

March 12th, 2025

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee meeting to be held on Thursday, 13th March 2025 at 6:00 pm in Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre.

Committee Membership 2024-2025

Councillor T Howie **Chairperson**

Councillor C King **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor C Bowsie

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor W Clarke

Councillor C Enright

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor A Mathers

Councillor D McAteer

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Rice

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 February 2025

📎 *SPR-Action Sheet arising from 2025 02 13.pdf*

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For Discussion/Decision

4.0 Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

For Decision

📎 *SPR Cover Report Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26.pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 1 - Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26.pdf*

Page 7

📎 *Appendix 2 - Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26.pdf*

Page 30

5.0 Procurement Policy

📎 *SPR Report - Updated Procurement Policy_.pdf*

Page 33

📎 *Draft NMDDC Procurement Policy SPR March 2025 - FV.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

6.0 Lands at Daisy Hill, Newry

For Decision

📎 *Lands at Daisy Hill Newry.pdf*

Not included

📎 *NM162-G-1-06.pdf*

Not included

7.0 Licence of Lands at Donard Park, Newcastle

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.

 <i>SPR Mar 2025 Proposed Licence of Lands at Donard Pk Newcastle.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>DDC148-G-1-10B.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>

8.0 Renewal of Lease of Lands adjacent to Kilkeel Leisure Centre

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.

 <i>SPR Mar 2025 Renewal of Lease of Lands Adjacent to Kilkeel Leisure Centre.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>map SPR.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>

9.0 Renewal of Licence at Council Depot, Kilkeel

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.

 <i>SPR Mar 2025 Renewal of Licence at Council Depot Kilkeel.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>NM095-G-1-12.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>

10.0 Lease of Building & Lands at Annalong Marine Park


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.

 <i>SPR Mar 2025 Lease of Building & Land at Annalong Marine Park.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
 <i>NM004-B-2-10.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>

11.0 Lease of Lands at Killybane, Newry

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

 ***SPR 13 Mar 2025 Lease of Land at Kiltybane Newry.pdf***

Not included

 ***NM056-G-1-00.pdf***

Not included

12.0 Direct Award Contract

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 Report - March 2025 - DAC.pdf***


Not included

13.0 AHC Facility Lease

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.

 ***AHC Lease Facility.pdf***

Not included

 ***SPR Map - Feb 25.pdf***


Not included

14.0 Sale of Land, Newry

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

 ***Report - Sale of Lands at Newry.pdf***

Not included

 ***TDK Original - Site at 4 Daisy Hill 27.02.2025.pdf***

Not included

 ***Appendix A TDK Report and recommendation on current Offer of Sale_.pdf***

Not included

15.0 NMDDC LGSC Contributions

For Information

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

holders under, the Council. The public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

📎 **2025-03- xx LGSC SLA and Contribution Arrangements.pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appendix 1 - Letter LGSC for NI Continuing Operations 25-26.pdf** **Not included**

16.0 Clearance Works – Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Garden - National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) project

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

📎 **S P R 13 Mar 25 (002).pdf** **Not included**

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

17.0 Postal Services Contract

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.

📎 **Tender for Postal ServicesSPR13.03.2025(002).pdf** **Not included**

18.0 Management Accounts

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.

📎 **Management Accounts Q3 202425 final (003).pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appendix 1 - Mgt Accts by Directorate at 31.12.24.pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appendix 2 - Mgt Accts By Assistant Directorate at 31.12.24.pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appendix 3 - Mgt Accts by Expense Code at 31.12.24.pdf** **Not included**

📎 **Appendix 4 - Payroll Report as at 31.12.24.pdf** **Not included**

19.0 DAERA Project - Castlewellan

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 - Castlewellan Final Payment March 2025.pdf*

Not included

20.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting 6 Dec 2024

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.

 *Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Mtg - 06.12.24 - vf.pdf*

Not included

For Noting

21.0 Minutes of Women's Working Group

 *Women's Working Group Action Sheet - 16.01.25 (002).pdf*

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Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Fionnuala Branagh

Cllr Jim Brennan

Cllr Pete Byrne

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Cllr Andrew McMurray

Mr Colin Moffett

Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston

Cllr Declan Murphy

Sinead Murphy

Cllr Kate Murphy
.....
Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
.....
Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Mr Peter Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
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Nicola Stranney
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Sarah Taggart
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
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Mr Conor Woods
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Cllr Helena Young
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<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 18 April 2024</u>					
SPR/056/2024	Notice of Motion – Ethical Procurement	It was agreed that NMD Council affirms to consider a section under ethical procurement and will review the Council's tender process It was also agreed this item remain on the action sheet until such time as new Policies were forthcoming to Committee	J Kelly	Procurement Policy is being updated with new legislation. Report to be brought back to SP & R in due course.	N
<u>ACTION SHEET –STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) –</u>					
<u>Thursday 13 February 2025</u>					
SPR/020/2025	Action sheet of meeting held 23/01/25	It was agreed to approve the action sheet	J Kelly	Agreed	Y
SPR/021/2025	Fuel Policy	It was agreed to approve Council's Fleet fuel Management Policy as presented at Appendix 1 of the Officer's report	C Sage	Agreed	Y
SPR/022/2025	Officer Report on NOM – 80 th Anniversary of VE & VJ Day	<p>It was agreed to note that the notice of motion had been considered and discussed at the Councillor's Equality & Good Relations Reference Group on 31 January 2025 and 12 February 2025 and that the consensus was to recommend the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of an 80th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day financial assistance programme with a fund of £35,000; and where the chairperson receives an invitation to attend a Council funded event that a commemorative bowl acknowledging the 80th anniversary be presented by the Chairperson. -The development and delivery of a programme of events by the Museums and where possible this to include an education leaflet on World War II. -Council to place a plaque within Down County Museum to acknowledge the 80th anniversary of VE and VJ Day. <p>In addition, approval is sought to proceed to open the 80th Anniversary of VE and VJ financial assistance theme call week beginning 17 February 2025 prior to the ratification of the decision at Council meeting on 3 March 2025.</p>	C Moffett	Agreed	Y

		It was also agreed to explore the placing of a commemorative plaque within Newry and Mourne Museum.			
SPR/023/2025	Belfast Legal Services	It was agreed to enter into a one-year SLA with Belfast City Council Legal Services Department from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026 on a non-profit / cost recovery basis by virtue of the provisions of section 105 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 in relation to the legal services as outlined within the Officer's Report	J Kelly	Agreed	Y
SPR/024/2025	Insurance Premiums	It was agreed to approve the payment of the insurance premiums for 2025/2026	S Trainor	Agreed	Y
SPR/025/2025	Impact of Storm Éowyn on Council Estate	It was agreed to note the contents of the Officer's Report	C Sage	Agreed	Y
		It was also agreed to write to the Minister of Finance to highlight the cost incurred from Storm Éowyn, the subsequent financial implications and to enquire if support would be made available to assist with repairs	J Kelly	Agreed	Y
END					

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	13 March 2025
Subject:	Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director: Finance and Performance
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catherine Hughes– Acting Head of Performance and Improvement

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

For decision	X	For noting only	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Each financial year, Councils are required to set performance improvement objectives for the services they provide. These objectives can span more than one year, with intermediary milestones, which must be reviewed annually. The performance improvement objectives form part of the annual Performance Audit and Assessment which is carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.
2.0			Key issues
			Draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26
2.1			<p>It is proposed that the Council carries forward all five performance improvement objectives from 2024-25, which were developed within the context of the Corporate Plan 2024-27. These objectives are outlined in Appendix 1, and the 'supporting actions', 'measures of success' and targets have been developed and updated where appropriate and relevant.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 and job creation 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 improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change 5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme <p>As part of the Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment 2024-25, the Northern Ireland Audit Office has confirmed that the Council has demonstrated that the 2024-25 improvement objectives are legitimate, clear, robust, deliverable and demonstrable. The improvement objectives cover a wide range of Council services, and they relate to both improving Council functions and improving services for communities and citizens.</p>
			Legislative context
2.2			The guidance issued by the Department for Communities states that performance improvement is more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or in the

	<p>internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement should focus on activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for communities.</p> <p>Councils should therefore frame improvement objectives so as to bring about improvement in at least one of the following specified aspects of improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic effectiveness • Service quality • Service availability • Fairness • Sustainability • Efficiency • Innovation
2.3	<p>Councils should also determine their objectives for improvement based on critical self analysis, taking account of a wide range of evidence. All improvement objectives should relate to improving the functions and services to citizens, and be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legitimate • Clear • Robust • Deliverable • Demonstrable
2.4	<p>Councils are required to consult and engage a range of stakeholders, including citizens, businesses and partner organisations on the performance improvement objectives. The proposed eight week consultation programme will run from 14 March-09 May 2025 and will consist of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website - On the consultations section of the Council's website an electronic survey in relation to the draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26 will be published. The overall consultation and engagement process will be further promoted through the Council's website and social media channels and circulated to key internal and external stakeholders. • Public advertisements in local newspapers • Engagement with DEA Forums and Section 75 groups through Youth Voice and Older People's Forums <p>Consultation feedback will inform the final objectives which will form part of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26. An overview of the overall approach to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2025, in line with statutory requirements, is outlined in Appendix 2.</p>
2.5	<p>Delivery plans for each performance improvement objective will also be developed. These plans will demonstrate, in practical terms, how the Council will manage the effective delivery of each objective. Objective Delivery Plans are dynamic and will be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis, in order to ensure the Council has the necessary resources and processes in place to support the delivery of each objective.</p>
3.0	Recommendations

3.1	<p>To consider and agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The five draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26, as outlined in Appendix 1 The proposed approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26, as outlined in Appendix 2, including approval to commence the consultation and engagement process on 14 March 2025
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no financial resource implications within this report.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> The draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26 have been equality screened and it is recommended that they are not subject to an equality impact assessment (with no mitigating measures required). In relation to the proposed eight-week consultation process, whilst the Council's Equality Scheme commits to holding consultation exercises relevant to the statutory duties for a minimum of twelve weeks, it also sets out exceptional circumstances where the twelve weeks may not apply. In this instance, it is proposed that</p>

	<p>the Council implements an eight-week consultation process in order to ensure the deadline for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26 by 30 June 2025 is met.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the performance improvement objectives 2025-26 have been developed based on the content of existing strategies, including the Corporate Plan 2024-27, which have been informed by a robust and reliable quantitative and qualitative evidence base, including Residents Survey 2022.</p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 – Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26 • Appendix 2 – Approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26
8.0	Background Documents
	Performance Improvement Plan 2024-25

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

Our Duty of Improvement

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

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

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

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

The draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26 for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council have been carried forward from 2024-25. They have been developed based on extensive consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and are aligned to the following regional and local plans which influence the overall direction of travel of the organisation.

- Draft Programme for Government
- Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2024-27
- Thematic Plans and Strategies, including the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy

Once agreed, the performance improvement objectives 2025-26 will be published in the annual Performance Improvement Plan. This plan will provide more detail about what we want to improve, how we will deliver improvements, how our performance will be measured and what outcomes stakeholders will experience as a result of our improvement activity.







Our Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

- 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 and job creation**
- 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 improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change**
- 5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme**

These objectives have been selected based on the following criteria:

- Does the objective support the delivery of the Programme for Government, Community Plan and Corporate Plan 2024-27?
- Do the objectives demonstrate improvement in at least one of the seven aspects of improvement? (strategic effectiveness, service delivery, service availability, fairness, sustainability, efficiency, innovation)
- Are the objectives SMART? (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timebound)
- Are the resources in place to deliver the objective? (financial, human, leadership, skills, knowledge, governance, risk)
- Are the objectives based on robust and reliable evidence, and will they make a visible difference in the local area?
- How well are we performing?

Legend:

Status		Trend	
	Target or objective achieved / on track to be achieved		Performance has improved
	Target or objective partially achieved / likely to be achieved / subject to delay		Performance is similar to the previous year
	Target or objective not achieved / unlikely to be achieved		Performance has declined

*It should be noted that the performance information contained in the 'Looking Back' section of this report may be subject to change when the results are verified and reported through the Assessment of Performance 2024-25 in September 2025.

Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down

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

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

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

Our Outcomes

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





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

The Corporate Plan 2024-27 sets out the strategic direction of the organisation and ties together a number of plans and strategies that will enable the Council to achieve the following mission and eight strategic objectives. The Corporate Plan will also contribute the achievement of the overarching vision and outcomes within the Community Plan.

Council Mission Statement

‘To 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

Your voice, your choice!

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is inviting you to put forward your views on the draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26. We are keen to ensure that our performance improvement objectives have a positive impact on the quality of life of all stakeholders across the District, including citizens, local businesses, partner organisations in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, employees and Elected Members.

A questionnaire has been included on page 21 of this document for all stakeholders to complete and return to:

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

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

www.newrymournedown.org/consultations

Alternatively, if you prefer to provide comments in person, please contact us on:

Tel: 0330 137 4000
 Email: performance@nmandd.org

The closing date for responses is: 09 May 2025.

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving 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, however residents did comment on issues such as the need for modernisation and improving cleanliness
- 76% of respondents to our 2024-25 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 between April - September 2024



334,564 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities



Recorded 155,659 recorded visits across a total of 10 community trails.



9,608 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities



8 Projects being progressed at different stages for Donard Park, Dundrum, Kilkeel Leisure Centre, Jennings Park & Dunleath















9,388 attendances recorded of people taking part in targeted health programmes



9,153 attendances recorded of young people participating in youth health and wellbeing initiatives

Looking Forward: What we will do in 2025-26

- Increase 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards Leisure-Safe Accreditation for all indoor leisure facilities 					
How we will measure success	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2024-25	2025-26 Target
Number of paid attendances recorded at:		698,864	768,842	 	334,564	724,000
Newry Leisure Centre	183,224	307,153	331,546		104,412	335,000
Down Leisure Centre	177,496	246,978	259,473		126,234	260,000
Kilkeel Leisure Centre	66,987	69,797	63,811		39,785	15,000
St. Colmans Sports Complex	36,717	54,024	58,491		25,625	58,500
Newcastle Centre & Tropicana Outdoor Swimming Complex	33,801	25,517	27,765		24,392	27,800
Ballymote Sports and Wellbeing Centre	10,309	15,365	27,756		14,116	27,800
Number of people participating in targeted health programmes	322	9,309	10,805	 	9,388	16,000
Value of Financial Assistance funding allocated to sports clubs	New measure			-	-	£225,000
Number of leisure centre memberships	-	9,534	9,923	 	9,608	10,000
Number of play parks upgraded	New measure			-	-	2
Number of capital leisure projects progressed	New measure		3	-	-	2
What you will see by March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 724,000 paid attendances at our six leisure centres by the end of 2025-26 Increase in the number of people participating in targeted health programmes to 16,000. Increase in the number of memberships being taken out to 10,000. 2 play parks upgraded 2 new build and/or upgraded capital leisure projects progressed. Works to be commenced on Kilkeel centre upgrade. Planning permission and contract tender agreed for Jennings park upgrade Financial assistance allocated for sports clubs to the value of £225,000 for capital projects. Leisure-Safe Accreditation being worked towards for all indoor leisure facilities. 					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2024-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the District. 					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities 					

Draft Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cut Health Waiting Times			
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service quality	Service availability	Fairness
Responsible Officer	Director: Active and Healthy Communities			

Performance Improvement Objective 2

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

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
- 71% of respondents to our 2024-25 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 the new 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 new DfE initiative for the establishment of Local Economic Partnership's which will deliver £4.5 Million of investment over a 3-year period, into initiatives that drive the creation of good jobs, productivity growth, sustainability and decarbonisation.

Looking Back:

What we did between April-September 2024
















135 new enterprises created as a result of support and 69 new jobs promoted through business start activity



8 new social enterprise start-ups supported, and 8 new social enterprise jobs created








179 existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions

		Delivered a Make it Local campaign in Newcastle to support the business community during Eats and Beats and the Amgen Irish Open.				
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Invest in the social economy through the Social Enterprise programmeSupport the establishment of new businesses through the 'Go Succeed' ProgrammeSupport the growth of existing businesses and creation of new jobs through the 'Go Succeed' ProgrammeInvest in employability and skills through the implementation of the LMP Action Plan.Invest in the creation of good jobs, productivity growth, decarbonization and regional balance through the implementation of a Local Economic Partnership action plan					
How we will measure success	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2024-25	2025-26 Target
Number of social enterprise start-ups supported	12	12	12	 	8	12
Number of social enterprise jobs created	13	12	16	 	8	12
Number of participants engaged across all 'Go Succeed' activity	New measure		Data not available	-	460	712
Number of business plans created for start-up businesses and employer enterprises	358	361	151	 	115	289
Number of jobs promoted via business start-up activity	404	187	90	 	69	173
Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	215	187	90	 	135	119
Number of existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions.	373	220	351	 	179	220
What you will see by March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">289 business plans created for Start-Up businesses and employer enterprisesOver 700 participants engaged across all Go Succeed activitySupport provided to 220 existing businesses to progress growth and scaling ambitions173 new jobs promoted via business start-up activity.12 social enterprise start-ups supported and 12 social enterprise jobs createdContinued support for new and established local businessesContinued support for the growth of new employment opportunitiesContinued support to grow a labour market that is economically active and prosperous					

Alignment				
Corporate Plan 2024-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support the continued growth and development of our local economy			
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities			
Draft Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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			

*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.

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	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 80% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey agreed with this objective <p>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.</p> <p>To improve the overall cleanliness of the District, the Council is currently reviewing cleansing operations to design a more effective model of service provision. The Council also remains committed to collaborating with partner organisations and local communities to promote responsible dog ownership, address issues around littering and illicit dumping and generate local pride in having a cleaner, greener District for everyone to enjoy.</p>	
	Looking Back: What we did between April-September 2024	<div>  Issued 12 fixed penalty notices, 10 of which were paid </div> <div>  Supported 100% of all 12 community clean up requests received </div> <div>  15 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme </div> <div>  Decrease in the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill </div> <div>  Increase in the rate of recycling, to 52.5% </div>
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2025-26		<p>Address issues around recycling, littering, illicit dumping and dog fouling by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to implement 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 • Exploring options to determine levels of street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots • Rollout an environmental awareness campaign displayed on Council fleet highlighting simple messages on recycling, littering and dog fouling <p>Work in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to:</p>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Target
Number of fixed penalty notices issued	118	110	25	▽	12	100
Number of fixed penalty notices paid	100	91	19	▽	10	80
Percentage of issued fixed penalty notices that are paid	New measure			-	-	80%
Percentage of community clean up requests supported	New measure			-	100%	90%
Number of 'Live Here Love Here' environmental projects	18	10	9	▶	15	No target
The percentage of household waste collected by District Councils that is sent for recycling	49.1%	49.6%	50.0%	😊 △	52.5%	50% by 2020
The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled	2,685t	2,319t	937t	😊 △	85t	<20,954 tonnes (2019-20)
The amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings	87,336t	82,842t	84,684t	▶	45,263	No target
What you will see by March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the number of fixed penalty notices issued and paid• Responsible dog ownership and reduced levels of dog fouling, littering and illicit dumping• Improved opportunities to report littering, dog fouling and illicit dumping• Reduction in the disposal of paint from our Household Recycling Centre sites• Opportunities to engage in community clean ups• Increased awareness of environmental messaging on issues including recycling, dog fouling and littering• A cleaner, greener District, with improved civic and community pride					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2024-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment					
Draft Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment					
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability	Innovation		Sustainability	
Responsible Officer	Director: Sustainability and Environment					

*The Q1/Q2 2024-25 data for the statutory waste management performance indicators remains provisional and will be finalised when the year-end data is validated and published by DAERA.

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





Performance Improvement Objective 4










We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change.		
Why this matters	You told us that:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure.81% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey agreed with this objective	
	<p>Our climate is changing, and we need to prepare. Greenhouse gas emissions cause the Earth’s atmosphere to hold more radiation from the sun which increases the overall temperature of the planet. This change in temperature is altering our climate and causing one of the greatest threats of our time. In October 2019 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council declared a ‘Climate Emergency’.</p>	
	<p>NMDDC is acutely aware of how intrinsic sustainability and care of our district is to its future. Within our new Council structure, a Sustainability Department has been created. This is led by a dedicated Assistant Director with responsibility for issues such as Energy, Council Fleet, Facilities Maintenance and Biodiversity.</p> <p>Environmental sustainability has become a key objective in the development of our capital projects, providing economic growth for the region in an inclusive and sustainable way. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council aims to embed the ethos of sustainability throughout its operations and to provide leadership for the community.</p>	
	<p>The Council also forms part of the Local Government Climate Action Network which is helping to deliver the NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme. This network will enable us to collaborate with other Councils and relevant statutory partners to develop a strategic approach for climate action.</p>	
Looking Back: What we did between April-September 2024		Continued to implement the Fleet Replacement Programme
		Planted 34 trees across the District
		Progressed the development of a Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategy
		Progressed the development of a Biodiversity Strategy
		Continued the development of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan
Looking Forward: What	Address issues around climate change and sustainability by:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Completing the draft Sustainability and Climate Change strategy ready for consultation, review, approval and then publication.	

we will do in 2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publishing the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan• Implementing the newly published biodiversity strategy 2024-30• Complete and implement the Council's Tree Strategy• Supporting the continued implementation of new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points• Undertaking a baseline assessment of the Council's carbon footprint and renewable energy output• Continuing to implement the Council's fleet replacement programme• Preparing the Climate Change Mitigation Report in accordance with The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024					
How we will measure success	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Target
Carbon footprint of Council estate	To Be Established					Not set - baselines to be established
Renewable energy generation	New measure – To Be Established					
Energy Consumption baseline	New measure – To Be Established					
Percentage of Council fleet younger than 8 years	New measure	75%		70%	85%	
Number of vehicles within the Council fleet that have an alternative fuel source	New measure	1		1	10	
Number of trees planted on Council managed estate	New measure	2,800		34	2,800	
Number of Council supported EV charging points	New measure	20		0	18	
What you will see by March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publication of the Council's Climate Change and Sustainable Development strategy• Publication of the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan• Implementation of the new Newry, Mourne and Down Biodiversity Strategy (2024-2030)• Publication of Council's Tree Strategy• 2,800 new trees planted• Carbon baseline established for Council estate• Renewable energy baseline established for Council estate• Energy consumption baseline established for Council estate• Increase in the percentage of younger, less polluting vehicles within the Council fleet• New electric vehicles operating within Council fleet.• Publication of the Climate Change Mitigation Report in accordance with The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024					
Alignment						
Corporate Plan 2024-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect and enhance our environment to secure a sustainable future					
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment					

Draft Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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	<p>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. 88% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey also agreed with this objective.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Work continues on the Planning Improvement Programme and following discussions with SOLACE and DFI, the programme will be reviewed and updated during 2025-26 to be more reflective of the challenges currently facing planning across NI.</p> <p>Staff retention and recruitment remains challenging with vacancies remaining in the planning team across all functions as per agreed structures. Recruitment remains ongoing. This has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on targets and performance. This remains a priority for Council and Senior Management with ongoing review and monitoring.</p> <p>The Council has not yet achieved the statutory standards for 2024-25 but remain committed to delivering further improvements and providing a high-quality service to all customers.</p>	
		Opened 144 enforcement cases which was the second highest across all the Councils
		Average processing time of 44.2 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 18.8 weeks
		Average processing time of 73.5 weeks for major planning applications, which is less than the regional average of 42.0 weeks. This signifies an improvement of 393.5 weeks since the same period last year
		Received 561 local planning applications, which is the third highest across Northern Ireland and accounts for 12% of all the applications received regionally.
Looking Forward: What we will do in 2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months. • 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'. • Launch the Draft plan Strategy by Q2 2025-26 	

How we will measure success		2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	Status Trend	Q1/Q2 2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Target
Average processing time for local planning applications (weeks)		18.8	21.6	33.7	 	44.2	<15 weeks
Average processing time of major planning applications (weeks)		44.3	89.0	154.8	 	73.5	<30 weeks
Percentage of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks		48.5%	58.6%	60.0%	 	37.2%	70%
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or more**		187	228	352		424	150
Number of planning applications in the system for 12 months or less**		871	934	1,154		1,042	700
Number of enforcement cases in the system 12 months or more**		472	503	599		580	450
What you will see by March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A more efficient and effective planning service• Improved processing times for local and major planning applications• Improved processing times for planning enforcement cases• Reduction in the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases in the system• An empowered and motivated workforce• Increased confidence in the Planning system• Sustainable development and regeneration of the District• Commencement of public representation on the Draft Plan Strategy						
Alignment							
Corporate Plan 2024-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver sustainable services						
Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities						
Programme for Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide More Social, Affordable and Sustainable Housing• Reform and Transformation of Public Services						
7 aspects of improvement	Strategic effectiveness	Service availability		Sustainability		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 2024-25.

**The 2025-26 targets have been carried forward from 2024-25 and will be reviewed prior to the publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26, in June 2025.

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 All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities	Strategic effectiveness Service quality Service availability Fairness
We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses and job creation	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 improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change	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 Sustainability Efficiency

Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

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

Question 1

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

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

If other, please provide further information below.

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Question 2

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

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Agree	Disagree
We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 2	Agree	Disagree
We will contribute to growing the economy by supporting local businesses and job creation		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 3	Agree	Disagree
We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents		

Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 4	Agree	Disagree
We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 5	Agree	Disagree
We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme		
Comments:		

Question 3

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

--

Question 4

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

Area	
Arts Centres and Museums	
Building Control	
Car Parking	
Cemeteries	
Cleansing Service	
Community Services/Centres	
Council Parks and Open Spaces	
Council Website	
Economic Development (Programmes to support the economy)	
Environmental Health	
Grants, Procurement and Finance	

Harbours and Marinas	
Leisure Centres	
Licensing (dogs, gaming, entertainment etc)	
Planning	
Play Parks	
Recycling	
Bin Collection	
Registration Services (Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships)	
Tourism Events	
Visitor Attractions	
Visitor Information Centres	
Other Services (please specify)	

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

Completed questionnaires or comments should be submitted by **09 May 2025** to:

Email: performance@nmandd.org

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

Telephone: 0330 137 4000

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

We look forward to hearing from you.

Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26

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1	Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26	Timetable
1.1	Review baseline evidence to support the development of the Performance Improvement Plan, including a review of existing performance management arrangements across the organisation	Jan 2025
1.2	Develop and update the performance improvement objectives, supporting actions and measures of success, ensuring alignment to the seven criteria outlined in the legislation, as well as the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and other key strategies. Prepare Delivery Plans for each objective.	Jan-Feb 2025
1.3	Consider and agree the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft performance improvement objectives 2024-25, supporting actions, measures of success Overall approach and timetable for developing and publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26, ensuring compliance with the statutory Duty to Improve 	CMT: Mar 2025 SMT: Mar 2025 SPR: Mar 2025 Council: Apr 2025 AC: May 2025
1.4	Carry out an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment of the draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26	Feb 2025
2	Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26	Timetable
2.1	The proposed 8 week consultation timetable with key stakeholders will consist of the following elements:	
2.2	Speak NMD – Electronic survey and ideas board published through Speak NMD website, promoted through the Council website and social media channels, and circulated to internal and external stakeholders	14 Mar-09 May 2025
2.3	Public Advertisements in local newspapers	W/B 17 Mar 2025
2.4	Consultation and engagement on the draft performance improvement objectives 2025-26 with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 75 groups, including Youth Councils, Older People's Forum, Cedar Foundation and District Electoral Area Fora 	14 Mar-09 May 2025
2.5	Analyse feedback from consultation and engagement activity, and propose amendments to the performance improvement objectives, supporting actions and measures of success where appropriate	May 2025
3	Design, approval and publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26	Timetable
3.1	Finalise the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26	May 2025
3.2	Carry out an equality screening and rural needs impact assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26	May 2025
3.3	Consider the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26, with proposed amendments following the consultation process	SMT: June 2025 CMT: June 2025

Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26

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		SPR: June 2025 (including request to publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2025) Council: Jul 2025 AC: Jul 2025
33.4	Publish the Performance Improvement Plan on the Council's website and social media channels	Jun 2025 (before statutory deadline of 30 June)
3.5	Develop, translate into Irish (in line with Bilingualism Policy) and publish the summary performance document – 'Our Performance: Looking Back, Going Forward'	Sep 2025
4	Implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26	Timetable
4.1	Publish the annual Assessment of Performance 2024-25, in line with statutory requirements	SMT: Sep 2025 SPR: Sep 2025 Council: Oct 2025 AC: Oct 2025
4.2	Monitor and report progress in implementing the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26 through the Mid Year Assessment	SMT: Nov 2025 SPR: Nov 2025 Council: Dec 2025 AC: Jan 2026
5	Improvement Audit and Assessment 2025-26	Timetable
5.1	NI Audit Office carry out the annual Improvement Audit and Assessment to ascertain if the Council has fulfilled its statutory duty of performance improvement. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A forward looking assessment of the Councils likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement A retrospective assessment of whether the Council has achieved its planned improvements to inform a view regarding the Councils track record of improvement 	Jul-Oct 2025

Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26

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5.2	The NI Audit Office issue the S95 report, outlining the findings from the Improvement Audit and Assessment, which includes proposals for improvement to assist the Council in fulfilling its performance responsibilities in future years	Final report: 30 Nov 2025 Publication of report: Feb 2026
5.3	Consider the s95 Improvement Audit and Assessment Report	SMT: Dec 2025 SPR: Dec 2025 Council: Jan 2026 AC: Jan 2026

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday 13 th March 2025
Subject:	Revised Procurement Policy and Update on the Procurement Act 2023
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Josephine Kelly, Director of Corporate Services

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

For decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For noting only	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose and Background
	<p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a revised Procurement Policy which has been updated with:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A section outlining the policy approach to Ethical Procurement, Social Value and Sustainability following on from the Notice of Motion received in 2024. • Updated for the requirements of new Procurement Act 2023.
2.0	Key issues
	<p>New Procurement Act 2023 – for procurements commenced after 24 February 2025.</p> <p>The new Procurement Act 2023 went live on 24 February 2025. The main changes impact procurements over threshold amounts of £179,087 net for services and £4,477,174 for net capital works.</p> <p>For Procurements, Contracts or Frameworks commenced prior to 24 February 2025</p> <p>To note that any Contract Notice published, or contract awarded prior to go live (24 February 2025) will continue to be managed under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.</p> <p>Summary of key changes of the New Procurement Act 2023</p> <p>Many of the changes that will come into effect impact the buyer side and will be managed centrally by Procurement. These include additional notice requirements, changes to the standstill period and evaluation reporting / award letters. These changes will be managed through our existing governance which includes processes, procedures, template forms, and training. Council Officers involved in procurement activity will be kept up to date of changes made.</p>

Information on changes that impact bidders / suppliers will be provided on the Council's website and suppliers in due course.

The main change that bidders / suppliers will face is use of the Governments extended Find a Tender Service, named Central Digital Platform. New registration will be required for any bidder who wants to participate in an above threshold procurement exercise.

Background

The new Legislation will introduce a number of requirements that will more widely impact staff involved in the end-to-end commercial lifecycle and the time taken to procure Supplies and Services.

Category Management

Category Management is a structured approach to grouping and improving the procurement of similar goods and services across the Council.

The new legislation requires Contracting Authorities to aggregate requirements that can reasonably be aggregated unless there are good reasons for not doing so. This is part of what is termed Category Management.

Pre-Market Engagement (PME)

The new Procurement Act places a greater emphasis on the transparency of PME undertaken by considering the purpose and subject of the engagement and not the type of communication or engagement. Informal PME could include any communication with a supplier if the purpose is related to an upcoming procurement exercise.

Conflicts of Interest

Another aspect of the Legislation with greater transparency requirements is the declaration of any conflicts. We currently have a conflict of interest process that is aimed at officers involved in specification development and evaluation.

New requirements now:

- broaden the assessment of potential conflicts to include "any interested parties that can influence a decision made by or on behalf of a Contracting Authority".
- broaden the consideration and management of conflicts across the entire contract lifecycle which includes taking up contract extensions and management of the contract.
- require published confirmation a conflicts assessment has been conducted at various stages of the procurement and contract lifecycle

Contract Management

Contract Management is devolved to each Department and is defined as the management of activity post contract award. It is an important phase of the procurement cycle in which a supplier delivers the required goods, services, or works as described in the specification and terms and conditions of contract.

Officers will follow existing guidance on contract management in the delivery of their contracts. Contract Owners will continue to oversee contract management across their

	<p>department or service and Contract Managers will work with their suppliers to deliver contract outcomes including Social Value. The main change is related to the reporting on contract management activity.</p> <p>The new legislation aims to embed further transparency requirements throughout the contract lifecycle. This includes specific reporting requirements during the contract management phase.</p> <p>For contracts with a value exceeding £5million contracting authorities will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set and publish a minimum of three KPIs for such contracts • actively report on the management and achievement of any KPIs set and • publish details of poor performance that has not been rectified by a supplier <p>The Governments new Central Digital Platform will be used for the publication of these requirements.</p> <p>Training and updated contract management guidelines will be provided to staff.</p>
3.0	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the updated Procurement Policy • Note the Legislative updates contained within the Report.
4.0	Resource implications
	Potential financial and resource implications will either be contained within the Estimates or as part of the Capital Plan
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>

	<p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
	Updated Procurement Policy
8.0	Background Documents

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

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Procurement Policy

DRAFT

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



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

Policy Control

Policy reference:	CS 26
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Abbreviations Commonly Found in Procurement

Abbreviation	Meaning
CN/CAN	Contract Notice - the notice advertising a contract opportunity on Find a Tender. Contract Award Notice - the notice issued on Find a Tender to advertise the award of a contract.
CCS	Crown Commercial Services - The UK Central Procurement Body https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/crown-commercial-service
CoI	Conflict of Interest
CoPE	Centre of Procurement Efficiency (UK) Expertise (NI) – Any recognised central purchasing body - see PCR2015 Reg.37
Council	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
CPD/DoF	Construction & Procurement Delivery (CPD) which provides a central procurement function for central government in Northern Ireland under DoF (Department of Finance)
CPV	Common Procurement Vocabulary
DAC	Direct Award Contract – also known as Single Tender Action
DPS	Dynamic Purchasing System
EJC	European Court of Justice
EO	Economic Operator - The generic term for a Contractor, Service Provider or Supplier
FoIA	Freedom of Information Act
ITT	Invitation to Tender
ITT Submission	Tender Return or formal offer from an Economic Operator (EO)/Tenderer
KPI	Key Performance Indicator

MAT	Most Advantageous Tender
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Bodies
NIPPP	Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy is approved by the Northern Ireland Executive and is mandatory for central government Departments, Non-Departmental Public Bodies and Public Corporations.
NMDDC	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council / the Council
PCR 2015	Public Contract Regulations 2015 – as amended - http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/102/contents/made
PIN	Prior Information Notice
PO	Purchase Order
PPN/PGN	Procurement Policy Notes (PPNs) / Procurement Guidance Notes (PGNs) are the means by which the NI public sector is advised of procurement policy: http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/content_-_cpd_-_policy_-_procurement_guidance_notes Also: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/procurement-policy-notes
PPP/PFI - JVC	Public Private Partnership / Private Finance Initiatives – Joint Venture Company
PQQ	Pre-Qualification Questionnaire
RfQ	Request for Quotation
VEAT	Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency Notice
VfM	Value for Money
WTO/GPA	The World Trade Organisation and their Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)

1. BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

1.1 What is Public Procurement?

Public procurement refers to the process by which public authorities purchase goods, works or services from external providers that enable them to deliver the services for which they are responsible.

Public Procurement is defined as¹:

"The process of the acquisition, usually by means of a contractual arrangement after public competition, of goods, services, works and other supplies by the public service' and adopts 'Best Value for Money' as 'the most advantageous combination of cost, quality and sustainability to meet customer requirements.'"

As such, procurement is a critical function of government and accounts for a significant proportion of public spending. Given the resource implications, it is essential that procurement activity is well managed to secure the maximum possible value from this expenditure. The overriding procurement policy requirement is that all public procurement must be based on value for money, defined as "the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay over the period of use of the goods or services bought". This should be achieved through competition unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary².

Procurement is also about making choices and a public authority's procurement activity provides a very clear signal of the organisation's values and how it wants to be seen now and in the future. At a strategic level, aligning procurement decision-making to the organisation's broader policy objectives means that the organisation's purchasing power can be leveraged to make a positive impact towards those goals, for example to achieve wider economic, environmental and social benefits.

1.2 Mission Statement for NMDDC's Procurement Policy

The overarching objective of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's (NMDDC/the Council) procurement activities is to secure the most advantageous tender (MAT). The aim is to achieve a best value for money (VfM) outcome for the ratepayer whilst delivering on the key economic, environmental and social outcomes set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

¹ <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dfp/NI-public-procurement-policy.pdf>

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-sector-procurement-policy>

In the achievement of this overarching objective, Council's procurement activities must also:

- Demonstrate propriety and good practice
- Comply with legal requirements that apply to public procurement activities
- Meet the Social Value Criteria as approved by the Council.

1.3 Purpose, Application and Scope

The purpose of this Policy is to govern the method by which the Council procures the goods, works and services required to enable it to deliver its services effectively.

This document is designed therefore to assist Council Officers to determine the most appropriate method of procurement when purchasing goods, works and services. It details what the Council expects from its Officers in terms of behaviour, actions taken and processes to be followed.

This Policy applies to all Council Officers involved in the execution of works, supply of products or provision of service contracts, where they are involved in a procurement process, whether as requisitioners, specifiers, purchasers or those who validate or authorise payment. This includes full-time and part-time employees on a substantive or fixed-term contract and associated persons such as agency staff, contractors and secondees. Consultants working on behalf of the Council who are involved in the procurement process must ensure their documentation complies with this Policy.

All Officers engaging in procurement activity shall be aware of, and comply with, this Policy and relevant and associated statutory and regulatory requirements, as detailed in section 2, when undertaking procurement activity.

This Policy **does not** apply to³:

- The acquisition or rental, by whatever financial means, of land or existing buildings
- Certain legal services (for example, legal representation or advice by a lawyer in judicial proceedings before the courts or in situations where there is a high probability that judicial proceedings will result)
- Certain financial services (for example, those in connection with the issue, sale, purchase or transfer of securities)
- Loans
- Employment contracts
- Civil defence and danger prevention services that are provided by non-profit organisations covered by certain Common Procurement Vocabulary codes, with the exception of patient transport ambulance services
- Using public transport services by rail or metro

- Public contracts between public sector entities that satisfy a range of conditions
- Statutory payments such as TV licensing, LPS rate payments, pension contributions
- Cost of attending training and development events
- Cost of study courses; attendance at conferences, exhibitions, seminars and workshops
- Officer's professional fees required as legal necessity to perform their duties
- Payments to individuals such as speaker fees; organist; medical reports
- Internal purchases (including petty cash)
- To Grants, as defined:
 - As a transaction below the UK threshold
 - As the Council contributing to the cost of a particular purpose or activity, where the nature of the relationship created is to spend the money in accordance with the grant or return it
 - As expenditure that does not form payment for a contract for services, or where the Council specifies the output or outcomes to be delivered.

1.4 Guiding Principles of Procurement

There are 12 guiding principles to govern the administration of public procurement⁴:

1. **Accountability:** effective mechanisms must be in place in order to enable Officers and their equivalents to discharge their personal responsibility on issues of procurement risk and expenditure.
2. **Competitive Supply:** procurement should be carried out by competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary.
3. **Consistency:** economic operators should, all other things being equal, be able to expect the same general procurement policy across the public sector.
4. **Effectiveness:** public bodies should meet the commercial, regulatory and socio-economic goals of government in a balanced manner appropriate to the procurement requirement.
5. **Efficiency:** procurement processes should be carried out as cost effectively as possible. Where possible and allowed, collaborative procurement is to be encouraged.
6. **Fair-dealing:** suppliers should be treated fairly and without unfair discrimination, including protection of commercial confidentiality where required. Public bodies

⁴ <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dfp/NI-public-procurement-policy.pdf>

should not impose unnecessary burdens or constraints on suppliers or potential suppliers.

7. **Integration:** the procurement policy should pay due regard to the Council's other economic and social policies, rather than cut across them.
8. **Integrity:** there should be no corruption or collusion with suppliers or others.
9. **Informed decision-making:** public bodies need to base decisions on accurate information and to monitor requirements to ensure that they are being met.
10. **Legality:** public bodies must conform to all legal requirements.
11. **Responsiveness:** public bodies should endeavour to meet the aspirations, expectations and needs of the community served by the procurement.
12. **Transparency:** public bodies should ensure that there is openness and clarity on procurement policy and its delivery.

1.5 Managing Public Money

Managing Public Money⁵ requires everyone working in public services in Northern Ireland to be aware of the need to manage and deploy public resources responsibly in the public interest.

This requirement is clearly very relevant when undertaking procurement activity which must be carried out:

- In the spirit of, as well as to the letter of, the law
- In the public interest
- To high ethical standards
- To achieve value for money.

⁵ <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/managing-public-money-ni-mpmni>

2. LEGISLATION & POLICY

2.1 Legal Context

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 states a Council may enter contracts necessary for the discharge of any of its functions⁶. To enter contracts for the supply of goods, works and services, Local Authorities are subject to and must adhere to procurement related legislation.

2.2 Procurement Thresholds

The thresholds at which public procurement opportunities are subject to the full suite of UK regulations governing public contracts, are revised every two years. This is to take account of currency fluctuations, and to ensure the UK complies with its obligations under the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)⁷. The current applicable thresholds are provided in the attached [Appendix 1](#).

For tenders close to the UK Threshold, Officers should calculate the estimated value of a contract based on the total amount payable including VAT.

2.3 Regulated Procurement ('Above Threshold')

2.3.1 UK Public Procurement Regulations - The Procurement Act 2023

The Procurement Act 2023 (the 2023 Act), which reforms existing Procurement Rules, received Royal Assent in October 2023. In March 2024, the Procurement Regulations 2024 were laid in Parliament to bring some elements of the Bill and the wider regime into effect.

On 12 September 2024, the Cabinet Office announced that the Procurement Act 2023 would commence on 24 February 2025. There was a delay of four months from the original go-live date of 28 October 2024, to allow time for a new National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) to be produced⁸.

All regulated procurements started **on or after 24 February 2025** are subject to the provisions of the 2023 Act. The 2023 Act has introduced new public procurement rules. Procurement exercises formally commenced on or after the go-live date and contracts awarded under those exercises will be subject to the new Public Procurement rules.

⁶ [Local Government Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1972 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ppn-1123-new-thresholds/procurement-policy-note-1123-new-thresholds-html#background>

⁸ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/54/>

Publishing a PIN (Periodic Indicative Notice under UCR2016) does not formally commence a procurement for the purposes of the Act. Any contracts awarded through a framework agreement, dynamic purchasing system or qualification system (referred to as 'commercial tools') set up under the previous legislation, will continue to be managed in accordance with that legislation until the end (for whatever reason e.g. expiry, termination) of the last contract awarded under the framework, dynamic purchasing system or qualification system during its term.

2.3.2 UK Public Procurement Regulations - Prior to the Procurement Act 2023

For procurements prior to the 2023 Act, the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) 2015⁹ established rules for procurement for the Council with respect to public contracts and design competitions.

The Concession Contracts Regulations 2016¹⁰ establish the rules on procurement by contracting authorities with respect to works or service concessions i.e. where there is income to be generated.

2.3.3 Public Procurement Regulation Post-Brexit

The Regulations continued to apply even though the UK had left the EU, and the transition period has ended.

Some minor changes to the PCR 2015 were brought in by the Public Procurement (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 (PPR 2020)¹¹. The PPR 2020 remove all references to the EU and so, for example, the financial thresholds are no longer calculated in Euros. They have also removed the requirement to publish OJEU notices. Instead, UK contracting authorities publish procurement notices on the Government's new platform 'Find a Tender' Service (FTS).

2.3.4 Treaty Obligations

All public procurement is subject to the EU Treaty principles of:

- Non-discrimination
- Free movement of goods
- Freedom to provide services
- Freedom of establishment.

⁹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/102/contents/made>

¹⁰ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2016/273/regulation/3/made>

¹¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/1319/contents>

In addition to these fundamental treaty principles, some general principles of law have emerged from the case law of the European Court of Justice. The most important of these general principles of law to be aware of in the procurement context are:

- **Equal treatment (non-discrimination/fairness):** Contracting Authorities are obliged to treat both potential and actual tenderers in the same way, without favour or prejudice. When specifying requirements avoid brand names and other references which would favour or eliminate particular providers, products or services and accept equivalence.
- **Transparency (openness):** Some degree of advertising (appropriate to the size of the contract) is likely to be necessary to demonstrate transparency. Must be upfront with tenderers about the conditions for participation, clearly specified requirements, selection criteria, contract details, award criteria and the reasons why they were or (more importantly) were not successful.
- **Proportionality:** Contracting Authorities must ensure that tender requirements are both relevant to the contract being procured and necessary.
- **Mutual recognition:** Member States are required to accept on their territory, products which are legally produced and marketed and services that are legally provided, in other Member States. There must also be mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates or other evidence of formal qualifications.
- **Confidentiality:** Contracting Authorities are obliged to respect the confidentiality of the information received from tenderers during the procurement process.

2.4 Other Relevant Legislation When Procuring

When conducting procurement exercises it is usual to assess whether the bidders can comply with relevant legislation. The types of legislation that are commonly relevant in a procurement exercise are:

- Health and Safety Regulations
- Environmental Regulations
- Employment Regulations

When setting legislative requirements, it is important to check with the relevant Council section that the requirements are appropriate.

2.5 Wider Procurement Policy Landscape

The Council carries out its procurement activities adhering to Council Policy and Procedures.

Although the Council is not directly subject to Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy, Council Officers are encouraged to use CPD best practice procurement guidance to assist them if they are looking for any further guidance when performing procurement exercises, especially if the project is funded through central government.

In Northern Ireland the Procurement Board, chaired by the Finance Minister, is responsible for the Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy (NIPPP).

Construction & Procurement Delivery (CPD) is a business area within the Department of Finance (DoF) in the Northern Ireland Civil Service and supports the Procurement Board, liaising with the Cabinet Office on legislative matters, helping in the development of new policies, and monitoring their implementation¹².

CPD is responsible for disseminating advice and guidance on the direction and policies on public procurement, determined by the Procurement Board, to the Northern Ireland Central Government and monitors their implementation. It does this through the production of Procurement Guidance Notes, which are developed in consultation with its public sector stakeholders. Procurement Guidance Notes are available on the [CPD Website](#).

2.6 Ethical Procurement and Social Value

Responsible and ethical procurement encompasses both Social Value and Sustainability and recognises the Council's responsibility to procure value for money goods, services, works and utilities, whilst maximising social value, minimising environmental impacts and ensuring the ethical treatment of people throughout its supply chains.

2.6.1 Legislative Context

The Council conducts procurement activity in line with the best practice principles of transparency, non-discrimination, fair treatment, value for money and the public good when conducting procurements of any value.

The Procurement Regulations set out the specific types of qualification, selection and award criteria that may be used to assess bidders to ensure suppliers are treated in a fair and transparent manner. Assessing suppliers on criteria considered as non-commercial is not

¹² <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/procurement-policy-and-guidance>

permitted. Non-commercial considerations could include, for example, a supplier's political affiliation.

The Council recognises the following:

2.6.2 Social Value

Leveraging service and works contracts to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of local people and the local environment, providing skills and employment opportunities and promoting the local economy.

- Protecting people and the environment by ensuring Health and Safety is an inherent part of the procurement process
- Promoting social inclusion, equality and community benefit by including work-related opportunities, employability and apprenticeships in relevant contracts
- Supporting local economic regeneration by paying the living wage and ensuring that supply chain opportunities are accessible to Small and Medium Enterprises, Social Enterprises and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

2.6.3 Environmental Sustainability

Minimising environmental impacts, promoting animal welfare and improving efficiency throughout the supply chains of all goods, services and works procured.

- Sourcing lower impact materials and methods and promoting sustainable food, farming and animal welfare
- Maximising resource efficiency by considering whole life costs and seeking to reduce waste
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change by ensuring energy efficiency and promoting renewable and carbon energy.

2.6.4 Ethical Sourcing

Ensuring that human rights and employment rights are protected throughout the Council's supply chains and encouraging responsible business practices within the procurement process.

- Ensuring human and labour rights
- Ensuring legal and fair employment practices
- Contracting with responsible businesses.

Responsible Procurement will be balanced and guided by use of available resources whilst achieving value for money and constantly seeking continuous improvement and will contribute towards the Council Values and Outcomes.

2.6.5 Ethical Procurement

Ethics refers to the use of recognised social principles that involve fairness throughout the business relationship and being ethical means following a behaviour perceived as fair by the business community and wider society.

Being ethical means treating suppliers in a just, fair, honest and fitting manner; preferential treatment is considered unethical. Council departments are in control of large budgets; hence it is important to set out:

- The legislative context in which we operate
- The expected behaviours for all Officers and how these are built into our processes
- What we expect from our suppliers and how we can assess that within our procurement exercises.

The Council expects high standards of ethical conduct from employees involved in Procurement and from its suppliers. Procurement specialists are also expected to observe and comply with codes of conduct set out by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply.

For procurement exercises conducted under the 2023 Act, the Council will act in accordance with applicable legislation and have regard to the importance of the following objectives:

- Delivering value for money
- Maximising public benefit
- Sharing information for the purpose of allowing suppliers and others to understand the authority's procurement policies and decisions
- Acting, and being seen to act, with integrity.

2.7 Expected Officer Behaviour & Conflicts of Interest

To embed this approach Officers involved in procurement activity must adhere to the principles of conduct and the standards of behaviour expected as detailed in the Council's Code of Conduct.

The Council will take all reasonable steps to identify, and keep under review, in relation to a covered procurement any:

- (a) Conflicts of interest, or
- (b) Potential conflicts of interest.

2.8 Assessing Suppliers

The Council exercises due diligence in assessing bidder's ethical practices by the following means:

- Mandatory exclusion of bidders who have been convicted of offences including conspiracy, corruption, bribery, non-payment of taxes etc
- Discretionary consideration of excluding bidders who are guilty of violating labour laws, professional misconduct, being involved in distorting competition etc
- Confirmation that bidders comply with Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Confirmation that bidders have not and will not take part in canvassing, soliciting or have any conflicts of interest
- Confirmation that bidders comply with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

2.9 Procurement Approach

The Council adopts a hybrid approach whereby a central procurement function supports trained and competent staff within directorates. However ultimate responsibility for procurement resides in the Council service area where the expenditure is being incurred.

The Council where appropriate, the use of Government Procurement Frameworks and other relevant frameworks will be explored. Collaborative procurement opportunities should also be considered where relevant.

Regularly used supplies, services and works will be procured through the 'tenders for services and supplies' process. These will be reviewed at appropriate intervals.

For procurement over the thresholds as set out in Appendix 1, as part of the Social Value considerations the Council will assess bidders on:

- Prompt payment ie that our suppliers pay their supply chain promptly and
- Policies relating to ethical procurement and fair treatment of their supply chains.

2.10 Related Policies

A non-exhaustive list of current policies that should also be reviewed in conjunction with this Policy is listed below:

- Code of Conduct for Local Government employees
- The Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors

- Anti-Fraud Policy
- Fraud Response Plan
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure.

2.11 Complaints

The Council is committed to the provision of high-quality services. Our Complaints Handling Procedure reflects the Council's commitment to valuing complaints. Occasionally, things can go wrong. When this happens, we will investigate all complaints received and advise you of the outcome. We will conduct thorough, impartial and fair investigations of customer complaints so that, where appropriate, we can make evidence-based decisions on each case. You may find the following guidance useful in submitting a complaint.

Complaint Handling Procedure – Guide for Complainants [here](#).

Appendix 1

UK Thresholds for Procurements (Effective 1 January 2024) ¹³		
Public Contracts	Threshold inc. VAT (published threshold)	Threshold exc. VAT (for information)
Supplies & Services (central government authorities)	£139,688	£116,407
Supplies & Services (other public sector authorities)	£214,904	£179,087
Works and Concessions	£5,372,609	£4,477,174
Light Touch Contracts for Services	£663,540	£552,950

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ppn-1123-new-thresholds/procurement-policy-note-1123-new-thresholds-html#annex-a--summary-of-thresholds-from-1-january-2024>

Appendix 2

NMDDC Procurement Thresholds		
Contract Value	Procurement Process	Approvals Required
Low Value Order £0.01 to £250 <u>Restricted to specific users</u>	Low Value Orders are a specific type of order limited to a few named designated users who require orders under £250 to be issued directly to the supplier. The Assistant Director of Finance and Performance determines the users who can avail of LVO use.	A cumulative value for the requirement over a typical three-year contract period to be calculated.
Value for Money £0.01 to £5,000	Council Officer must demonstrate ' Value for Money ' (VfM) has been achieved by seeking a minimum of 3 documented prices/quotations on a like for like basis. Quotations can be sought via telephone, email or internet search but must be documented. A VfM record is to be retained by the Officer. Best practice is to attach a summary of the VfM exercise to the requisition as an internal attachment.	Requisition approved by authoriser with an approval limit greater than or equal to the requisition value.
Request for Quotation (RfQ) £5,000 to £30,000	<p>'Request for Quotation' (RfQ) documentation is completed by Council Officer along with a RfQ Issuance Form and uploaded for approval by Officer's authoriser.</p> <p>Once approved by the authoriser, documentation is released by Procurement.</p> <p>By exception, the Officer can request a Procurement review of their RfQ documentation via the RfQ Issuance Form. Once the documentation has been finalised between Officer and Procurement the RfQ is released.</p> <p>RfQs can be run on an open or restricted basis. If Council Officer requests a restricted list, a minimum of 4 registered suppliers should be invited to participate.</p>	Approval to Commence Procurement Form completed by Officer and signed by authoriser with an approval limit greater than or equal to the RfQ contract value.
Internal Framework Agreement/DPS £5,000 to £30,000	A Framework Agreement can be established by NMDDC for NMDDC use only. The Framework establishes a pre-qualified list of supplier(s) that can be engaged as and when the need arises.	Approval to Commence Procurement Form completed by Officer and signed by authoriser with an approval

	<p>Framework documentation is completed by Council Officer and uploaded for approval by Officer's authoriser.</p> <p>Once the documentation has been finalised between Officer and Procurement the Framework is released.</p>	limit greater than or equal to the Framework value.
External Framework Call-Off/DPS £5,000 to £30,000	<p>NMDDC can make use of Frameworks established by other Contracting Authorities and/or Purchasing Organisations provided the Council is named as a potential buyer.</p> <p>Access to the Framework and award of contracts under it is determined by the Framework rules, as specified by the Framework owner, which must be adhered to.</p>	Approval to Commence Procurement Form completed by Officer and signed by authoriser with an approval limit greater than or equal to the call-off contract(s) value.
Invitation to Tender (ITT) £30,000 to UK Thresholds – Goods, Works and Services	<p>'Invitation to Tender' (ITT) documentation completed by Council Officer and uploaded for approval by Officer's authoriser.</p> <p>Once approved, documentation is transferred to Procurement for review.</p> <p>When documentation has been finalised between Officer and Procurement, ITT is uploaded and sent to nominated suppliers by Procurement.</p>	<p>Appropriate business case template completed depending on value and signed by the Director.</p> <p>Business case brought to relevant Committee for consideration and approval.</p> <p>Committee's decision referred to full Council for approval.</p>
Internal Framework Agreement/DPS £30,000 to UK Thresholds – Goods, Works and Services	<p>A Framework Agreement can be established by NMDDC for NMDDC use only. The Framework establishes a pre-qualified list of supplier(s) that can be engaged as and when the need arises.</p> <p>Framework documentation is completed by Council Officer and uploaded for approval by Officer's authoriser.</p> <p>Once the documentation has been finalised between Officer and Procurement the Framework is released.</p>	<p>Appropriate business case template completed depending on value and signed by the Director.</p> <p>Business case brought to relevant Committee for consideration and approval.</p> <p>Committee's decision referred to full Council for approval.</p>
External Framework Call-Off/DPS £30,000 to UK Thresholds – Goods, Works and Services	<p>NMDDC can make use of Frameworks established by other Contracting Authorities and/or Purchasing Organisations provided the Council is named as a potential buyer.</p> <p>Access to the Framework and award of contracts under it is determined by the Framework rules,</p>	<p>Appropriate business case template completed depending on value and signed by the Director.</p> <p>Business case brought to relevant Committee for consideration and approval.</p>

	as specified by the Framework owner, which must be adhered to.	Committee's decision referred to full Council for approval.
ITT Above UK Threshold Level	<p>Invitation to Tender (ITT) documentation completed by Council Officer using the appropriate above-threshold tender document templates and uploaded for approval by Officer's authoriser.</p> <p>Once approved, documentation is referred to Procurement for review. When documentation has been finalised between Officer and Procurement, ITT is uploaded and sent to nominated suppliers by Procurement.</p> <p>ITT is advertised on a UK wide basis via the 'Find a Tender' service (FTS).</p>	<p>Appropriate business case template or economic appraisal completed depending on value and signed by the Director.</p> <p>Business case or Economic Appraisal brought to relevant Committee for consideration and approval.</p> <p>Committee's decision referred to full Council for approval.</p>
Internal Framework Agreement/DPS Above UK Threshold Level	<p>A Framework Agreement can be established by NMDDC for NMDDC use only. The Framework establishes a pre-qualified list of supplier(s) that can be engaged as and when the need arises.</p> <p>Framework documentation is completed by Council Officer and uploaded for approval by Officer's authoriser.</p> <p>Once the documentation has been finalised between Officer and Procurement the Framework is released.</p>	<p>Appropriate business case template completed depending on value and signed by the Director.</p> <p>Business case brought to relevant Committee for consideration and approval.</p> <p>Committee's decision referred to full Council for approval.</p>
External Framework Call-Off/DPS Above UK Threshold Level	<p>NMDDC can make use of Frameworks established by other Contracting Authorities and/or Purchasing Organisations provided the Council are named as a potential buyer.</p> <p>Access to the Framework and award of contracts under it is determined by the Framework rules, as specified by the Framework owner, which must be adhered to.</p>	<p>Appropriate business case template or economic appraisal completed depending on value and signed by the Director.</p> <p>Business case or Economic Appraisal brought to relevant Committee for consideration and approval.</p> <p>Committee's decision referred to full Council for approval.</p>

**WOMENS WORKING GROUP
THURSDAY 16th JANUARY 2025
MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING**

In attendance: **(Councillors)**
Councillor A. Quinn (Chairperson)
Councillor T. Howie
Councillor C. Bowsie
Councillor D. Finn

In attendance: **(Officials)**
Josephine Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Patricia Murtagh, Corporate Communications & PR Manager
Gary Scott, Safeguarding Co-ordinator
Sarah- Louise Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Sinead Trainor, Assistant Director, Environmental Health
Ruth Hamilton, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Martina Flynn, Acting Head of Engagement, Community Engagement & relations
Martin McKibbin, PA to Director of Corporate Services

Introduction & Apologies:

Apologies: Councillor A. Finnegan
Marie Ward, Chief Executive

Declarations of Interest: None

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Action taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action sheet Y/N
Item 3.0 – Action sheet of Women's Working Group of 22nd August 2024.	<p>Prior to the meeting it was noted that Cllr Finnegan was an apology, and a chair would need to be appointed. Cllr Quinn advised that she was happy to chair the meeting.</p> <p>P: Councillor Howie S: Councillor Finn</p> <p>Members were asked to agree the Action sheet of the Women's Working Group meeting of 22nd August 2024.</p> <p>P: Councillor Finn S: Councillor Bowsie</p>	J Kelly	Agreed	Y
Item 4.0 – Ending violence against Women and Girls – Update from AHC	<p>Members were asked to note the report from M. Flynn.</p> <p>M. Flynn advised that the Ending violence against Women & Girls Programme Change fund has been approved and welcomed by the Council. The fund will be split between a momentum fund and a local change fund. The momentum fund will help build on existing work and allow training and awareness sessions to be held before the end of March 2025. There is also a number of events arranged with local groups coming up in the next few months. The allocation to the local change fund will allow a grant scheme to support EVAWAG initiatives. This scheme will close on 24th February 2025 and offers 3 tiers of funding. There will also be inaugural EVAWG Stakeholder Conference taking place on Tuesday 25 March 2025. M. Flynn advised that any support offered from Councillors to advise their constituents of this scheme and the events would be appreciated.</p>	M Flynn	Noted	Y

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Action taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action sheet Y/N
	<p>Questions following presentation:</p> <p>Cllr Quinn asked what projects Council would be looking to grant the funding towards. M. Flynn advised that the Tier 1 would be one off events or programmes whereas Tier 2 would be longer term programmes. She advised to direct any constituents to the Council if they feel they could benefit from this funding, and they will speak directly with them.</p>			
<p>Item 5.0 – Safeguarding Campaign Evaluation Report</p>	<p>Members were asked to note the report from P. Murtagh.</p> <p>P. Murtagh shared with members an update on all safeguarding campaigns highlighting the reach, target audience, key demographics etc of each campaign.</p> <p>Questions following presentation:</p> <p>Cllr Bowsie asked do the Council ever boost or pay for adverts. P. Murtagh advised that each campaign presented was a paid campaign. She advised that these are monitored.</p> <p>Cllr Finn advised that a lot of companies have moved to advertising on Blue Sky and asked if this was something that Council have been considering. She also asked if Council collaborated with any other Council's while doing these campaigns. P. Murtagh advised that the Marketing team are constantly looking at new channels that are performing well and will explore these. She said that we collaborate closely with Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon Council and the Trust will also share Council campaigns.</p>	P Murtagh	Noted	Y

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Action taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action sheet Y/N
	<p>Cllr Howie asked if Council had ever looked at advertising on Tik Tok given its popularity with young people. P. Murtagh advised that government departments are not permitted to m using the Tik Tok platform due to GDPR issues. Cllr Howie noted that our Council along with ABC Council appear to be taking the lead in this matter and asked does it be rolled out across all Councils. G. Scott advised that he keeps other Councils involved with what campaigns we do. He advised that most other Council's only have a part time safeguarding officer so don't have as much time to focus on campaigns. He is presenting to SOLACE soon where he will be highlighting social media campaigns and will be raising collaborations with other Council's as a key point.</p> <p>Cllr Bowsie asked if Council had looked into YouTube ads. P. Murtagh advised that the Council has it own YouTube channel where they put video content on. She advised that she would look into whether they can put ad's on this and bring an update back to the next meeting.</p>	P Murtagh	Update to be provided at the next meeting	Y
Item 6 – International Women's Day	<p>J. Kelly confirmed that this year the Council will be concentrating on International Women's Day internally with no plans to have an external event as the concentration will be on the inaugural EVAWG Stakeholder Conference at the end of March. The Council is keen to look at Health & Wellbeing as a key theme for the internal Council event.</p> <p>S. Trainor advised that they had partnered with Cancer Focus for International Men's Day last year and had received positive feedback from this. She advised that Ruth Hamilton is leading the Health & Wellbeing Working Group and will be discussing this at future meetings. Cllr Bowsie accepted that it may be a good idea to concentrate on this given the high amount of sickness among staff recently. S. Trainor advised that she would develop this over the next few weeks and share an update with the Group.</p>	J Kelly	Agenda item	Y

Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Action taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action sheet Y/N
	<p>Cllr Howie advised that it would be helpful to know what is happening well in advance given that last year nobody knew about any events until it was put on social media. She advised that she would still like something to be put on social media to celebrate the day. Cllr Finn agreed with this and said she would like to see something on social media celebrating women across the district. S. Trainor advised that they will be developing the plan over the next couple of weeks and will then take this forward with Comms & marketing.</p> <p>M. Flynn advised that if S. Trainor needed any help from the EVAWAG group she can contact them.</p> <p>Cllr Finn said it might be good if Councillors or Community groups can nominate someone and platform them on social media. Cllr Bowsie suggested that we can look at incorporating them into the Civic awards.</p>			
Next Meeting	Meeting ended: 5:55pm Next Meeting: TBC	J Kelly	Meeting arranged	Y