



May 13th, 2026

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Thursday, 14th May 2026** at **6:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre.**

Committee Membership 2025-26

Councillor O Hanlon **Chairperson**

Councillor D McAteer **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor C Enright

Councillor M Hearty

Councillor R Howell

Councillor T Howie

Councillor A King

Councillor C King

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor A Mathers

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Rice

Councillor D Taylor

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held 23 April 2026

 *SPR-Action Sheet arising from 2026 04 20 (002).pdf*

Page 1

For Discussion/Decision

4.0 LDP Revised Timetable

For Decision

 *SPR Report re LDP Revised Timetable May 2026.pdf*

Page 5

 *Appendix A - LDP Timetable Rev 5 May 2026.pdf*

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5.0 Performance Improvement Plan 2026/27

For Decision

 *SPR Cover Report PIP 2026-27.pdf*

Page 21

 *Appendix 1 - Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27.pdf*

Page 24

 *Appendix 2 - Consultation and Engagement Report 2026-27.pdf*

Page 62

 *Appendix 3 - Draft Objective Delivery Plans 2026-27.pdf*

Page 75

6.0 Cullyhanna Community Centre

For Decision

 *SPR Report - Cullyhanna CC.pdf*

Page 91

Exempt Appendices

6.1 Exempt Appendix - Cullyhanna Community Centre

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.

For Discussion/Decision

7.0 Changing Pavilion at Milltown, Warrenpoint

For Decision

SPR - Milltown Pavilion - vf inc appx 1 (002).pdf

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Exempt Appendices

7.1 Exempt Appendix - Changing Pavilion at Milltown, Warrenpoint

For Information

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.

aax 1 - SPR - Milltown Pavilion - vf inc appx 1 (002).pdf

Not included

For Discussion/Decision

8.0 Fitness Equipment - Kilkeel Leisure Centre

For Decision

SPR - KLC Gym Equipment April 26 - vf.pdf

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Exempt Appendices

8.1 Exempt Appendix - Kilkeel Gym Equipmet

For Information

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.

appx 1 - SPR - KLC Gym Equipment Capital Costs - vf inc appx 1.pdf

Not included

For Discussion/Decision

9.0 Cranfield Sea Defences

For Decision

 **SPR Report - Cranfield Sea Defences.pdf**

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 **Appendix 2 - Cranfield Sea Defence Correspondence from NIEA.pdf**

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 **Appendix 3 - Cranfield Sea Defence AECOM Technical Note.pdf**

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Exempt Appendices

9.1 Exempt Appendix - Cranfield Sea Defences

For Information

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.

 **Appendix 1 - Cranfield Sea Defences.pdf**

Not included

For Discussion/Decision

10.0 Membership of Ulster Scots Ulster British Working Group

 **Membership of Ulster Scots Ulster British Working Group.pdf**

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

11.0 Disposal of lands at Annalong

For Decision

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.

 **20260514 SPR Report MB.pdf**

Not included

 **NM004-B-2-10.pdf**

Not included

12.0 Planning - Professional Support

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 Planning - Professional Support.pdf**

Not included

13.0 Direct Award Contracts for IT Solutions

For Decision

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.

 **14.05.26 SPRC Report IT Related DACs.pdf**

Not included

 **DAC Contracts.pdf**

Not included

14.0 Additional Voluntary Contributions

For Decision

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.

Copy to follow

 **AVC - SPR.pdf**

Not included

15.0 Release of Easement at Daisy Hill, Newry

For Decision

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 14 May 2026 Release of Easement at Daisy Hill Newry - Copy.pdf**

Not included

 **20260515 Map 1.pdf**

Not included

 **20260514 Map 2 SPR.pdf**

Not included

16.0 Request for Wayleave at Market Street Car Park Downpatrick

For Decision

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 14 May 2026 Request for Wayleave at Market Street Car Park Downpatrick.pdf** **Not included**

 **Wayleave unsigned - Market Street carpark.pdf** **Not included**

17.0 Licence at Foreshore Bloody Bridge Newcastle for Bird Survey

For Decision

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 14 May 2026 Licence of Foreshore at Bloody Bridge Newcastle for Bird Survey.pdf** **Not included**

18.0 Licence for Glenree House

For Decision

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 14 May 2026 Licence for Works & Occupation of Part of Glenree House Springhill Road Newry from Dept of Finance.pdf2.pdf** **Not included**

 **817649 - Glenree House - Newry (V0 - 20260204).pdf** **Not included**

19.0 Fleet Replacement Programme 2026/27

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.

20.0 Camlough Lake Recreational Hub

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.

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

21.0 SFWG Minutes of 7th May 2026

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.

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Mr Caolain Boyd

Fionnuala Branagh

Cllr Jim Brennan

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Pete Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Mr Conor Haughey

Cllr Martin Hearty

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Ms Marina Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Joanne Johnston

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Aurla King

Ms Elaine Kirk

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr Niall Lawlor

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Ms Carol McClean

Jonathan McGilly
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Mr Martin McKibbin
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Mr Colin Moffett
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Cllr Declan Murphy
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Ms Alison Robb
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Ms Maria Rogan
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Mr Peter Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Mr Conor Sage
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Mrs Amanda Smyth
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Donna Starkey
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Sarah Taggart
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Ms Sinead Trainor
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
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Mr Conor Woods
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Cllr Helena Young
.....

<u>Minute Ref</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Actions taken / progress to date</u>	<u>Remove from Action Sheet? Y/N</u>
<u>ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) –</u> <u>Thursday 14 August 2025</u>					
SPR/135/2025	Business Case – Residual Waste Contract	It was agreed that the requested rates per tonnage be brought back before Members as discussed.	S Murphy	New rates not available until Procurement Process completed Update tabled at March 26 meeting.	N
<u>ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) –</u> <u>Thursday 12 March 2026</u>					
SPR/034/2026	Go Succeed NI Update	It was further proposed to write to the UK Government reminding them of their promises that EU funding would be matched and request that the council be reimbursed for the funds it is putting towards the Go Succeed programme.	A Smyth	Letter sent to the Secretary of State for Housing on 11th May 2026.	Y
<u>ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) –</u> <u>Thursday 20 April 2026</u>					
SPR/047/2026	Action sheet of SPR meeting held 12/03/2026	It was agreed to note the action sheet	M Ward	Agreed	Y
SPR/048/2026	Elected member Development Charter	The following was agreed: - That Council does not proceed with the reattainment of the Member Development Charter at this time - That officers develop and bring forward an Elected Member Training and Development Plan, tailored to the current and future needs of Councillors, with the plan being presented to a future SP&R Committee for consideration and approval	M Ward	Agreed	Y
SPR/049/2026	Expression of Interest – Warrenpoint Square Retail Unit 2	It was agreed to proceed with an expression of interest for the lease of retail unit 2 at Warrenpoint Square public toilet block	C Sage	Agreed	Y
SPR/050/2026	Emergency Works – Canal Bank Car Parks, Newry	It was agreed to approve the appointment of a contractor to carry out emergency repair works at Canal Bank 2 and 3 car parks in Newry.	C Sage	Agreed	Y
SPR/051/2026	Downpatrick Regeneration	It was agreed to approve the following: - The allocation of funding and the appointment of the technical support to assist with the delivery of the Grove Peace Plus Project in Downpatrick as set	C Mallon	Agreed	Y

		out in Appendix 1. - The allocation of funding and appointment of the technical support to assist with the delivery of the project to link the skate park and Dunleath Park in Downpatrick as set out in Appendix 1. - The allocation of funding to the Irish Street project in Downpatrick as set out in Appendix 1, and the procurement for the Irish Street development, subject to approval from Dept for Communities. It was also agreed that Council seek assurance from DfC that they are committed to the Irish St Project given the level of funding that Council agreed to spend	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/052/2026	BRCD Tourism – Outline Business Case	It was agreed to approve the appointment of a multidisciplinary team to deliver the Outline Business Case for the BRCD Tourism project at the fee estimate as set out in Appendix 1. It was also agreed to note the draft press release at Appendix 2.	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/053/2026	Dundrum Pitches	the following was agreed: - To utilise the required capital budget for essential works to Dundrum football pitches. - To approve the business case for the works and appointment of a contractor following a competitive tendering process in line with Council's Procurement Policy.	A Patterson	Agreed	Y
SPR/054/2026	Kilkeel Town Hall	It was agreed to continue the open market process to achieve the best price	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/055/2026	Request for Easement at the Banks Recreation Area, Dundrum	It was agreed to grant an Easement for a foul sewer pipe under that portion of Council facility known as The Banks Recreation Area, Dundrum as shown by a red dashed line on the map attached to the report, to the party named in this report for nil consideration, subject to Departmental Consent.	E Kirk	Agreed	Y
SPR/056/2026	Deed of Dedication for Newry City Park	It was agreed to the signing and sealing of the Deed of Dedication as a necessary requirement of the Contract for Funding for Newry City Park with the Department for Communities.	E Kirk	Agreed	Y
SPR/057/2026	NCCR Theatre Conference Review	It was agreed to approve the procurement of a specialist advisor to support Council in the development of the preferred operating model	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/058/2026	Castlewellan Forest Park NLHF Project	It was agreed to approve the allocation of additional capital funding as detailed in sections 1.1, 2.2 and 4.1 of the officer's report.	C Boyd	Agreed	Y

		It was also agreed that a paper be brought to the next SPR Committee outlining the compensation events and the reporting structures for the project.	C Boyd	Report to go to SPR Committee in June 2026	N
		It was further agreed that minutes and action sheets of the project are tabled for noting at Committee going forward.	C Boyd	Agreed	Y
SPR/059/2026	Strategic Capital Projects Manager	It was agreed to approve the appointment of a Strategic Capital Projects Director as detailed within the officer's report.	M Ward	Agreed	Y
SPR/060/2026	Waste management Resources	It was agreed to approve the recommendations outlined in sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 of the report to engage in waste, infrastructure and data specialists to assess current Waste Collection and Recycling Services and make recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency as required by the Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR) regulations with resource requirement outlined at section 4.1 of the report.	S Murphy	Agreed	Y
SPR/061/2026	SOLACE Policy Officer Post	It was agreed to approve, under the Chief Executive Structure, the creation of an additional post and associated recruitment for one full time equivalent staff resource, funded through SOLACE NI contributions by all 11 Councils.	M Ward	Agreed	Y
SPR/062/2026	Hilltown HRC Lease	It was agreed to note the contents of the report	S Murphy	Agreed	Y
SPR/063/2026	Minutes of the NCCR Programme Board Meeting of 06/02/2026	It was agreed to note the minutes	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/064/2026	Financial Assistance Funding	It was agreed to note the shortfall in funding available for successful applications under Financial Assistance Call 1 – Revenue. It was also agreed that officers look at measures to address the shortfall to ensure all successful applicants are awarded funding with a paper for noting to be tabled at the next SPR Committee.	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/065/2026	Minutes of MMGP held 02/04/2026	It was agreed to note the minutes	C Mallon	Agreed	Y

SPR/066/2026	Statutory Reporting – Section 75 Policy Screening Report Jan – Mar 2026	It was agreed to note the report	E Kirk	Agreed	Y
SPR/067/2026	Correspondence from Minister Kimmins	It was agreed to note the correspondence	M Ward	Agreed	Y

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources
Date of Meeting:	14 May 2026
Subject:	LDP: Revised Timetable
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Jonathan McGilly (Assistant Director: Regeneration)
Contact Officer (Including job Title:	Lois Jackson (Development Plan Manager and Planning Enforcement)

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

For decision	☒	For noting only	☐
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on, and to agree a revised Timetable in respect of the Local Development Plan (LDP).
1.2	The Timetable details the key stages and indicative timings for the preparation and adoption of the LDP. The Timetable is required to be formally revised as necessary to reflect progress and changes to the projected timeframe.
1.3	Legislation requires the Council to keep the timetable under review to ensure that the preparation of the LDP is proceeding in accordance with the timetable.
1.4	The current Timetable, as revised in September 2023, was approved by the Council in August 2023 and agreed by the Department for Infrastructure in September 2023.
1.5	There is now a need to further revise the Timetable to reflect progress and changes to the projected timeframe. A revised Timetable has now been drafted for Members consideration and agreement.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	The Timetable is a public statement of the Council's programme for the production of the LDP. It helps to ensure that the plan process is efficiently managed and that the key stakeholders such as the statutory consultation bodies and the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) are kept informed and can manage their own resources to facilitate their involvement in the LDP process.
2.2	The current Timetable, as revised in September 2023, indicated the draft Plan Strategy would be published in the 2 nd quarter of 2024/2025 ¹ with public consultation, to include 8 weeks for representations and 8 weeks for counter representations, scheduled for the 2 nd and 3 rd quarters 2024/2025.
2.3	Members will be aware the draft Plan Strategy was published for public consultation on 27 th June 2025. The period for public consultation closed on 22 nd September 2025. The LDP team have undertaken a review of the representations received in response to this public consultation and published the representations received on the Council's website. The

¹ Timetable quarters referred to financial year.

	counter representations consultation period subsequently ran from the 30 th January 2026 to 20 th April 2026.
2.4	Members will also be aware that the Timetable is agreed by DfI and takes account of DfI guidance ² .
2.5	The timetable has now been reviewed and a revised Timetable has been drafted for Members consideration and agreement (Appendix A). The main changes to the previously published Timetable include: • The revisions to the current stage of the Plan process (Stage 2 Plan Strategy) include time for the consideration of representations and any proposed changes and a further 8-week period for public consultation on any changes. • The length of time taken for the IE which includes submission to the Department for Infrastructure, the IE hearing and reporting timeframe (a minimum of 9 months) • The stages for the Local Policies Plan are indicative only and will be revised following adoption of the draft Plan Strategy
2.6	Subject to the agreement of the Planning Committee and approval by the Council, the LDP team will liaise with the PAC and other key stakeholders prior to submitting the revised Timetable to DfI for its agreement.
2.7	Progress against the timetable will continue to be monitored and Members will be kept advised of further developments and the need for any further revision should this be considered necessary.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	It is recommended that the Planning Committee note the content of this report, and agree: • The draft revised Timetable (Appendix A); • That following approval by resolution of the Council, the Planning Department liaises with the PAC prior to submitting the revised Timetable to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) for its agreement; • That following agreement of the revised Timetable by the DfI, that it be made available and published in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	N/A
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following:

² DfI's Development Plan Practice Note 03 Timetable

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i> ☐
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix A: LDP Timetable (Draft Revision May 2026)
8.0	Background Documents
	N/A

Local Development Plan Timetable

Revised May 2026



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

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

1.0 Local Development Plan: Timetable

The Council's Timetable for the Newry, Mourne, and Down Local Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. In accordance with Section 7 (2) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and Regulation 7 the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, the Local Development Plan: Timetable was first approved by the Council on 3 July 2017 and agreed by the Department for Infrastructure on 20 October 2017.

Since 2017 and in monitoring progress the Timetable has been revised to take account of delays in preparation of the draft Plan Strategy. The Council approved this revision to the Timetable on xxx 2026 which was agreed by the Department for Infrastructure on xxx 2026.

1.1 Getting in Touch

Should you have a Development Plan query, you can contact the Development Plan Team in the Council's Planning Department in the following ways:

By email: ldp@nmandd.org

By post: Development Plan Team
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Rd
Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

By telephone: Council: 0330 137 4000
Planning: 0330 137 4036

This document can be viewed and downloaded from the Council's website at www.newrymournedown.org/local-development-plan or requested using the contact details above.

To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, copies of this document in alternative formats are available on request. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

If you have any queries regarding this document, please contact us using the details above.

1.2 Introduction

- 1.3 The purpose of Local Development Plan Timetable (Timetable) is to set out the key stages of and an indicative timescale for the production of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's new Local Development Plan (LDP).
- 1.4 The Timetable meets the legislative requirements of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. In response to the consultation requirements of Regulation 5 of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, the Council has also consulted with the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC).

2.0 Purpose of the Local Development Plan

- 2.1 The purpose of the Local Development Plan (LDP) is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide development decisions within the district up to 2035.
- 2.2 The new LDP will be prepared in the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and will take account of the Council's Community Plan to enable us to plan for the future of the district.
- 2.3 The LDP must also take account of the regional policy context set by the Northern Ireland Executive and Central Government Departments. This includes amongst others, the Programme for Government, Sustainable Development Strategy, Regional Development Strategy and Strategic Planning Policy Statement.
- 2.4 The Plan will be produced in two stages consisting of two separate documents which will shape development within our District in the period to 2035. The first stage will be a Plan Strategy followed by the Local Policies Plan.
- 2.5 Prior to the preparation of the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan the Council will identify the key issues in the Plan area and will formulate a series of options for dealing with them. The information will be published as a Preferred Options Paper (POP) which will indicate the Council's preferred options for growth and development across the district and will form the basis for consulting with the public and

stakeholders who will have an opportunity to put forward views and have an influence on the LDP from the outset.

- 2.6 The Plan Strategy will establish the strategic direction of the plan in order to provide a level of certainty on which to base key development decisions across the District as well as the necessary framework for the preparation of the Local Policies Plan. The Strategy will set the aims, objectives, overall growth strategy and associated strategic policies applicable to the Plan area.
- 2.7 Once the Plan Strategy is adopted a Local Policies Plan will be prepared which will be consistent with the Plan Strategy. In contrast to the Plan Strategy the Local Policies Plan will deal with site specific policies and proposals associated with settlement limits, lane use zonings and environmental designations required to deliver the Council's vision, objectives and strategic policies.
- 2.8 Once adopted, the LDP will replace the current development plans for the District, produced by the Department of the Environment, namely the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP) (adopted March 2009) and the Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP) (adopted October 2013), in so far as they relate to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.
- 2.9 The Council will undertake an on-going Sustainability Appraisal (SA) throughout the life of the LDP. This will run in parallel to the preparation of the Preferred Options Paper, the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan. The SA process aims to ensure that the policies and proposals contained within the LDP are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Relevant reports will be published at each of the key stages of the plan making process.
- 2.10 As referenced above, the preparation of the LDP involves a number of key stages each presenting opportunities for community involvement. The Council has produced a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in accordance with the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Planning (Statement of Community Involvement) regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. The SCI serves as a guide to community engagement in the planning process and sets out the Council's policy for involving the community in the production of the LDP. It describes who, together with how

and when the community will be invited to participate in the different stages of the LDP. The SCI can be viewed on the Council's website at www.newrymournedown.org/planning

3.0 The Timetable

3.1 In accordance with Regulation 6 of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 the Timetable contains indicative dates for the various stages of the plan preparation process; these are set out at Appendix 1. A brief outline of the key stages is set out below:

- **Preferred Options Paper (POP)** – The POP is a public consultation document which will set out the most significant planning issues currently affecting our District, as well as those likely to become relevant in the future. It will include the Council's preferred options to address them.
- **Draft Plan Strategy** – The Plan Strategy is the first of two 'Development Plan Documents' in the LDP process. The draft Plan Strategy is a public consultation document which will set out in draft terms the proposed broad aims, objectives and the overall future growth strategy and associated generic planning policies applicable across the District.
- **Independent Examination (IE)** – An IE will be held to determine the soundness of the draft Plan Strategy, taking into account a consideration of the representations and counter representations received during the draft Plan Strategy consultation period. After the IE, an Independent Examination Report of its findings and recommendations will be issued to Central Government (currently the Department for Infrastructure).
- **Direction** – Following consideration of the Independent Examination Report, Central Government will issue a Direction to the Council requiring it to adopt the draft Plan Strategy as originally prepared or with modifications. The Council must incorporate any changes outlined in the Direction into the final Plan Strategy.

- **Adoption of the Plan Strategy** – Following the IE and Direction from Central Government, the Council will formally adopt the Plan Strategy.
- **Draft Local Policies Plan** – The Local Policies Plan is the second of the 'Development Plan Documents' within the LDP process. The draft Local Policies Plan is a public consultation document and will contain the Council's detailed land use proposals for the District.
- **Independent Examination (IE)** - An IE will be held to determine the soundness of the draft Local Policies Plan, taking into account a consideration of the representations and counter representations received during the draft Local Policies Plan consultation period. After the IE, an Independent Examination Report of its findings and recommendations will be issued to Central Government.
- **Direction** – Following consideration of the Independent Examination Report, Central Government will issue a Direction to the Council requiring it to adopt the draft Local Policies Plan as originally prepared or with modifications. The Council must incorporate any changes outlined in the Direction into the final Local Policies Plan.
- **Adoption of the Local Policies Plan** - Following the IE and Direction from Central Government, the Council will formally adopt the Local Policies Plan.

3.2 The Council is also required to carry out a number of assessments in the preparation of the LDP. These include:

- **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - This will help the Council to assess the sustainability of the LDP proposals and how the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, especially with regard to social, economic and environmental factors. This is required in relation to both LDP documents.

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** – A procedure to follow that contributes to the integration of environmental considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes. It will be undertaken in relation to both LDP documents as an integral part of the SA process above. Prior to commencing an SEA an initial screening exercise will be undertaken at the POP stage to determine if the LDP requires a full SEA.
- **Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)** – This considers the potential impact of LDP policies and proposals on designated European nature conservation sites.
- **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** – In line with the Council’s Equality Scheme, an Equality Screening exercise will be undertaken at the POP stage to assess if the LDP is likely to have an impact on specific groups identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. If required a full EQIA will be undertaken for both the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan.
- **Rural Proofing Assessment (RPA)** – This is a process by which all major policies and strategies are assessed to determine whether they have a detrimental impact on rural areas. The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 imposes a statutory duty on local councils to consider rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services.

4.0 Delivery of the Local Development Plan

- 4.1 There are a number of factors outside the Council’s control that may impact on the delivery of the Council’s LDP within the indicative timescales indicated. This can include unforeseen events (e.g., emergency crisis), input from statutory consultees, the duration of the Independent Examination and reporting period, subsequent consideration by Central Government and the potential for legal challenge.
- 4.2 To help identify the full range of factors that may impact on the delivery of the LDP, a Risk Management Log has been developed which highlights the risks and outlines how the Council will seek to mitigate the impact of these. Details are contained in

the Council's Risk Management Strategy/Register.

- 4.3 To further assist with the effective management of the timetable a range of steps and safeguards will be put in place to manage the LDP decision making process and provide early warning of potential time slippage. Such steps include:
- Papers presented to the relevant Council Committee on a regular basis regarding LDP matters, including key planning topics and findings as they emerge.
 - A Steering Group, comprising elected Members of the Council and Senior Council Officers to ensure overview and strategic input on behalf of the whole community as well as planning professionals.
 - A Project Management Team comprising Senior Council Officers and representatives from the key statutory/government departments who will be invited to provide input on policies/proposals at the relevant stages.
 - Post-adoption, an Annual Monitoring Report will be produced to inform Members and the Central Government on our progress in meeting the published timetable.

5.0 Review

- 5.1 In the event that the LDP Timetable requires amendment, the Council has the power under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to publish a revised timetable. Any such amendments must be published and made available on the Council website.

Appendix 1: LDP Timetable (Revised May 2026)

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Local Development Plan: Timetable		
Local Development Plan process: Key Stages	Sustainability appraisal & other assessments	Indicative Timeframe
Stage 1 – Plan Preparation	Statement of Community Involvement & LDP Timetable	
	Publication of SCI and LDP Timetable	Complete SCI published November 2017 SCI revised May 2025 and September 2025 Timetable published November 2017 Timetable revised March 2019, January 2021, September 2022 and September 2023
	Preferred Options Paper	
	Publication of Preferred Options Paper (POP)	Publication of SA Interim Report comprising Scoping Report and appraisal of alternative options Screening for HRA, EQIA and Rural Proofing Complete POP published June 2018
Stage 2 – Plan Strategy	Plan Strategy	
	Publication of draft Plan Strategy (dPS) and associated documents: - statutory public consultation specified as 8 weeks in legislation which may be extended - 8-week period for counter representations - Consideration of representations - Consideration of any proposed changes and further public consultation (8 weeks)	Current Stage Quarter 2 2025 – Quarter 3 2026
Independent Examination		

	Independent Examination (IE) of draft Plan Strategy (dPS) - Submission of dPS to Central Government (DfI) for IE and publication of Public Consultation Report - IE hearing - Submission of IE Independent Examination Report to Central Government (DfI), - Receipt of Direction from Central Government (DfI) to the Council. Council considers Direction and incorporates any changes into the final PS	May require further consultation with statutory bodies	Quarter 4 2026 – Quarter 3 2027
	Adoption of Plan Strategy	Publication of SA Adoption Report (incorporating SEA) Publication of HRA, EQIA and Rural Proofing	Quarter 4 2027

Local Policies Plan			
Stage 3 – Local Policies Plan	Updating of evidence base and statutory consultee engagement on site specific policies/proposals	Invite comments from Consultation Body (NIEA) on draft SA (incorporating SEA) Scoping Report. Publication of SA Interim Report comprising Scoping Report and appraisal of alternative options.	2028
	Publication of draft Local Policies Plan (LPP) and associated documents: - Statutory public consultation specified as 8 weeks in legislation which may be extended - 8-week period for counter representations - Consideration of representations - Consideration of any proposed changes and further public consultation (8 weeks)	Publication of SA Appraisal Report, Incorporating SEA, Publication of drafts of HRA, EQIA and Rural Proofing.	2028 – 2029
	Independent Examination		

	Independent Examination (IE) of draft Local Policies Plan (draft LPP) - Submission of draft LPP to Central Government (DfI) IE and publication of Public Consultation Report, IE hearing - Submission of IE Independent Examination Report to Central Government (DfI) - Receipt of Direction from Central Government (DfI) to the Council. Council considers Direction and incorporates any changes into the final LPP.		2029 - 2030
	Adoption of Local Policies Plan	Publication of SA Adoption Report (Incorporating SEA)	2030
Stage 4 – Monitor & Review	Monitoring and Review of LDP		
	Monitoring and Review of LDP Annual Monitoring Report Review every 5 years	Monitoring of SA and other assessments.	Ongoing

Notes:

- This is an indicative Timetable and may be subject to change due to factors outside the Council's control.
- There is no statutory timeframe for the progress of each of the Development Plan Documents (PS and LPP) through the respective IE stage. The timeframe from submission to, and receipt of Direction from, Central Government is dependent on both Central Government and the Independent Examiner. The indicative timeframe of 12 months for each IE stage is based on current Central Government advice (5-2-5 i.e. 5 months from submission to IE, 2 months for IE, 5 months from IE to issue of Direction).
- The current Central Government department is the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). The current Independent Examiner is the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC). Please note DfI has secured funding to bring forward alternative Commissioners under Section 10(4) of The Planning Act (NI) 2011.
- The indicative timeframe refers to quarters of the calendar year.

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

Report to:	Strategy Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 May 2026
Subject:	Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director: Finance & Performance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catherine Hughes – Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting)

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			The purpose of this report is to recommend the final version of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27. This plan is supported by the Consultation and Engagement Report 2026-27 and Delivery Plans which have been developed for each Performance Improvement Objective 2026-27.
1.2			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. The guidance states that performance improvement is more than 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.
1.3			The Performance Improvement Plan is a key strategic document which drives all improvement activity across the organisation. It features within the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework and is directly aligned to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans.
2.0			Key issues
2.1			In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council is required to publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2026. The Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 is attached at Appendix 1, and includes the following information: • Performance improvement objectives 2026-27 • Statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management • Self imposed performance indicators, as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2024-27
			Public Consultation and Engagement 2026-27
2.2			The development of the performance improvement objectives 2026-27 is based on a robust and reliable evidence base which includes: • 764 responses to the Residents Survey (September 2022)

	This was supplemented by a nine week public consultation and engagement process around the proposed performance improvement objectives 2026-27, which took place between 13 February – 17 April 2026 and consisted of the following elements: • 54 responses to the survey on the draft performance improvement objectives, published on the consultation section of the Council's website • Engagement with 68 stakeholders through the Crotlieve DEA Forum; Downpatrick DEA Forum; Rowallane DEA Forum; Slieve Croob DEA Forum; The Mournes DEA Forum; Age Friendly Alliance and Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice. Overall, the feedback from the consultation and engagement process revealed that the majority of respondents support the proposed performance improvement objectives, as outlined in Appendix 2.
	Objective Delivery Plans 2026-27
2.4	Delivery plans for each performance improvement objective have been developed, as outlined in Appendix 3. They seek to demonstrate how the Council will manage the effective delivery of each objective, in terms of resources, risk management and governance arrangements. These plans are a 'work in progress' and will be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis to support the delivery of each performance improvement objective.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To consider and agree • The Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 (including the five performance improvement objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2026-27 and Objective Delivery Plans 2026-27.
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	<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 ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following:

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☒ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☒ <i>Rationale:</i> At the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meeting in February 2026, it was agreed to implement a nine week consultation and engagement process, in order to meet the statutory deadline of 30 June 2026 for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan.
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☒
7.0	Appendices
	• Appendix 1 – Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 • Appendix 2 – Consultation and Engagement Report 2026-27 • Appendix 3 – Objective Delivery Plans 2026-27
8.0	Background Documents
	Performance Improvement Plans 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2026-26

Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27



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

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Foreword

An Cathaoirleach
Chairperson TBC



An
Príomhfheidhmeannach
Chief Executive
Marie Ward

Welcome to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27. After engaging and listening to our residents and communities we have retained our core themes for the year ahead. However, we have refined the wording of our economic development and climate change objectives to make them more succinct, meaningful, and better reflect the evolving work taking place across these areas. We have also introduced several new measures and actions designed to strengthen delivery and ensure our priorities continue to benefit both our people and our place.

As we continue the revitalisation of our district, it is important to recognise the progress that has been made. Over the past year, the Council remained focused on delivering essential services and advancing our performance improvement objectives.

Our residents and visitors continued to prioritise their health and wellbeing, with our leisure centres recording over 930,000 paid attendances and nearly 30,000 people participating in targeted health programmes. We responded to every community clean-up request received and continued to take action

against environmental crime.

Through our economic development initiatives, we provided support to 227 local businesses and social enterprises, contributing to the creation of 254 local jobs. We also made progress in addressing our sustainability and climate change through the establishment of our carbon footprint baseline.

While these achievements are encouraging, we recognise that there is still more to be done to ensure Newry, Mourne and Down remains a great place to live, work, visit and invest in. This year's performance improvement objectives will continue to focus on the issues that matter most to our communities: enhancing the quality of our leisure facilities and services, supporting the growth of the local economy and pathways to employment, improving the cleanliness of our district and promoting recycling, reducing our contribution to climate change, and strengthening the performance of our Planning Service.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with our communities, partners and stakeholders to deliver high-quality, efficient and effective services. Together, we will continue striving to improve quality of life for all and to build a district that everyone can take pride in.

Introduction

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all district councils must put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. The Council is required to set annual improvement objectives for the services it provides and to have in place arrangements to achieve these objectives. The Council recognises 'improvement' to mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities.

The performance improvement objectives do not describe every improvement the Council plans to make during 2026-27. Alternatively, they provide an overview of how the Council will address the issues which matter most to local communities. The Performance Improvement Plan outlines the Council's objectives for improvement, how performance will be measured and what positive outcomes stakeholders can expect as a result of improvement activity. It represents the Council's commitment to achieving continuous improvement in the delivery of key services.

Performance Improvement Objectives 2026-27

- 1. We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services**
- 2. We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses, job creation and pathways to employment**
- 3. We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents**
- 4. We will reduce our contribution to climate change by cutting carbon emissions and improving the efficiency of our fleet and buildings**
- 5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme**

These objectives have been developed within the context of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework. They are:

✓	Linked to the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans
✓	Based on a robust and reliable evidence base, including performance trends
✓	Aligned to the seven strategic aspects of improvement
✓	Legitimate, clear, robust, deliverable and demonstrable

Our District, Our Organisation, Our Performance



District

Population: 183,115
Households: 68,397
7 District Electoral Areas
41 Elected Members
1,000+ employees
88% of residents are satisfied with the Council



Community

Life expectancy:
Male: 79.0 years /
Female: 82.9 years

Age Profile: Based on
NISRA Mid-Year Estimates.
0-15 years: 21.7%
65+ years: 18%

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

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

55 Neighbourhood Watch Schemes

£14.27m awarded through the Financial Assistance Scheme since 2015



Tourism

In 2024:

Numbers of overnight stays 443,776

Level of visitor spend - £73,277,005

Three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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



Health and Wellbeing

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

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

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

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

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



Economy

Employment rate: 78.2%

9,525 VAT Registered Businesses

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

238.2 new jobs promoted through business start-up activity

215 existing business supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions



Environment

Recycling is important to 91% of residents

Top perceived problem for residents: Dog mess and fouling

Recycling rate: 49.3%

100% of Community Clean Up Requests Supported

Fifth lowest level of waste to landfill across all NI Councils



Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	
Why this matters	You told us that: - One of the top priorities for improving your local area was 'Improving people's health and wellbeing (and reducing health inequalities). 17% of our residents are not active for a single day each week. - The third most important health and wellbeing opportunity you would like to see more of was 'physical activity opportunities such as leisure centres, gyms and sports facilities'. - Between 2018 and 2022 there has been an increase in the number of residents satisfied with the leisure centres across the District. 62% of respondents to our 2026-27 survey agreed with this objective. We know that keeping fit and active can help improve a person's health and wellbeing both physically and mentally and the provision of leisure facilities is key to achieving this. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council plays a key role in helping local communities to live long and healthy lives. The Council remains committed to promoting physical, mental and emotional well-being and encouraging residents to make healthy and informed lifestyle choices and as part of this we need to always be striving to improve our leisure facilities and offerings.
Looking Back: What we did in 2025-26	 934,517 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities
	 28,399 people participating in targeted health programmes
	 11,192 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities
	 £225,000 in capital funding allocated to sports clubs across the District
	 7 play parks upgraded across the District
	
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2026-27	- Sustain the number of paid attendances at indoor leisure facilities. - Continue to deliver a range of targeted, sustainable health programmes to encourage participation in physical activity. - Progress the leisure projects agreed within the Capital Programme. - Provide funding through financial assistance for capital projects for sports clubs. - Upgrade a number of play parks across the District. - Continue to monitor customer satisfaction. - Record usage of Donard Park Multisport Hub.

	Work towards achieving disability accreditation across identified tier 1 sites.					
How we will measure success	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Actual	Status Trend	2026-27 Target
Number of paid attendances recorded at:	698,864	768,842	737,439	934,517 (Target: 757,500)	 	898,000
Newry Leisure Centre	307,153	331,546	244,929	497,295 (Target: 335,000)	 	450,000
Down Leisure Centre	246,978	259,473	273,783	268,839 (Target: 275,000)	 	270,000
Kilkeel Leisure Centre	69,797	63,811	74,988	21,208* (Target: 15,000)	 	21,000
St. Colmans Sports Complex	54,024	58,491	68,662	67,376 (Target: 68,700)	 	60,000
Newcastle Centre & Tropicana Outdoor Swimming Complex	25,517	27,765	39,128	29,649 (Target: 27,800)	 	27,800
Ballymote Sports and Wellbeing Centre	15,365	27,756	35,949	50,150 (Target: 36,000)	 	40,000
Number of people participating in targeted health programmes	9,309	10,805	20,421	28,399 (Target: 22,000)	 	16,500
Number of attendances recorded at Donard Park Multisport Hub	New measure				-	30,000
Value of Financial Assistance funding allocated to sports clubs	New measure			£225,000 (Target: £225,000)		£225,000
Number of leisure centre memberships	9,534	9,923	10,050	11,192 (Target: 10,100)	 	9,500**
Number of capital leisure projects progressed	New measure	3	4	4 (Target:2)	 	7
Number of Play parks upgraded	New Measure			7 (Target:2)		2
What you will see by March 2027	898,000 paid attendances at our six leisure centres by the end of 2026-27. 16,500 people participating in targeted health programmes across the District. 9,500 leisure centre memberships recorded. 2 play parks upgraded. 7 new build and/or upgraded capital leisure projects progressed including Kilkeel Leisure Centre, Newry City Park, Newcastle Centre, Rowallane Multisport hub, Crotlieve Multisport hub, Newry Multisport hub and Newcastle rock pool.					

	- Financial assistance allocated for sports clubs to the value of £225,000 for capital projects. - Disability accreditation achieved in an identified tier 1 site. 30,000 recorded visits to Donard Park Multisport hub.			
Alignment				
Corporate Plan 2024-27	Improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District			
Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing			
Programme for Government	Cut health waiting times			
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service Availability	Fairness
Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities			

*Substantial decrease due to closure of KLC during 2025-26
** Decrease in Target due to 6 month closure of KLC

Performance Improvement Objective 2

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

Why this matters

You told us that:

- 'Improving skills, employability and job prospects' was your top priority for improving the local area in the 2022 residents survey.
- 'Supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' is in your top three priorities for improvement.
- Investment to grow the economy, create jobs and attract tourists is the most important form of investment.
- 63% of respondents to our 2026-27 survey agreed with this objective.

Continuing to support and grow the economy of Newry, Mourne and Down remains a key priority for the Council. Council continues to support the growth of both new business start-ups and the growth of existing businesses through the collaborative delivery of the Go Succeed Programme. 'Go Succeed' is Northern Ireland's go-to source for free expert business advice focusing on the three pillars of starting, growing and scaling your business or business idea.

The NMD Labour Market partnership (LMP) is vital for delivery against skills and employability, addressing economic inactivity, and supporting the up-skilling and re-skilling of residents in line with the demand for skills. The LMP has delivered a range of employment academies, careers fairs and jobs fairs, working closely with key stakeholders across the private and public sector.

Delivery against the Belfast Regional City Deal investment areas continues, with ambitions for job creation and the stimulation of private sector investment across the district.

Council is leading on the implementation of a DfE "Regional Balance Fund" establishing a Local Economic Partnership which will develop an action plan and deliver £4.5 million of investment over a 3-year period, which will drive the creation of good jobs, productivity growth, sustainability and decarbonisation.

Looking Back:

What we did in 2025-26



188 new enterprises created as a result of support and 238.2 new jobs promoted through business start-up activity



12 new social enterprise start-ups supported, and 16 new social enterprise jobs created



Over 4,700 participants engaged across all 'Go Succeed' activity



Delivered a range of Make it Local campaigns to support "Giant Adventures"

Looking Forward:

- Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme.

What we will do in 2026-27	- Support the establishment of new businesses through the 'Go Succeed' Programme. - Support the growth of existing businesses and creation of new jobs through the 'Go Succeed' Programme. - Directly support participants on employment pathway initiatives. - Invest in employability and skills through the implementation of the LMP Action Plan. - Invest in the creation of good jobs, productivity growth, decarbonisation and regional balance through the implementation of a Local Economic Partnership action plan.					
How we will measure success	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Actual	Status Trend	2026-27 Target
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	12	12	12	12 (Target: 12)	 	12
Number of social enterprise jobs created	12	14	16	16 (Target: 12)	 	12
Number of participants engaged across all 'Go Succeed' activity	New measure		839	4,719* (Target: 712)	 	712
Number of business plans created for start-up businesses and employer enterprises	361	150	334	397* (Target: 289)	 	279***
Number of jobs promoted via business start-up activity	155	90	206	238.2* (Target: 173)	 	173**
Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	195	90	175	188* (Target: 119)	 	119
Number of existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions	220	351	221	215* (Target: 220)	 	188***
Number of participants directly supported on employment pathway initiatives	New measure				-	250
What you will see by March 2027	279 business plans created for Start-Up businesses and employer enterprises. - Over 700 participants engaged across all Go Succeed activity. - Support provided to 188 existing businesses to progress growth and scaling ambitions. 173 new jobs promoted via business start-up activity. 12 social enterprise start-ups supported, and 12 social enterprise jobs created. 250 directly supported participants on employment pathway initiatives. - Continued support for new and established local businesses. - Continued support for the growth of new employment opportunities. - Continued support to grow a labour market that is economically active and prosperous.					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2024-27	Support the continued growth and development of our local economy					

Community Plan	• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities			
Programme for Government	• Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy			
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service availability	Innovation
Responsible Officer	Director: Economy, Regeneration and Tourism			

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

**Updated 'Go Succeed' programme target for the number of jobs promoted in Newry Mourne and Down: 173. An amendment to the standard set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 is awaiting legislative passage and approval. Methodology for calculating based on business and enterprise action plans * 0.6

*** Targets have been revised downwards as the funding package for 'Go Succeed' has been reduced for 2026-27.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

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

Why this matters	You told us that: • Dog mess and dog fouling and rubbish or litter lying around are your top two perceived problems in your local area. • 6% of the residents surveyed were dissatisfied with the cleansing service provided by the Council. • 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure. • 63% of respondents to our 2026-27 survey agreed with this objective. 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. 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.														
Looking Back: What we did in 2025-26	<table> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1137 528 1182"></td><td data-bbox="528 1137 1426 1227">Issued 35 fixed penalty notices, 32 of which were paid</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1182 528 1227"></td><td data-bbox="528 1227 1426 1272"></td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1227 528 1272"></td><td data-bbox="528 1227 1426 1283">Supported 100% of community clean-up requests</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1283 528 1339"></td><td data-bbox="528 1283 1426 1361">10 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme with a total of £14,822 awarded to local groups</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1361 528 1417"></td><td data-bbox="528 1361 1426 1417">Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1417 528 1473"></td><td data-bbox="528 1417 1426 1518">Slight increase in the average rate of recycling, to 49.3%, but below the set target.</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1473 528 1525"></td><td data-bbox="528 1473 1426 1525"></td></tr> </table>		Issued 35 fixed penalty notices, 32 of which were paid				Supported 100% of community clean-up requests		10 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme with a total of £14,822 awarded to local groups		Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out		Slight increase in the average rate of recycling, to 49.3%, but below the set target.		
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	Anti-littering and responsible dog ownership campaigns rolled out														
	Slight increase in the average rate of recycling, to 49.3%, but below the set target.														
															
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2026-27	Address issues around recycling, littering, illicit dumping and dog fouling by: • Reviewing and implementing the Enforcement Improvement Plan. • Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns. • Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres. • Supporting local community clean ups. • Continued implementation of a Paint Re-Use Scheme at a further 2 Household Recycling Centres. • Implementing a new system to determine levels of street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots. • Embedding the new online reporting tool for dog fouling.														

	- Continuing to implement the rollout out of compactable street litter bins. Work in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to: - Promote the 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns. - Encourage community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'. - Highlight the impact of littering on the marine environment.					
How we will measure success	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Actual	Status Trend	2026-27 Target
Number of fixed penalty notices issued	110	25	31	35 (Target: 100)	 	100
Number of fixed penalty notices paid	91	19	26	32 (Target: 80)	 	80
Percentage of fixed penalty notices issued that are paid	New measure			91% (Target: 80%)		80%
Percentage of community clean up requests supported	New measure		100%	100% (Target: 90%)		100%
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	10	9	15	10		No target
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	49.6%	50.1%	48.7%	49.3% (Q1-Q3)	 	70% by 2030 (55% by 2025)
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	2,319t	932t	429t	380t (Q1-Q3)	 	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20)
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	82,842t	84,636t	85,383	66,395t (Q1-Q3)	 	85,500 tonnes * * (2019-20 target)
What you will see by March 2027	- Increase in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and paid. - Responsible dog ownership and reduced levels of dog fouling, littering and illicit dumping. - Improved opportunities to report dog fouling and identify hotspots for enforcement patrols. - Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites. - Opportunities to engage in community clean ups. - Increased awareness of environmental messaging including recycling, dog fouling and littering. - Decrease in overflowing bins and reduction of street bin collections. - A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride.					
Alignment						

Corporate Plan 2024-27	Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future			
Community Plan	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment			
Programme for Government	Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment			
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Innovation	Sustainability
Responsible Officer	Director: Sustainability and Environment			

*The Q1-Q3 2025-26 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 trend is based on a comparative analysis with the same period last year to ensure effective comparability.

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

Why this matters

You told us that:

- Managing waste, reducing climate change, investing in renewable energy etc. was important to you.
- Green technology skills were the second most important training support needed to improve the growth of resident employability.
- 57% of respondents to our 2026-27 survey agreed with this objective.

Climate change is arguably the most serious threat we face today to our way of life. Climate change is the long-term shift in average weather patterns across the world. Since the mid-1800s, humans have contributed to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air mainly through burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas. This causes global temperatures to rise, resulting in long-term changes.

In October 2019 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council declared a 'Climate Emergency'.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council are developing a Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. This process is led by a Cross-Departmental Officer Working Group who are reviewing all our operations and considering our impacts on climate change.

The Strategy will include positive action to reduce our impacts on climate change (Mitigation) and increase our resilience to deal with its impacts (Adaptation).

Looking Back:

What we did in 2025-26



Established the baseline for the Council's carbon footprint



Established the baseline for the Council's renewable energy generation and overall energy consumption



Progressed the action plan contained within the Newry, Mourne and Down Biodiversity Strategy (2024-30)



78% of Council fleet younger than 8 years



Planted 2,800 trees across the District

Looking Forward:

What we will do in 2026-27

- Publish and launch Sustainability and Climate Change strategy.
- Publish the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan.
- Support the continued implementation of new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.
- Undertake the annual assessment of the Council's carbon footprint and renewable energy output.
- Continue to implement the Council's fleet replacement programme.
- Procure new electric vehicles for Council fleet.
- Begin the transition of Council vehicles to HVO.

How we will measure success	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Actual	Status Trend	2026-27 Target
Reduction in carbon footprint of Council estate	To be established			5,246 tCO2e	-	50% reduction by 2040
- Electricity	New measure			4,584,089 kWh	-	
- Mains Gas	New measure			4,996,994 kWh	-	
- Heating Oil (Kerosene)	New measure			12,449,723 litres	-	
- Fleet Use (Diesel)	New measure			837,901 litres	-	
- Fleet Use (Unleaded Petrol)	New measure			4,995 litres	-	
- HVO Use	New measure			-	-	
Increase in Renewable energy generation	To be established			154,684 kWh	-	5% increase
Percentage of Council fleet younger than 8 years	New measure		79%	78% (Target: 85%)		75%
Number of electric vehicles within the Council fleet	New measure		1	1 (Target: 10)		16
Number of Council supported EV charging points	New measure		20	0 (Target: 18)		12
What you will see by March 2027	- Council's Climate Change and Sustainable Development strategy launched and published. - Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan published. - Annual assessments of the Council's carbon footprint and renewable energy output completed and reported. - Reduction in Council's carbon footprint. - Increase in Council's renewable energy generation. - Continues implementation of Council's fleet replacement programme. - Reduction in vehicle emissions from Council fleet through transition to HVO. - New electric vehicles operating within Council fleet. - New EV charging points installed across the District.					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2024-27	- Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future - Deliver sustainable services					
Community Plan	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment					
Programme for Government	Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Efficiency	Innovation	Sustainability		
Responsible Officer	Director: Sustainability and Environment					

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. 59% of respondents to our 2026-27 survey also agreed with this objective. The new portal, which launched in December 2022, allowing customers to submit applications online and track live planning applications, is now fully operational and amendments and changes remain ongoing as per agreed structures. Work continues on the Planning Improvement Programme and following discussions with SOLACE and DFI, the programme has been reviewed for 2025-26 and a new work programme is in place. Staff retention and recruitment remain challenging, however as of January 2026 all vacant posts have been filled. Additionally, as part of the Performance Improvement Programme two Higher Level Apprenticeship officers commenced employment in January 2026. Performance against the statutory targets remains a challenge and continues to be reviewed by SMT and SPR Committees.	
Looking Back: What we did between April-December 2025		64.7% of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks which is below the regional average of 75.2%
		Average processing time of 46.0 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 19.6 weeks
		Average processing time of 58.8 weeks for major planning applications, which is above the regional average of 38.6 weeks
		Received 869 local planning applications, which is the second highest number of applications received behind Belfast City Council
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2026-27	• Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months. • Improve the average processing time for validating application forms through the introduction of the validation checklist. • Ongoing 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.' • Review and consult on representations made during the consultation period after the launch of the Draft Plan Strategy. • Explore the development of a training programme for staff and members in collaboration with the Department of Infrastructure (DfI) as part of the Council's performance improvement programme for planning. • Review and agree Council's Enforcement Strategy.	

How we will measure success	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	Q1-Q3* 2025-26	Status Trend	2026-27 Target
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)	21.6	33.7	45.2	46.0 (Target: 15 weeks)	 	<15 weeks
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	89	154.8	29.6	58.8 (Target: 30 weeks)	 	<30 weeks
Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks	58.6%	60.0%	47.6%	64.7% (Target: 70%)	 	70%
Average processing time for validating application forms	New measure					6 weeks
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more	228	352	408	561 (Target: 170)	 	170
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less	934	1,154	1,118	981 (Target: 870)	 	870
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more	503	599	574	648 (Target: 580)	 	580
What you will see by March 2027	• A more efficient and effective planning service. • Improved processing times for local and major planning applications. • Improved processing times for planning enforcement cases. • Reduction in the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system. • Validation checklist introduced and processing time for validating planning applications improved. • An empowered and motivated workforce. • Increased confidence in the Planning system. • Sustainable development and regeneration of the District. • A review of representations made during the consultation period for the Draft Plan Strategy. • A training course developed for Council staff and members in collaboration with DfI. • Council's enforcement strategy reviewed and agreed.					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2024-27	• Deliver sustainable services					
Community Plan	• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities					
Programme for Government	• Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing • Reform and Transformation of Public Services					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability		Service quality	Efficiency	
Responsible Officer	Director: Economy, Regeneration and Tourism					

*Annual planning figures will be validated by the Department for Infrastructure and published through the Annual Report 2025-26.

Strategic Alignment

Performance Improvement Objective	Corporate Objective(s)	Community Planning Outcome(s)	Duty of Improvement
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	Improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Service availability Fairness
We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses, job creation and pathways to employment	Support the continued growth and development of our local economy	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 continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Innovation Sustainability
We will reduce our contribution to climate change by cutting carbon emissions and by improving the efficiency of our fleet and buildings	Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future	All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Strategic Effectiveness Efficiency Innovation Sustainability
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	Deliver sustainable services	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service availability Service quality Efficiency

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

Section 89 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the Council to publish the results of the performance indicators and standards that are set by central government around economic development, planning and waste management.

The seven statutory performance indicators and standards, as outlined in the Local Government Performance Indicators and Standards Order (2015), are set out below:

Ref	Statutory Performance Indicator	Annual Standard
Economic Development		
ED1	The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity	>155 173* (updated target)
Planning		
P1	The average processing time of major planning applications	<30 weeks
P2	The average processing time of local planning applications	<15 weeks
P3	The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks	70%
Waste Management		
W1	The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)	70% by 2030 Interim: 55% by 2025
W2	The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	<20,954** tonnes (2019-20 target)
W3	The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	85,500 tonnes**

*Updated 'Go Succeed' programme target for the number of jobs promoted in Newry Mourne and Down: 173. An amendment to the standard set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 is awaiting legislative passage and approval.

** These targets are 2019-20 NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) target which have not yet been updated.

The Council has put in place the following arrangements to monitor progress against the standards set for the statutory performance and indicators:

- Inclusion within the Performance Improvement Plan, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.
- Inclusion within Directorate Business Plans, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the relevant Council Committee.
- Data submissions to Government Departments, with reports being issued to monitor the performance of each Council, outlining regional trends and comparisons.

Self-Imposed Performance Indicators

The Council has identified the following self-imposed performance indicators to measure progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2024 - 27.

Draft Corporate Objective	Draft Measure of Success
Support the continued growth and development of our local economy	Number of jobs created and businesses supported through Council programmes
	Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity
	Amount of investment secured and distributed by Council
Improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district	Number of people participating in targeted health programmes
	Number of attendances at Council indoor leisure facilities
	Number of users of community trails
Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future	Level of street cleanliness across the District (Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Street Cleanliness Index)
	Level of compliance with Sustainable Development Duty
	Percentage of waste recycled
	Percentage of EV charging points
Support regenerative tourism opportunities which promote our culture, heritage and environment	Level of visitor spend
	Number of overnight stays
	Level of visitor satisfaction
	Number of visitors to Council's Arts Centres and Museums
Empowering communities to play an active part in civic life	Percentage of residents who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
	Percentage of residents who agree the Council consults with, and listens to the views of local people
	Percentage of residents who feel they can have a say on how services are delivered in their local area
	Number of financial assistance projects funded.
	Number of people accessing the Ethnic Minority Support Office services
Develop and revitalise our district	Number of BRCD projects delivered.
	Number of small settlement schemes delivered.
	Number of new/upgraded public conveniences.
Deliver sustainable services	Level of citizen satisfaction.
	Compliance with the Duty of Improvement.

Represent the voice of the District with our partners	Number of users registered to Council corporate social media channels.
	Number of visits to Council's corporate website.
	Compliance with the Duty of Community Planning
	Percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live
	Number of training events provided to elected members

The Council has put in place the following arrangements to monitor progress against the self-imposed performance indicators:

- Inclusion within the Performance Improvement Plan, with progress being monitored by the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee through the annual Assessment of Performance.
- Some performance indicators are included within Directorate Business Plans, with progress being monitored on a bi-annual basis by the relevant Council Committee.

These performance indicators are aligned to community planning outcomes. This will ensure the Council continues to address the needs and aspirations of local communities and deliver sustainable outcomes for all, now and in the future.

Identifying the Performance Improvement Objectives 2026-27

Three of the five performance improvement objectives 2026-27 have been carried forward from 2025-26 as they remain relevant and meaningful. We have however, refined the wording of our economic development and climate change objectives to make them more succinct, meaningful, and better reflect the evolving work taking place across these areas. A number of changes and additions have been made to the actions and measures that support all the objectives. They have been developed, reviewed and updated in close liaison with Elected Members, Senior Management Team, Corporate Management Team and employees across the organisation. Each objective is underpinned by a suite of 'supporting actions', 'measures of success' and outcomes for stakeholders. They are clearly aligned to the Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2024-27, as well as other regional and local plans, particularly the Council's Business Plans which have been developed by each Directorate. These plans influence and guide the overall direction of travel for the organisation.

- Programme for Government 2024-2027
- Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down 2017-2030, Priority Action Areas and District Electoral Area (DEA) Action Plans
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2024-27
- Thematic plans and strategies, including the IT Strategy and Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy
- Annual Directorate Business Plans 2026-27

The Council has also taken into consideration performance information from the following sources to support the development of the performance improvement objectives:

- The Northern Ireland Audit Office Audit and Assessment Reports and 'proposals for improvement', which are currently being progressed
- The Assessment of Performance 2024-25, including progress against performance improvement objectives, measures of success within the Corporate Plan 2024-27 and statutory performance indicators and standards for economic development, planning and waste management.

The reasons for objectives being carried forward and/or amended are detailed in the table below:

PIO's -2025-26	PIO's 2026-27	Progress / Rationale	Status Proposed
PIO 1: We will improve the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	PIO 1: We will improve the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	During 2025-26 progress was made against a number of key actions under this objective including: • Increase in the number of paid attendances at some of Council's 6 main leisure centres. • Increase in the number of people participating in targeted health programmes. • Increase in the number of leisure centre memberships However, there is still improvements to be made, and the 2022 residents survey ranked 'Improving people's health and wellbeing (and reducing health inequalities) as a high priority for improving the local area.	Retain This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2026-27.
PIO 2: We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses and job creation	PIO 2: We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses, job creation and pathways to employment	During 2025-26 progress was made against a number of key actions including: • Number of business plans created for start-up businesses and employer enterprises. • Number of jobs promoted via business start-up activity. • Number of new enterprises created as a result of support However, there is still improvements to be made and there is a focus on pathways to employment going forward. The 2022 residents survey ranked 'improving skills, employability, and job prospects' and 'supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' as the 1st and 3rd highest priorities for improving the local area.	Amend This performance improvement objective to be amended for 2026-27.

PIO 3: We will improve the cleanliness of our district by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling incidents	PIO 3: We will improve the cleanliness of our district by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling incidents	During 2025-26 progress was made against some key actions under this objective including: • Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity campaigns and dog licences • Promoting the 'Live Here, Love Here' campaign through the funding of 10 environmental projects. However, improvement is still needed in a number of areas including increasing the Council's recycling rate and decreasing the level of municipal waste arising. The 2022 residents survey ranked 'dog mess and fouling' and rubbish or littering lying around' as the top two perceived problems in their local areas by residents.	Retain This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2026-27.
PIO 4: We will improve our sustainability by reducing our impacts in relation to climate change	PIO 4: We will reduce our contribution to climate change by cutting carbon emissions and improving the efficiency of our fleet and buildings	During 2025-26 progress was made against a number of key actions and measures including: • Establishing the carbon footprint of the Council Estate and • Establishing the Energy Consumption baseline for the Council Now that these have been established however, work will commence on ways to reduce these and work towards the Council's net zero obligations.	Amend This performance improvement objective to be amended for 2026-27.

Feedback from the consultation also highlighted the need for the objective to be more measurable and achievable, hence the amendment to the objective.			
PIO 5: We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme.	PIO 5: We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	During 2025-26 progress continued to be made against a number of key actions including: • Working with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted. • Supported employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'. • Increase in the percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks. However, much improvement is still required as the statutory standards for the average processing times of major and local planning applications and enforcement cases is still not being met.	Retain This performance improvement objective to be carried forward to 2026-27

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'.

The Community Plan sets out the following five positive outcomes:

Our Outcomes

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



Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2024-27

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The Corporate Plan 2024-27 sets out the following mission statement and eight strategic objectives:

Council Mission Statement

'To deliver sustainable services and empower our communities through transparent governance and collaboration.'

Council Strategic Objectives

 Support the continued growth and development of our local economy	 Improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the district
 Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future	 Support regenerative tourism opportunities which promote our culture, heritage and environment
 Empowering communities to play an active part in civic life	 Develop and revitalise our district
 Deliver sustainable services	 Represent the voice of the district with our partners

Alignment with the Strategic Aspects of Improvement

In accordance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, each performance improvement objective seeks to bring about improvement in at least one of the following aspects:

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

The table below outlines how Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's performance improvement objectives 2026-27 are aligned with the seven specified aspects of improvement:

Performance Improvement Objective	Seven Aspects of Improvement						
	Strategic Effectiveness	Service Quality	Service Availability	Fairness	Sustainability	Efficiency	Innovation
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services	✓	✓	✓	✓			
We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses, job creation and pathways to employment	✓	✓	✓				✓
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and reducing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling	✓		✓		✓		✓
We will reduce our contribution to climate change by cutting carbon emissions and improving the efficiency of our fleet and buildings	✓				✓	✓	✓
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	✓	✓	✓			✓	

The Council has also assessed the performance improvement objectives against the following criteria, and considers them to be:

- Legitimate
- Clear
- Robust
- Deliverable
- Demonstrable

Equality Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment

In accordance with the Section 75 requirements of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), whereby the Council must carry out its functions having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard for the desirability to promote good relations, the Performance Improvement Plan has been subject to an equality screening. The outcome of the equality screening process determined that the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 is not subject to an equality impact assessment, with no mitigating measures required.

In accordance with the Rural Needs Act Northern Ireland (2016), the Council has given due regard to rural needs by carrying out a Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27.

Consultation and Engagement

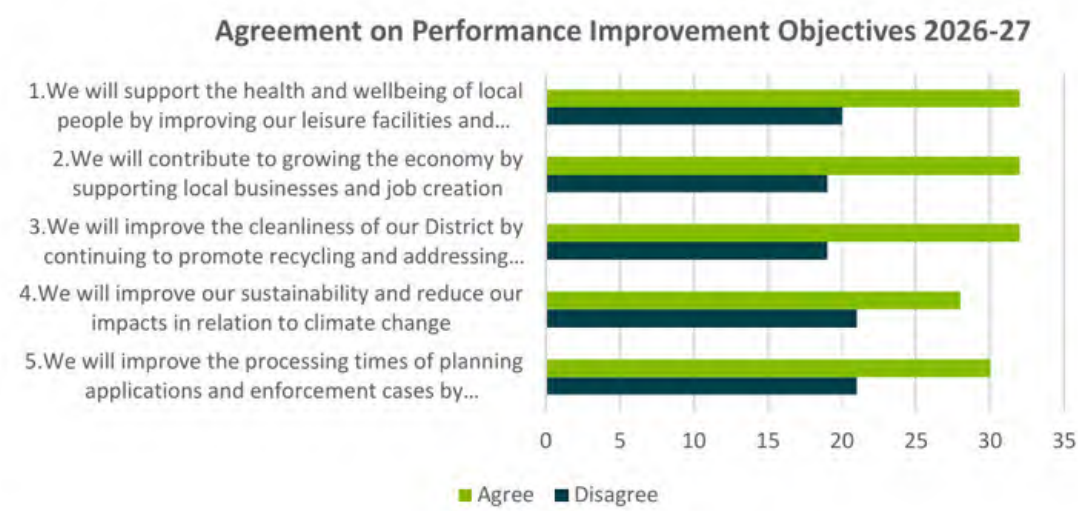
The Council is committed to listening to local people and taking on board their views. Since 2017, the Council has carried out extensive consultation and engagement, inviting key stakeholders, including Elected Members, residents, local businesses and community planning partners to put forward their views on the proposed performance improvement objectives.

The Council website was host to the consultation and engagement process. Under the consultations section of the website, an electronic survey in relation to the draft performance improvement objectives 2026-27 was published and promoted. The consultation and engagement process was promoted further through the Council's social media channels and circulated to key internal and external stakeholders.

The overall consultation and engagement process resulted in 54 completed surveys and engagement with 68 stakeholders through the Crotlieve DEA Forum, Downpatrick DEA Forum, Mournes DEA Forum, Slieve Croob DEA Forum and Rowallane DEA Forum as well as Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice and Age Friendly Alliance. These responses have been supplemented by the input of 764 respondents to the Residents Survey in 2022.

Electronic documentation, survey on the draft performance improvement objectives 2026-27 on the consultation section of the Council website	Survey: 54 responses
Engagement with the: Section 75 groups, including Age Friendly Alliance and Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Voice	32 consultees
Engagement with: 5 DEAs across the District	36 members
Residents Survey (September 2022)	764 respondents

The consultation responses revealed support for the proposed performance improvement objectives, with the majority of respondents agreeing with each of the five objectives.



The areas for improvement and issues raised through the overall consultation and engagement processes are clearly aligned to the five performance improvement objectives 2026-27, and will be addressed through the Performance Improvement Plan, and as part of the Council’s business planning process.

Achieving Continuous Improvement

Transforming and improving how the Council delivers services is a key objective within the Corporate Plan. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to developing a 'can do' culture, where managing performance and achieving improvement is everyone's responsibility. In pursuing the corporate vision and objectives, the Council has identified the following five core values:

What this means:	
Respect	We will demonstrate respect for all people in our attitudes, behaviours and working relationships.
Transparency	We will be transparent in how we make decisions.
Excellence	We will take pride in our work and be passionate about the standards we strive to achieve.
Integrity	We want the people of our district to trust us to do the right thing.
Accountability	We will be accountable to the public for our decisions and actions. We will be accountable for how we plan and use resources sustainably.

The Council has put in place a number of frameworks and systems to drive forward continuous improvement and facilitate a performance improvement culture. These include the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, Policy Development Framework, Equality Scheme, Governance Framework and Risk Management Policy.

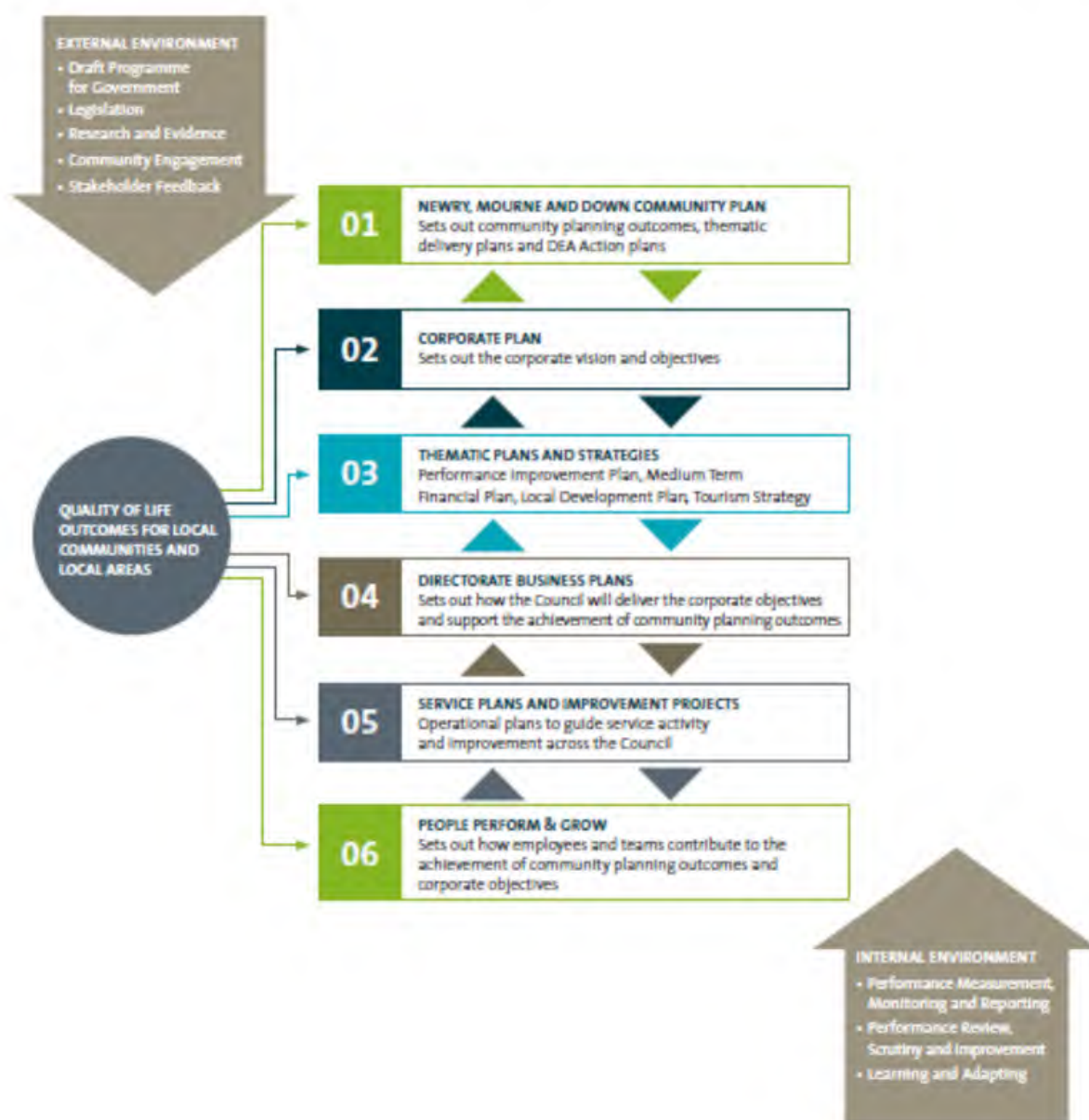
The Council also assesses how performance compares with other Councils. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is working with the Association of Public Service Excellence to benchmark performance against the performance of Councils across Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions. This information is being used to collate a robust and reliable evidence base, to help identify and address future areas for improvement.

The Performance Improvement Plan underpins the Council's overall approach to effective performance management. It supports the Council in identifying more efficient and effective ways of working to facilitate the achievement of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and Directorate objectives, which together support the continued implementation of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework.

Business Planning and Performance Management Framework

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The Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework drives and provides assurance that community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives are being delivered, with the primary goal of making life better for our citizens.



The Community Plan and Corporate Plan sit within a hierarchy of plans that informs the Council's overall direction of travel and guides all activity within the organisation. Community planning outcomes and corporate objectives are cascaded across the organisation through thematic plans and strategies and Directorate Business Plans. Performance indicators continue to be developed at all levels across the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, in order to ensure performance is measured, monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis.

During 2026-27, the Council will continue to progress and mainstream the development, implementation and review of Service Plans and roll out of Individual Performance (People Perform Grow), both of which seek to demonstrate the 'line of sight' between the work of employees and how they contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes and corporate objectives.

Through the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework, the Council will manage performance at all levels across the organisation, in order to ensure the necessary steps are taken to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of functions. Each level of the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework is, and will be, accompanied by a relevant set of performance measures to monitor and assess the Council's progress in improving the quality of life for local communities.

The table below provides a description of the various plans and strategies that form part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Management Framework.

Community Plan	The Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down sets out the long-term vision for improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the District. Developed in collaboration with partners across the statutory, business and voluntary sectors, the Community Plan is underpinned by Priority Actions Areas and seven DEA Action Plans, which seek to deliver the five community planning outcomes at a local level. Progress in implementing the Community Plan is reviewed on a biennial basis.
Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan 2024-27 sets out the proposed vision, values and strategic objectives for the Council. Each strategic objective is underpinned by 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success'. Progress in delivering the Corporate Plan is reported annually through the Assessment of Performance.
Thematic Plans and Strategies	The Council has put in place a number of Thematic Plans and Strategies to support the implementation of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan, including the Performance Improvement Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan and Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy. These plans provide the strategic context for multiple programmes of work across the organisation.
Directorate Business Plans	Business Plans are developed annually to demonstrate how Directorates contribute to the achievement of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives. Directorate Business Plans include suites of key performance measures to

	measure progress and drive continuous improvement, with performance being monitored and reviewed bi-annually by the relevant Committee.
Service Plans and Improvement Projects	Service Plans and Improvement Projects are operational and set out the direction for service areas across the Council. They outline how each service contributes to the delivery of community planning outcomes, corporate objectives and performance improvement objectives, include key performance measures and provide a mechanism to manage performance consistently across the organisation.
People Perform Grow	The Council recognises the significant role employees play in contributing to the achievement of the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Thematic Plans and Strategies, Directorate Business Plans and Service Plans. People Perform Grow demonstrates the link between the work of employees and how they contribute to the achievement of key plans and strategies, as well as the outcomes experienced by local communities.

The Business Planning and Performance Management Framework is complemented by the integrated cycle of activity outlined in the diagram below.

Governance Arrangements

Reviewing performance and reporting progress to Elected Members and other key stakeholders is very important, as it facilitates transparency, accountability and improvement in everything the Council does. The governance arrangements to develop, monitor, report and review the Council's progress in implementing the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 are outlined below:



The Council must publish an Assessment of Performance by 30 September 2026 which will provide an overview of how the Council has performed during 2025-26. The Assessment of Performance will be published on the Council's website and is supplemented by the Mid-Year Progress Report for the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27.

The arrangements the Council has put in place to secure continuous improvement are subject to an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. Subject to the General Duty of Improvement being met, the Northern Ireland Audit Office will issue a Letter of Assurance to both the Council and Department for Communities.

How to Propose New Performance Improvement Objectives

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Newry, Mourne and Down District Council welcomes your ongoing feedback on the performance improvement objectives 2026-27, as well as any suggestions you may have on how services can be improved in the future.

The Council can be contacted in the following ways:

In writing:

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

Telephone: 0300 013 2233

Email: performance@nmandd.org

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

0330 137 4000 (Council)
council@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

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

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

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation and Engagement Report on the Performance Improvement Objectives 2026-27

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 February 2026. 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 13 February – 17 April 2026, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council carried out a nine-week consultation and engagement process with key stakeholders on the draft performance improvement objectives 2026-27 through the following mechanisms:

- Electronic survey and documentation on the consultations section of the Council website, which was promoted through the Council's social media channels
- Public Notices in local newspapers
- Engagement with the following stakeholders:
 - Crotlieve DEA
 - Mournes DEA
 - Slieve Croob DEA
 - Downpatrick DEA
 - Rowallane DEA
 - Newry and Mourne and Down Youth Voice
 - Age Friendly Alliance

This process was further supplemented by the consultation and engagement which was carried out to support the development of the Corporate Plan 2024-27.

- Residents Survey (September 2022)
- Consultation and engagement on the Corporate Plan 2024-27 (March – May 2024)
- Consultation and engagement on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

Analysis Methodology

A total of 54 surveys were received in response to the consultation and engagement on the Council's draft performance improvement objectives 2026-27. 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 2026-27. This was supplemented by an engagement process with 68 key stakeholders, as outlined below:

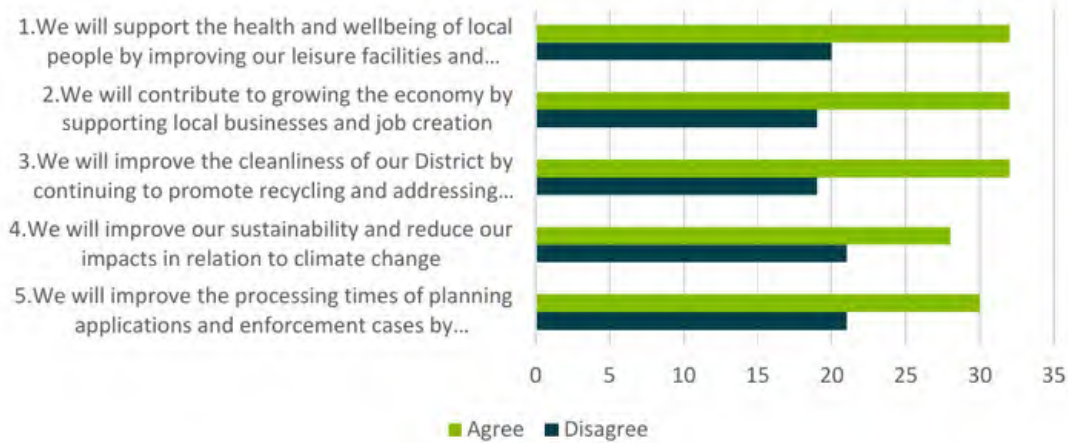
Consultation and Engagement	Details
Mournes DEA Forum	10 participants – 24 March 2026
Crotlieve DEA Forum	11 participants – 14 March 2026
Downpatrick DEA Forum	7 participants – 14 April 2026
Rowallane DEA Forum	5 participants – 14 April 2026
Slieve Croob DEA Forum	3 participants – 24 February 2026
Age Friendly Alliance	15 participants – 27 February 2026
Newry and Mourne and Down Youth Voice	17 participants – 14 April 2026
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 2026-27 have been received from residents, elected members, local community organisations, statutory organisations and others including those that work in and visit 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 2026-27



Residents Survey (2022)

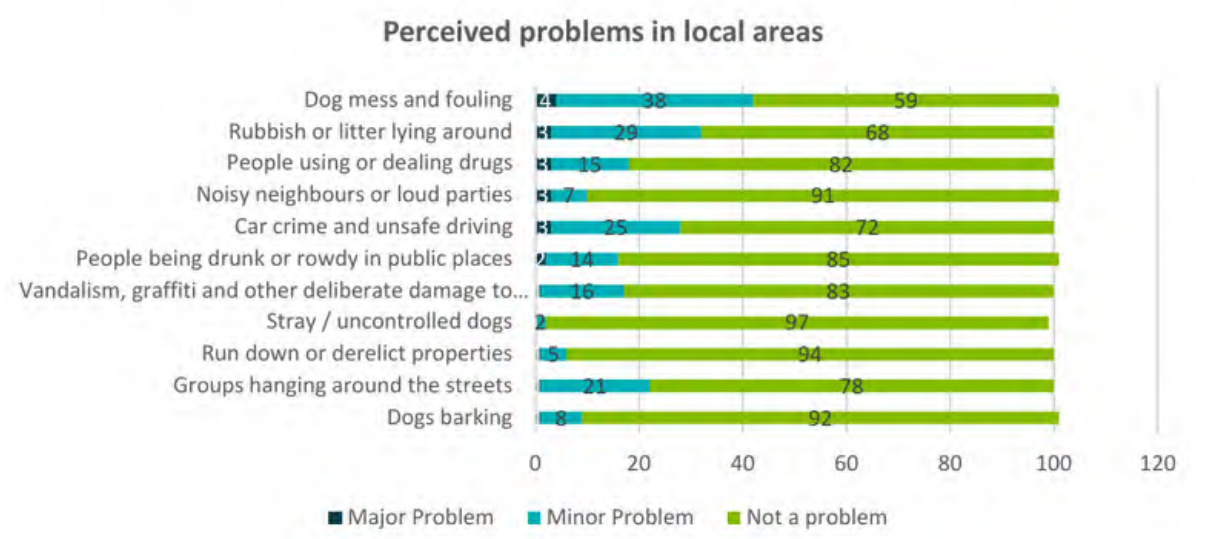
These findings are further endorsed by the results of the Residents Survey which indicate that the performance improvement objectives broadly address the top improvements identified to make somewhere a good place to live.

- 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 2026-27 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 Listened	We Did
Consultation Survey	Survey layout is quite biased towards agreement of objectives and should be changed.	Council will review the consultation layout and present a different format for next year.	
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our			Included a new measure on 'Number of attendances

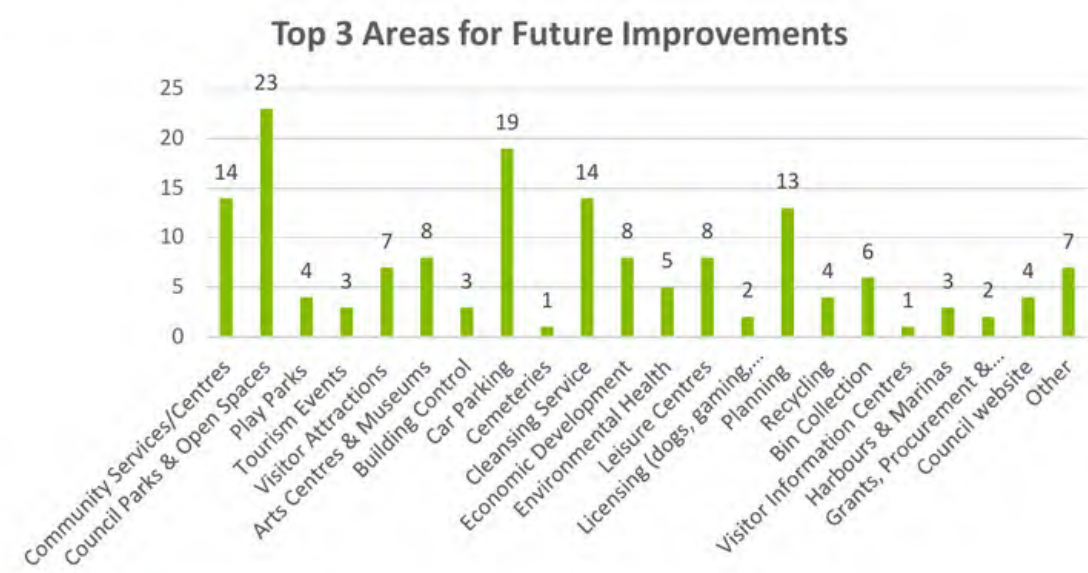
leisure facilities and services			recorded at Donard Park multisport hub' Included an action on working towards achieving disability accreditation at a Tier 1 site.
We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting business growth, job creation and pathways to employment			Targets for economic development programmes have been revised due to the reduction in the budget from DFI
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents	The target for supporting clean ups should be 100%.		To further address the issue of cleansing, the Council has included an action on the rollout of compactable street litter bins. An online dog fouling tool has also been developed. Target has been changed to 100%.

We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change	'Again, too vague. How will this be achieved? What measurable steps will be taken?' 'Please state objectives in a way that this can be measured Meaningless, generalised statement.'		Council has set a target for the reduction of its carbon footprint. Council have now reviewed and amended this objective to make it clearer what we are trying to achieve and how we are going to achieve it.
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme	'Applications for both minor and major developments take far too long,		Council will review its Enforcement Strategy In conjunction with DFI, the Council will explore the development of a training programme for staff and members as part of the Council's performance improvement programme. Council have now introduced a validation checklist to improve the

	often exceeding reasonable timeframes.'		processing times of validating applications and have set a target of 6 weeks.
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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', 'Car Parking', 'Community Services/Centres' and 'Cleansing Services' are the top priorities for improvement in 2026-27.



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 2026-27, there has been an amendment to the climate change and sustainability objective as well as changes to a number of 'supporting actions' and 'measures of success', as outlined in the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27.

The Consultation and Engagement report will be published on the Council's website by 30 June 2026, alongside the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27. It will also be circulated to key stakeholders to support the business planning process.

A summary of the consultation and engagement feedback is provided below.

Summary of Consultation and Engagement Feedback

Performance Improvement Objective 1

- Strong dissatisfaction with perceived ineffectiveness and delays (e.g. Newry pool reopening), and lack of progress on long-promised projects like Warrenpoint Baths and the Newry park.
- Particular frustration that places like Warrenpoint lack basic amenities such as a community centre, despite smaller areas having them.
- Existing leisure centres, parks, trails, and attractions are not being properly maintained, with closures and deterioration risking reduced visitor numbers and revenue.
- A lack of facilities and activities for young people—especially beyond traditional sports—as well as a call to cater for all age groups, not just families with children.
- Mixed views on whether leisure services should be publicly funded, with some arguing they should be left to the private sector.
- Concerns that poor transport links and accessibility barriers prevent people, particularly those with disabilities, from using leisure facilities.
- Perception that areas like Newry are deteriorating (e.g. potholes, lack of attractions), with calls for investment to boost footfall, economic activity, and community wellbeing.

Performance Improvement Objective 2

- Frustration that there are too many vape shops, nail bars, and similar businesses, with calls for better checks and more support for genuine local businesses.
- Views that excessive regulation and costs (e.g. National Insurance increases) are harming employers, leading to job losses and reduced business activity.
- Many feel economic development should sit with central government, questioning why the council is involved and how rates are being spent.
- Strong perception that Newry is deteriorating, with empty buildings, poor cleanliness, and lack of investment making it unattractive for businesses and visitors.
- Concerns that developments like the Newry Civic Centre could negatively impact the city, and that external contractors are used instead of local firms.
- Calls for initiatives such as a nighttime economy strategy, attracting independent retailers and multinationals, improving tourism infrastructure, and increasing footfall.

- Support for bringing derelict buildings back into use, improving infrastructure, and focusing council spending on visible benefits for local ratepayers and job creation.

Performance Improvement Objective 3

- Give 100% as a target for community clean ups
- Advertise what the Council can provide for community groups in terms of clean ups.
- More frequent road sweeping, drain clearing, and general maintenance of public spaces is needed.
- Hire more cleansing staff, improve productivity of existing workers, and better advertise vacancies.
- Roadsides, rural areas, and key routes are heavily affected by rubbish, including fly-tipping and waste from local businesses.
- Lack of action on dog fouling and fly-tipping, with calls for stricter monitoring, enforcement and prosecution.
- Public toilets, amenity sites, and key roads are poorly maintained or inadequate.
- Dirty streets and littered landscapes harm the area's appeal compared to neighbouring regions.
- Greater investment, community pride and cross-border collaboration to address litter, waterways, and biodiversity issues.

Performance Improvement Objective 4

- Some view climate change initiatives as ineffective, politically driven, or a misuse of public funds.
- Fears that sustainability measures (e.g., Net Zero) will place financial strain on households.
- Doubts about the council's ability to deliver meaningful or effective climate action.
- Perceived contradiction in supporting sustainability while allowing waste-related activities (e.g., Re-Gen operations).
- Feedback that plans are too vague, with calls for tangible solutions like better public transport and cycling infrastructure.
- Support for climate initiatives if they are realistic, sensible, and cost-effective.

Performance Improvement Objective 5

- Bat survey issues and biodiversity issues that are being requested to be carried out has significantly increased the financial implications of submitting an application. These surveys /issues used to be at the discretion of the planning officer and now they appear to be mandatory.
- The whole system needs to be looked at. Blanket approach to planning.
- Applications for both minor and major developments take far too long, often exceeding reasonable timeframes.
- Decisions appear inconsistent, with unclear or shifting requirements and poor communication throughout the process.
- Strong criticism of the council's track record, with doubts about its ability to improve or deliver effectively.
- Calls for earlier clarification of issues, and faster handling of straightforward applications.
- Concerns that existing infrastructure (e.g., water systems) cannot support development, and that enforcement and decision-making need to be stronger and more effective.

Other comments

- Re-do consultation form to make it less biased – hard to disagree.
- Strong demand to focus on roads, healthcare, housing, rivers, and essential services rather than broader or global issues.
- Widespread perception that money is being wasted on "vanity projects" instead of practical improvements residents value.
- Residents want reduced rates bills, and clearer evidence of value for money.
- Significant dissatisfaction with council leadership, including calls for accountability and leadership change.
- Support for parks, cycling paths, improved public transport, and refurbishment of existing assets over new developments.
- Strong desire for the council to listen more closely to residents and reflect their priorities in decision-making.
- Need for better support for rural areas, improved connectivity, and more services for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities.

Other improvements

- Strong demand to fix roads, improve waste collection, maintain waterways, and address flood management issues.
- Criticism of “vanity projects” (e.g., civic buildings, gondolas) and calls to reduce costs, reuse existing buildings, and lower rates.
- Ongoing issues with litter, poor maintenance, and lack of green spaces, including calls for more parks and better upkeep of public areas.
- Residents want meaningful consultation, clearer communication, and more openness in decision-making processes.
- Need for affordable, reliable public transport and better connectivity, especially for non-drivers and people with additional needs.
- Greater emphasis on local needs, including community events, inclusive services, and balanced investment across all areas.
- Calls to reduce political influence, improve leadership accountability, and ensure decisions reflect the priorities and consent of local residents.

Objective Delivery Plans 2026-27

Delivery Plans have been developed to demonstrate the arrangements which have been put in place to support the effective implementation of each performance improvement objective. They provide an overview of:

- Responsible Officers
- Alignment with the Community Plan and Draft Corporate Plan
- Governance arrangements for the Performance Improvement Plan
- Meeting the seven legislative criteria
- 'Supporting actions' and 'measures of success'
- Links to existing plans and strategies
- Resources
- Governance arrangements

In recognition of the dynamic nature of the information included within the Objective Delivery Plans, they should be considered as a 'work in progress', subject to change to a continuous basis.

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will improve the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services					
Responsible Officers	Director: Activity and Healthy Communities Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport				
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing	Link to Corporate Plan 2024-27	Improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District		
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27	- Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee. - Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.				
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives. Achieving this objective will deliver real benefits and outcomes for local communities and other key stakeholders. Service Quality: The quality of services will continue to improve through the planned increase in the number and variety of classes being offered, as well as health promotions taking place. Service Availability: The continued progression and delivery of Council leisure projects will improve access to and availability of key leisure services and contribute towards the improvement of people’s health and wellbeing. Fairness: Includes opportunities for people across Section 75 categories to access the Council’s leisure centres.				
What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	Link to existing Plan/Strategy	Measures of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Progress the leisure projects agreed within the capital programme	AHC Business Plan 2026-27 Capital Works Programme	7 new build and/or upgraded capital projects progressed in 2026-27	Amount agreed under the capital plan.	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2026-27 Ongoing monitoring of projects within the Capital Plan	Assistant Director Healthy Living Assistant Director Capital and Procurement
Sustain the number of paid attendances at indoor leisure facilities	AHC Business Plan 2026-27	Target set at 898,000 across the 6 leisure sites for 2026-27	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director Healthy Living Head of Indoor Leisure

Continue to deliver a range of targeted, sustainable health programmes to encourage participation in physical activity.	AHC Business Plan 2026-27	Target of 16,500 people to be participating in targeted health programmes	In partnership with the Southern and South Eastern Health Trusts	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan 2026-27 Reporting back to Health Trusts	Assistant Director Healthy Living Head of Indoor Leisure Sports Development Officer
Provide funding through financial assistance for capital projects for sports clubs.	AHC Business Plan 2026-27 Healthy Living Service Plan	Target of £225,000 allocated to sports clubs across the District	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan and Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director Healthy Living Head of Programmes
Upgrade a number of play parks across the District	AHC Business 2026-27 Healthy Living Service Plan	Target of 2 play parks to be upgraded	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan and Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Healthy Living Head of Outdoor Leisure
Work towards achieving disability accreditation across identified tier 1 sites	AHC Business Plan 2026-27 Healthy Living Service Plan	Disability accreditation at a tier 1 site achieved	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business Plan and Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Healthy Living Head of Indoor Leisure
Continue to monitor customer satisfaction	AHC Business Plan 2026-27	Customer satisfaction monitored	Within the resources of the AHC Directorate	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the AHC Business	Assistant Director: Healthy Living

	Healthy Living Service Plan			Plan and Service Plan 2026-27	Head of Indoor Leisure
Record usage of Donard Park Multisport Hub	AHC Business Plan 2026-27 Healthy Living Service Plan	Target of 30,000 recorded visits to Donard Park Multisport Hub			
Risk Management					
Risks		Actions to Mitigate Risks			
Leisure facilities do not achieve the projected paid attendance levels		Targeted promotional and publicity campaigns including online campaigns are being carried out.			
Targeted groups do not engage in physical activity programmes		Programmes are managed, monitored and publicised effectively across the District.			
Capital Projects do not go ahead		Budgets have been set to include the leisure centre capital projects.			

Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses, job creation and pathways to employment					
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism				
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Link to Corporate Plan 2024-27	Support the continued growth and development of our local economy		
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27	- Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee. - Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.				
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives, and will deliver tangible benefits to citizens, local businesses and social enterprises. Service Quality: The quality of services available to businesses and stakeholders will improve through the broad range of economic development programmes available. Service Availability: The continued roll-out of programmes to businesses, social enterprises and fishing dependent communities will improve access to and availability of key services, as well as the overall quality of life in the District. Innovation: Implicit within this objective are innovative, forward looking ways to promote / create new jobs and support businesses / social enterprises across the District.				
What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measures of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Support the creation of new businesses, support existing businesses, and promote new jobs through the new 'Go Succeed' programme	Corporate Plan 2024-27 Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020-25 ERT Business Plan 2026-27	Number of participants engaged across all 'Go Succeed' activities Number of business plans created for start-up businesses and employer enterprises	NMD contribution: £168k Regional programme led by Belfast City Council	Monthly meetings of the regional Management Team Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism Head of Regeneration and Business Development

	EGT Service Plan 2026-27	Number of new jobs promoted through business start-up activity Number of new enterprises created as a result of support Number of existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions			
Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programme		Number of social enterprise start ups supported Number of social enterprise jobs created	Social Enterprise Programme: £51k	Quarterly meetings with Newry Enterprise Agency Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism Head of Regeneration and Business Development Enterprise Development Officers
Invest in employability and skills through the implementation of the LMP Action Plan.	ERT Business Plan 2026-27 EFT Service Plan 2026-27	Implementation of the LMP Action Plan	Waiting on Letter of Offer for 2026-27	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Invest in the creation of good jobs, productivity growth, decarbonization and regional balance through the	ERT Business Plan 2026-27 EFT Service Plan 2026-27	Implementation of a Local Economic Partnership Action Plan	Within NMD Resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism

implementation of a Local Economic Partnership action plan.					Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Directly supporting participants on employment pathway initiatives.	ERT Business Plan 2026-27 EFT Service Plan 2026-27	Number of participants directly supported on employment pathway initiatives	Within NMD Resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism Head of Regeneration and Business Development
Risk Management					
Risks		Actions and Controls to Mitigate Against Risks			
Failure to deliver the economic development programmes to support the economic recovery of the District		All programmes to be in place with robust management and governance arrangements.			
The impact of reduced funding from Central Government on delivering the various economic development programmes and achieving targets		Ongoing discussions and engagement with Central Government as well as monitoring of key influences and economic development support adjusted to meet local demand and Council resources.			
Lack of interest in and applications made to participate in programmes		Publicity campaigns delivered through online and social media platforms. Signposting service in place.			

Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents.					
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Directors: Environment / Sustainability				
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Link to Corporate Plan 2024-27	Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future		
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27	- Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee - Annual Assessment of Performance to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee				
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits and outcomes to local citizens. Service Availability: The availability of key services will improve, through support for community led initiatives and access to funding through 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns. Innovation: The Council has introduced innovative ways to improve civic and community pride across the District, as evidenced through support for Community Clean ups, Enforcement Improvement Plan, continued engagement with Keep NI Beautiful and the development of mobile apps to report and record environmental crime, identify emerging issues and address 'hotspots' across the District. Sustainability: Initiatives to encourage public participation in key campaigns, promote responsible dog ownership and reduce levels of littering, fly tipping and dog fouling will empower residents and support the delivery of a more sustainable service and cleaner District in the future.				
What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Address issues around littering, fly tipping and dog fouling by:	Corporate Plan 2024-27	Number of fixed penalty notices issued (littering and dog fouling)	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Environment
	Enforcement Action Plan	Number of fixed penalty notices paid (littering and dog fouling)		Ongoing assessments of the Dog Fouling Strategy and	Head of Waste Processing
Reviewing and implementing the Enforcement Improvement Plan	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2025-26				Head of Waste Management

Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns Embedding the new online reporting tool for dog fouling Continuing to implement the rollout of compactable street litter bins Working with Louth County Council to raise awareness of the impact of fly tipping along the border area Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres	Environment Service Plan 2025-26	Percentage of issued fixed penalty notices that are paid The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings		Enforcement Action Plan	
Continued implementation of a Paint Re-Use Scheme at a further 2 Household Recycling Centres	SE Directorate Business Plan 2026-27 Environment Service Plan 2026-27	Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites.	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business & Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Environment Head of Waste Processing
Support local community clean ups, Participate in the Keep NI Beautiful 'Live Here Love Here' campaign	Sustainability & Directorate Business Plan 2026-27	100% of community clean up requests supported	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business & Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Sustainability Head of Sustainability

Encourage community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'	Environment Service Plan 2026-27	Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects Number of community groups to 'Adopt a Spot'			
Implementing a new system to determine levels of street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots.	SE Directorate Business Plan 2026-27	A system has been identified for carrying out cleanliness inspections Work commenced in relation to littering and the marine environment	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business & Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Environment Head of Waste Processing
Highlight the impact of littering on the marine environment	Environment Service Plan	New compactable bins installed across areas of the District			
Increased awareness of environmental messaging including recycling, dog fouling and littering.	SE Directorate Business Plan 2026-27 Environment Service Plan	A number of bin lorries painted with environmental and recycling messages to carry out bin collections	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business & Service Plan 2026-27	Assistant Director: Environment Head of Waste Processing
Risk Management					
Risks			Actions to Mitigate Against Risks		
Stakeholders do not get involved in community clean up's and 'Live Here Love Here' campaigns			All initiatives are promoted and publicised across the District, through social media, website, liaison with Council employees and word of mouth.		
Failure to improve the level of street cleanliness and reduce the level of littering, dog fouling and fly tipping			The Council has several initiatives in place to encourage civic pride in the local area, promote responsible dog ownership, report littering and use enforcement action. Council has now identified a cleanliness monitoring systems due to lack of data from the LEAMS survey and will be looking to implement that this year.		
Failure to achieve the statutory targets for waste management			Programmes are in place to increase the rate of recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.		

Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will reduce our contribution to climate change by cutting our carbon emissions and improving the efficiency of our fleet and buildings.					
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Director: Sustainability				
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment	Link to Corporate Plan 2024-27	Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future		
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27	Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee				
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits and outcomes to citizens. Efficiency: The procurement and availability of younger, less polluting cars as well as cars with alternative fuel sources will provide a more efficient and effective service to our customers as well as working towards protecting our environment. Innovation: Innovative mechanisms to allow more people access electric cars by providing more electric charging points will hopefully assist in the increase of cars with alternative fuel sources Sustainability: Implementing the Council’s fleet replacement programme to ensure younger, less polluting cars as well as cars with alternative fuel sources are within our fleet which allows for the delivery of a more sustainable service across the District.				
What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers

Continue the implementation of the Council's Fleet Replacement Program	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2026-27 Sustainability Service Plan 2026-27	% of Council fleet younger than 8 years Number of electric vehicles in the Council fleet	Within existing resources	Annual and Bi-annual assessment of the SE Directorate Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27 Reports considered and approved by the SE Committee	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Director: Sustainability
Publication of the following strategies and plans: - Climate change and sustainable development strategy - Climate Change Adaptation Plan	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2026-27 Sustainability Service Plan 2026-27	All strategies and plans published		Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27 Reports considered and approved by the SE Committee	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Director: Sustainability
Support the continued implementation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2026-27 Sustainability Service Plan 2026-27	Number of Council supported EV charging points		Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27 Reports considered and approved by the SE Committee	Assistant Director: Sustainability
Undertaking the annual assessment of the Council's carbon footprint and renewable energy output	Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plans 2026-27 Sustainability Service Plan 2026-27	Baselines established and increase / reduction achieved		Annual and Bi-annual assessments of the SE Directorate Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27	Director: Sustainability and Environment Assistant Director: Sustainability

				Reports considered and approved by the SE Committee	
Risk Management					
Risks		Actions to Mitigate Against Risks			
Delivery issues with vehicles ordered		Getting approval for vehicles in time and ordering early to mitigate against time delays on delivery			
Too many plans and strategies to be complete and not getting done on time		Timetabling the process and adding additional resources when required.			
Carbon footprint and energy baselines not improving		Implementing agreed actions and measures within the climate change strategy and action plan			

WORK IN PROGRESS

Performance Improvement Objective 5

We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme					
Senior Responsible Officer	Director: Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Assistant Director: Regeneration Chief Planner				
Link to Community Plan	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Link to Corporate Plan 2024-27	Deliver sustainable services		
Governance: Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27	- Mid Year Progress Report of the Performance Improvement Plan 2026-27 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee - Annual Assessment of Performance 2025-26 to the Senior Management Team, Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee				
Meeting the legislative criteria	Strategic Effectiveness: Aligned to community planning outcomes and corporate objectives and will deliver real benefits to citizens. Service Quality: The implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme and the new planning portal has, and will continue to improve the quality of the service provided by reducing the processing times of applications. Service Availability: Improved availability of the Planning Service, focused on reducing processing times, will contribute to the sustainable development of Newry, Mourne and Down. Efficiency: The purpose of the Planning Service Improvement Programme is to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the service, by seeking to make better use of the resources available.				
What we are going to do					
Supporting Action	Link to Thematic Plan/Strategy	Measure of Success	Resources	Governance Arrangements	Responsible Officers
Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months	ERT Business Plan 2026-27 Regeneration Service Plan 2026-27	Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks) Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27	Assistant Director: Regeneration Chief Planner
Reduce the average processing time for		Percentage of planning enforcement cases			

validating application forms through the introduction of a validation checklist 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'		progressed within 39 weeks Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more Number of planning applications in the system for less than 12 months Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more Average processing time for validating application forms			
Review and consult on representations made during the consultation period after the launch of the Draft Plan Strategy.	ERT Business Plan 2026-27 Regeneration Service Plan 2026-27	Revised Draft Plan Strategy	Within existing resources	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27	Assistant Director: Regeneration
Explore the development of a training programme for staff and members in collaboration with the Department of Infrastructure (DfI) as part of the Council's performance	ERT Business Plan 2026-27 Regeneration Service Plan 2026-27	A new training programme developed for staff and members	In collaboration with DfI	Annual and bi-annual assessments of the ERT Business Plan & Service Plans 2026-27	Assistant Director: Regeneration

improvement programme for planning.					
Risks Management					
Risks			Actions to Mitigate the Risks		
Failure to meet the statutory performance standards for processing planning applications, enforcement cases.			The Planning Service Improvement Programme outlines the key areas for improvement, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis.		
The Council does not reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system			The Planning Service Improvement Programme outlines the key areas for improvement, with progress being monitored and reported on a regular basis.		

WORK IN PROGRESS

Report to:	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 May 2026
Subject:	Cullyhanna Community Centre
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Community Development
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Community Development

<table><tr><td>For decision</td><td>x</td><td>For noting only</td><td></td></tr></table>		For decision	x	For noting only	
For decision	x	For noting only			
1.0	Purpose and Background				
1.1	Purpose The purpose of this report is to seek approval to procure and appoint a contractor to replace the roof at Cullyhanna Community Centre within the budget agreed at the Strategic Finance Working Group on 7 May 2026. Background Cullyhanna Community Centre had been closed since 30 January 2026 following adverse weather conditions and the ingress of water. Electric to the kitchen was disconnected with damp areas identified around the electrics, smoke alarms and lighting. The centre is now reopened, however a full roof replacement is now required. This project will ensure the lifespan of the building is enhanced over the next 30 years.				
2.0	Key issues				
2.1	The Centre is managed by Cullyhanna Community Association under a Facilities Management Agreement. In addition to roof replacement, internal works are required to building insulation, damp removal, painting, new vinyl flooring, checking of electrics and replacement of some of the suspended ceiling tiles. These works are required enhance the lifespan of the facility over the next 30 years. If approval is granted, it is proposed the works will be progressed in the summer when the Centre is generally quieter. A Project Proposal Form – Capital Projects is attached in conjunction with this report. The estimated capital budget for these works is set out in appendix 1.				
3.0	Recommendations				
3.1	Approval to procure and appoint a contractor to replace the roof at Cullyhanna Community Centre as detailed in this report.				
4.0	Resource implications				

4.1	Financial – detailed in appendix 1.
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 ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation – N/a</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves. ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☒
7.0	Appendices
7.1	Project Proposal Form – Capital Projects.

8.0	Background Documents
8.1	None.

Report to:	SPR Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 th May 2026
Subject:	Changing Pavilion at Milltown, Warrenpoint
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Haughey, Assistant Director: Healthy Living
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Haughey, Assistant Director: Healthy Living

For decision	x	For noting only	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			<u>Purpose</u> For members to consider and approve the procurement and appointment of a contractor to replace the changing pavilion at Milltown, Warrenpoint. <u>Background</u> The existing changing pavilion at Milltown, Warrenpoint is currently closed due to its condition and has been deemed unsafe in line with Health and Safety requirements. The facility has deteriorated significantly and is no longer fit for purpose, resulting in the loss of essential changing and toilet provision for users of the site. Milltown is a key community sports facility which supports regular usage from local clubs, including the tennis club and GAA club. The absence of a functioning pavilion is significantly impacting participation, particularly for female users who require access to appropriate changing and toilet facilities. The site no longer meets current operational and best practice standards, including provision for: • Women and girls' changing • Officials/referees • Adequate toilets, showers and circulation Modern design standards across governing bodies (e.g. Irish FA, GAA, Sport NI) require more inclusive and appropriately configured facilities to support participation growth. Failure to invest will limit the Council's ability to modernise facilities, address capacity constraints and support participation
2.0			Key issues
2.1			The current pavilion at Milltown is no longer operational due to its poor structural condition and associated health and safety concerns. As a result: • There are no suitable changing or toilet facilities available on site • Participation is being negatively impacted, particularly for ladies' teams and users • The site is unable to adequately support club activity, training or matches It is proposed that Council replace the existing pavilion with a new modular changing pavilion, based on the design previously delivered at Dundrum, thus providing modern, compliant changing and toilet facilities for all users. The estimated capital costs for this project is set out in appendix 1.

	Officers will undertake a review of Council (AHC) managed changing facilities/pavilions in the district to establish costs and timelines for maintenance and refurbishment requirements.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	Approval for the procurement and appointment of a contractor for the replacement of the existing changing pavilion at Milltown, Warrenpoint with a new modular facility, ensuring compliance with health and safety standards and supporting continued use of the site by local sports clubs.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Estimated capital cost as detailed in appendix 1.
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 ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation – N/a</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)

6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐ If no, please complete the following: The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs ☐
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1: Capital Project proposal form
8.0	Background Documents
	None

Report to:	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 May 2026
Subject:	Fitness Equipment – Kilkeel Leisure Centre
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Haughey, Assistant Director: Healthy Living
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Haughey, Assistant Director: Healthy Living

For decision	x	For noting only	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			Purpose The purpose of this report is for members to consider and approve the purchase of Kilkeel Leisure Centre (KLC) Fitness Equipment from the Council's framework supplier following the centre refurbishment which is ongoing at present. Background Kilkeel Leisure Centre is currently undergoing a significant refurbishment which will see a complete refit of all mechanical and electrical elements, modernisation of the facility enhanced changing areas, improved accessibility, state of the art fitness suite and new studio space.
2.0			Key issues
2.1			Newry and Down Leisure Centres' Fitness Equipment is provided by Technogym. NMDDC are on a Framework for Technogym services, therefore procurement process is in place in line with policies and procedures. This would now be another step to ensuring consistency across all indoor leisure sites for fitness equipment. It is proposed that Council purchase the proposed specification of equipment to bring the centre in line with Newry and Downpatrick centres.
3.0			Recommendations
3.1			Approval to purchase Fitness Equipment for Kilkeel Leisure Centre as set out in this report.
4.0			Resource implications
4.1			Capital cost detailed in appendix 1.
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 ☒

5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation – N/a</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐ If no, please complete the following: The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs ☐
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – Capital Costs
8.0	Background Documents
	None

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resource
Date of Meeting:	14 th May 2026
Subject:	Capital provision to progress Cranfield Sea Defences Project
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Mallon Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Michelle Boyle Head of Tourism Product Development & Visitor Experience

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either: -	
For decision	☒ For noting only
1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> To consider recommendation set out in section 3 of report. <u>Background</u> Following extensive damage caused by Storm Bram on 9 December 2025, the existing coastal defences and embankments at Cranfield Beach have been significantly compromised, now requiring replacement
2.0	Key issues
2.1	• Damage to the Sea Defences has resulted in: ➢ Health and safety concerns relating to public access ➢ Increased vulnerability of the adjacent coastal road ➢ A heightened risk of structural failure of the coastal road due to ongoing erosion and potential undermining of its foundation • The coastal road is a critical access route serving local residents, visitor facilities, and caravan parks. Failure or closure of this route would result in significant disruption to the local community, restrict access to tourism assets, and create potential emergency access issues. • In response, an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) assent application was submitted to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) seeking approval to undertake repair and replacement works. The proposal included the removal and replacement of failed or damaged coastal defence structures, including Reno mattress gabions, stacked gabions, rock armour, and sections of the stepped concrete breakwater. The intent was to maintain the existing shoreline protection that safeguards the main access road used by residents and businesses.

	- All proposed works were confined to the footprint of the existing defences, with no extension seaward or landward. While the works are located outside, they are directly adjacent to the ASSI designation. - NIEA did not grant ASSI assent within the standard 28-day period and requested additional supporting information to inform their assessment (Appendix 2) - Specifically, NIEA requires: - Detailed engineering drawings clearly illustrating the scale, size, and extent of the proposed defences - Supporting information to assess potential impacts on coastal processes - To address this, a marine engineer was commissioned through AECOM to undertake a visual inspection of the existing coastal defences. A Technical Note has since been produced (Appendix 3), outlining high-level repair and replacement options, along with recommendations for progressing the scheme. - Advancement of the project now requires detailed design development and environmental assessment to support a revised ASSI assent application and associated approvals. - This requires the appointment of an ICT Team to undertake detailed design development and environmental assessment to support a revised ASSI assent application and associated approvals for replacement of Cranfield Sea Defences.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	1) To approve provision in the capital programme a budget to progress the Cranfield Sea Defences project and progress with ICT appointment
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Refer to appendix 1
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 ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	☐
5.3	Proposal initiating consultation Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves Consultation period will be 12 weeks Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <i>Rationale:</i>	N/A ☐ ☐ ☐
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	 ☐
7.0	Appendices	
	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 Appendix 1 - Resource implications Appendix 2 - Correspondence from NIEA Appendix 3 – Technical note from AECOM	
8.0	Background Documents	
	N/A	

Our reference: ID 3226

Ms Barbara Fleming-Ovens
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Warrenpoint Town Hall
29 Church Street
Warrenpoint
Co. Down
BT34 3HN

10th February 2026

Conservation, Designation & Protection
Floor 2, Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 90 569583
E-mail: CDP@daera-ni.gov.uk

Dear Ms Fleming-Ovens

CARLINGFORD LOUGH AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ASSI) CARLINGFORD LOUGH SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)

I refer to your Assent application received on 13th January 2026 regarding the above.

Conservation, Designation and Protection Casework Team have assessed the application and associated documents and have the following comments to make:

CDP have reviewed the information provided however have not been able to make a decision on the application at this stage as there is not enough detail provided for a fully comprehensive assessment to be conducted.

Please find below a list of information required to enable CDP to progress your recent application for Assent to conduct sea defence removal and repairs on Cranfield Beach.

Requirements

To make a fulsome assessment of the activities, the applicant should provide the following information:

- Detailed methodology on how works will be undertaken, to include detail on length and timing of each stage of the construction and equipment details.



- Detail on both biosecurity and pollution risk management.
- A clear map must be provided showing the location of the proposed works, the designated refuelling area for machinery, and the specific areas of work on the beach side, including all access points.
- Detailed drawings, clearly showing the scale, size and magnitude of defences proposed. NIEA require drawings detailing this information in order to fully assess the potential impact any works may have upon coastal processes in this area.
- Confirmation that all works will remain above MHW, and explanation how MHW will be marked on site during construction.
- Information on the future management plans in this location. This should include detail on how management will be adapted to give full consideration to the heightened risks associated with climate change, to ensure that a sustainable and holistic approach is taken to future management.

Once all of the above information is received you will be advised of a new final response date for your application.

Yours sincerely,



Seán McCourt
Senior Scientific Officer
Natural Environment Division
Conservation, Designation and Protection



Technical Note

Project:	Cranfield Beach Coastal Defences	Job No:	60718848
Subject:	Summary findings of the coastal defence structures visual inspection	Ref. No:	TN-001 rev. P01
Prepared by:	Despoina Katopodi	Date:	11th March 2026
Checked by:	Roland Pyzer	Date:	30th March 2026
Approved by:	Roland Pyzer	Date:	31st March 2026

1 Introduction

AECOM was appointed by Newry, Mourne and Down District (NMDD) Council to undertake a visual inspection of the existing coastal defence structures along the embankment at Cranfield beach located in County Down, Northern Ireland, at the mouth of Carlingford Lough.

A visual walk down survey along the foreshore and at the top of the embankment was carried out collecting photographic records of the defence structures by the local AECOM team. Following the survey, the collected photos were reviewed, a list of observations were compiled and defects identified and summarised in this Technical Note. A further visit was made on 20th March 2026 by a member of AECOM's maritime team to verify the findings. High level options for repair works/replacement of the coastal protection along with recommendations for the next steps are also presented.

1.1 Site Location

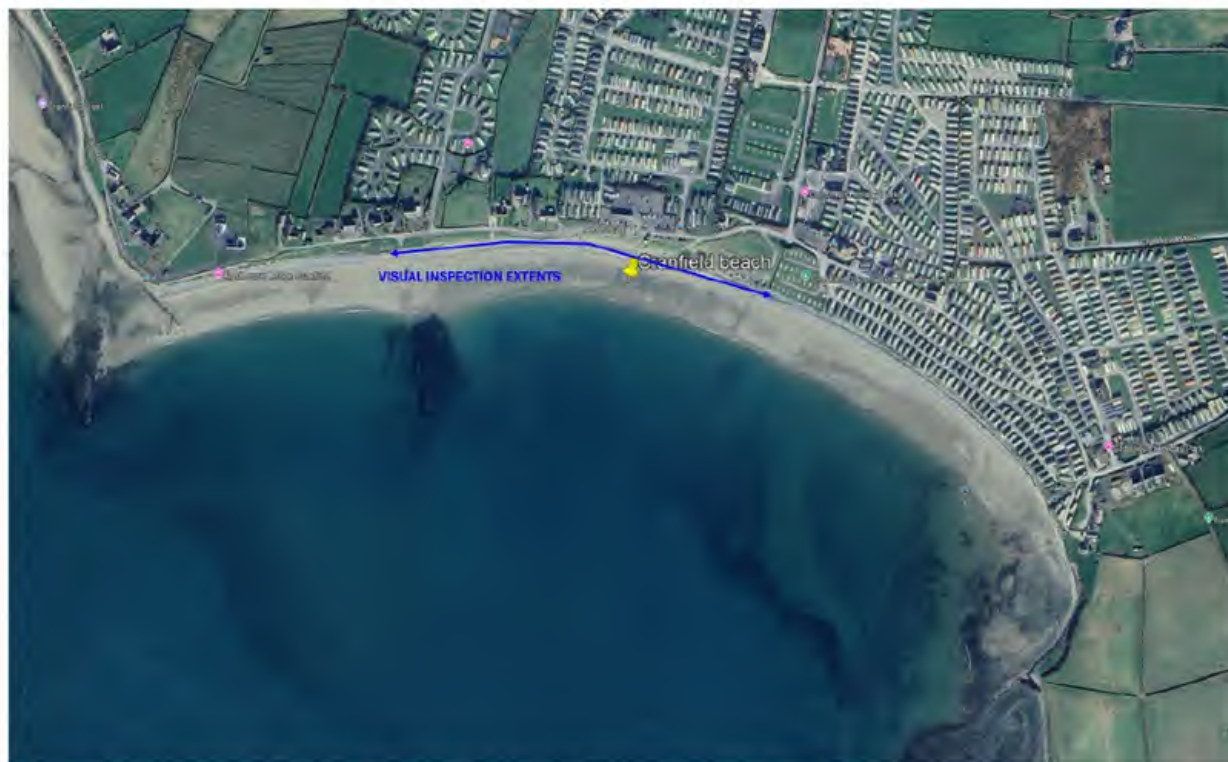


Figure 1 Location of Cranfield Beach site and visual survey extents

2 Visual Survey

A visual inspection of the coastal defence structures at Cranfield beach was carried out by Matthew Murphy (AECOM) on the 3rd March 2026. Several photos were collected along the embankment and shared with the Ports & Marine team for review.

A second visual inspection was conducted by Roland Pyzer and Joe Curran (AECOM) on 20th March 2026.

2.1 Survey Points Chainage

The survey points set out at 10m centres along the full length of the coastal embankment are presented in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Location of survey setting out points

2.2 Main Findings

The main findings of the visual survey based on the photographic records (refer to Appendix A) are summarised below:

- 1) Different types of coastal defence structures are identified at the surveyed area including:

- a) gabions with rock fill,
- b) rock mattresses,
- c) a concrete stepped "breakwater"
- d) rock armouring façade.

These defence structures have either entirely failed or suffered damage leaving the embankment unprotected and/or exposed to erosion due to storm/wave action. It should be noted that a pathway, a road and several houses seem to be located close to the embankment edges that could be at risk if erosion is further developed.

- 2) Gabions with rock fill installed in a single column layer on the face of the embankment have severely failed (i.e. weathered/torn wire mesh with fully or significant loss of rock fill material, gabions bulging, tilting towards the sea or completely flattened). Gabions do not seem to cover the full height of the embankment. No signs of undermining/scouring at the toe of the gabions but since the storm event(s). Failure reasons could vary including the following:

- gabions installed may not be suitable to withstand the local wave action (i.e. inadequate rock size or unsuitable defence type due to design not considering the required storm event),
- existing arrangement does not enhance the wave energy dissipation, on the contrary installing a single vertical 'façade' would attract the energy and may increase turbulence,
- gabions do not seem to cover the full embankment height leaving exposed parts vulnerable to erosion which would proceed to lower levels resulting to detachment of the gabions,
- undercutting of the gabion structure leading to wall failure,
- exceedance of the design life of the gabions.

Gabions are not considered an efficient solution for protection from direct wave action. Furthermore, for sea defences, the gabions are generally installed in a 'stepped' arrangement with several rows at the front of the protected structure together with an embedded toe or appropriate scour protection to prevent undermining and maintaining structural integrity.

- 3) Failed rock/gabion mattresses are apparent at the toe of the embankment leaving the embankment exposed over much of its area. This type of coastal defence structure is not considered suitable/adequate for protection from wave action. The mattresses have failed to protect the embankment and left extended areas/sections entirely exposed with severe signs of erosion progressing landside.
- 4) The concrete stepped "breakwater" installed in front of the face of a vertical wave wall has suffered severe damage from the storm/wave action towards the west end of these steps including significant settlement between the adjacent sections, misalignment of the adjacent steps, steps tilting towards the sea, development of gaps between the sections and potentially loss of sublayer material beneath. Concrete barriers with 'pyramids' are apparent at the toe of the concrete steps

(understood to have been added more recently by the Council to offer protection to the steps) but they have shifted away from the structure and appear too small to provide the required wave energy dissipation. The settlement of the steps is believed to be due to undercutting of the structure. Some cracks are also apparent on the wave wall.

- 5) Rock armouring with concrete along the top layer was found to have failed in several locations with signs of rock movement and broken concrete. Adopting an arrangement of a single rock layer bound by concrete does not enhance the rocks' stability neither its efficiency to dissipate wave energy. Rocks do not seem to be interlocked with the surrounding rocks, leaving gaps that are vulnerable to erosion. Holes seem to have been developed at the back of the armoured face causing erosion of the bank's material that could progress further landside.
- 6) Concrete structures on the foreshore, such as a slipway and outfall structure were found to be damaged and undermined potentially due to an inadequate foundation beneath.

3 Recommendations / Next Steps:

The existing sea defence structures have failed in a number of locations and should be replaced and/or repaired/strengthened. Much of the existing defence structures and their arrangement/footprint are considered unsuitable to protect the shoreline and dissipate the wave energy. Failure to address the shortcomings will result in further breakdown of the defences and erosion of the shoreline such that the road (Ameracam Lane) will be threatened.

It has been suggested that a like-for-like replacement be considered, However this has proven to be inadequate to offer the necessary protection from storm and a solution(s) that is designed to protect from the necessary storm event is recommended.

Therefore, it is recommended that replacement be with structure types and/or arrangements designed to fully protect the embankment and structures at the landside from storm event(s), dissipating the wave energy before it reaches the structures, compelling wave breaking and limiting wave overtopping. Replacement defence structures could include the following:

- a) Rock revetment installed in a sloped arrangement with a sufficient berm width at the top, with rock armouring, core material and potentially geotextile to prevent loss of bank material beneath and at the back. This should cover the full height of the embankment with a suitable embedded toe structure to prevent undermining. This type of structure will have a larger footprint compared to the existing defence structures (i.e. gabions, rock mattresses, etc.) and this may not be attractive to the consenting authorities. It is noted that the caravan park to the east of the inspected site is protected by rock armouring and, from a cursory view, appears to have withstood the storm event(s) without damage.
- b) Concrete armouring/blocks could also be used for the revetment option, as an alternative to rock. However, this may be less desirable in terms of visual impact.
- c) Rock bags of adequate weight to withstand the local wave climate laid in a stepped/sloped arrangement covering the full height of the embankment. This option will also have a larger footprint compared to the existing defence structures.
- d) A gabion wall could be provided but would need to be designed to be more substantial than the existing with an extended footprint to allow a stepped arrangement together with a suitable toe to prevent undermining.

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- e) Geogrid to strengthen the embankment at the back of the coastal protection. This option should be combined with another option at the face of the embankment.
- f) A new wave wall could be provided along the length of the beach, either in the form of a concrete or steel sheet piled wall. The advantage of this option would be that it would have a minimal footprint but would likely be the most expensive option and have a fairly significant visual impact.
- g) Replacement of the damaged length of the concrete stepped "breakwater" structure should be undertaken with the provision of an improved foundation to prevent undermining. Removal of the steps is not recommended as the steps (probably placed after the wave wall was constructed) provide protection to the wave wall. The alternative could be to introduce rock or concrete armouring in the form of a revetment.

The above solutions can be designed for a varying design life ranging from 20 to 120 years with the rock revetment and wave wall offering the longer design life. It is noted that planning permission and / or a Marine Licence and / or other permits may be required for most of the replacement options for the defence structures, particularly those with extended footprints.

Next steps would include the following:

- Establish the local wave climate to inform the design of adequate coastal protection including estimation of overtopping.
- Intrusive surveys of the concrete structures adjacent to the embankment including the wave wall and stairs (such as trial pits) to verify their condition and strength.
- Open communications with the consenting parties to determine preferential solutions.
- Perform a feasibility/options study with the proposed replacement defence structures, considering cost, design life, environmental impact and other influencing factors.
- Detailed design of the preferred option(s) following discussion with the Council.
- Construction of the repair works.

Technical Note

Appendix A Summary of visual survey records

Table 1 Indicative Survey Photos

Chainage	Description / Commentary	Indicative images
0-100m	- Failed gabions with full or significant loss of rock infill. - Heavily deformed gabions (bulging, sloping, tilting towards the sea). - Concrete blocks left on the foreshore which seem to be broken pieces of a beam/structure. - Gabions detached from embankment, left it exposed. Signs of severe erosion. - Few gabions with rock or concrete cube blocks seem to be still standing with signs of tilting/sloping though. - Signs of failed rock mattress at the toe of the embankment.	
100-200m	- Signs of severe erosion at exposed embankment with left-overs of failed rock mattress apparent at the toe. - Broken slipway structure, undermined, loss of foundation underneath. - Signs of holes at the side of the stairs which could lead to loss of fill material at the back. - Concrete stepped "breakwater" misaligned, settled and detached from the wave wall behind.	
200-300m	- Concrete stepped "breakwater" misaligned, settled and detached from the wave wall behind. - Signs of severely weathered concrete steps, broken pieces. - Severe cracks on the concrete steps and the wave wall behind. Gaps between the stepped structure. - Concrete 'pyramid barriers' at the toe of the concrete stepped "breakwater". - Broken ramp on the foreshore. - Rock armour covering the embankment façade.	

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300-400m	- Lower levelled embankment with rock armour face covering. Grout is apparent between the rocks. - Eroded holes/gaps seem to be developed at the back of the rock armouring leaving the embankment vulnerable. - Failed armour with rocks slipping down the foreshore. - Ramp with signs of fill/foundation material loss beneath.	    
400-540m	- Gaps/holes created within the rock armouring leaving exposed to wave action the embankment and allowing erosion/loss of bank material. - Signs of erosion holes is apparent along most this section with the pathway at the back. - Rock armouring with grout extending further out to the foreshore only locally at the right end of the surveyed area.	       

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 May 2026
Subject:	Membership of Ulster Scots Ulster British Working Group
Reporting Officer:	Elaine Kirk, Assistant Director Legal and People
Contact Officers:	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

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

For decision	X	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	The Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 16 October 2026 agreed the following: On the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to establish an Ulster Scots Ulster British Working Group, the title of which, along with the Terms of Reference would, be agreed at the first meeting of the Working Group.
1.2	The establishment of the Ulster Scots Ulster British Working Group was discussed at the Party Leaders meeting on 5 March 2026. At this meeting it was recommended the membership allocation be the same as that of the Councillors' Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	The Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group Terms of Reference details its membership is as follows: - Council Chairperson - Council Deputy Chairperson - Two Councillors nominated from Sinn Fein - Two Councillors nominated from SDLP - One Councillor nominated from DUP - One Councillor nominated from Alliance - Two representatives nominated from the smaller parties/independents
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To note the recommendation of the Party Leaders meeting on 5 March 2026, and that the membership of the Ulster Scots Ulster British Working Group be the same

	allocation as that of the Councillors' Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group i.e. • Council Chairperson • Council Deputy Chairperson • Two Councillors nominated from Sinn Fein • Two Councillors nominated from SDLP • One Councillor nominated from DUP • One Councillor nominated from Alliance • Two representatives nominated from the smaller parties/independents
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
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 ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐

	<i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
8.0	Background Documents