

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation and Engagement Report on the Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24



Introduction

The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement, whereby all District Councils must put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions and set performance improvement objectives for each financial year. Each Council also has a statutory duty to consult key stakeholders on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

The five draft performance improvement objectives were considered and approved by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in March 2023. This was followed by an extensive consultation and engagement process which encouraged key stakeholders, including residents, Elected Members and partner organisations to have their say on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

This report provides an overview of the consultation and engagement methodology and an analysis of the responses which were received.

Consultation and Engagement Activity

Between 20 March–15 May 2023, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council carried out an eight week consultation and engagement process with key stakeholders on the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24, through the following mechanisms:

- Electronic survey and documentation on the Speak NMD platform, which was promoted through the Council's website and social media channels
- Public Notices in local newspapers
- Engagement with the following stakeholders:
 - Newry and Mourne and Down Youth Voice
 - Cedar Foundation
 - Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

This process was further supplemented by the consultation and engagement which was carried out to support the development of the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23:

- Residents Survey (September 2022)
- Consultation and engagement on the Corporate Plan 2021-23 and impact of COVID-19 (September 2020)
- Consultation and engagement on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2022-23

Analysis Methodology

A total of 123 surveys were received in response to the consultation and engagement on the Council's draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the draft performance improvement objectives and if they had any comments to make regarding each objective. Respondents were also asked to put forward their suggested priorities for future improvement.

In carrying out the quantitative and qualitative consultation and engagement, a structured process was used to capture responses around each of the five draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24. This was supplemented by an engagement process with 27 key stakeholders, as outlined below:

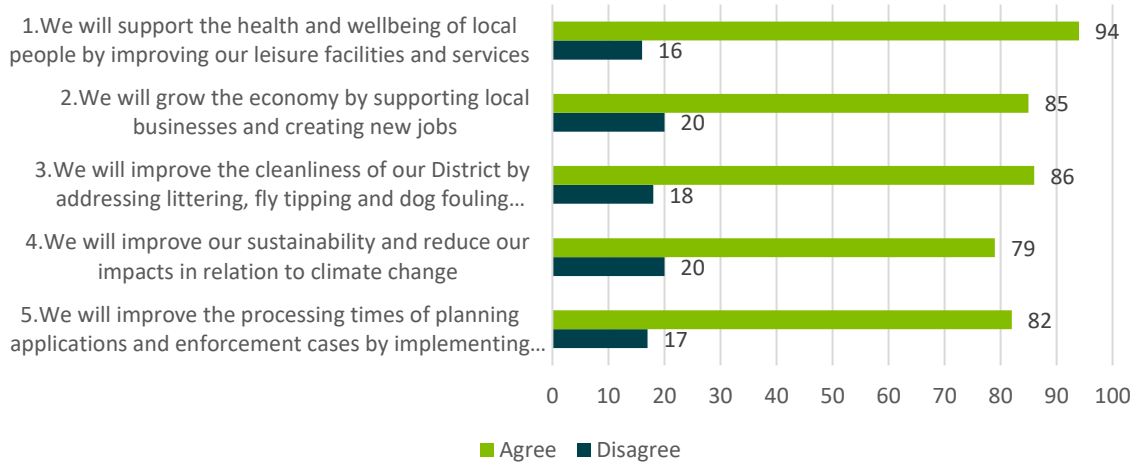
Consultation and Engagement	Details
Newry and Mourne and Down Youth Voice	14 participants - 25 April 2023
Cedar Foundation User Forum	8 participants - 02 May 2023
Newry and Mourne Senior Forum	5 participants - 10 May 2023
Residents Survey (September 2022)	764 residents aged 16+ with quotas applied for age, gender, social class and District Electoral Area

Consultation and Engagement Findings

Analysis of Findings

Responses to the draft performance improvement objectives 2023-24 have been received from residents, elected members, local community organisations, local businesses, statutory organisations and others including those that work in the district. There has been a positive response to the five proposed performance improvement objectives, with the majority of respondents agreeing with each objective.

Agreement on Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

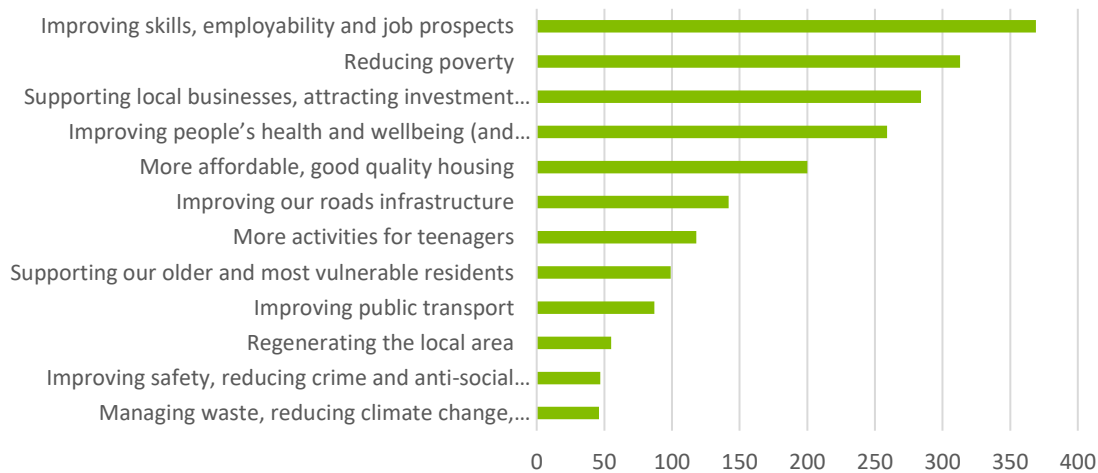


Residents Survey (2022)

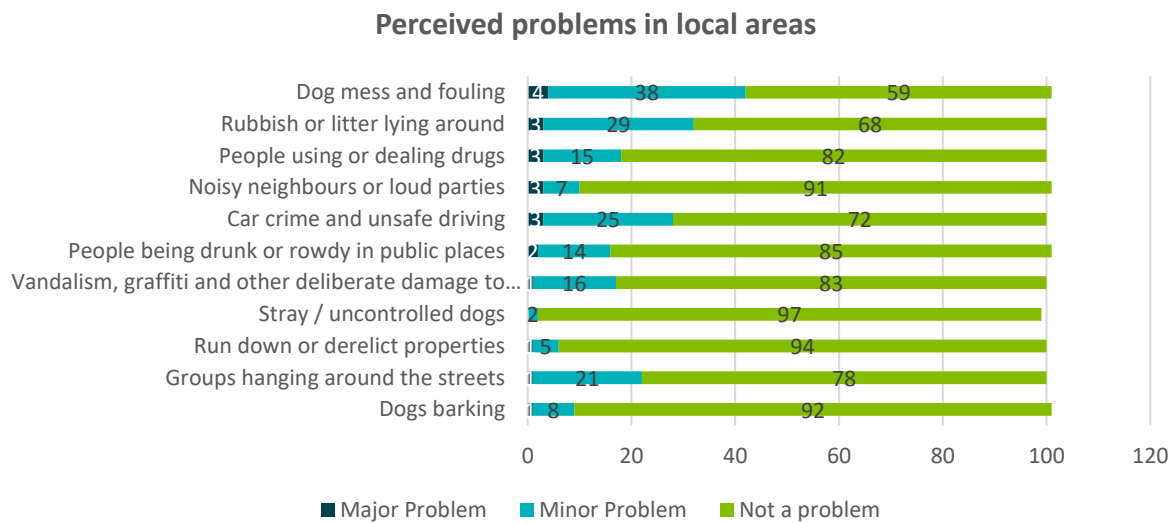
These findings are further endorsed by the results of the Residents Survey which indicate that the performance improvement objectives broadly address the top improvements identified to make somewhere a good place to live.

- The local economy, health and wellbeing, housing, infrastructure, public transport, protecting the environment, climate change and managing waste are amongst the top priorities for improvement.
- Supporting communities, educational provision, accessible leisure centres, accessible arts centres/theatres and museums and opportunities for volunteering are amongst the lesser priorities for improvement.

Top priorities for Improving the local area



These findings are further reinforced by the fact that residents identify dog mess and littering as the top perceived problems in the local area.



You Said, We Did - Overview of Consultation Feedback

Performance Improvement Objectives

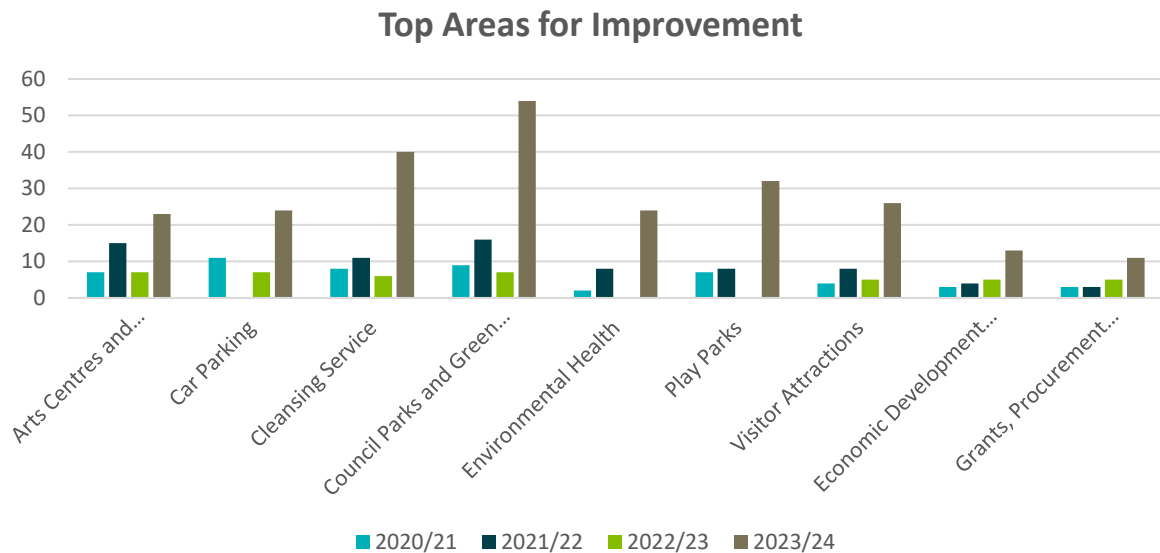
An analysis of the consultation and engagement findings indicates that the issues raised will be addressed through the proposed 2023-24 performance improvement objectives, 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success', or as part of the Council's business planning process. An overview of the amendments and revisions that have been made to the performance improvement objectives, throughout the consultation and engagement process are highlighted below.

	You Said	We Did
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	<i>'More areas for people to walk, cycle and walk their dogs'</i>	We have revised our target for community trails upwards to reflect the number of users in 2022-23 and in doing so recognising the importance of outdoor space and facilities for people's mental and emotional wellbeing.
	<i>'Most young people feel health and wellbeing is curcuially important and</i>	A new measure has now been introduced in the Performance Improvement

	<i>feel improvements would be good'</i>	Plan 2023-24 focusing on the participation of young people in youth health and wellbeing initiatives. Revised the 2022-23 figure for paid attendances based on updated year end data which has also led to a revised target for 2023-24.
We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs		Figures for economic development programmes have been revised. To reflect 2022-23 actual figures.
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents		
We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change		
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme		

Suggested Areas for Improvement

As part of the survey, and similar to previous years, respondents were asked to put forward their suggested areas for improvement. 'Council parks and open spaces', 'cleansing service', 'Leisure Centres' and 'Play Parks' are the top priorities for improvement in 2023-24.



Next Steps

Based on the feedback obtained through the consultation and engagement process, as well as the ongoing developmental work around each performance improvement objective 2023-24, there have been some minor amendments to the 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success', as outlined in the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.

The Consultation and Engagement report will be published on the Council's website by 30 June 2023, alongside the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24. It will also be circulated to key stakeholders to support the business planning process.

Summary of Consultation and Engagement Feedback

Performance Improvement Objective 1

Youth Voice

- What has happened to city park?.
- Albert Basin Park.
- What has happened to your park
- Kilkeel could use an upgrade (only 30 minutes)
- Could be an upgrade in Kilkeel
- Most young people feel health and wellbeing is curcuially important and feel improvements would be good
- Make sure other services in the Council don't suffer from the high levels of funding used in leisure centres

Cedar Foundation

- Over 60's membership is very good value for money.
- There are a lot of items damaged and broken in the leisure centre in Newry which is awful as it is such a new building and these need to be fixed.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- There should be toilets on the tow path.
- There are cars being parked on the cycle path in Warrenpoint which is a danger to cyclists who have to go round and onto the dual carriageway to get past.
- Play park in Bessbrook is a great asset and the toilets are clean and the Derramore woods are a great asset too.
- Thanks to the Southern Trust and the Age Friendly alliance for all the support they provide to older people's groups and individuals.
- Transport for older people is very important especially as more services are being moved to Craigavon and older people can't get to appointments, community transport needs to be maintained.
- Traffic lights at the court house need to be fixed, it's a danger as it's getting so busy.

NMD Speak Website

- Yes but. The senior management team consistently fail to deliver. Newry pool has had to close. And the council has ensured that people are locked out of their(i.e the public rate payers) sports pitches
- Not enough outdoor walks and parks for tourists vrs other areas...current places not looked after or maintained especially walking paths...mound of down path is a disgrace
- Daisy Hill in a Shambles Warrenpoint police station let go no GP service in Rostrevor. Loss of green space
- Consolidate what exists - no need for further investment in this regard at present.

- As leisure facilities are only in the main towns community centres need to be improved to allow for the provision of such services in rural areas
- Outdoor facilities which are not dedicated to field sports should be considered for development
- Ensure leisure facilities once available have high standard of cleanliness
- leisure facilities in Newry require significant improvement, as a regular user of the gym pool and soft play area of the NLC it is disappointing to see that the facility is regularly not clean. I had to ask staff to clean urine from the floor in the changing area of the pool and ants all over the floor in another changing area. The soft play is regularly unclean with tables not wiped and the floor dirty. I really like being able to use NLC but it embarrassing especially as a staff member to see this new facility in such a state of uncleanliness. For years Newry is lacking in 4G pitches for soccer in the area and this needs to be improved.
- also improve outdoor facilities, not just swimming pools etc
- More greenways
- Newcastle is severely lacking in service availability
- Leisure facilities need to be open accessible hours
- Improved leisure facilities in Newcastle have been requested for decades. Kilkeel has great facilities but are criminally mismanaged and underused.
- Better facilities
- We want a park as promised
- You as a Council have ignored the wish of our Citizens in pushing ahead with White Elephant Projects despite strong voter opposition to same
- Newry Leisure Centre is closed more times than it should be – broken equipment in the gym – cold showers – tiles on pool floor – restrictive timetable of classes – closed every Wednesday 2-3pm For training !!! Really this is a disgrace and needs to be changed immediately – train Sunday morning before opening
- I hope to see this being fulfilled in the kilkeel area. Our leisure facilities need repair and appropriate staffing. The limited opening times are restrictive and swimming lessons difficult to access.
- No fixed bridge on the southern relief road. Promoting more use of the canal and improving facilities would contribute to better community well-being
- I would like more appropriate facilities in my town, Newcastle.
- What about cycle path plan for newcastle. There is nothing. It's quite embarrassing for a tourist destination is
- Downpatrick has a first class leisure facility in DLC which is visible in the general numbers of a wide diverse range on ages that us the facility. But opening hours at the weekend are very much lacking and restrict the use of the service for a great number of people. Longer opening hours into the evening is required at the weekends.
- The management of Arts facilities needs to be contracted out to bodies which will appropriately promote and support arts and culture.
- Actions speak louder than words, at least make a start on the Park for Newry City.

- As a Newcastle resident, I have to travel 15 miles to my nearest leisure centre. Since the part demolition of the Newcastle Centre (without any plans for a new build) you can't even hire a room in the centre. The Gateway project information day had to be held in a local pub because of this.
- This is a good objective but you don't really do it the new leisure center has been closed a lot for cleaning and repairs and surely if it is staffed properly this would not be required.
- Nice sentiment! but over past 10/20 years nothing much of a major improvement .. based on past performance am concerned about the future
- So we get our park then? This should be your top priority in leisure facilities. And it is an scandal and a shame that you have deliberately avoided doing this already.
- How will this be measured?
- Not enough opportunity within leisure facilities, swimming pool etc are disasters where people are traveling outside the district to go swimming
- some many from outside the area use facilities, there should be a charge for non rate payers
- Sort Newcastle lesiure centre out once and for all
- Very leisure facilities focused, this not only requires those to travel and limits participation to activites at those centres, but makes little use of natural area and beauty which often also attracts external visitors and hence expenditure
- This needs to be a priority over other infrastructure projects and the Albert Basin needs to be developed asap. HIGher profile of the leisure centre facilities, classes and opening hours to promote accessibility and interest More areas for people to walk, cycle and walk their dogs (dog parks, more pavements along busy rural roads) and along existing transport routes.
- Question? What did the council actually do to improve the health and wellbeing of the community?
- No
- As an older resident I feel we need to ensure our OAP s are offered first class facilities to encourage an active lifestyle.
- Special needs should b focal point
- Not everyone can afford to use the council facilities. The Peoples Park would deliver a better facility for more residents
- Where are the leisure facilities in Warrenpoint?
- It works well , it's a very well Disability Draft
- Ballynahinch is a growing town with no leisure facilities
- The Trust welcomes the objective of supporting the health and wellbeing of the local population and the links to the Council's Corporate and Community Plans. In particular, the Trust welcomes the Council's commitment to helping reduce health inequalities and improve the quality of life for all by contributing fully to programmes, services, facilities and amenities. The Trust is committed to building on new and existing partnerships with the Council, working in collaboration with key stakeholders to help reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

Youth Voice

- The Quays is too empty
- Attract more businesses to the quays and Hill Street
- Should invite bigger corporations / businesses into shopping centres
- Don't forget the rural areas
- Shopping centres need new businesses
- Any growth to economy will be a help to our area, would like new jobs in area but also would like opportunity to travel for work.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- A lot of small businesses have closed due to Brexit, Covid-19, war in ukraine and cost of living crisis and got no support.
- The rise in parking fees is unfair as it's mostly older people parking who are out in the towns spending money and contributing to the economy.

NMD Speak Website

- Would like to see the stats of what Jobs the council have brought to the whole district since 2015
- This council is only interesting in building houses so it becomes even more reliant on rates which is contrary to what the NIAO has told needs to change.
- Not enough done to support start ups
- Warrenpoint town centre turned into a social apartment centre and lost of every day business due to high rates
- What does "support" local businesses mean? Give them public money?
- Again - no requirement for investment in this field at present Consolidate the present situation, plan for the future.
- Local jobs for local people where are the contractors from who work within the old district.ie Downpatrick glossary,Killyleagh, what percentage of them is local
- Availability of affordable working spaces for new small business should be investigated
- Council work well with local stakeholders and entrapreneurs/businesses in the district to grow the NMD economy for everyones benefit
- develop the economy. Growth goes against the climate emergency that NMDDC declared a few years ago. You can not grow without having a damaging impact to the climate, biodiversity and the environment. You can however sustainably develop the economy.
- Encourage working from home within civil service so civil servants can support their local businesses, not Belfast city centre.
- Helping start new small businesses and improving rundown town centres allowing free parking facilities would encourage people out of the supermarkets and back into town centers
- This is important but its effectiveness is precarious, and I doubt the council will find an elegant solution. It should not be in the top 5 objectives.

- Increased rates will drive any business trying to start within the district!
- You burden small and large businesses with excessive rates charges in return for little or nothing. You intend sacrificing parking at Cathedral for vain Projects
- Rates increase each year. Cost of bin collection. Newry is a ghost town and has nothing to offer to tourists apart from a spot of shopping and a nice hotel. Allow the regeneration of the CBD embrace planning restrictions by working with the people trying to breathe new life into the town. Stop backward thinking and apply a mentality of progress
- How do you propose to do this ?
- How many jobs have you created in the past 10 years?
- What is your agenda and plan to enable this - these are merely statements, one round need to see the plan of execution and how this would be achieved & timescale
- Jobs in Newcastle are mostly for the service industry. This means minimum wage and zero hours contracts are the norm in the area. This should be addressed to provide sustainable employment for local residents.
- Again a good point but We do not have enough street cleaners not enough bins but enough public toilets
- Do this by addressing the outrageous rates charged to local businesses driving many out of the area.
- Only fund those who can prove they are registered within Northern Ireland and have local employees
- Laziness
- How money is spent supporting business has no impact goals and no measurement of success. Government funds allocated by local council are spent to secure the highest number of votes this will attract.
- Support local business by supporting your own workers such as bin men
- There is a genuine and wide perception NMD does not focus enough on the County Town of Downpatrick
- There needs to be a pipeline of skilled workers to fulfil jobs created, therefore attention is needed in the educational sector and to support the economically inactive to do so. Higher profile on where there are job skills gaps for those in education etc. and flexibility in jobs so that those with benefits are not impacted by gradually becoming part of the workforce again.
- I am not aware of the council supporting anything in the local economy
- No
- I disagree that the council creates new jobs.
- Create jobs for people with disabilities

Performance Improvement Objective 3

Youth Voice

- Bins are full all the time.
- Bins not being emptied.
- Bins aren't being monitored
- Dog fouling and litter - Kilkeel is boggin
- Kilkeel is boggin
- Bin strike
- Littering is a huge problem and needs tackled. Have notices re: dog fouling but need to have more bins to put litter, dog poo etc.

Cedar Foundation

- Littering, dog fouling and fly tipping are significant issues across the District.
- The Council should issue more fixed penalty notices to offenders as the number is very small considering the littering around the District.
- There was a large fly-tipping incident out beside Slieve Gullion Forest Park.
- There is a significant amount of litter on Monks Hill and the Crieve Road, and areas which are poorly lit can often suffer from high levels of fly tipping.
- It would be good to see more community clean ups taking place.
- Good to hear that the Council offer bulky waste collection and assisted bin lifts to residents that need it.
- Council should have more signs up about not mowing the grass verges to protect the bees as people don't know and think it just looks untidy.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- Fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling will always be there.
- A lot of litter bins have been taken away but not all have been replaced.
- Street cleaners never seems to have brushed with them to clean hard to reach area under seats and its left.
- Places look untidy which is not conducive to good tourism and attracting people.
- Some areas are happy with the cleansing service they receive while other areas are not.
- Dog fouling is the biggest issue.
- Like the idea of the paint re-use scheme, great to see an initiative like this in the Council area.

NMD Speak Website

- Have sufficient staff resources in place
- The council continues with the same failed systems and refuses to use technology like DNA testing for dog fouling or cameras for illegal dumping. Not to mention the failure to deliver bird proof bins in coastal areas

- You do nothing about litter....shameful , please work with schools to stop littering, please provide bins and dog bins at least.
- Country roads and dual carriageway full of litter and illegal dumping for months
- Effective action is required in this regard throughout the district.
- Downpatrick is dirty also surrounding towns..how many mechanical sweepers are in Downpatrick. How many times are the estates clean compared to Newry
- Must be a strong monitoring on litter. And dog fouling is shocking in Donaghadee water and Warrenpoint shore road. Litter all around the area is a disgrace on the country roads
- Resident could be paid low wage to litter pick at weekends. This would be good for residents well-being/fitness who might normally work retail or admin, earn extra cash, and offer council cheaper labour. Could be paid with vouchers for local businesses to support our local economy.
- More bins are required in tourist locations. If there is a bench or picnic table, then a bin is required in the visible area.
- Dog fouling is a big problem. Harsher penalties that are actually enforced would be good
- More dog wardens needed, hundreds of fines need to be issued. When people know the risk is they will be fined they will be less likely to let their dog foul
- Fly tipping in remote areas and dog fouling are major issues. Staffing and fines should be increased. Public awareness campaigns wastes money-people know it's wrong. Get creative.
- The council are failing at this now. Newry and surrounding areas are a disgrace.
- Council has not agreed on a weedkiller towns and cemetery's look awful
- There is a need to clean the roadside verges and have zero tolerance to any litter. The road from Camlough past the council dump is in a terrible state with rubbish in all the verges and hedges
- Any chance of sorting the potholes â€¦. Roads are not good
- NMDDC have abandoned littering prosecutions long ago. Its a case of "Hear no evil, see no Evil"!!! The little man will pay the litter lifting bill.
- I hope so â€¦. Dog foul is everywhereâ€¦. Flytipping a disgrace â€¦. How do you intend to manage this?
- Dog fouling is a permanent problem in Killybegs.
- More and bigger bins. Solar powered compacting bins. More name and shame of irresponsible dog owners
- Would suit you better to actually clean the streets in the first place
- Not enough bins in various towns across the district. Dog litter is terrible.
- No visible patrols. Island park Newcastle. Tennis club has broken glass outside every other night from underage drinkers
- This is a very significant issue and requires much work to address
- Council needs to employ a team or teams of people to ensure street cleaning in each city, town and village.
- My bins are constantly being left for 3-4 weeks between collection

- Again, what means are in place to support your objectives - I would like to see the actions and your plans on how you aim to achieve these very broad statements - that is the part missing- the plans are the means of showing your thought process and timescales of delivery - what are your key measurements ?
- How much of the Council budget will be allocated to additional enforcement and dog wardens? Newcastle last weekend was absolutely disgusting with the amount of rubbish, overflowing bins and lack of toilets.
- Definitely this is not done our streets are a disgrace
- Improve the enforcement of existing laws and regulations.
- Need to provide locals who litterpick with coloured bags that can be deposited at Road junctions for bin lorries to lift whilst doing their rounds weekly.
- Not enough being done. Need to crack down more on littering dog fouling etc. Hit people where it hurts in their pockets. Residents constantly getting away with fly tipping on green areas
- more communal bins, schemes to fine people who litter & advertise penalties
- And washing the footpaths on Newcastle main street
- Not unless there is clear accountability - for example - so we see the terrible state of the district appear as a negative of the responsible executive staff members performance review ? Are they on a performance improve plan which is they don't resolve the issues they are ultimately found unfit for their job?
- How can you do this with the strikes?
- But actions speak louder than words
- Need more bins in more locations. Higher profile on littering being culturally unacceptable.. Get business to become more corporately aware of litter issues and CSR to clean around their premises areas to promote their sustainability etc. Educate on the results of littering, dog fouling, promote responsible dog ownership with classes. Ensure more of the items put for recycling are actually recycled.
- Only when it's pointed out by a councilor standing and pointing at it on Facebook.
- No
- There is a great deal of litter along the footpaths in the area, it would be great to see a litter free environment.
- Nothing worse than dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs. Owners also not controlling their dogs remains a further issue.
- No one ever clears the dog poo on the paths where I live, Rathfriland Road area.
- The footpaths in Warrenpoint are a complete disgrace and there aren't enough bins for dog waste
- It's only on Monday last 1st of May 2023 that I was out for a walk near Slieve Gullion , somebody had been fly tipping . The objects that were dumped were babies dirty nappies . I did report at a Cedar Foundation meeting on the 2nd May 2023 . Two council officials were invited to the meeting with Cedar Foundation Newry User Forum . I went back the next

day , all objects were lifted . These objects should not have been dumped in the first place

- What measures will you take to address rural littering so that locals do not have to keep cleaning it several times per year ?
- Entire district is a disgrace

Performance Improvement Objective 4

Youth Voice

- Clanrye river and the Canal should be prioritised
- More wind turbines
- Wind turbines
- More direct action
- More wind turbines
- Inevitable natural order of the Earth, however we do contribute and that may be harmful, throwing nature off course. We need to slow down our contribution to it.
- Make sure this is a priority to the Council and not over looked due to funding issues.

CEDAR Foundation

- There needs to be a lot more EV charging points in the district.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- Council don't seem to have a maintenance strategy, the free wifi in Newry and Warrenpoint is not maintained and is never working. Hope these new EV charging points will be maintained.

NMd Speak Website

- Is there an active ISO in place for council ?
- This from a council who fails to deliver their biodiversity plan and won't protect trees which have tpos and have accepted aconsultation which proposes substandard greenways and active travel plans.
- How ? Nothing is done in Downpatrick to support the wildlife or environment. You should be ashamed.
- Lost of green spaces and coastal way losing our AONB
- Pragmatic and workable initiatives are required in this respect.
- This is not a suitable objective. Council do not have qualified scientists among their staff. The CO2 net zero aspirations of other councils in the UK, along with their 15 and 20 minute cities are based on a false premise. True science tells us that these policies do not help people or the climate. Instead they cause hardship, depopulation, loss of freedom, and the negative impacts are felt most keenly by the most disadvantaged in society. This objective is bad for business so it contradicts objective two. It is anti-health and family so it contradicts objective one.
- Vehicles are scrap constantly breaking down ,leaking oil ,fumes .where are the new vehicles that was promised for down
- Have strict supervision on the number of trees that are being cut down€!..some just for house building
- see above re growth, the two conflict each other. Expalin how you can grow without increasing your impacts in relation to climate change
- Lead from the front

- This is the most sensible suggestion made, proportional to how urgent it is. Should be expanded to include enhancement of biodiversity and conservation/restoration of historically damaged natural spaces. To include totally rework Mournes Gateway Project, no gondola or visitor centre. Many great alternatives available.
- What are you doing to counter this, are council offices running off solar? Are vehicles electric?
- We need our park
- NMDDC will waste money and limited resources on vain Projects regardless of the Climate / Carbon footprint. Efficiency is not a focus for NMDDC
- The recycling centre operates limited opening hours making it difficult to access
- More electric car charging stations. Free town shuttle buses
- Again another great statement - the action plan reinforces the objectives which are very broad but in statements - your intent sounds great but proof of how this is carried out by means of a plan us what is like to read & see
- The vanity project of the Newcastle Gondola is one of the most environmentally destructive projects in recent years. What are your plans to mitigate the destruction caused and to offset the carbon footprint of the project.
- Should be done but You will probably waste a lot of time and money writing reports and having meetings about this rather than doing
- Re-open the canal rather than driving more traffic through environmentally sensitive areas. Pedestrianise Hill Street to improve air quality, reduce emissions & bring an area you have managed to kill back to life.
- I am not in favour of low traffic neighbourhoods as people with disabilities need to be able to drive close to shops. I'm not in favour of getting rid of our central car parks. I'm not in favour of our farms having to reduce their nitrogen as farms are our only source of natural food. I'm not in favour of surveillance and monitoring our carbon foot print. I am not in favour of becoming a cashless society. I do agree with doing as much as we can to help our planet but big companies could do more.
- Better access to recycling centres.
- Planning for renewable energies must be prioritised look at area where acceptable. Have to stop Nimbyism and lobby for more support to change for renewable energy sources.
- When one off your warehouses burn down and you cover up its asbestos roof blowing around the town. St. Christopher park wear house in question.
- No
- We need to keep trying to improve our wind and solar power and give more information to the public.
- I don't see any effort to reduce environmental impact on climate change.
- Keep using recycling centres , and proper bins provided by the council

Performance Improvement Objective 5

Youth Voice

- Sustainable energy sources
- Planning permission isn't good in rural areas (e.g Kilkeel)
- Agree but do not feel this is as important a priority as the previous 4.
- Look into getting young people involved in the process.

Newry and Mourne Senior Forum

- Tram station in Bessbrook is up for development and people want it to be developed as a tourist attraction, we need to preserve our villages and not build a petrol station and houses.

NMD Speak Website

- Your planning office is toxic and out of date
- Particular attention and effective powers must be given to enforcement where clear breaches of planning regulations have been made. Enforcement must create the environment that reverses building activities where planning has not been sought in advance or where planning recommendations have been ignored. The special nature of the environment throughout the district demands effective leadership in this regard. Retrospective planning requests should not be tolerated.
- I work in the planning department and I love my job, but it is disappointing to see targets not being met as staff work extremely hard. The planning dept. have lost more than 5 business support staff and this work results in the business support staff which are left being over worked and not getting their own work done. The planning officers have had to help business support to put new applications on the new portal resulting in planning officers not being able to process applications and is a short term fix as the new applications continually build up again and staff are swamped. The new portal and loss of staff has resulted in planning officers spending less time processing applications as there is now more admin tasks to complete than there ever was before for planning officers. There is a lack of staff also in the planning technical side as officers have not been replaced when off on long term sick, maternity and posts not filled when people leave. This has resulted in high case lists and workloads for the staff remaining and it is unfair. Planning surgeries do not happen anymore in the Newry office. The planning officers also do not have the correct IT infrastructure to carry out their jobs on site since the new portal as planners were to be given ipads to view drawings, this never happened and results in officers now having to print plans to take on site, which is a waste of time and paper. IT infrastructure is essential for site visits and officers should have an ipad each (similarly to building control officers) for doing their job. Staff receive no training and left to get on with the job, this is partly because everyone is so stretched with their workload. The poor work environment and workloads have resulted in a high turnover of staff with people leaving for other councils. Furthermore, it would be good to discuss this objective

directly with planning staff to see how we can work together to improve resources, IT and any other measures necessary to achieve this objective.

- The planning department is a joke. No transparency and no accountability. Like the rest of the council they refuse to reply to emails and whoever is in charge of enforcement must be on gardening leave.
- There is no enforcement at all and already going against their own policies on planning
- Improve your processes this will help your processing times
- Again, a huge issue and welcome to address but not as priority.
- Only let planning through as long as the infrastructure can support it
- We want our park!
- We will wait and see. Currently the worst in N.I. and no sign of change. A planning mindset of "" how can we delay/ block / procrastinate instead of pushing ahead positively
- So far itâ€™s a disgrace !! Allow landowners more considerationâ€¦ allow growth and investment in the town â€¦. All change is necessary change â€¦. If a decaying building is listed â€¦ help get the building back to its state
- Takes far too long: this needs addressed!!
- So could you spell the improvements - what is the current processing time vrs how shall you improve it - statistics & plans are needed to back your side statements -
- Planning enforcement is non-existent at present. There are projects in Newcastle which have been implemented without permission, shops with a change of use (again without permission) and no action has been taken by the planners, even when they have been informed.
- Should be done
- Improve on the reuse of existing buildings, especially in Newry town centre.
- Needs to be more specificâ€¦ improve by what %
- What really is the point of having targets for processing planning applications, when there appears to be an alarming lack of consistency in decision making stemming from the Planning Committee arbitrarily overruling recommendations seemingly as a matter of policy? A work colleague who submitted an application for a dwelling said to me that their agent had told her not to worry about it's location because "Councillor XXX will sort it out for us!" When I checked the records I discovered that indeed a refusal recommendation had been overturned. What are the Council's guidelines on this practice?
- Need a consistent approach to planning and more staff. Need to lobby government to ensure existing housing stock is utilised e.g. all upstairs of retail units could be used for accommodation making premises safer more nightlife and then safer for people. Type of housing approved needs to suit a mix of needs and have access to public transport.
- Canâ€™t see happening, they have tried for years to make this happen.
- No
- I donâ€™t know enough about this to comment.
- What about the sewage treatment in Warrenpoint
- Need to speed up applications

Other comments

- Increased recycling targets and giving residents all the tools/equipment/information to do same
- Yes a vote of confidence in the management team. Stop making residents lives worse while continuing to expect them to bail you out by having to pay increasing rates every year
- Downpatrick is a dump, shopfronts and buildings disgraceful, litter everywhere, no flowers or hanging baskets, no bins, parking and traffic situation a mess, roads a mess. Tourist sites not supported or maintained, nothing for kids to do, drug situation out of control, no parks or walks vrs population. Sewage in the river, animal abuse and dog fouling out of control, illegal lotteries not investigated, major drug dealing and money laundering etc etc you could go on for days. It would be interesting to see per capita spend for Downpatrick postcodes vrs the rest of Down. Investigation needed asap. Severe lack of funding vrs amount collected in rates. P.S your website is embarrassing.....everything is out of date....the least you can do is keep the info up to date and accurate.
- They would need to tear the page out and start again. Having delivered on any of their commitments. They donâ€™t even acknowledge emails
- I would like to see your Access to the Countryside Policy implemented in more than a token way. An audit of the current state of the existing public rights of way in the council area should be undertaken (many are blocked or not waymarked). An online map of them all should be published.
- Improve the openness and transparency and accountability of all funding within all council departments. Endeavour to ensure effective performance while guaranteeing value for money, efficiency and excellence.
- Level of council investment in Outdoor facilities and sports clubs which are not field sports.
- Show the number of times an area is monitored and action taken. For example the speed on shore road between Warrenpoint and Rostrevor and the Moygannon Road. 30 speed limit is totally ignored and people do 60/70 but it is NEVER monitored and fines issued. You need to measure the impact of what you have done in practical ways dog fouling, littering are totally spoiling our countryside
- No
- increase in biodiversity by species level, habitat level.
- peoples access to the natural world
- increase in woodland cover
- increase in protected areas to achieve 30 by 30 targets
- reduce carbon to achieve net zero targets
- Resident/ratepayers could be paid low wage/vouchers to litter pick at weekends/evenings. This would be good for residents well-being/fitness who might normally work retail or admin, earn extra cash, and offer council cheaper labour (cheaper than overtime & agency staff). Could be paid with vouchers for local businesses to support our local economy. This would increase pride in the local area.

- Increased footfall in leisure services. Access to leisure services in all areas.
- We will invest and develop the current infrastructure (revitalising and rejuvenating under used, vacant and derelict sites) in our towns and villages to provide suitable facilities for every community.
- We will consult with local communities on what their priorities and needs are from each service area that the council provides and target resources and funding to projects that communities identify as priorities. (eg Newry Park, reinstatement of Warrenpoint Swimming baths,
- The measurement of success is that everytime the council proposes a project the majority of responses are positive and supportive.
- The measurement of success is that towns and villages are rejuvenated thriving and prosperous- and residents feel they get value for money for their high rate paying
- Stop wasting money on unwanted projects like the Mourne Gateway (which Newcastle cannot handle the increase of people) and spend the money on more useful things, like fixing the potholes, as the roads are in a terrible state. Town centres are in bad need for repairs to derelict buildings, and help to bring in small businesses to encourage people back in town centres.
- Financial assistance
- Make the process of applying for and spending grants more accessible for community groups/volunteers and more in line with streamlined processes in other councils. Appreciate your volunteers without them the community would be much worse off and the council would have to spend much more money on community development.
- Also community centres/town halls open at accessible times and Not charging a caretaker fee to open in the evenings/weekend - be more proactive in offering out our community halls and advertising the spaces - this will make them more cost effective
- The council is incredibly out-of-touch with the needs of residents, as is evident in these suggested objectives. Frivolous spending on auxiliary needs. Road maintenance, new road infrastructure, expansion of public transport provision, new council housing, fixed wastewater management, healthcare, schools, environmental health etc. These are the basics of a functioning society, and are clearly neglected. It's common sense that they be priority, anything else is shocking misuse of our money. Your suggestions scream "middle-class". The suggestions are mostly comfort based, while the silent majority need the basics I've described.
- More emphasis needed on objective 3
- improve visibility of council management leaders with a real vision for Newry city explained, consulted and delivered
- We want our park!
- Excellent, straightforward and clear objectives for the council to work towards.
- We only have to look at NMDDC sickness/ Absenteeism figures to give a picture of efficiency desires. It seems the Trade Unions actually call the shots in NMDDC

- When something is suggested by council there should be an obligation on council officials to take matters forward. So many ideas wither for lack of follow up and accountability for non action
- I would like the council to be more accessible. Last year I submitted a message from your direct contact message via your website and never received a reply. I followed it up with leaving a message with the receptionist that answered the phone. I never received a reply. That is not customer service.
- Objective 4 should be expanded to include electrical charging network and more cycle routes and dedicated bike parking. Benefits both environmental objectives and tourism, local business in newcastle
- Downpatrick has a first class leisure facility in DLC which is visible in the general numbers of a wide diverse range on ages that us the facility. But opening hours at the weekend are very much lacking and restrict the use of the service for a great number of people. Longer opening hours into the evening is required at the weekends.
- Transport/buses only take change and should take card and very hard to get buses in rural areas.
- The river and canal
- Transport, I can't get home anytime past 6 that's when I have lessons to make my way to and from home.
- Transport - make more efficient
- Public transport - be later at night especially around rural areas.
- Public transport in more rural areas
- More emphasis on the climate and environment and litter
- I strongly suggest that the generic statements listed - action plans and timelines on how these will be achieved is key.

Objectives need to be achievable and measurable . Newry is a beautiful city , the people need educated on preserving our beautiful town - not continue to throw rubbish in the canal or where they feel like it- high quality cameras are needed at the flytipping spots .

I don't see any objective in respect of safety to the public - surely this should be high on the agenda.

Additionally - Hill street once a booming street - small businesses squeezed out to the big shopping centres - hill street needs a plan to bring this place back to life and really support local businesses by encouraging the people back to this street .

Very quick to get rid of our iconic old buildings - one should be harnessing from the hesitation of these old buildings and restore them.

Newry could relish from an old and new town . Unfortunately, Newry deemed a city but it is still very much a beautiful town not city- it lacks too much to be deemed a city. What benefit does this create by deeming Newry a city - it is far from city status .

One thing that seriously needs to be addressed is the crime & public disruption from alcohol & substance abuse - making Newry a safer city to walk about .

- I think I've covered enough above.
- You need to provide a FREE bulky refuse collection to help with fly tipping - not all can afford Â£10

Also consider going back to making free community skips available

And if trees are overhanging and leaving footpaths dangerous then remove the trees to save both time and money on this issue - trees need to be preserved but they also need to be in places where the leaves can be left to decompose naturally without causing a hazard

- Increase funding and help to the arts and culture.
A thriving local arts scene will drive the tourist economy and improve mental well-being among all ages.

Supporting actions:

1. Fund IÃr Cinn Fleadh properly rather than relying on volunteers to run the entire programme on 20k.
2. Work with artists and creatives to successfully complete simplified funding applications.
3. Create and support accessible art spaces.

Measure of success:

1. Increase in tourism economy measured by spending in local industries, increased footfall in public areas, hotel & hospitality income.
 2. A reduction in those seeking MH support.
 3. Monitor national & international coverage of key events such as IÃr Cinn Fleadh.
- We will seek the views of our population in relation to the delivery of services
 - More effort of cleanliness, refuse collections etc. The likes of Newcastle workers seen on the streets daily carrying out duties of emptying bins etc. Workforce in Newry getting it too handy and not putting full day work in
 - Enable a better customer experience online
 - There is no value to performance improvement objectives if no one is held accountable when they aren't achieved - I'd like to see a named owner on each objective !
 - Bring back Festival of Flight, it is the biggest event in our district and supports the local businesses so much as well as bringing 100k people to the area.
 - Pay your staff correctly and you get a better happier workforce
 - A measured strategy for investment in Downpatrick across all areas!
 - Improvements to roads and infrastructure - poor quality roads and our infrastructure causes noticeable traffic and congestion issues in significant number of NMD areas

For objective 1, continued improvement of green spaces in particular those of natural beauty, key recent benefits are, Tievenadarragh Wood which has significant footfall, Drumkeeragh forget which also has much increased footfall and recent drawing of visitors e.g. orienteering event, and those of glasswater Wood etc. Which has not only had increased footfall but also hosts other events e.g. the children's outdoor group

- No
- Yes, listen to relate payers regarding peopleâ€™s park.
- More Bins and dog fouling bins
- Live stream the meetings to ensure openness and transparency

Other improvements

- Better communication with your service users
- The recycling service to be improved.
- I would like to see the various recycling bins along the promenade, main street, and in the various parks and car parks.
- These sets of bins would consist of the normal rubbish bins, plus bins for paper, glass and plastic.
- We don't just need to recycle at home but also encourage it throughout the area.
- I would like a better cleaning service of the pavements in Newcastle. Ever since the Chinese paving was put down, those paving slabs have never been properly cleaned.
- More facilities for the people in Newcastle. For years we have cried out for an indoor swimming pool. I am disabled and cannot easily travel to Downpatrick.
- We also have a large school in the town, so I'm sure that a swimming pool would get use.
- I also think that a bowling alley would be a great asset. This sports facility can be used for all age groups, young, old and disabled. It would also be a facility for residents and visitors, to be used all year round.
- With the addition of a cafe it could also be a socialising area.
- Improve your maintenance in your bin lorries as they are constantly breaking down and out bins are frequently not emptied. Maybe change lease on them with the provider when purchasing bin lorry to save on costs and maintenance time. Free car parking for
- the small towns as the shops are struggling and this would be welcome also reduction in business rates would be welcome all over to help improve the economy and support business owners. There seems to be a lot of empty shops around NI and a lot of businesses closing due to the rising costs.
- Cycling and electric charging infrastructure
- Longer opening hours into the evening is required at the weekends at DLC
- Deliver the Albert Basin Park
- Abandoned buildings
- Diversity
- Concerts
- More diversity
- More concerts
- Diversity - all over
- Concerts / large events held in Newry
- Make areas attractive
- Empty shops etc. make the area unattractive
- More leisure facilities young people friendly, costs quite often prevent us using facilities.
- More diversity. More Concerts
- Abandoned buildings. Diversity. Concerts
- Keep things running smoothly