

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18

Mid Year Assessment



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

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Council's progress in implementing the performance improvement objectives between April-September 2017. Where possible, performance has been tracked against the targets set within the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18.

Performance Improvement Objectives 2017-18

- 1. Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities**
- 2. Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination**
- 3. Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in**
- 4. Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District**
- 5. Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures**

Legend

Status	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved
	Target or objective partially achieved / likely to be achieved / subject to delay
	Target or objective not achieved / unlikely to be achieved

It should be noted that the information contained within this report may be subject to change when the results are verified, validated and reported through the annual Assessment of Performance which will be published by 30 September 2018.

Progress at a glance

Performance Improvement Objective	Progress	Status
Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities	Newry Leisure Centre completed in October 2017	
	Completion of Downpatrick Leisure Centre delayed until Q3 2018-19	
	Over 790,000 attendances at Council leisure facilities and 764 children took part in Community Play initiatives	
	Delay in carrying out the review of outdoor leisure facilities	
Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination	93 jobs promoted through business start-up activity	
	32 community groups and organisations provided with business support	
	£600k awarded to 19 projects through Call I of the Rural Business Investment Scheme	
	Four of our 'Giant Adventure' festivals attracted around 131,000 visitors and generated over £3.8m for the local economy	
Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in	Physical re-development of Warrenpoint Municipal Park on track to complete by Q1 2018-19	
	Delay in commencing the environmental improvement and revitalisation schemes	
	Forkhill Greenspace Project completed in May 2017 and 42 Village Plans being updated or created	
Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District	Blue bin collections available to all commercial properties in the legacy Down District	
	Domestic food waste service in place and there has been a 29% increase in brown bin waste	
	Completion of the Downpatrick Household Waste Recycling Centre delayed until Q3 2018-19	
	£39,988 awarded through the 'Down Your Street' initiative	
	Improved processing time for local planning applications	
Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures	Corporate Consultation and Engagement Framework adopted	
	48% of places occupied on community engagement structures are taken by representatives from the voluntary, business and community sectors	
	Over £1.3m awarded to 380 projects through the Financial Assistance scheme	
	1,276 devices fitted in 151 homes through the 'Home Secure' scheme	
	12,030 calls made to the 299 registered service users on the 'Good Morning, Good Neighbour' scheme	

Performance Improvement Objective 1

Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Active and Healthy Communities

Progress:

- Phase II of Newry Leisure Centre completed in October, with the official launch taking place on 3-4 November 2017.
- The completion of Downpatrick Leisure Centre has been delayed until Q3 2018-19, due to the re-design of the sub structure. The demolition of the existing leisure centre and construction of the new car park will complete during Q4 2018-2019 and Q1 2019-2020 respectively.
- There have been over 790,000 attendances at the Council's indoor leisure facilities.
- The Marketing Plan and new physical identity for the leisure service are in the process of being developed. The new leisure IT system will be launched in November, to improve customer accessibility to information and online booking.
- Targeted physical activity programmes continue to be delivered through the Everybody Active 2020 Programme.
- The review of outdoor leisure facilities has been delayed and will be progressed when Tier 5 Officers are recruited.
- The Council has issued the 'Request for Tender' to carry out the year one physical works outlined in the Play Strategy. DEA Fora have been consulted and the community consultation process will commence during Q4 2017-18.
- 764 children have participated in Community Play initiatives.
- The Activity, Promotion and Development Plan is being prepared and will be finalised when Tier 5 Officers are recruited.

Measure of Success	2017-18		Status	Explanatory note
	Target	YTD Actual		
4% increase in the number of participants using indoor leisure facilities	1,436,739 attendances	791,757 attendances		The Council has achieved 55.1% of the 2017-18 target.
5% increase in the number of participants using Newry Leisure Centre	586,316 attendances	307,973 attendances		The Council has achieved 52.5% of the 2017-18 target (attendance levels include Newry Sports Centre).
9% increase in the number of participants using Down Leisure Centre by 2018-19	192,515 attendances	184,411 attendances		The Council has achieved 95.8% of the 2017-18 target. Following the completion of Downpatrick Leisure Centre, it is anticipated that attendance levels will increase further.
Level of user satisfaction with selected indoor leisure facilities	Baseline to be established		-	The Council is considering carrying out customer satisfaction surveys at selected leisure centres, through APSE

				Performance Networks.
Increase in the number of children and young people engaged in Community Play initiatives	-	764		764 children and young people participated in Community Play initiatives at a number of locations including Martin's Lane, Drumanness, Kitty's Road and Jonesborough. Further Community Play initiatives are scheduled to take place during Q3/Q4 2017-18.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

Progress:

- The NI 'Go for It' Business Start programme is in place and offers regional wide business start-up support and activity.
- 15 short term business development workshops have been delivered and an application has been submitted to fund the delivery of long term Business Growth mentoring programmes.
- The Social Economy Programme is in place and the Council is developing applications for Call 2 of the European Social Fund Programme 2014-20, which seeks to reduce economic inactivity and increase the skills base.
- The Mourne, Gullion and Lecale Partnership awarded over £600k to 19 projects through Call I of the Rural Business Investment Scheme. 100 expressions of interest have been submitted to Call 2 of the Scheme.
- In partnership with the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland, the Council is progressing Global Geopark status for the Mourne and Ring of Gullion, and has developed a Marketing and Engagement Plan which will be rolled out in Q3 2017/18.
- Current works on the Carlingford Lough Greenway between the Weir and Victoria Lough are scheduled to complete by January 2018.
- Consultation and engagement with key stakeholders has informed the development of the Destination Experience Development Plan for Mourne, Ring of Gullion and the Mourne Coast. This plan will be launched and rolled out during Q3/Q4 2017-18.
- The Council's Giant Adventures festivals took place between June-September 2017, including the inaugural City of Merchants festival which celebrated Newry's rich maritime and industrial heritage.

Measure of success	2017-18		Status	Explanatory note
	Target	YTD Actual		
Number of business plan applications approved	245	123		The Council has achieved 50% of the 2017-18 target.

Number of new business starts	167	84		The Council has achieved 50% of the 2017-18 target.
Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity	155	93		The Council has achieved 60% of the 2017-18 target.
Number of new social enterprise start ups	8	4		The Council has achieved 50% of the target.
Number of new social enterprise jobs created	12	5		The Council has achieved 42% of the 2017-18 target.
Number of new volunteers recruited	30	12		The Council has achieved 40% of the 2017-18 target.
Number of community groups and organisations provided with business support	40	32		The Council has achieved 80% of the 2017-18 target.
Estimated number of visitors to flagship festivals (total)	-	131,000		Festival of Flight attracted the largest number of visitors (103,000) whilst the remaining festivals attracted between 9,000-10,000 visitors each.
Estimated direct spend at flagship festivals (total)	-	£3,832,036		Festival of Flight generated the largest proportion of direct spend across the four festivals (£3,175,974) whilst the remaining festivals generated between £170,342 and £263,457 each.
Level of visitor satisfaction with flagship festivals (average)	-	96%		Visitor satisfaction with all events was very high, ranging from 94% for Wake the Giant to 97% for Skiffie Strangford Lough.
Growth rate per annum in overnight expenditure in Newry, Mourne and Down	NI Target (Annual)	NMD 2016 (Actual)		The regional annual target for growth in overnight expenditure is 6%. In 2016, Newry, Mourne and Down experienced a 26.9% increase in growth in overnight expenditure since the previous year, exceeding the regional target.
	6%	26.9%		
	2020 target	YTD Actual		
Number of new micro and small rural businesses created in rural areas	55	-	-	Performance measures and targets will be monitored and reported throughout the lifetime of Rural Development Programme.
Number of micro and small businesses supported in rural areas	30	-	-	

Number of new jobs created in rural areas	147	-	-	
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*YTD actuals for business plan applications, new business starts and jobs promoted through business start-up activity relates to April-August 2017.

*Evaluation of the flagship festivals includes Festival of Flight, Footsteps in the Forest, Skiffie Strangford Lough and Wake the Giant. The evaluation for the City of Merchants festival is currently being finalised.

*'Average spend per group at flagship festivals' has been substituted with 'estimated direct spend at flagship festivals', as a result of the amended methodology for evaluating events.

*The 'level of visitor satisfaction with flagship festivals' was calculated based on a score of 1-5 in 2016 (with scores 4-5 used to determine the level of satisfaction) and 1-10 in 2017 (with scores 7-10 used to determine the level of satisfaction).

Performance Improvement Objective 3

Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

Progress:

- The main contractor to carry out the physical re-development of Warrenpoint Municipal Park is in the process of being appointed and will start on site during Q3 2017-18.
- The implementation of the Ring of Gullion AONB Management Plan 2017-2022 is underway, with projects including the Upland Visitor Management project and community engagement and capacity building programmes.
- The implementation of the Strangford and Lecale AONB Management Plan 2017-2022 is underway, with projects including the submission of a £3m Landscape Partnership Scheme proposal 'Coast Connect' and a number of public biodiversity projects.
- Funding for the environmental improvement and revitalisation schemes in Downpatrick, Newry and Warrenpoint has not been released. The Council is working with the Department for Communities to ensure the schemes remain on the agenda, and are ready to progress when funding is secured.
- The Forkhill Greenspace Pathway Project completed in May 2017, providing an 800 metre circular pathway with seating, tree planting and artwork images designed by pupils from the local primary school.
- The Council secured £51,375 funding from the Mourne, Gullion and Lecale Partnership to update 24 existing Village Plans and create 18 new Village Plans. Community consultation on the Village Plans is now complete.
- Through the Rural Development Programme, a Broadband Feasibility Study is being conducted to identify three pilot projects in Mourne, Lecale and Slieve Gullion to redress the challenges of rural broadband connectivity. An application has also been submitted by Belfast City Council to LFFN (Local Full Fibre Networks) on behalf of NI Councils for the Gigabit Voucher Scheme, which seeks to support businesses in purchasing gigabit-capable connectivity.

Measure of success	2015-16 Actual	2018-19 Target	2020-21 Target	Status	Explanatory note
Increase in the number of visitors to Warrenpoint Municipal Park	20,865	27,900	35,000	-	The baseline data was collated in 2015-16 and the next survey will be carried out in Q3 2019.
Improved visitor satisfaction with Warrenpoint Municipal park	68%	74%	80%	-	The baseline data was collated in 2015-16 and the next survey will be carried out in Q3 2019.
Increase in the number of people who believe Warrenpoint Municipal park enhances their quality of life	31%	40.5%	50%	-	The baseline data was collated in 2015-16 and the next survey will be carried out in Q3 2019.
Increased footfall, improved business/visitor perception and reduced/sustained vacant properties by 2019-2020, following the completion of the Newry, Warrenpoint and Downpatrick environmental improvement and revitalisation schemes.		-			As a result of the political situation in Northern Ireland, funding for the environmental improvement and revitalisation schemes in Downpatrick, Newry and Warrenpoint has not been released. The Council is working with the Department for Communities to ensure the schemes remain on the agenda, and are ready to progress when funding is secured.

Performance Improvement Objective 4

Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Regulatory and Technical Services

Progress:

- Blue bin collections are available to all commercial properties in the legacy Down area and the Council continues to circulate promotional material highlighting the cost and environmental benefits of recycling.
- Project teams have been established to explore options for harmonising glass collection and progressing the routes optimisation project.
- The completion of the Downpatrick Household Waste Recycling Centre has been delayed until Q3 2018-19 due to the requirement to carry out ecology surveys as part of the planning process. The project is currently being progressed to the design stage.

- The domestic food waste service is now in place across the District and the 'No Food in Black Bin' awareness campaign is underway.
- 34 schools currently hold the Green Flag award, 40 school visits were organised to discuss issues such as waste, litter and biodiversity and 60 schools took part in the annual calendar competition which promotes the benefits of recycling.
- The Litter Strategy has been drafted and an Anti-Litter Committee has been established.
- Enforcement Officers continued to promote responsible dog ownership by carrying out targeted leaflet drops and engaging with visitors at Council run festivals. Litter and dog fouling bins in Warrenpoint have also been rebranded.
- The two minute beach clean initiatives successfully engaged volunteers in removing litter in coastal areas and £39,988 was awarded to 18 environmental improvement projects through the 'Down Your Street' initiative.
- During Q1 2017-18, the Council received the second highest number of planning applications across NI (402), 400 of which were local planning applications.
- Since April 2015, the Council reduced the number of live legacy planning applications by 92.6%.

Measure of Success	2017-18		Status	Explanatory note
	Target	YTD Actual		
Percentage of household waste collected that is sent for recycling	44% in 2017-18 / 50% by 2020	-	-	Validated Q1 data to be released by DAERA in November 2017.
Amount of biodegradable municipal waste that is landfilled	<23,675	-	-	Validated Q1 data to be released by DAERA in November 2017.
Amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	85,500 tonnes	-	-	Validated Q1 data to be released by DAERA in November 2017.
Reduction in black bin waste collected	-	15,663 tonnes		There has been a 7% reduction in black bin waste when compared to April-August 2016.
Increase in mixed dry recyclables collected	-	4,544 tonnes		There has been a 2% increase in blue bin waste, when compared to April-August 2016.
Increase in brown bin waste collected	-	5,989 tonnes		There has been a 29% increase in brown bin waste, when compared to April-August 2016.
Reduction in general waste arisings at civic amenity sites	Baseline to be established			This information is being collated and will be reported through the annual Assessment of Performance 2017-18.
Percentage of bins collected on their scheduled day	Baseline to be established			This information is being collated and will be reported through the annual Assessment of Performance 2017-18.
Level of street cleanliness across	Baseline to be established			The street cleanliness system will be piloted across the District once the

the district				methodology has been developed and agreed.
Percentage of planning enforcement cases that are processed within 39 weeks	Standard	Q1 Actual		Whilst the Council has made progress in processing enforcement cases within the statutory timescale of 39 weeks, Q1 performance during 2017-18 remains below the regional average of 76.9%.
	70%	57%		
Average processing time of major planning applications	<30 weeks	92.6 weeks		The 2017-18 Q1 processing time of major planning applications is above the regional average of 55.5 weeks and represents a 6 week increase since Q1 2016-17. No major planning applications were processed within 30 weeks, compared to 11.1% during the same period last year.
Average processing time of local planning applications	<15 weeks	18.8 weeks		Whilst the 2017-18 Q1 processing time of local planning applications is above the regional average of 15.4 weeks, it has reduced from 26.2 weeks in Q1 2016-17, representing an improved processing time of 7.4 weeks. 41.8% of local planning applications were processed within 15 weeks which represents a 17.6% improvement from the same period last year.

*YTD actuals for black bin waste, mixed dry recyclables and brown bin waste relates to April-August 2017

*2017-18 Q1 planning statistics remain provisional and will be finalised when the Department for Infrastructure releases the 2017-18 Annual Report in June 2018.

Performance Improvement Objective 5

Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Active and Healthy Communities

Progress:

- The Corporate Consultation and Engagement Framework has been adopted and provides a robust and meaningful foundation to encourage and enable citizens to have a voice on local issues.
- Of the 185 places currently occupied through the Council's engagement structures, 32% are taken by Elected Members, 20% by statutory organisations and 48% by representatives from the voluntary, business and community sectors.
- The DEA Fora, PCSP, Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships and PEACE IV Partnership organised or supported around 150 meetings, public events and capacity building programmes, demonstrating the Council's commitment to strengthening the level of community participation in Council run engagement structures.
- In September, over 60 internal and external stakeholders participated in a workshop to

discuss the community planning operating structure and identify future ways to develop the level of engagement through the DEA operating model.

- The Council received 552 applications to the Financial Assistance Scheme, 69% of which were awarded a total of £1,313,410.50 to deliver community based projects.
- In 2016, the Council commissioned an Audit of Effectiveness to review existing operating and funding models for community centres. To date, 43 community centres have been involved and a further 7 will be engaged in the final stage of the review during Q3 2017-18.

Measure of Success	2017-18		Status	Explanatory note
	Target	YTD actual		
PCSP: Number of meetings	-	7		The PCSP is made up of 10 Elected Members, 9 Independent Members and 7 statutory organisations. The PCSP has hosted a range of events including the Mourne Mountain Adventure, 'Coffee with Cops' and Crime Prevention Seminars. The PCSP also runs the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and facilitates meetings of the Neighbourhood Watch Network.
PCSP: Number of events and capacity building programmes	-	23		
NRP: Number of meetings	-	19		The Newry and Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships are made up of 53 members, including 21 statutory organisations and 32 representatives from the voluntary and community sectors. Both partnerships meet approximately every 6 weeks, with Newry NRP having regular thematic meetings.
NRP: Number of events and capacity building programmes	-	1		
DEA: Number of meetings, including public engagement events	-	28		The seven DEA Fora are currently made up of 83 members, including 41 Elected Members and 42 Independent Members, which represent networks across the voluntary, community and business sectors. DEA Fora held 28 private meetings and public engagement events covering a range of themes including youth education and employment, and PEACE IV. DEA Fora have also organised or supported a further 75 events and capacity building programmes across the District.
DEA: Number of events and capacity building programmes	-	75		
PEACE: Number of meetings	-	4		The PEACE IV Partnership is made up of 9 Elected Members, 9 social partners and 5 statutory organisations, including the PSNI, PCSP and Education Authority. The partnership meets on a monthly basis.
PEACE: Number of events and capacity building programmes	-	1		

The effectiveness of Council run community engagement structures in facilitating stakeholder participation	-	-		48% of the 185 places currently occupied through the Council's engagement structures are taken by representatives from the voluntary, business and community sectors. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to working alongside key stakeholders, enabling them to inform the local decision-making process and have their say in shaping the future of the district. Regular meetings and public events continue to strengthen the level of participation and collaboration within the community engagement structures, enabling stakeholders to make a positive contribution across key themes including community safety, good relations, community development and health and wellbeing.
Number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes	-	180		The number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes increased from 150 in 2016-17 to 180 at present, with over 5,000 registered homes. Through the 'Home Secure' scheme, 151 homes were fitted with 1,267 devices, the most popular being window alarms, door wedge alarms and dawn to dusk light. Through 'Good Morning, Good Neighbour', 12,030 calls were made to the 299 users of the scheme.
Number of beneficiaries of the 'Home Secure' scheme	-	151 homes secured 1,276 devices fitted		
Number of beneficiaries of the 'Good Morning, Good Neighbour' scheme	-	299 users 12,030 calls made		
Number and percentage of financial assistance projects funded and successfully delivered	-	552 applications 69% success rate		

*Some meetings, events and capacity building programmes may have been held or supported by one or more of the listed community engagement structures as a joint initiative

*YTD actuals for the Neighbourhood Watch, 'Home Secure' and 'Good Morning Good Neighbour' schemes relate to Q1 2017-18