y 2022</u>					
Minute Ref:	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Action taken/Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SPR/021/2022	Action sheet of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 20 January 2022	It was agreed that the action sheet from the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 20 January 2022 be approved.	D Carville	Approved	Y
SPR/022/2022	Notice of Motion – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure	It was agreed to bring back a more detailed report with further information including costings, to be tabled at the next Sustainability and Climate Change Forum and to the Strategic Finance Working Group for consideration.	D Carville/ E Devlin	Noted	Y
SPR/023/2022	Notice of Motion Regarding Live Streaming	It was agreed that Elected Members approved to continue with option 1, officers to research further option 2 and option 3 and return to Committee with a report outlining risks and cost implications. It was also agreed that officers investigate the current operations of other Councils with regard to live streaming.	D Carville	Approved	Y
SPR/024/2022	Assertion of McMinns Lane, Dundrum,	It was agreed to approve the assertion statement of the Land Management Officer dated 1 st February 2022 and asserts the path known as McMinns Lane running between Castlehill and Castlevue, Dundrum as a public right of way for use as a public footpath.	F O'Connor	Approved	Y
SPR/025/2022	Allocation of SRA Allowances	It was agreed to bring a report back to Party Leaders for further discussion and a further report to be brought to Strategy Policy and Resources Committee meeting.	D Carville	Approved	Y

SPR/026/2022	Schedule of meetings – May 2022-June 2023	<p>It was agreed that Elected Members approve the schedule of meetings including the amendments on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock Annual Meeting – Thursday 26th May 2022 at 2pm • Annual Meeting – Monday 1st June 2022 at 6pm • ERT – Wednesday 12th April 2023 at 6pm • Planning Committee Meeting from 4th May to be rescheduled to accommodate Assembly Elections 	D Carville	Approved	Y
<u>ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014</u>					
SPR/027/2022	Lease of units Saintfield	<p>It was agreed to approve the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) A lease of the Industrial Unit known as Unit B at Saintfield Community Centre, Belfast Rd., Saintfield, for a term of 15 years, is offered to the party named at para 1.6 of this report at the rent stated therein; ii) A lease of the Industrial Unit known as Unit C at Saintfield Community Centre, Belfast Rd., Saintfield, for a term of 15 years, is offered to the party named at para 1.9 of this report at the rent stated therein. iii) A review clause to be included in the lease for every 5 years. 	F O'Connor	Approved	Y
SPR/028/2022	Leases of Council Land – Lismore, Crossmaglen	It was agreed to approve the grant of a 25-year lease to the successful applicant within this process indicated in para 2.1, subject to a market valuation and legal formalities, and the recovery from the club of the recoverable costs under the Sports and Community Leasing Policy (2016).	F O'Connor	Approved	Y

SPR/029/2022	Surplus Asset Update	It was agreed to note the content of the report and Attached Appendix A – Surplus Asset Overview and approve to move Grove Gardens Recreation Area, Killyleagh to the Open Market.	C Boyd	Noted	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/030/2022	Update on acquisition of lands at Camlough Lake	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	F O'Connor	Noted	Y
SPR/031/2022	Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 18 January 2022 & 03 February 2022.	It was agreed to note the Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 18 January 2022 & 03 February 2022.	D Carville	Noted	Y
SPR/032/2022	Chief Executive Appraisal	It was agreed to note that the 2020-2021 and 2021–2022 Performance Appraisals of the Chief Executive had been completed and members of the Chief Executive Appraisal Group were unanimous in their assessment of performance.	C Miskelly	Noted	Y
SPR/033/2022	Presentation on Museum Structures	It was agreed to note the Presentation on Museum Structures. It was further agreed that Council would carry out a full and detailed Strategic Review of Museum services and the investment in them across the District, this review would include meaningful consultation with key community stakeholders including Friends of the Down Museum and other groups deemed relevant.	C Mallon	Noted	Y

<u>FOR NOTING</u>					
SPR/034/2022	NMDDC Response to: The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022	It was agreed to note NMDDC Response to: The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022	D Carville/ K Bingham	Noted	Y
SPR/035/2022	Sickness Absence	It was agreed to note the contents of the report.	L Fitzsimons	Noted	Y

END

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2022
Subject:	The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) consultation on the proposed Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 and Equality and Human Rights Screening.
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	x	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) is consulting on the proposed SBNI Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 and Equality and Human Rights Screening. The key aim of this strategy is to set out the strategic direction and context of work of the SBNI.
1.2	The recommended response to this consultation is appended to this report (Appendix 1 Strategic Plan & Appendix 2 Equality and Human Rights Screening).
2.0	Key issues
2.1	Children have a right to be safeguarded and protected. This is enshrined within the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (the Children Order) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Effective child protection stands or falls on the quality of assessment and analysis of the risks to an individual child and collaboration between agencies to promote and protect.
2.2	<p>The SBNI is a partnership made up of key organisations from the statutory, community and voluntary sectors including Councils. It is the statutory objective of the SBNI to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by Newry Mourne and Down District Council as a member of the SBNI for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p> <p>The key statutory functions of the SBNI are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people • Promote an awareness of the need to safeguard children and young people • Keep under review the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board (including Newry Mourne and Down District Council through SOLACE) to safeguard children and young people • Undertake Case Management Reviews (CMRs) in cases where a child has died or been significantly harmed, or where there has been multi-agency involvement, and to learn from them; • Promote communications between the Board and children and young people.

2.3	This is the SBNI's third Strategic Plan and aims to build on the achievements in tackling the 2018-2021 strategic priorities of Domestic Violence and Abuse, Child and Parental Mental Health and Neglect and sets out the direction and priorities for the SBNI over the next four years, 2022-2026.
2.4	SBNI is proposing that the three main strategic priorities over the next four years should be; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Safety • Domestic Violence and Abuse; and • Children and Young People's Mental Health
2.5	The SBNI proposes that the SBNI Safeguarding Panels at local levels will coordinate the implementation of the SBNI Strategic Plan 2022-2026.
2.6	At question 4 of the consultation response on the proposed Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026, it is proposed to add the word 'respected' to the text for the SBNI Vision. It is important the SBNI vision reflects that they value children and young people, that engagement has meaning, and children should be respected by all in society (individuals / organisations / parents / carers / professionals etc). <i>Our vision is that all children and young people are seen, respected, their voices are heard and they are protected in order that they grow up in safety, thrive and fulfil their potential.</i>
2.7	At Question 14 of the consultation response on the proposed Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026, it is proposed that the SBNI should, within Strategic Priority 2 at 2.2, include the education of children in raising awareness of the impact of DVA on children.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	That Council supports all proposals contained in the SBNI Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 and Equality and Human Rights Screening.
3.1	The proposed Consultation Response (Appendix 1) is approved, incorporating the amendments outlined at 2.6 and 2.7 of this report.
3.2	The proposed response to the Equality and Human Rights Screening is approved.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Members should note responses to this consultation are submitted on-line therefore this typed word document response provided at Appendix 1 & 2 are for the purposes of this report, however, the actual response will be submitted through the Department of Health's website.
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	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following:

	<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 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></p> <p>The Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland has requested views on their proposed Equality Screening and Human Rights screening and are included at 7 & 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 Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland as below at 8 - Background Documents – Rural Needs 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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) consultation on the proposed Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 Consultation Response - Newry Mourne and Down District Council 2. Equality and Human Rights Screening Consultation Response – Newry Mourne and Down District Council.
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p> <p>The following link provides access to the following supporting documents</p> <p>Welcome to the SBNI Consultation on its new draft Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Consultation on Draft Strategic Plan 2022-26 (safeguardingni.org)</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. SBNI Draft Strategic Plan 2022-20262. Equality and Human Rights Screening3. The Regulatory Impact Assessment Screening and the Rural Proofing Statement.
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Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026

Consultation Questionnaire

Overview

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) invites your views on our draft Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026.

Why we are consulting

This consultation seeks your views on our new strategic plan which sets out the strategic direction and context of work of the SBNI over the next four years to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

We aim to gather the views and suggestions about this strategic plan from children and young people, their parents and carers, all organisational stakeholders with an interest in safeguarding and the protection of children and young people as well as the general public on our draft mission, vision, values, strategic priorities and aims.

How you can contribute to the consultation

- To give us your views on this plan, please complete the online questionnaire
- Email questionnaire return to SBNI.info@hscni.net

Closing date for submissions

- The closing date for submitting submission returns is midnight on Friday 15 April 2022.
- Please note that only returns submitted in the questionnaire format will be analysed.
- Also, any submissions received after 15 April 2022 will not be analysed.

How your feedback will be used

- Your feedback and views will shape the development of the SBNI Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 for endorsement by the SBNI Board.
- To facilitate an open consultation process, we intend to treat all submissions received as public. Should you prefer us to treat your submission as

confidential – either by publishing as an anonymous response or by not publishing at all – please indicate accordingly.

- Before you submit your response, please read Appendix 1 about the effect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on the confidentiality of responses to public consultation exercises.

Your details

By providing information about yourself or your organisation, we will be better able to understand the context of your answers that you provide to our consultation.

We also want to be sure that we have received responses from as many interested parties as possible. This information will therefore help us to accurately record who has responded to this consultation.

Your details will only be kept for this consultation and future work directly related to this.

What is your name?

Gary Scott

Please tell us if you are responding as an individual or representing a group or organisation

- ☐ Responding on behalf of an organisation or group

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or group, please tell us who you are responding on behalf of and include its type, (e.g. health and social care trust, voluntary organisation, parents group)

Newry Mourne and Down District Council

If you selected other, please specify

What is your email address?

gary.scott@nmandd.org

SBNI Mission, Vision and Values

SBNI Mission:

Our mission is to positively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by working together in partnership to prevent and protect them from risk and harm.

Question 1: Do you agree that our mission clearly states the purpose of the SBNI?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 2: If no, what would you have expected to see included?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

SBNI Vision:

Our vision is that all children and young people are seen, their voices are heard and they are protected in order that they grow up in safety, thrive and fulfil their potential

Question 3: Do you agree that our vision clearly sets out what we are trying to achieve?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Question 4: If no, what would you have expected to see included?

(Limited to 150 words)

This vision should include that children should be respected by all in society (individuals/organisations/parents/carers/professionals etc). It is important SBNI vision reflects that they value children and young people and that engagement has meaning.

*Our vision is that all children and young people are seen, **respected**, their voices are heard and they are protected in order that they grow up in safety, thrive and fulfil their potential*

SBNI Values:

We listen to children and young people, their wishes, feelings and experiences and place them at the heart of what we do.

We work in partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

We develop, respect and value those who work for us as we strive for excellence in what we do.

We are open, honest and transparent in our dealings with children and young people our members, partners and staff and we respect diversity and promote equality in all that we do.

We ensure that all of our work and relationships are undertaken from an ACE aware and trauma informed perspective

We all embrace the strategic priorities of the SBNI and strive to protect children and young people

Question 5: Do you agree that our values meet your expectation of a modern children and young people safeguarding public service?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 6: If not, what would you have expected to see that is not reflected in our values?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1: To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children

- 1.1 To ensure that the Case Management Review, Safeguarding and Child Death Overview Panels meet their statutory functions.
- 1.2 To ensure that the non-statutory committees fulfil their delivery obligations within their terms of reference.
- 1.3 To participate in relevant child safeguarding and child protection fora.

Question 7: Do you agree that Strategic Priority 1 is a correct priority for the SBNI?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 8: If not, what changes to this priority would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Question 9: Do you agree with the aims of Strategic Priority 1?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 10: If not, what changes to the aims would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Strategic Priority 2: To hear and respond to the voices of children and young people affected by domestic violence¹ and abuse

2.1 To work with government departments and their agencies to prevent domestic violence and abuse (DVA) from occurring.

2.2 To work with member and partner agencies engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the impact of DVA on children and young people.

2.3 To work with member and partner agencies to provide training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

Question 11: Do you agree that Strategic Priority 2 is a correct priority for the SBNI?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 12: If not, what changes to this priority would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Question 13: Do you agree with the aims of Strategic Priority 2?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Question 14: If not, what changes to the aims would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

¹ Definition of DVA as per the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland - A Seven Year Strategy, March 2017'.

Consideration should be given to including children within the aims. It is recognised that the impact of DVA starts from a young age and that the impact can be significant including engaging in Domestic Violence and Abuse. The aims should include a focus on working with children to promote healthy relationships and to understand the impact of Domestic Abuse (it is not just the parents that need to understand this but children/young people themselves). For Strategic Priority 3 below SBNI included educating children at 3.2 and similar considerations should be applied to Strategic Priority 2 at 2.2 and/or consideration should be given to including a section similar to Aim 4.3 of Strategic Priority 4 - To work with member and partner agencies to promote awareness for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health.

Strategic Priority 3: To support children and young people to exercise their rights to enjoy the benefits of the online world free from harm, fear and abuse.

3.1 To work with government departments and their agencies to develop and online infrastructure and associated standards to prevent children and young people from experiencing harm and abuse online.

3.2 To work with member and partner agencies to educate children and young people, their parents and carers and those who work with them to navigate the online world safely and confidently and support them to stay safe and well online.

3.3 To ensure the views of children and young people inform and influence online policy and practice development

Question 15: Do you agree that Strategic Priority 3 is a correct priority for the SBNI?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 16: If not, what changes to this priority would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Question 17: Do you agree with the aims of Strategic Priority 3?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 18: If not, what changes to the aims would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

Strategic Priority 4: To hear and respond to the voices of children and young people affected by mental health issues.

4.1 To work with government departments and agencies to reduce the incidence of those affected by mental health issues.

4.2 To work with member and partner agencies to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the impact of poor mental health and any associated stigma, on children and young people.

4.3 To work with member and partner agencies to promote awareness for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health.

4.4 To work with partners to promote training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing the impact of mental health issues.

Question 19: Do you agree that Strategic Priority 4 is a correct priority for the SBNI?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 20: If not, what changes to this priority would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Question 21: Do you agree with the aims of Strategic Priority 4?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 22: If not, what changes to the aims would you make?

(Limited to 150 words)

N/A

Question 23: Are there any other strategic priorities that the SBNI should adopt?

(Limited to 150 words)

No

Other:

Question 24: Is our draft strategic plan easy to understand?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Question 25: If no, what can be done to make it easier to understand?

(Limited to 150 words)

Question 26: Do you think that there is anything missing from our plan?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Question 27: If yes, please state what you think is missing.

(Limited to 150 words)

Appendix 1

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – CONFIDENTIALITY OF CONSULTATIONS

The SBNI will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The SBNI can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the SBNI in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The SBNI cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- the SBNI should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided
- the SBNI should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence" which is not confidential in nature
- acceptance by the SBNI of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see web site at:

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>)



The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI)

The SBNI Strategic Plan 2022-2026

Response to Equality and Human Rights Screening

If you require this document in an alternative format (such as large print, Braille, disk, audio file, audio cassette, Easy Read or in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English), please contact alex.mccoy@hscni.net

Do you have any comments on the issues identified in the screening template under 2.2 (the equality profile of those affected by the policy) and 2.3 (the needs of different equality groupings in relation to the policy)?

No

Can you identify any further equality issues?

No

Do you think that the actions we are taking to address the equality issues (see 2.5) will be sufficient?

Yes

Do you have any suggestions for further actions to address the equality issues?

No

Do you agree with the screening decision (see 3)?
If not please explain and provide relevant supporting evidence.

Yes

Do you have any suggestions to further promote equality of opportunity for any of the nine equality groups?

No

Do you have any comments on the issues identified in the human rights screening template under section 5?

No

Report to:	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2022
Subject:	Surrender of Ballykinlar Playing Fields to facilitate new sports facility at Ballykinlar GAC
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Contact Officers (Including Job Title):	Michael Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)

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			Council's Active and Healthy Communities Committee, at its Meeting on 18 June 2018, ratified by Council at its meeting on 2 July 2018, agreed that Down County Board should submit a planning application which included Council's current football pitch, and agreed, in principle, to surrender the lease for Ballykinlar football pitch back to the MOD.
1.2			A key issue identified in the report was that Down County Board wanted to work in partnership with Council to ensure maximised community use in relation to the proposed development.
2.0			Key issues
2.1			Council's Planning Department has now confirmed that Planning Permission has been granted for the new sports facility at Ballykinlar GAC.
2.2			The MOD is seeking to progress surrender of Council's lease for Ballykinlar Playing Fields.
2.3			Officers in AHC are currently liaising with Down County Board to secure a commitment for shared community and sporting use of the facilities going forward.
2.4			Council has a Lease with Ballykinlar Cross Community Pre School Playgroup Limited for the term of 30 years from 27 October 2006 which relates to part of the land leased to Council from MOD. The lands comprised within the lease are not required for or impacted by the new sports facility at Ballykinlar GAC. The surrender by Council to the MOD will therefore exclude the land subject to Council's Lease with Ballykinlar Cross Community Pre School Playgroup Limited.
3.0			Recommendation
3.1			Council agree to progress surrender of its lease for Ballykinlar Playing Fields to the MOD subject to Down County Board providing a commitment for shared community and sporting use of the facilities going forward. The surrender to exclude the lands leased to

	Ballykinlar Cross Community Pre School Playgroup Limited by Council for the term of 30 years from 27 October 2006.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Officer time and reasonable legal costs in relation to surrender of lands.
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><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>

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
	None
8.0	Background Documents
	None

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2022
Subject:	Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment 2021-22
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Dorinnia Carville – Director: Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Kate Bingham – 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>The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the key findings from the Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment 2021-22 which was carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) on behalf of the Local Government Auditor (LGA). This audit and assessment underpins the general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions, which has been placed on Councils through Part 12 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act (2014).</p>
2.0			Key issues
2.1			<p>Every year the LGA is required to report on whether each council has discharged its duties in relation to improvement planning, the publication of improvement information and the extent to which each council has acted in accordance with the Department's Guidance.</p> <p>However, in response to the impact of COVID-19, the legislation was amended and councils were not required to produce Performance Improvement Plans for 2020-21. As a result, there was no requirement to report progress in implementing the self imposed performance improvement objectives in the 2020-21 self-assessment report. However, councils were still required to report progress in relation to the general duty of improvement and performance against the statutory indicators and standards for economic development, waste management and planning in the 2020-21 self assessment report.</p>
2.2			<p>Audit Opinion</p> <p>The LGA is proposing an unqualified audit and assessment opinion, with no statutory recommendations being made. An Audit and Assessment certificate of compliance has been received, as outlined in Appendix 3.</p> <p>Improvement planning and publication of improvement information</p> <p>The LGA has certified that 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.</p> <p>Improvement assessment</p> <p>In light of the impact of COVID-19 on Council services, the LGA has been unable to assess whether the Council has discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently during 2021-22.</p>

	The LGA has not conducted an assessment to determine whether the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act in subsequent years.
2.3	<p>Proposals for Improvement</p> <p>The LGA has put forward the following two 'proposals for improvement' to assist the Council in meeting its performance improvement responsibilities in future years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council should prioritise the development of an Outline Business Case to support the procurement of an electronic performance management system. • The Council should consider using Internal Audit to provide assurance on the implementation of the performance management framework and specifically in relation to data collation processes and data accuracy. <p>Progress in relation to the implementation of both 'proposals for improvement' is currently underway.</p>
2.4	<p>Detailed Observations</p> <p>The LGA has included detailed observations in Annex B of the report, which can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past few years, the Council has made good progress in putting in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. These arrangements are becoming increasingly embedded within the overall business planning and performance management cycle, particularly through the introduction of Service Plans, 'People Perform Grow' and the Corporate Performance Dashboard, which will further strengthen the Council's ability to deliver continuous improvement. • The Council continues to use a Microsoft Excel based system to measure and monitor performance at all levels of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. This method of collating performance data is very labour intensive and the Council should consider introducing an electronic platform to capture the growing central repository of performance information in a more efficient and effective way. • In January 2022, a training session was delivered to the Audit Committee, focusing on the role of Elected Members in managing performance. These sessions should be undertaken periodically, in order to ensure Elected Members can effectively scrutinise and improve the Council's performance management arrangements. • The 2021-22 performance improvement objectives are legitimate, clear, robust, deliverable and demonstrable. The improvement objectives cover a wide range of Council services and relate to both improving Council functions and improving services for communities and citizens. • Whilst the consultation process was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, best efforts were made to maximise the number of people participating in the overall consultation and engagement process. • The Council continues to strengthen its performance reporting arrangements and used the self assessment report 2020-21 to provide an overview of baseline data in relation to the 'measures of success' within both the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To consider and agree:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2021-22, including the two 'proposals for improvement', as outlined in Appendix 2
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no direct financial resource implications within this report. However, the detailed observations outlined in Annex B make reference to an electronic performance management system which, if progressed, will have financial implications for the Council.
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><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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 – Correspondence to the Deputy Chief Executive • Appendix 2 – s95 Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2021-22 for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council • Appendix 3 – Audit Certificate
8.0	Background Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2020-21



Northern Ireland Audit Office

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Karen Beattie
Audit Manager

1 Bradford Court,
Upper Galwally
Belfast
BT8 6RB
Direct Line : (028) 9025 1003
Fax : (028) 9025 1051
E-mail : karen.beattie@niauditoffice.gov.uk

Dorinnia Carville
Deputy Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down Council
Downshire Civic Centre
Ardglass Road
Downpatrick
Co. Down
BT30 6GQ

25 February 2022

Dear Dorinnia,

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council: - Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2014 Improvement Audit and Assessment

The Local Government Auditor has now certified the improvement audit for the Council with a standard, unqualified opinion. In terms of the audit assessment, the LGA has concluded that she is unable to assess whether Council is likely to comply with Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) during 2021-22 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Council services. No statutory recommendations have been made to the Department this year in respect of the Council nor is there a requirement for a special inspection. I attach a copy of our final audit and assessment report.

The report sets out the findings and conclusions from our work, it includes the audit and assessment certificate as an Annex. I also attach a copy of the original certificate signed by the Local Government Auditor.

This letter and attachments have been copied to the Department for Communities as the legislation requires. I would like to thank you and your staff for the assistance and cooperation we received throughout the audit.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Beattie
Audit Manager



Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Audit and Assessment Report 2021-22

Report to the Council and the Department for Communities under Section 95 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014



25 February 2022

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3. Audit Findings	6
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We have prepared this report for sole use of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and the Department for Communities. You must not disclose it to any third party, quote or refer to it, without our written consent and we assume no responsibility to any other person.

1. Key Messages

Summary of the audit

Audit outcome	Status
Audit opinion	Unqualified opinion
Audit assessment	The LGA has concluded that she is unable to assess whether Council is likely to comply with Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) during 2021-22 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Council services.
Statutory recommendations	The LGA made no statutory recommendations
Proposals for improvement	The LGA made two proposals for improvement

This report summaries the work of the Local Government Auditor (LGA) on the 2021-22 performance improvement audit and assessment undertaken on Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. We would like to thank the Deputy Chief Executive and her staff, particularly the Head of Performance Improvement, for their assistance during this work.

We consider that we comply with the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) ethical standards and that, in our professional judgment, we are independent and our objectivity is not compromised.

Audit Opinion

The LGA has certified the performance arrangements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification. She certifies an improvement audit and improvement assessment has been conducted. The LGA also states that, as a result, she believes that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (the Council) has discharged its performance improvement and reporting duties, including its assessment of performance for 2020-21 and its 2021-22 improvement plan, and has acted in accordance with the Guidance.

Audit Assessment

The LGA has assessed whether Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (the Council) is likely to comply with its performance improvement responsibilities under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act). This is called the 'improvement assessment'.

In normal circumstances this work would have been undertaken in time for this report to be issued by 30 November 2021. However, this was impacted in delays in completing the previous period's report when legislative changes were required to clarify the performance improvement arrangements before work could be concluded.

In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on council services, the LGA has concluded that she is unable to reach an opinion on whether the Council was likely to have complied with its performance improvement responsibilities for 2021-22.

The LGA did not exercise her discretion to assess and report whether the council is likely to comply with these arrangements in future years.

Audit Findings

During the audit and assessment we identified no issues requiring a formal recommendation under the Act. We made two proposals for improvement (see Section 3). These represent good practice which should assist the Council in meeting its responsibilities for performance improvement. Detailed observations on thematic areas are provided in Annex B.

Status of the Audit

The LGA's audit and assessment work on the Council's performance improvement arrangements is now concluded. By March 2022 she will publish an Annual Improvement Report on the Council on the NIAO website, making it publicly available. This will summarise the key outcomes in this report.

The LGA did not undertake any Special Inspections under the Act in the current year.

Management of information and personal data

During the course of our audit we have access to personal data to support our audit testing. We have established processes to hold this data securely within encrypted files and to destroy it where relevant at the conclusion of our audit. We can confirm that we have discharged those responsibilities communicated to you in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. Audit Scope

Part 12 of the Act provides all councils with a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. It sets out:

- a number of council responsibilities under a performance framework; and
- key responsibilities for the LGA.

The Department for Communities (the Department) has published '*Guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement 2016*' (the Guidance) which the Act requires councils and the LGA to follow. Further guidance to clarify the requirements of the general duty to improve was issued by the Department during 2019.

The improvement audit and assessment work is planned and conducted in accordance with the LGA's Code of Audit Practice for Local Government Bodies in Northern Ireland and the Statement of Responsibilities.

The improvement audit

Each year the LGA has to report whether each council has discharged its duties in relation to improvement planning, the publication of improvement information and the extent to which each council has acted in accordance with the Department's Guidance. The procedures conducted in undertaking this work are referred to as an "improvement audit". During the course of this work the LGA may make statutory recommendations under section 95 of the Act.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, legislation was amended so that councils were not required to produce a Performance Improvement Plan for 2020-21, and thus there was no requirement to set self-imposed objectives for that year. As a result of this councils did not have to perform a self-assessment of self-imposed objectives in their 2020-21 self-assessment report, nonetheless the report was still required to note outturn performance on the statutory indicators and how the general duty to improve was taken forward during the year.

The improvement assessment

The LGA also has to assess annually whether a council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act, including consideration of the arrangements to secure continuous improvement in that year. This is called the 'improvement assessment'. She also has the discretion to assess and report whether a council is likely to comply with these arrangements in future years.

The annual improvement report on the Council

The Act requires the LGA to summarise all of her work (in relation to her responsibilities under the Act) at the Council, in an 'annual improvement report'. This will be published on the NIAO website by March 2022, making it publicly available.

Special inspections

The LGA may also, in some circumstances, carry out special inspections which will be reported to the Council and the Department, and which she may publish.

3. Audit Findings

This section outlines key observations in the form of proposals for improvement, arising from following thematic areas of the Council's audit and assessment:

- General duty to improve;
- Governance arrangements;
- Improvement objectives;
- Consultation;
- Improvement plan;
- Arrangements to improve; and
- Collection, use and publication of performance information
- Demonstrating a track record of improvement.

These are not formal recommendations, which are more significant matters which require action to be taken by the Council in order to comply with the Act or Guidance. Proposals for improvement include matters which, if accepted, will assist the Council in meeting its performance improvement responsibilities. The LGA may follow up how key proposals have been addressed in subsequent years. We recommend however that the Council's Audit Committee track progress on all proposals for improvement.

Our procedures were limited to those considered necessary for the effective performance of the audit and assessment. Therefore, the LGA's observations should not be regarded as a comprehensive statement of all weaknesses which exist, or all improvements which could be made.

Detailed observations for the thematic areas can be found at Annex B.

Thematic area	Issue	Proposal for improvement
General duty to improve	The Council continues to use a Microsoft Excel based system to identify, measure and monitor performance improvement at all levels of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. This, however, is a very labour intensive method of collating performance information, and then ensuring that it is robust and accurate. An electronic performance management system would be a more efficient way of capturing the growing central repository of performance information. An electronic system would also provide a platform to demonstrate the alignment and interdependencies across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, create capacity for further analysis of the information and focus on key improvement areas across the organisation. This issue was originally raised in our 2018-19 report and whilst we recognise a Project	The Council should prioritise the development of an Outline Business Case to support the procurement of an electronic performance management system.

Thematic area	Issue	Proposal for improvement
	Mandate has now been approved, there are further steps to follow in the procurement process before a system can be purchased.	
Governance Arrangements	Internal Audit has not specifically been used for the audit of performance improvement related activities since 2018-19 when it reviewed APSE performance indicators. Using the Internal Audit function would provide the Council with assurance on the integrity and operation of the Council's performance management framework and could identify any supplementary areas for improvement.	The Council should consider using Internal Audit to provide assurance on the implementation of the performance management framework and specifically in relation to data collation processes and data accuracy.

4. Annexes



Annex A – Audit and Assessment Certificate

Audit and assessment of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council’s performance improvement arrangements

Certificate of Compliance

I certify that I have audited Newry, Mourne and Down District Council’s (the Council) assessment of its performance for 2020-21 and its improvement plan for 2021-22 in accordance with section 93 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) and the Code of Audit Practice for local government bodies.

I also certify that I have performed an improvement assessment for 2021-22 at the Council in accordance with Section 94 of the Act and the Code of Audit Practice.

This is a report to comply with the requirement of section 95(2) of the Act.

Respective responsibilities of the Council and the Local Government Auditor

Under the Act, the Council has a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions and to set improvement objectives for each financial year. The Council is required to gather information to assess improvements in its services and to issue a report annually on its performance against indicators and standards which it has set itself or which have been set for it by Government departments.

The Act requires the Council to publish a self-assessment before 30 September in the financial year following that to which the information relates, or by any other such date as the Department for Communities (the Department) may specify by order. The Act also requires that the Council has regard to any guidance issued by the Department in publishing its assessment.

As the Council’s auditor, I am required by the Act to determine and report each year on whether:

- The Council has discharged its duties in relation to improvement planning, published the required improvement information and the extent to which the Council has acted in accordance with the Department’s guidance in relation to those duties; and
- The Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act.

Scope of the audit and assessment

For the audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information or whether the improvement plan published by the Council can be achieved. My audits of the Council’s improvement plan and assessment of performance, therefore, comprised a review of the Council’s publications to ascertain whether they included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the documents complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Council had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing them.

For the improvement assessment I am required to form a view on whether the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act, informed by:

- A forward looking assessment of the Council’s likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement; and

- A retrospective assessment of whether the Council has achieved its planned improvements to inform a view as to its track record of improvement.

My assessment of the Council's improvement responsibilities and arrangements, therefore, comprised a review of certain improvement arrangements within the Council, along with information gathered from my improvement audit.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 93 to 95 of the Act cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.

Audit opinion

Improvement planning and publication of improvement information

As a result of my audit, I believe 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

In light of the impact of COVID-19 on Council services I have been unable to assess whether the Council has discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently during 2021-22.

I have not conducted an assessment to determine whether the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act in subsequent years. I will keep the need for this under review as arrangements become more fully established.

Other matters

I have no recommendations to make under section 95(2) of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014.

I am not minded to carry out a special inspection under section 95(2) of the Act.

COLETTE KANE
Local Government Auditor
Northern Ireland Audit Office
1 Bradford Court
Galwally
BELFAST
BT8 6RB

25 February 2022

Annex B – Detailed observations

Thematic area	Observations
General duty to improve	<p>The Council continues to develop arrangements to secure continuous improvement and has outlined within its Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22, its plans to achieve objectives and to attain continuous improvement.</p> <p>The Council published its Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 on 29 June 2021 after gaining approval by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee. Approval was subsequently given by the Audit Committee and full Council in July 2021. The Performance Improvement Plan outlines the Council's improvement framework and provides a description of the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions evidenced by examples of self-imposed indicators and standards. Arrangements are constructed within the seven relevant criteria set out in legislation and the current functions prioritised and selected for improvement are aligned to its corporate priorities. The objectives and associated projects are set across the whole functions of the Council.</p> <p>Throughout the year the Council has introduced a number of new arrangements, demonstrating commitment to secure continuous improvement. Firstly, a Corporate Performance Dashboard was introduced which is a useful tool that is used to succinctly report on a range of performance measures and this is prepared on a quarterly basis. Furthermore, during the first quarter of the year Service Plans were introduced for Assistant Directors/ Departments to identify, 'core, business as usual activity,' and 'improvement,' activity. Service Plans are aligned to Directorate Plans and in turn to the Corporate and Community Plans. The Council has also continued to develop a system for individual performance plans through a new 'People Perform Grow' initiative which has been partially rolled out during the year. The introduction of Service Plans and 'People Perform Grow' provide an important link within the Business Planning and Performance Management from the higher level Community and Corporate plans to the operational and individual plans, thus embedding performance improvement within all levels of the organisation. For the potential benefits to be achieved, it is important the roll-out of 'People Perform Grow' is carefully managed to ensure maximum engagement of employees.</p> <p>The Council continues to use a Microsoft Excel based system to identify, measure and monitor performance improvement at all levels of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. This, however, is a very labour intensive method of collating performance information, and ensuring that it is robust and accurate. An electronic performance management system would be a much more efficient way of capturing the growing central repository of performance information and would also provide a platform to demonstrate the alignment and interdependencies</p>

Thematic area	Observations
	<p>across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, create capacity for further analysis of the information and focus on key improvement areas across the organisation. This issue was raised in prior years as a proposal for improvement, but there has been limited progress made on addressing this, so it has been included in section three of this report as a proposal for improvement.</p>
Governance arrangements	<p>The Council has adequate governance and scrutiny arrangements for performance improvement and these arrangements are operating effectively. The Council has established a range of governance arrangements to assist in the delivery of the Performance Improvement Plan.</p> <p>The Performance Improvement Policy was adopted in November 2018 and is due to be reviewed 2022-23. The policy provides the context for mainstreaming and embedding of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework across the organisation. It is important the policy is reviewed as planned to ensure that developments that have been made across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework are fully reflected.</p> <p>The Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meets monthly and has overall responsibility for Performance Management including monitoring and scrutiny. The Audit Committee meets quarterly and is responsible for providing assurance that the performance arrangements are robust and effective.</p> <p>The governance arrangements for the development, implementation and review of Directorate Business Plans have been strengthened over the past few years and included within the respective plan. All Business Plans are considered, scrutinised and approved by the respective Standing Committee.</p> <p>A training session was delivered in January 2022 for Elected Members of the Audit Committee. The session focused on the role of Elected Members in managing performance and particularly in terms of planning, monitoring and improving performance. Sessions such as this are essential in ensuring Members are able to offer effective scrutiny of the arrangements and should be undertaken periodically, when it is appropriate to do so.</p> <p>An Internal Audit relating to Performance Management has not been undertaken since 2018. A proposal for improvement has therefore been included in section 3 of this report recommending the use of Internal Audit to provide the Council with assurance on the integrity and operation of the Council's performance management framework, specifically in relation to data collation processes and data accuracy.</p>

Thematic area	Observations
Improvement objectives	<p>The Council has demonstrated that the 2021-22 improvement objectives are legitimate, clear, robust, deliverable and demonstrable. The improvement objectives cover a wide range of Council services and they relate to both improving Council functions and improving services for communities and citizens. The impact of COVID-19 has been considered and reflected in the published objectives.</p> <p>The 2021-22 Performance Improvement Plan contains five objectives, four of which have been carried forward from the prior year. The Council continues to review and refine improvement objectives and the associated actions, outcomes and measures every year as part of development of the Performance Improvement Plan. It is evident that improvement objectives have been developed in accordance with the strategic priorities of the Council as detailed in the Corporate Plan flowing from the Community Plan outcomes and in accordance with consultation with stakeholders. It is also clear that the objectives align with the strategic aspects of improvement. The Council has refined objectives previously identified as being as too broad, to make them more specific. This allows for better assessment of progress, with outcomes capable of being better measured.</p>
Consultation	<p>Council's usual consultation process for the Performance Improvement Plan was affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the limits on formal gatherings, events and face to face contacts. However, overall it is apparent best efforts were made in the process to maximise the number of people engaging with the consultation.</p> <p>An eight week consultation was undertaken from 15 March – 10 May 2021 which is a reduction from standard twelve weeks however in the circumstances an eight week period was approved by the Strategy, Policies and Resources Committee. The consultation process included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • electronic survey on the Council's website and social media platforms, asking for stakeholder views on the proposed; • performance improvement objectives 2021-22; • public notices in local newspapers; and • engagement sessions, between March and May 2021, with the following stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elected Members ○ Seven District Electoral Area Forums ○ Older Persons Forums in Newry and Downpatrick ○ Newry and Mourne Youth Council

Thematic area	Observations
	<p>This process was supplemented by the feedback from the Residents Survey in 2018 and the consultation and engagement on the impact of COVID-19 in September 2020. The findings from the consultation and engagement feedback was used to inform, finalise and endorse the proposed performance improvement objectives 2021-22.</p> <p>Overall, the Council had a majority agreement from consultees on proceeding with the draft improvement objectives as highlighted.</p>
Improvement plan	<p>The Council's 2021-22 Improvement Plan was published on 29 June 2021 and complies with the Act and with DfC guidance. The document is available on the Council's website along with a summary document "Our Performance, Looking Back, Going Forward", which sets out the key points from its Performance Improvement Plan (and its assessment of performance).</p> <p>The document contains a high-level description of the Council's plan for discharging its statutory performance improvement duties. It includes a description of its annual performance improvement objectives, how these were selected, the key actions to be undertaken in order to achieve each of the objectives, how the progress of the key actions will be measured and what the outcomes for local communities and stakeholders will be. For each objective detail is also provided on how it is linked to the corporate plan priorities, community plan outcomes and Programme for Government outcomes, as well as detailing the alignment of each objective to the seven aspects of improvement.</p> <p>The plan also provides a summary of the Council's consultation process and the outcome of that process, together with information on how citizens and stakeholders may propose new objectives during the year and how performance against the plan will be reported.</p>
Arrangements to improve	<p>The Council's arrangements to secure the achievement of its improvement objectives, statutory indicators and to comply with the general duty to improve, are adequate.</p> <p>The Council is required to establish arrangements to deliver on its improvement objectives each year. The Department for Communities' guidance states that the Council should be able to understand and demonstrate the impact of its arrangements for continuous improvement on the outcomes for citizens. The underlying projects in relation to the improvement objectives are supported in some degree by delivery plans and budgets and are being project managed and have lines of accountability to senior management and members.</p>

Thematic area	Observations
	<p>The Council has made good progress over the last few years with regards to putting arrangements in place to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions in order to achieve its General Duty to Improve. It is evident that arrangements are becoming increasingly embedded within the overall business planning and performance management cycle particularly with the introduction of Service Plans and the Corporate Performance Dashboard. The introduction of further planned arrangements such as 'People Perform Grow' will further strengthen the ability of the Council to deliver continuous improvement.</p>
Collection, use and publication of performance information	<p>The Council's publication of its 2020-21 Performance Improvement Self-Assessment Report in September 2021 fulfils the Council's statutory requirement under Part 12, Section 92 of the Act.</p> <p>It presents the results of the Council's self-assessment in discharging its general duty under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 in relation to performance improvement arrangements. It sets out an assessment of the Council's performance against the requirements.</p> <p>Whilst there was no published Performance Improvement Plan for 2020-21, and thus no published Performance Improvement Objectives, the Council still included in its assessment the draft improvement objectives as the majority of these have been carried forward into 2021-22. Statutory performance improvement indicators and standards for the functions of Economic Development, Planning and Waste were also included for 2020-21 including comparison with previous two years. In addition, performance information on self-imposed indicators and standards collected during 2020-21 were included within the Performance Improvement Plan.</p> <p>The Council continues to develop its performance reporting with an increasing focus on developing and reporting against baselines and outcomes through the 'measures of success.' The issue of benchmarking with other councils is part of the work plan for the Performance Improvement Working Group and it is expected that progress on this issue will continue to be made to allow a broader range of functions to be compared. However, we note that delays to this process were faced as a result of COVID-19.</p>
Demonstrating a track record of improvement	<p>As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department for Communities confirmed in June 2020 that it did not expect Councils to publish a performance plan for the 2020-21 financial year and so there were no published performance objectives for the year. On the basis however that the majority of the draft performance improvement objectives for 2020-21 were carried forward to 2021-22, the Council used the self-assessment 2020-21 to establish a baseline to</p>

Thematic area	Observations
	<p>monitor and report progress against the majority of the ‘measures of success’ which underpin the performance improvement objectives 2021-22.</p> <p>The Council also disclosed its performance in relation to its statutory indicators including a comparison across three years, providing explanation and context to performance and made performance comparisons against national averages or other Council’s. Whilst performance has been affected by COVID-19, the Council was able to demonstrate some improvement in relation to some statutory performance indicators and standards and performance, although Planning again fell short of the targets set. Likewise, against self-imposed indicators it has been able to show some improvement, however the overall assessment is that nearly half of all indicators have been achieved or are ‘on-track’ with the remaining half either ‘substantially achieved/subject to delay,’ or ‘not/unlikely to be achieved.’</p> <p>Although there was some evidence of a track record of improvement, in light of the impact of COVID-19 on Council services we have been unable to place reliance on this trend information, in forming an assessment of whether the Council has discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities’ guidance sufficiently during 2021-22.</p>

Audit and assessment of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's performance improvement arrangements

Certificate of Compliance

I certify that I have audited Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's (the Council) assessment of its performance for 2020-21 and its improvement plan for 2021-22 in accordance with section 93 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) and the Code of Audit Practice for local government bodies.

I also certify that I have performed an improvement assessment for 2021-22 at the Council in accordance with Section 94 of the Act and the Code of Audit Practice.

This is a report to comply with the requirement of section 95(2) of the Act.

Respective responsibilities of the Council and the Local Government Auditor

Under the Act, the Council has a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions and to set improvement objectives for each financial year. The Council is required to gather information to assess improvements in its services and to issue a report annually on its performance against indicators and standards which it has set itself or which have been set for it by Government departments.

The Act requires the Council to publish a self-assessment before 30 September in the financial year following that to which the information relates, or by any other such date as the Department for Communities (the Department) may specify by order. The Act also requires that the Council has regard to any guidance issued by the Department in publishing its assessment.

As the Council's auditor, I am required by the Act to determine and report each year on whether:

- The Council has discharged its duties in relation to improvement planning, published the required improvement information and the extent to which the Council has acted in accordance with the Department's guidance in relation to those duties; and
- The Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act.

Scope of the audit and assessment

For the audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information or whether the improvement plan published by the Council can be achieved. My audits of the Council's improvement plan and assessment of performance, therefore, comprised a review of the Council's publications to ascertain whether they included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the documents complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Council had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing them.

For the improvement assessment I am required to form a view on whether the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act, informed by:

- A forward looking assessment of the Council's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement; and
- A retrospective assessment of whether the Council has achieved its planned improvements to inform a view as to its track record of improvement.

My assessment of the Council's improvement responsibilities and arrangements, therefore, comprised a review of certain improvement arrangements within the Council, along with information gathered from my improvement audit.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 93 to 95 of the Act cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.

Audit opinion

Improvement planning and publication of improvement information

As a result of my audit, I believe 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

In light of the impact of COVID-19 on Council services I have been unable to assess whether the Council has discharged its duties under Part 12 of the Act and has acted in accordance with the Department for Communities' guidance sufficiently during 2021-22.

I have not conducted an assessment to determine whether the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of Part 12 of the Act in subsequent years. I will keep the need for this under review as arrangements become more fully established.

Other matters

I have no recommendations to make under section 95(2) of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014.

I am not minded to carry out a special inspection under section 95(2) of the Act.



COLETTE KANE
Local Government Auditor
Northern Ireland Audit Office
1 Bradford Court
Galwally
BELFAST
BT8 6RB

25 February 2022

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2022
Subject:	Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Dorinnia Carville – Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Kate Bingham – 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			Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Each financial year, Councils are required to set performance improvement objectives for the services they provide. These objectives can span more than one year, with intermediary milestones, which must be reviewed annually. The performance improvement objectives form part of the annual Performance Audit and Assessment which is carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.
2.0			Key issues
			Draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23
2.1			<p>It is proposed that the Council carries forward the five performance improvement objectives 2021-22, which were developed within the context of the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These objectives are outlined in Appendix 1, and the 'supporting actions', 'measures of success' and targets have been updated where appropriate and relevant.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>As part of the Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment 2021-22, the Northern Ireland Audit Office confirmed that the 'Council has demonstrated that the 2021-22 improvement objectives are legitimate, clear, robust, measurable and demonstrable. The improvement objectives cover a wide range of Council services and they relate to both improving Council functions and improving services for communities and citizens'.</p>
			Legislative context

2.2	<p>The guidance issued by the Department for Communities states that performance improvement is more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or in the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement should focus on activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for communities.</p> <p>Councils should therefore frame improvement objectives so as to bring about improvement in at least one of the following specified aspects of improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic effectiveness • Service quality • Service availability • Fairness • Sustainability • Efficiency • Innovation
2.3	<p>Councils should also determine their objectives for improvement based on critical self analysis, taking account of a wide range of evidence. All improvement objectives should relate to improving the functions and services to citizens, and be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legitimate • Clear • Robust • Deliverable • Demonstrable
2.4	<p>Councils are required to consult and engage a range of stakeholders, including citizens, businesses and partner organisations on the performance improvement objectives. The proposed eight week consultation programme will run from 21 March-16 May 2022 and will consist of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak NMD - This dedicated online space is facilitated through the Newry, Mourne and Down Community Planning Partnership and enables residents to participate in local consultation and engagement activities. To date, approximately 1,500 residents have registered to use this engagement platform and have their say on the issues and decisions which have an impact on their local area. Through Speak NMD, an electronic survey and idea's board in relation to the draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23 will be published electronically. The overall consultation and engagement process will be promoted further through the Council's website and social media channels, and circulated to key internal and external stakeholders. • Public advertisements in local newspapers • Engagement with DEA Forums and Section 75 groups, through Youth Councils and Older People's Forums <p>Consultation feedback will inform the final objectives which will form part of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23. An overview of the overall approach to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2022, in line with statutory requirements, is outlined in Appendix 2.</p>
3.0	Recommendations

3.1	<p>To consider and agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The five draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23, as outlined in Appendix 1 The proposed approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23, as outlined in Appendix 2, including approval to commence the consultation and engagement process on 21 March 2022
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no financial resource implications within 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	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> The draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23 have been equality screened and it is recommended that they are not subject to an equality impact assessment (with no mitigating measures required). In relation to the proposed eight-week consultation process, whilst the Council's Equality Scheme commits to holding consultation exercises relevant to the statutory duties for a minimum of twelve weeks, it also sets out exceptional circumstances where the twelve weeks may not apply. In this instance, it is proposed that</p>

	<p>the Council implements an eight-week consultation process in order to ensure the deadline for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23 by 30 June 2022 is met.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the performance improvement objectives 2022-23 have been developed based on a robust and reliable quantitative and qualitative evidence base, including the COVID-19 consultation in 2020. They are directly aligned to the strategic objectives within the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and outcomes within the Community Plan.</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> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 – Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23 • Appendix 2 – Approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23
8.0	Background Documents
	Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23



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

Our Duty of Improvement

Part 12 of The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions.

The Council is required to set performance improvement objectives for the services it provides on an annual basis, and to have in place arrangements to achieve these objectives. Each performance improvement objective must bring about improvement in at least one of the following aspects of improvement:

- Strategic effectiveness
- Service quality
- Service availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

Improvement for Councils should focus on enhancing the sustainable quality of life for ratepayers and local communities, and each objective should be clearly linked to the community planning outcomes for the District.

The draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23 for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council have been carried forward from 2021-22. They have been developed based on extensive consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and are aligned to the following regional and local plans which influence the overall direction of travel of the organisation.

- Draft Programme for Government
- Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-23
- Thematic Plans and Strategies, including the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy and Play Strategy

Once agreed, the performance improvement objectives 2022-23 will be published in the annual Performance Improvement Plan. This plan will provide more detail about what we want to improve, how we will deliver improvements, how our performance will be measured and what outcomes stakeholders will experience as a result of our improvement activity.







Our draft 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**

These objectives have been selected based on the following criteria:

- Does the objective support the delivery of the Programme for Government, Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2021-23?
- Do the objectives demonstrate improvement in at least one of the seven aspects of improvement? (strategic effectiveness, service delivery, service availability, fairness, sustainability, efficiency, innovation)
- Are the objectives SMART? (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timebound)
- Are the resources in place to deliver the objective? (financial, human, leadership, skills, knowledge, governance, risk)
- Are the objectives based on robust and reliable evidence and will they make a visible difference in the local area?
- How well are we performing?

Legend:

Status		Trend	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved		Performance has improved
	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

*It should be noted that the performance information contained in the 'Looking Back' section of this report may be subject to change when the results are verified and reported through the Assessment of Performance 2021-22 in September 2022.

Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down

The Community Plan has been developed and agreed by the Community Planning Partnership Board. Entitled 'Living Well Together', the Community Plan provides a framework for collaborative working to deliver positive change for our communities, and sets out the following long term overarching vision for the District:

'Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs'.

Through the Community Plan, the following five positive outcomes have been identified:

Our Outcomes

These are the positive outcomes we all wish to see in our community.









Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-23

The Corporate Plan 2021-23 sets out the strategic direction of the organisation and ties together a number of plans and strategies that will enable the Council to achieve the following mission and eight strategic objectives. The Corporate Plan will also contribute the achievement of the overarching vision and outcomes within the Community Plan.

Council Mission Statement

'To support and advocate for a welcoming District which is progressive, healthy and sustainable, providing better economic, environmental and social outcomes for all'.

Council Strategic Objectives

 <p>Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills</p> <p>We will facilitate investment by new and growing businesses while contributing to the further development of workforce skills to retain existing and attract new industries.</p>	 <p>Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district and reduce health inequalities</p> <p>We will help to reduce health inequalities and improve the quality of life for all by contributing fully to programmes, services, facilities and amenities.</p>
 <p>Enhance, protect and promote our environment</p> <p>We will contribute to tackling climate breakdown and reducing harmful impacts on the environment while enabling residents and visitors to enjoy our rich natural and built heritage.</p>	 <p>Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage</p> <p>We will support and advocate for increased investment and development in tourism which promotes our unique assets and increases visitor satisfaction and spend.</p>
 <p>Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities</p>	 <p>Promote the revitalisation of our city, towns, villages and rural communities</p>

<p>We will encourage people to play an active part in civic life in all its forms and develop the capacity of communities, particularly those in greatest need, to attract the right support to address needs and sustain valued projects and facilities</p>	<p>We will work with residents, businesses and our partners in regeneration to further develop desirable places to live, work, invest in and visit across the District.</p>
<div data-bbox="461 445 558 519" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Provide accessible, high-quality and integrated services through continuous improvement</p> <p>We will build a high performing Council, fit for the future, that delivers efficient and effective services for the benefit of all</p>	<div data-bbox="1098 445 1195 519" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Advocate with others for the benefit of all people of the District</p> <p>We will lobby and campaign with government and others to attract investment, develop modern infrastructure across the District, address needs and improve the quality of life for all.</p>

Your voice, your choice!

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is inviting you to put forward your views on the draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23. We are keen to ensure that our performance improvement objectives have a positive impact on the quality of life of all stakeholders across the District, including citizens, local businesses, partner organisations in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, employees and Elected Members.

A questionnaire has been included on page 19 of this document for all stakeholders to complete and return to:

Email: performance@nmandd.org
 Address: Performance and Improvement
 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
 O'Hagan House, Monaghan Row
 Newry, Co Down
 N. Ireland, BT35 8DJ





The questionnaire is also available on the Council's website and social media channels, as well as the Speak NMD website, through the following links:

www.newrymouredown.org/performance
www.livingwelltogethernmd.org

Alternatively, if you prefer to provide comments in person, please contact us on:
 Tel: 0330 137 4000
 Email: performance@nmandd.org

The closing date for responses is: 16 May 2022.

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		
Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of COVID-19 on mental health and well-being is one of your top concerns and the Council should provide well maintained parks and green spaces 'Improving people's health and wellbeing (and reducing health inequalities)' is your second highest priority for improvement Over the past two years, investment in local community projects, such as parks, has become more important to you 100% of respondents to our 2021-22 survey agreed with this objective <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the strong correlation between healthy lifestyles and outdoor recreation. The Council's greenways and blueways have become increasingly popular, providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to lead healthy and active lives whilst enjoying the natural beauty of our District. During 2021-22, the Council carried out Visitor Satisfaction Surveys for Forest Parks and Beaches and the preliminary findings suggest good levels of satisfaction with Kilbroney Park, Slieve Gullion Forest Park and Delamont Country Park.</p> <p>However, high visitor numbers can put pressure on parks and open spaces, particularly in relation to car park congestion, littering, irresponsible behaviour and general wear and tear on the environment. Promoting good visitor management will enhance the quality of the Council's parks and open spaces, ensuring they are welcoming, safe and well maintained places to encourage local people to be active and healthy.</p>	
Looking Back: What we did between April-September 2021		1.6m visits recorded at Kilbroney Park, Slieve Gullion Forest Park and Warrenpoint Municipal Park
		3 'blue flag' beaches and 5 'green flag' parks
		102,177 visits recorded at 8 community trails
		The Forest Parks team won the 2020-21 Green Flag 'Team of the Year' award
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2022-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the district's bid to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark designation Invest in new facilities at Kilbroney Park and Rostrevor Forest, Tyrella beach and Delamont Country Park Explore options to install visitor counters at Delamont Country Park Retain five green flag and three green flag heritage accreditations for the Council's parks Retain blue flag accreditation for Cranfield, Murlough and Tyrella beaches 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build four new play parks and upgrade two existing play parks• Identify new community trails to develop in future years• Promote good visitor management across all Council parks and open spaces					
How we will measure success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Target
Number of recorded visits at:						
Kilbroney Park	453,704	454,848	584,148	△	982,812	No targets
Slieve Gullion Forest Park	253,376	366,444	183,712	▽	469,940	
Carlingford Lough Greenway	40,219	73,138	47,005	▽	-	
Delamont Country Park	New performance measure					
Warrenpoint Municipal Park	-	205,126	119,600	▽	139,845	
Community trails (existing)	46,044	56,348	97,281	△	102,177	110,000
Number of parks with green flag accreditation	3	3	4	△	5	5
Number of parks with green flag heritage accreditation	-	-	1	△	3	3
Number of beaches with blue flag accreditation	3	3	2	▶	3	3
Number of new/upgraded play parks	17	9	0	▽	2	6
What you will see by March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improvements to the Council’s parks, beaches and open spaces including effective visitor management arrangements• UNESCO Global Geopark status achieved for Mourne Gullion Strangford• Five green flag awards and three green flag heritage awards for the Council’s parks• Three blue flag awards for the Council’s beaches• Four new play parks and two upgraded play parks					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities• Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We all enjoy long, healthy, active lives• People want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Fairness	Innovation		
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism					

*Whilst blue flag accreditation was awarded for the Council's three beaches in 2020-21, lifeguard services are not being offered at Murlough beach due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

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






Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of COVID-19 on businesses and employment is your top concern, and the Council should support local businesses, especially those which have been impacted most by restrictions • 'Supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' is your top priority for improvement • Investment to grow the economy, create jobs and attract tourists is the most important form of investment • 93% of respondents to our 2021-22 survey agreed with this objective <p>Whilst the global economic impact of COVID-19 is unparalleled, early indications suggest that the local economy is recovering. Over the past year, Newry, Mourne and Down has recorded increases in the number of VAT/PAYE registered businesses, employee jobs and the birth rate of new businesses. When compared to 2020, the claimant count for unemployment benefit has also reduced but remains above pre-pandemic levels.</p> <p>Continuing to support the economic recovery of Newry, Mourne and Down remains a key priority for the Council. During 2021-22, the Council awarded approximately £1m to assist local businesses in navigating the impact of pandemic. The Council also continued to deliver a range of economic development programmes to help new and established businesses to innovate, grow and expand. However, whilst much has been achieved, there is still more to do to rebuild and revitalise the local economy.</p>								
Looking Back: What we did between April-September 2021	<table> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1375 512 1451"></td><td data-bbox="512 1375 1396 1451">114 new business starts created and 114 new jobs promoted through business start activity</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1451 512 1527"></td><td data-bbox="512 1451 1396 1527">6 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 8 new social enterprise jobs created</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1527 512 1644"></td><td data-bbox="512 1527 1396 1644">213 businesses supported and 1,718 mentoring hours delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales and Trade'</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="432 1644 512 1720"></td><td data-bbox="512 1644 1396 1720">'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District</td></tr> </table>		114 new business starts created and 114 new jobs promoted through business start activity		6 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 8 new social enterprise jobs created		213 businesses supported and 1,718 mentoring hours delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales and Trade'		'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District
	114 new business starts created and 114 new jobs promoted through business start activity								
	6 new social enterprise start-ups supported and 8 new social enterprise jobs created								
	213 businesses supported and 1,718 mentoring hours delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth' and 'Sales and Trade'								
	'Make it Local' campaign delivered to stimulate footfall and the re-opening of businesses across the District								
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2022-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll-out the NMD 'Make it Local' and 'A Place to Work' campaigns to safely stimulate footfall and revitalise our local economy • Support the creation of new business starts and promote new jobs through the NI 'Go for It' programme • Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme • Support local businesses and create new jobs through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth', 'Tender for Growth', 'Sales and Trade' and 'Digital Transformation' 								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the creation of new jobs and businesses in coastal areas through SEAFLAG 2 					
How we will measure success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Target
Number of business plans approved through NI 'Go For It'*	300	298	266	▶	190	312
Number of new business starts created through NI 'Go For It'	204	203	181	▶	114	187
Number of new jobs promoted through NI 'Go For It'	184	183	164	😊 ▶	114	>155
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	9	10	12	△	6	12
Number of social enterprise jobs created	15	12	14	△	8	12
Number of businesses supported through 'NMD Growth'	New programme	198	198	▶	102	120
Number of jobs created through 'NMD Growth'		11	24	△	-	20
Number of businesses supported through 'Digital Growth'	New programmes		90	-	39	70
Number of jobs created through 'Digital Growth'			5.5	-	-	10
Number of businesses supported through 'Tender for Growth'			39	-	35	60
Number of jobs created through 'Tender for Growth'			6	-	-	10
Number of businesses supported through 'Sales and Trade'			-	-	37	45
Number of jobs created through 'Sales and Trade'			-	-	-	5
Number of businesses supported through 'Digital Transformation'	New performance measure					10
Number of new jobs created in coastal areas (SEAFLAG 2)*	New programme	7		△	9	Mar 2023: 5.5
Number of new businesses created in coastal areas (SEAFLAG 2)		1		△	2	Mar 2023: 2
What you will see by March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 312 entrepreneurs supported with an approved Business Plan and >155 new jobs promoted through the NI 'Go For It' programme 12 social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 social enterprise jobs created 305 businesses supported and 45 jobs created through the economic development programmes 510 mentoring days delivered through 'NMD Growth', 'Digital Growth' and 'Tender for Growth' The social economy and fishing dependent communities benefit from inward investment and growth 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 					
Alignment						

Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills 			
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities 			
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone can reach their potential Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral People want to live, work and visit here 			
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service availability	Innovation
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism			

*SEAFLAG 2 includes year on year cumulative results for both performance indicators.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents		
Why this matters	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog mess and dog fouling is your top perceived problem • Rubbish or litter lying around is a problem for many of you, particularly those living in urban areas • The Council should continue to keep the local environment clean, ensure dog fouling is kept to a minimum and reduce the perceived increase in littering • 98% of respondents to our 2021-22 survey agreed with this objective <p>Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the LEAMS* score for the District remained at 64, which falls just below the current regional average of 65. Issues around street cleanliness continue to escalate largely as a result of the increased number of illicit dumping, littering and dog fouling incidents reported to the Council and the prioritisation of the refuse collection service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>In order to improve the overall cleanliness of the District, the Council is currently reviewing cleansing operations to design a more effective model of service provision. The Council also remains committed to collaborating with partner organisations and local communities to promote responsible dog ownership, address issues around littering and illicit dumping and generate local pride in having a cleaner, greener District for everyone to enjoy.</p>	
	Looking Back: What we did between April-September 2021	<div>  Issued 74 fixed penalty notices, 56 of which were paid </div> <div>  Supported 66 community clean-ups </div> <div>  17 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme </div> <div>  Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out </div> <div>  Increase in the rate of recycling, to 51.7% </div>
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2021-22		<p>Address issues around littering, illicit dumping and dog fouling by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing the Enforcement Improvement Plan • Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns • Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of littering and illicit dumping along the border area • Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres • Supporting local community clean ups • Launching the mobile 'apps' to enable Officers and residents to record and report incidents of environmental crime <p>Work in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to:</p>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Commission surveys to monitor street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspotsPromote the 'Live Here Love Here' campaignsEncourage community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'Highlight the impact of littering on the marine environment					
How we will measure success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	2021-22 Q1/Q2 Actual	2022-23 Target
LEAMS score (Keep NI Beautiful Cleanliness Index)	72	64	64	▶	-	65
Number of fixed penalty notices issued	54	83	52	▼	74	120
Number of fixed penalty notices paid	50	72	24	▼	56	96
Number of community clean ups supported	100	94	33	▼	66	100
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	27	34	24	▼	17	No target
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	51.4%	53.7%	52.6%	😊 ▶	51.1%	50% by 2020
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	1,846t	2,131t	2,494t	😊 ▼	1,275t	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20)
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	82,136t	84,610t	86,980t	▶	46,909t	No target
What you will see by March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and paidResponsible dog ownership and reduced levels of dog fouling, littering and illicit dumpingImproved opportunities to report littering, dog fouling and illicit dumpingOpportunities to engage in community clean ups and participate in the 'Live Here Love Here' campaign and 'Adopt a Spot' schemeLandfill and recycling targets are achievedA cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhance, protect and promote our environment					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Innovation		Sustainability	
Responsible Officer	Director: Neighbourhood Services					



*Local Environmental Auditing Management System is carried out by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

**The Q1/Q2 2021-22 data for the statutory waste management performance indicators remains provisional and will be finalised when the year-end data is validated and published by DAERA.

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

Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme		
Why this matters	You told us that:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The impact of COVID-19 on 'mental health and well-being' and 'vulnerable, isolated and lonely' residents are amongst your top concerns, and the Council should support community groups and charities• 'Improving community relations and safety, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour' is the third highest priority for improvement for residents• 95% of respondents to our 2021-22 survey agreed with this objective	
	<p>The Council remains committed to building the capacity of local communities, enabling them to have a voice in shaping the future of their District. Through the Financial Assistance Scheme, local communities are empowered to address local issues using public funds. Since 2015-16, the Council has awarded almost £8m to 2,606 applications across a range of thematic areas including community engagement, summer schemes and festivals.</p>	
	<p>However, the overall success rate of applications to the Financial Assistance Scheme reduced from 72% in 2020-21 to 69% in 2021-22. This can largely be attributed to specific themes recording lower success rates, including 'Events and Festivals', 'Summer Schemes', 'Service Level Agreements', 'Let's Grow' and 'Major/Minor Capital Projects'. These themes will benefit from targeted intervention and additional support through the Council's training and capacity building sessions.</p>	
	<p>In addition, the number of projects funded during 2022-23 may reduce as applications are now scored and ranked, in line with the new Financial Assistance Policy, and demand for funding can exceed the level of funding available for some themes.</p>	
Looking Back: What we did in 2021-22		£1.4k awarded to 364 projects across 18 thematic areas
		£936k awarded towards major and minor capital projects
		£472k awarded towards four service level agreements with local voluntary organisations
		69% of applications to the financial assistance schemes were successful
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2022-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch 3 financial assistance calls across a minimum of 18 thematic areas to support the delivery of community led projects• Continue to promote and roll out the Electronic Grant Management System• Deliver training and capacity building to support local voluntary and community groups in applying for financial assistance, with an emphasis themes with lower success rates	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote the online training module to potential applicants, including those who were unsuccessful in 2021-22					
How we will measure success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Trend	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Target
% of successful financial assistance applications*	71%	71%	72%		68.8%	72%
% of financial assistance applications funded*	71%	71%	64%		68.8%	No target
Number of capacity building sessions delivered	New performance measure				6	5
Number of participants at training sessions	New performance measure				140	300
Number of participants / beneficiaries of the Financial Assistance Scheme	New performance measure				Q1/Q2 2021-22 2,604	10,000
What you will see by March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Circa £1m awarded to local voluntary and community groups through the Financial Assistance Scheme (including FMA's and SLA's)Improved and accessible training and support when applying for financial assistanceVoluntary and community groups are supported in meeting their objectives and delivering projects across a range of themesRepresentatives from the community and voluntary sector are empowered to have a voice and shape the future of their areaImproved community capacity and cohesion across Newry, Mourne and Down					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respectWe have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Fairness	Innovation		
Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities					

*The methodology for scoring specific themes within the Financial Assistance Scheme was reviewed in 2020-21 and the success rate of the applications funded reduced as some themes were scored and ranked, based on the funding available.

**Score and rank was not fully implemented in 2021-22 due to additional COVID-19 Recovery funding being made available.

Performance Improvement Objective 5

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

Why this matters





Delivering a more efficient and effective Planning Service for customers is a key priority for improvement for the Council. Planning plays a significant role in promoting sustainable development, regeneration, economic prosperity, investment and job creation for present and future generations of our District. 98% of respondents to our 2021-22 survey also agreed with this objective.

The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is well underway. Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, progress is being made in establishing and embedding modern, agile and responsive ways of working. However, whilst the 2021-22 processing times for planning applications have reduced when compared to previous years, the Council has not yet achieved the statutory standards and we remain committed to delivering further improvements and providing a high quality service to all customers.

In January 2022, the Council carried out a Customer Satisfaction survey with key stakeholders to understand current perceptions of the service, in relation to the time taken to process applications, reception service and expertise of officers. Feedback from the survey is currently being analysed and will be used to identify further improvements to the Planning Service.

Looking Back:







What we did between April-September 2021




	Processed 51.1% of planning enforcement cases within 39 weeks, which is below the regional average of 72.3%
	Average processing time of 17.4 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 16 weeks
	Average processing time of 42.6 weeks for major planning applications, which is below the regional average of 56.4 weeks
	Received 921 local planning applications, which is the highest across Northern Ireland

Looking Forward:

What we will do in 2022-23

- Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months
- Work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted
- Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'

How we will measure success	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Target
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	18	20.6	19	 	17.4	<15 weeks
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	76.6	94	64.6	 	42.6	<30 weeks
Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks	52.9%	36.2%	40.9%	 	51.1%	70%

Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more**	224	183	187		186	150
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less**	800	685	788		889	700
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more**	734	620	551		531	450
What you will see by March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities					
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People want to live, work and visit here					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Sustainability	Efficiency		
Responsible Officer	Director: Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism					

*Annual planning figures will be validated by the Department for Infrastructure and published through the Annual Report 2022-23.

**The 2022-23 targets have been carried forward from 2021-22 and will be reviewed prior to the publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23, in June 2022.

Strategic Alignment

Performance Improvement Objective	Corporate Objective(s)	Community Planning Outcome(s)	Duty of Improvement
We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces	Continue to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District and reduce health inequalities Support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Fairness Innovation
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs	Invest in and support new and growing businesses, job creation and employment skills	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Service availability Innovation
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	Enhance, protect and promote our environment	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Innovation Sustainability
We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme	Enable and support people to engage in inclusive and diverse activities in their communities	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Fairness Innovation
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	Provide accessible, high quality and integrated services through continuous improvement	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Sustainability Efficiency

Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23

I am responding:	as an individual	
	on behalf of an organisation (please state)	

Question 1

Which consultation group do you belong to? *Please tick all that apply.*

Resident	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elected Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Community Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Voluntary Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Statutory Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please provide further information below.

--

Question 2

Do you agree that the draft Performance Improvement Objectives are appropriate for our District?

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Agree	Disagree
We will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 2	Agree	Disagree
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 3	Agree	Disagree

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 4	Agree	Disagree
We will build the capacity of local communities through the Financial Assistance Scheme		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 5	Agree	Disagree
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme		
Comments:		

Question 3

Would you suggest any alternative Performance Improvement Objective(s), 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success'?

--

Question 4

Which of the areas outlined below would you like to see Newry, Mourne and Down District Council make improvements to in the future? (please tick 3 areas)

Area	
Arts Centres and Museums	
Building Control	
Car Parking	
Cemeteries	
Cleansing Service	
Community Services/Centres	
Council Parks and Open Spaces	

Council Website	
Economic Development (Programmes to support the economy)	
Environmental Health	
Grants, Procurement and Finance	
Harbours and Marinas	
Leisure Centres	
Licensing (dogs, gaming, entertainment etc)	
Planning	
Play Parks	
Recycling	
Bin Collection	
Registration Services (Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships)	
Tourism Events	
Visitor Attractions	
Visitor Information Centres	
Other Services (please specify)	

What specific improvements would you like Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to make in future years?

Completed questionnaires or comments should be submitted by **16 May 2021** to:

Email: performance@nmandd.org

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

Telephone: 0330 137 4000

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23

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1	Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23	Timetable
1.1	Review baseline evidence to support the development of the Performance Improvement Plan, including a review of existing performance management arrangements across the organisation	Jan 2022
1.2	Develop and update the performance improvement objectives, supporting actions and measures of success, ensuring alignment to the seven criteria outlined in the legislation, as well as the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and other key strategies. Prepare Delivery Plans for each objective.	Jan-Feb 2022
1.3	Consider and agree the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23, supporting actions, measures of success Overall approach and timetable for developing and publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23, ensuring compliance with the statutory Duty to Improve 	CMT: Feb 2022 SMT: Mar 2022 SPR: Mar 2022 Council: Apr 2022 AC: Apr 2022
1.4	Carry out an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment of the draft performance improvement objectives 2022-23	Feb 2022
2	Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23	Timetable
2.1	The proposed 8 week consultation timetable with key stakeholders will consist of the following elements:	
2.2	Speak NMD – Electronic survey and ideas board published Speak NMD website, promoted through the Council website and social media channels, and circulated to internal and external stakeholders	21 Mar-16 May 2022
2.3	Public Advertisements in local newspapers	21 Mar-16 May 2022
2.4	Consultation and engagement on the draft performance improvement objectives 2021-22 with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 75 groups, including Youth Councils, Older People's Forum, Ethnic Minority Support Centre and DEA Forums 	21 Mar-16 May 2022
2.5	Analyse feedback from consultation and engagement activity, and propose amendments to the performance improvement objectives, supporting actions and measures of success where appropriate	May 2022
3	Design, approval and publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23	Timetable
3.1	Finalise the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23	May 2022
3.2	Carry out an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23	May 2022
3.3	Consider the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23, with proposed amendments following the consultation process	SMT: Jun 2022 SPR: Jun 2022 (including request to

Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23

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		publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2022) Council: Jul 2022 AC: Jul 2022
3.4	Publish the Performance Improvement Plan on the Council's website and social media channels	Jun 2022 (before statutory deadline of 30 June)
3.5	Develop, translate into Irish (in line with Bilingualism Policy) and publish the summary performance document – 'Our Performance: Looking Back, Going Forward'	Sep 2022
4	Implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23	Timetable
4.1	Publish the annual Assessment of Performance 2021-22, in line with statutory requirements	SMT: Sep 2022 SPR: Sep 2022 Council: Oct 2022 AC: Sep 2022
4.2	Monitor and report progress in implementing the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23 through the Mid Year Assessment	SMT: Nov 2022 SPR: Nov 2022 Council: Dec 2022 AC: Jan 2023
5	Improvement Audit and Assessment 2022-23	Timetable
5.1	<p>NI Audit Office carry out the annual Improvement Audit and Assessment to ascertain if the Council has fulfilled its statutory duty of performance improvement. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A forward looking assessment of the Councils likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement • A retrospective assessment of whether the Council has achieved its planned improvements to inform a view regarding the Councils track record of improvement 	Jul-Oct 2022

Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23

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5.2	The NI Audit Office issue the S95 report, outlining the findings from the Improvement Audit and Assessment, which includes proposals for improvement to assist the Council in fulfilling its performance responsibilities in future years	Final report: 30 Nov 2022 Publication of report: Feb 2023
5.3	Consider the s95 Improvement Audit and Assessment Report	SMT: Dec 2022 SPR: Dec 2022 Council: Jan 2023 AC: Jan 2023

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting
held on Thursday 10th March 2022, 10.30am
Hybrid: Council Chamber, Newry & MS Teams**

In Attendance:

Programme Board Members

Councillor Roisin Mulgrew - Chair
Councillor Pete Byrne
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Gavin Malone

NMDDC Officials

Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Michael Lipsett, Director of Active, Healthy Communities
Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration
Caolain Boyd, Assistant Director, Estates & Capital Projects
Tracie McLoughlin, PA

External Members

Damian Mulholland, Dept for Communities

Apologies

Dorinnia Carville
Cllr Stokes
Cllr Taylor

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

NCCR/106 Minutes of the Albert Basin Park Project Board Meeting held on 1st March 2022

Members agreed to 'Note' the Minutes as circulated.

NCCR/107 Minutes of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board Meeting (NMD & BRCD+ projects) held on 1st March 2022

Members agreed to 'Note' the Minutes as circulated.

**NCCR/108 Actions from the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme
Board Outline Business Case Working Group Meeting held on 24th
February 2022**

Mr Mulholland advised the meeting was productive and the members were keen to get their issues aired, and logged, but noted there was no new issues beyond the OBC consultation feedback raised. The group will initially meet monthly. Mr Mulholland said he had subsequently met some members individually, including the Parish Council who remain concerned about car parking impact to the rear of the Cathedral. Mr Mulholland considered it important to bring Newry stakeholder together, and to demonstrate how decisions like the location for the civic hub had been taken.

The Chairperson agreed the meeting was useful and said it is important that representation is consistent at each meeting.

In relation to the No.3 in the Actions report circulated, Cllr Byrne asked what was the issue with Bullet Point 3? Mr Mulholland advised the wording stated that the members *“engage with and communicate the project / programme vision, aims and objectives and wider Council policy and priorities to identified stakeholders”*. Mr Mulholland noted potential for conflict between the representatives and their various groups and Council policy and priorities, the TOR wording would be amended to reflect this.

Members agreed to ‘Note’ the Actions Report as circulated.

NCCR/109 Carparking Survey Report

Mr Mallon said the Councils consultant team had carried out car parking surveys in June 2021, and a further validation check in February 2022. The results are detailed within the Report circulated and members are asked to consider recommendations.

On the proposal of Councillor P Byrne, seconded by Councillor C Casey it was agreed to note the contents of the Report and approve the following recommendations:

- 1. The June 2021 car parking results are utilised to quantify city centre car parking activity and occupancy levels;**
- 2. A further validation survey of car parking is conducted in June 2022;**
- 3. The project team continue to progress car parking options;**

Members also noted that consultation on this matter continues with key stakeholders through the OBC Public Consultation Working Group.

NCCR/110 Albert Basin Park Outline Business Case (OBC) (verbal update)

Mr Lipsett advised the Outline Business Case was not finalised, but that Officers and Consultants were continuing to liaise with the Department for Communities (DfC) representatives to progress. Mr Mulholland confirmed a meeting has been scheduled between DfC and Council for 16th March 2022. Mr Lipsett said a special meeting of the Programme Board will be arranged thereafter to consider the OBC and the consulting team will be in attendance.

NCCR/111 Theatre/Conference Pre Planning Application Public Consultation

The Chairperson asked if fewer attending the second information event indicated broad satisfaction with information provided at the first information event. Mr Grimshaw agreed lower attendance would support that view, and also noted the information contained on the portal, and the engagement sessions with the theatre user group would have reduced the need to attend the events. Reference was also made to the high number of responses received by the architect, and the social media reach of 10,000+.

The Chairperson asked if Officers could look into 3D models of the projects and locate these in areas with good footfall. Mr Mallon said this could be looked into and suggested graphics on screens that are currently in leisure centres and Council buildings. Mr Mallon also said he would liaise with the Marketing team on having graphics regularly on Council web and social media pages. Cllr Casey and Cllr Byrne welcomed this.

Members agreed to 'Note' the contents of the report circulated.

NCCR/112 Albert Basin Stakeholders Report

Mr Lipsett advised members that this report should be under the section 'For Decision' not 'For Noting' as indicated.

The Chairperson advised that Members did not have the opportunity to view this report in sufficient time in advance of the meeting and suggested that this item be considered at the next meeting of the Programme Board which is being arranged to discuss Item 6 Albert Basin Park Outline Business Case.

Mr Mulholland asked that Dept for Communities be included in the Albert Basin Stakeholders Group.

The following actions were agreed by all members present:

- 1. Report of Albert Basin Stakeholders Report be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the Programme Board Meeting to be arranged in the coming weeks.**

2. Representation from the Department for Communities be included in the Albert Basin Stakeholders Forum

EXEMPT ITEMS

The following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of 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).

NCCR/113 NCCR Programme Dashboard and Graphics

- a) Programme Dashboard Report
- b) Programme Dashboard Graphics
- c) Risk Register
- d) Look Ahead Programme

Cllr Byrne asked if the risk in relation to carparking could be updated to reflect the recent surveys carried out. Mr Mallon said this would be actioned.

Agreed:

- 1. Members agreed to note the contents of the above Reports.**
- 2. Risk Register be updated to reflect the results of the carparking study.**

NCCR/114 Date for Next Meeting

- 1. A meeting of the Programme Board to be held in the coming weeks to discuss the following agenda items:**
 - i) Albert Basin Park Outline Business Case**
 - ii) Albert Basin Stakeholders Report**
- 2. Date for meeting thereafter agreed for 12th May 2022.**

This concluded the business of the Meeting. The Meeting ended at 11.10am

**Approved by Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board.
For Noting at the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee
Meeting 16th March 2022**