

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

3 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a hybrid meeting of the Corporate Services Committee of Ards and North Down Borough in the Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards and via Zoom on **Tuesday 10 September 2024 commencing at 7pm.**

Yours faithfully

Susie McCullough
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest

Reports for Approval:

3. Review of Grants Policy (Report attached)
4. Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report 2023/24 (Report attached)
5. Blair Mayne Bursary Sub-Committee (Report attached)
6. Update on Proposals requiring EQIAs (Report attached)

Reports for Noting:

7. Budget Reports:
 - a) Strategic Budget Report (Report attached)
 - b) Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management 2024/25 Q1 (Report attached)
8. Response to Notices of Motion:
 - a) Response to Notice of Motion – Deep Concern at the Poor state of the Roads across Ards and North Down (Report attached)
9. Notices of Motion:
 - 9.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman Brooks and Councillor Chambers:

That the Council, following the 80th anniversary of D-Day, recognises the service of US regiment(s) stationed in Donaghadee and our Borough prior to D-Day and tasks officers to bring a report back looking at ways in which our Borough could provide a lasting memory to them.

10. Any other notified business

ITEMS 11 – 19 *IN CONFIDENCE*****

Items Delegated to Committee – Reports for Approval

11. Contract Award for the provision of financial management software (Report attached)

Reports for Approval

12. Budget Strategy for Estimates 2025/26 (Report attached)

13. Acquisition of Land at Ambleside Bangor (Report attached)

14. Renewal of Tenancy Agreement – Abbey Street Gate Lodge (Report attached)

15. Renewal of licence – access over land at Parkway, Comber (Report attached)

16. Request for a Lease of former allotment site at Kerr Park, Holywood (Report attached)

17. Request from Kingsland Table Tennis Club to renew the licence at Kingsland Pavilion (Report attached)

18. Grant of a lease to Deep Green for lands at Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex, Newtownards or Bangor Aurora Aquatic & Leisure Complex (the 'Sites' (Report attached)

Reports for Noting:

19. STEP Board Report June 2024 (Report attached)

Membership of Corporate Services Committee

Alderman Graham	Councillor Gilmour
Alderman McRandal	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman Smith	Councillor Thompson
Alderman Brooks	Councillor McAlpine
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor Cochrane (Vice Chair)
Councillor Chambers	Councillor W Irvine
Councillor S Irvine	Councillor McCracken
Councillor Moore	Councillor Irwin (Chairman)

Unclassified

3

ITEM 3

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Finance
Date of Report	02 September 2024
File Reference	FIN 58
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Review of Grants Policy
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Grant Declaration of Interest Appendix 2 - Grant Claim Form Appendix 3 - Standard terms & conditions Grant Funding Appendix 4 - Draft Grants Policy v2.0

Background

Members will be aware that Council has a Grants Policy. This has been in place since March 2016.

A Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cathcart and Councillor Gilmour requested that the Council commit to 'undertaking a root and branch review of community development funding, arts and heritage, sports development and all other funding streams to ensure that it provides the most efficient, effective and responsive service to our community, thus maximising impact, accessibility and equitable allocation of resources'.

Not Applicable

The review requested a review under 4 categories:

1. Accessibility
2. Communication Enhancement
3. Equity
4. Efficiency

In response the ANDBC Grants Management Working Group, an internal working group consisting of relevant heads of service, service unit managers and officers that have responsibility for managing grant schemes was established to support a detailed internal review and evaluation of grants that are offered and administered across Council. The group had its first meeting on 23 January 2024.

The project aims and objectives are:

Phase 1

- Development of an updated ANDBC Grants Management Policy with further consideration given to the Appeals Process.
- Implementation of a standardised framework, processes and documentation for grants management across Council in accordance with agreed Policy.
- Monitor the progress of identified work, identify potential challenges and how to mitigate against.
- Ensure council wide knowledge and understanding of grants management process.

Phase 2

- Electronic Grants Management Project

For the last number of months, the Transformation team have been working together with the Grants Management Working Group to review the current arrangements for Grants Management across all relevant services across council.

The current Grants Policy sits within Community and Wellbeing. It is proposed that going forward the policy will sit within Finance as a financial policy that will cover all grants administered by Council. It is intended that that changes made to the policy will provide an efficient and effective framework for grant management that allows budget holders to make decisions in line with the updated scheme of delegation and within appropriate timescales as well as delivering an improved customer experience to include the development of a digital grants management system.

The main changes to the policy include:

- The requirement to have all Grant scheme documentation agreed by parent committee in advance of launching.
- Grants schemes to be screened by Policy Screening before launch – this will apply to all grants in the first year of the new policy being in place.
- Only significant changes to a previously agreed grants schemes will need to be brought back to committee.
- Awarding decisions will be made by officer panels rather than Council in line with the updated Scheme of Delegation, this will speed up decision making.

Not Applicable

Members will receive interim award reports for noting or this information will be included in the annual evaluation report.

- Each year a report should be brought to committee evaluating each grant scheme to ensure that it is achieving the objectives set out in the approved scheme.
- The policy aims to set out minimum standards for grants management which can be enhanced to meet the conditions which Council may be required to meet from other external funders.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approve the updated Grants Policy for implementation across Council.

APPENDIX 1

Grant Declaration of Interests Form

Please complete below with all relevant information:

Grant Reference	
Name:	
Nominating Organisation:	
Please detail the Organisation in which you have Personal Interests:	
Please detail the Organisations in which you have Professional Interests:	
Please detail the Organisations in which you have Business Interests:	
Other Relevant Information:	

Signature:		Date Completed:	
------------	--	-----------------	--

Please Note:

An interest for the purposes of the register is defined to be any personal, professional or business interest that one may have in any relationship or proposed relationship between the Ards and North Down Borough Council and an external body. A relationship includes consultancy, employment, directorship (whether paid or unpaid), shareholding or membership.

APPENDIX 1

Grant Scheme Reference

Register of Interest Pro-Forma

Name of member	Description of interest	Extent of interest (does the interest affect the member or a person closely connected to them)	Nature of interest (current / former)
E.g. Mr Jim Bloggs	XYZ consultancy firm	Spouse of owner	Current

Declaration

I confirm that:

- The details provided on this form are current and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date Completed:

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL - GRANT CLAIM FORM

Ards and North Down Borough Council, 2 Church Street, Newtownards, BT23 4AP Telephone 030 013 3333

APPENDIX 2

8

Name of Organisation		Type of Grant		Grant Reference	
----------------------	--	---------------	--	-----------------	--

DETAILS OF EXPENDITURE:

Line No	Date Paid	Method of Payment	Cheque Number	Date of Invoice	Invoice Number	Supplier	Details of Purchase	Net Amount (excluding VAT)	VAT Amount	Amount Claimed	ANDBC use
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											
									Total		

NOTES

Please attach original invoices / receipts and proof of payment (i.e. Banks Statements). These will be returned once vouching has been completed.

Ards and North Down Borough Council collects data on this form for the purpose of processing grant applications. In processing this data, the Council will act in compliance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Data collected will be kept securely and not used for any other purpose without the applicant's consent

DECLARATION:-

I, the undersigned, declare that the above information is correct and represents eligible expenditure, as outlined in the Letter of Offer issued by Ards and North Down Borough Council.

SIGNED:		POSITION IN LEAD ORGANISATION:	
BLOCK CAPITALS:		DATE:	

APPENDIX 3

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING

TERM OF AGREEMENT

1. The term of this Agreement shall be for a period of xx months commencing xx/xx/xxxx and ending xx/xx/xxxx. A total grant assistance of £xx will be allocated and must be used solely for the agreed activity.

PURPOSE OF FUNDING

2. The purpose of the funding is (to be summarised as agreed in letter of offer)

IMPLEMENTATION

3. The recipient shall perform all its obligations and observe and comply with all the terms and conditions contained in the offer of grant correspondence.
4. The funds granted by the Council to this project will be allocated on the condition that the Recipient agrees to abide by any relevant regulations relating to the project.
5. Any significant change to the activity schedule should be notified in advance and agreed in writing.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

6. The Council requires the office bearers of all organisations in receipt of financial assistance to act at all times with honesty and integrity and to safeguard the resources for which they are responsible. In light of this:
 - a. The organisation must maintain effective controls to mitigate opportunities for misappropriation or fraud. The organisation must notify the Council immediately should an instance of fraud or suspected fraud arise.
 - b. The financial management system of the organisation must demonstrate effective controls and must present a clear audit trail at all times.
 - c. All claims must be summarised on council grant claim form provided and must be supported by receipts, invoices and bank statements. Scanned documents, photographs or printed on-line bank statements will be accepted however proof of original claim documentation may be requested as part of the claim process.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

7. All payments to Committee members, or if a Committee member is connected to any person being employed, should be disclosed.

CLAIMING PAYMENT

8. Grant payments will be paid on receipt of a fully completed claim form, paid invoices and evidence of payment from your business account.
9. Claims for funding must be submitted on the standard claim form supplied and signed.

10. Claims will be processed as detailed in letter of offer.

CHANGE TO THE ORGANISATION / PROJECT

11. The grant shall be used only for the purpose of the Recipient activity, which the Council has agreed to fund in advance. Any **proposed** changes to either the organisation or the projects must be notified immediately, before they are actioned, to the Council. Examples of significant changes which must be notified include:

- a. Issues impacting on the organisation's ability to operate on a going concern basis
- b. Nature / purpose of the project
- c. Change to the project name / organisation name
- d. Changes in key personnel
- e. Way in which the work is to be carried out and completed
- f. Funding period

Please note this list is not exhaustive and you must contact the appropriate officer detailed in the letter of offer should any doubt exist as to the need to report proposed changes. The Council shall be entitled to review and, if necessary, amend or withdraw this offer of funding in consequence to any such changes.

12. The organisation must:

- a) Comply with all applicable standards, laws, regulations, policies and statements;
- b) Not do anything that would cause the Council to breach its obligations under any legislation; and
- c) Hold all rights, licences and consents required to conduct the work of the organisation

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTATION

13. The organisation shall forward an end of project report, in a form satisfactory to the Council, outlining how the project has performed. This should include details of actual expenditure compared to forecast, and all other relevant information. To this end the organisation must ensure that adequate financial and operational records and registers are maintained and stored for at least 7 years from the date of expiry of the Funding Period or termination of this Agreement.

MONITORING AND INSPECTION

- 14. Any record, financial or otherwise, premises and/or equipment used for the project shall be open to inspection at any time by the Council or its duly authorised officers. In addition, the organisation shall comply promptly with any requests by the Council for information concerning the progress, administration, monitoring and evaluation of the project.
- 15. The Recipient must provide an update report and or end of year progress report, on the template supplied, showing activity against measurable outputs identified in their own activity plan as detailed in letter of offer.

INSOLVENCY / LIQUIDATION

16. The organisation undertakes to immediately notify the Council in the event that the organisation:

- Files a petition in bankruptcy;
- Is adjudicated bankrupt;
- Has a petition of bankruptcy filed against it which is not discharged within thirty (30) days;
- Becomes insolvent;
- Makes a resolution to go into liquidation, or
- Enters into any scheme or arrangement with their creditors.
- Goes into Administration

The Council shall have the right to terminate the Agreement at any time in such occurrences.

INDEMNITY / INSURANCE

17. The organisation shall maintain adequate insurance cover necessary to complete the project. Such insurance documents should be furnished to the Council prior to the commencement of the agreement and subsequently upon renewal. The Council, or its duly authorised officers, shall be permitted to review insurance policies and documents when requested.

18. In accepting the offer of grant, the organisation hereby indemnifies the Council in respect of any other claims howsoever arising and undertakes to hold the Council safe from any legal action in respect of such.

ASSIGNMENT / SUB ASSIGNMENT OF TERM AGREEMENT

19. This Agreement shall be considered valid and will remain in effect until the conclusion of the current term by any successor organisation to the organisation. The Council reserves the right to review the Agreement in the event of a successor organisation and exercise its options of termination.

This agreement may not be assigned or otherwise pledged by the organisation without the express written consent of the Council.

SUB CONTRACTING

20. The organisation may not sub-contract any of the delivery of the project to a sub-contractor without written approval from the Council.

PUBLICITY

21. The organisation shall publicise the financial contribution made by the Council by the inclusion of a printed acknowledgement (including the logo of the Council) in brochures, leaflets and all other publicity material and also on any related website/social media platform.

22. The Council shall be entitled to publish details of the financial contribution referred to in this Offer at such times and in such a manner as it may decide.

WITHHOLDING OF PAYMENT

23. Without prejudice to any other rights of the Council under this offer, the Council reserves the right to withhold any or all payments and/or to require the organisation to repay part or all of the grant if at any time:

- a) there is a substantial or material change in the nature, scale or timing of the project for which prior approval from the Council was not sought, or if the grant is used for purposes other than those specified in the application
- b) any records (financial or otherwise) inspected by, or supplied to, the Council are found to be inaccurate or incomplete
- c) the Council is not satisfied with the progression of the project
- d) the organisation is in breach of any of its obligations as outlined in this offer
- e) in the opinion of the Council the project has been abandoned, or ceased, or is not being pursued in a satisfactory manner.

TERMINATION

24. This Agreement will terminate without notice on the date mentioned in Paragraph 1 of the Terms and Conditions. This Agreement may also be terminated by the Council upon written notice at any time during its term. The organisation shall have no claim for damage, loss of profit, allowance or otherwise, either directly or indirectly, arising out of any action taken by the Council pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph.

DEFAULT

25. An event of default occurs if:

- a) The organisation is in breach of any of its obligations under the Funding Offer and
 - Fails to notify the Council accordingly, or
 - Such breach is incapable of remedy, or
 - Such breach is capable of remedy but remains unremedied for a period of 30 days after written request by the Council to remedy the breach.
- b) The organisation is for any reason no longer able to implement the project
- c) The organisation fails to pay to the Council any sum due under the terms and conditions of the financial assistance, or otherwise
- d) An order is made, or an effective resolution is passed, for the winding-up of the organisation or a receiver is appointed over all or any of the property of the organisation
- e) The organisation is unable to pay its debts within the meaning of Article 103 of the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 or statutory modification or re-enactment thereof

In such cases the Council may require the organisation to repay the aggregate of all payments of financial assistance made at any time prior to the event, less any other aggregate sum which may already have been repaid by the organisation under any other provision of this letter, or such lesser amount as the Council may determine.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

13

POLICY COVER SHEET

Policy Title	Grants Policy
Policy/File Reference	FIN 58 Ref: 339
Version	2.0
Policy Summary	The purpose of this document is to provide a framework within which Council can manage, administer and monitor all council grants following a robust, fair and consistent process.
Responsible Officer(s)	Head of Finance
Date of Equality Screening	28 August 2024
Date of consultation with Consultative Panel	N/A
Date of consultation with Unions	N/A
Date of Council approval	25 September 2024
Implementation date	3 October 2024
Appendices attached	
Next review date	October 2026

Revision History:

Version	Changes made by	Date	Reason for change
1.0	Community Development	March 2016	Policy established
2.0	Council Officers Grants Working Group	August 2024	New policy developed

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Chapter 1 Policy Statement.....	3
Chapter 2 High Level Process	6
Chapter 3 - Designing a Grants Scheme.....	8
Chapter 4 Managing a Grants Scheme	15
Chapter 5 Monitoring and Evaluation	16

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

15

Chapter 1 Policy Statement

1.0 Introduction

The Council recognises the value of activity that contributes to the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan and is committed to supporting organisations and individuals in their contribution to making a positive difference working towards a sustainable Borough – socially, environmentally and economically.

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 makes provision for the Council to provide grant contributions for the development of trade, tourism, leisure and cultural activities.

In 2015/16 the Department for Social Development introduced a Code of Practice aimed at reducing bureaucracy in grant funding to the voluntary and community sector.

This policy and associated procedures set out the framework within which the Council should manage, administer and monitor its grant programmes. It has been written in line with good practice on internal control and takes account of local government and internal audit recommendations.

1.1 Policy Scope

All revenue and capital grant funding administered by Council falls within the scope of this policy and associated procedures.

The policy will be applied by the Council and its Committees, Partnerships, Forums, Advisory Panels and Officers who have delegated authority to award grants on behalf of the Council and all Council directorates which have responsibility for managing the Council's grant schemes.

Chapter 1 covers the Grants Policy for the administration of Grants and is subject to Council approval, the remaining chapters are procedures and are subject to periodic management review.

This policy applies to all external organisations and individuals who apply to the Council for grant aid.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.2 Policy Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to ensure:

1. Council continues to invest in organisations and/or individuals which contribute to the Council's corporate priorities.
2. Grant processes are robust, fair and consistent.
3. There is an efficient and effective framework for grant management that allows budget holders to make decisions in line with the scheme of delegation and within appropriate timescales.
4. Improved customer experience to include the development of a digital grants management system.

1.3 Policy Statement

Council will provide support to Borough life by providing grant funding opportunities that will contribute to the achievement of the Big Plan and Corporate Plan priorities and outcomes.

These grant schemes will be developed within the governance framework that is robust and fair, delivered in a consistent and timely fashion. Each scheme will be approved by Council in advance of launching detailing, among other things:

- Objectives of scheme
- Frequency of calls
- Conditions of grant
- Timescales
- Evaluation criteria for applications including but not limited to marking frame and details of evaluation panel
- Monitoring process for supported projects and programmes
- Sample letter of offer
- Arrangements if grant call oversubscribed.

Council grants are awarded following a competitive application process, whereby applications are assessed against set criteria.

The process for grants application, delivery and administration should follow a standard process as set out in Chapters 3 and 4, which can be enhanced to meet the conditions which Council may be required to meet from other external funders.

Officers will apply the approved grants process to deliver, manage, administer the grants programme, issue letters of offer and award decisions using the following delegation thresholds (which are in line with those set out in the Purchasing and Payments Policy):

Grant amount up to	Minimum Grade
£3,000	PO1
£10,000	PO4
£30,000	PO11
Unlimited	DO4

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The outcome of the grants scheme may be presented to Council for noting.
Council will be working towards standardising Letter of Offer and reporting templates.

1.4 Definitions

The following definitions are used in this policy:

Term	Acronym	Definition
Letter of Offer	LoO	Letter of offer for recipients of grants detailing terms and conditions of offer.
Grant		A grant is defined as a sum of money awarded by the Council, for a particular project, event, activity, or the purchase of equipment as a result of a competitive application process.

1.5 Associated Policies

The following policies are associated with this policy:

Ref	Policy
325	Purchasing and Payments
123	Procurement
311	Budgeting
284	Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption
92	Data Protection
301	Lands
66	Safeguarding
116	Conflict of Interest
TBC	Policy for the loan of equipment to grant/non grant aided groups

1.6 Relevant legislation

- Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972
- Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
- Recreation and Youth Services Order (Northern Ireland) 1986
- Account and Audit Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015
- Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

18

Chapter 2 High Level Process

2.0 Annual Grants Timetable

To assist groups/individuals to forward plan and prepare adequately to make an application, the Council will publish on the Council website in advance of each financial year a timetable detailing when each grant scheme will be opening and closing throughout the year.

This timetable may be subject to amendment, for example, where grants are co-funded or dependent on the availability of external funding.

2.1 Grants Scheme Life Cycle

A summary of the grants scheme life cycle is detailed below:



2.2 Grants Referencing

Grants will operate the following standardised referencing system:
Financial Year – Scheme number – applicant number – claim number

For example;

Grant Reference number 2025-0027

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Applicant Reference number 2025-0027-002
Claim Reference number 2025-0027-002-01

The Finance Service will publish a register of grant schemes on ANDi which will allow managers to complete details of each scheme, which will enable unique referencing. These reference numbers should be used when constructing filing systems and documents

Claim numbers will then be used as the unique 'invoice' number when processing payments.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

20

Chapter 3 - Designing a Grants Scheme

3.0 Introduction

The grants framework sets out the procedures for which Council should design, manage, administer and monitor its grant schemes.

It has been written in line with good practice on internal control and takes account of local government and internal audit recommendations.

The Council is committed to distributing available funding fairly, efficiently and effectively. This Framework outlines the Council's approach to providing grant funding to external bodies to assist in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan, strategic priorities and outcomes.

The grants framework should be applied to all external organisations and individuals who apply to the Council for grant aid, detailed in the scope of this policy.

3.1 Objectives of scheme

When planning your grant scheme clear guidance for applicants should be provided. The objectives of the scheme should be clearly detailed and defined. Information requested for assessment should be based on the objectives of the scheme.

3.2 Grant criteria

Grant criteria will vary depending on the grant scheme and purpose of the fund. Grant criteria will be clearly detailed in grant guidance documentation.

Details of who is eligible to receive Council grants will be specified in each specific grant scheme criteria.

Grant Schemes should clearly state the terms and conditions specific to the scheme taking into consideration the conditions of this policy. It should be clearly demonstrated through the guidance notes issued as part of a grants application pack, what will and will not be accepted to support applications.

3.3 What the Council will not fund

Specific details of exclusions will be detailed in each specific grant scheme criteria. However, the following exclusions will apply as a minimum:

- Projects, events, activities undertaken or equipment purchased outside the specified award period
- Projects, events, and activities where the primary benefit is outside the Borough
- Events, projects or activities which conflict with any Council run project, event or activity
- Organisations not legally established in the UK
- Projects, events, activities not compliant with the Council's aims and objectives

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

21

3.4 Supporting documentation

The Council's grant application forms are designed to collect only the information considered essential to support a particular application. All supporting documentation must be submitted by the grant deadline date or will be deemed ineligible.

This information may include:

- Constitution or statutory registration (e.g. Charity number, company number) as appropriate;
- A list of office bearers/Board of Governors;
- Audited accounts, financial statements or bank statements as appropriate.
- Safeguarding policy (if applicable);
- Organisation chart;
- Rental Agreement/Lease or evidence of premises ownership;
- Public liability insurance;
- Risk Assessments;
- Business Plan;
- Event Management Plan; and
- Application for the use of Council Land.

The above list is not exhaustive. Details of the supporting information required by each grant scheme will be detailed in each application pack and should be closely referred to.

3.5 Compliance

In advance of Grants Schemes being presented to Parent Committees for approval, the Grant Scheme must be sent to the Policy Screening group for screening. Grant schemes will only need to be re-screened should there be any significant changes made to schemes before re-running a grant scheme.

When designing a grant scheme, it is important that the following compliance areas are considered.

3.5.1 Use of Council Land

Where applicants are applying for a grant to hold an event on Council land, a separate application for the use of Council Land must be submitted through the Council's Compliance - Lands Section. The Lands section must be contacted by the applicant in advance of the grant application being made.

Where applicable, grant guidance documentation should include information on how to make a request to use Council land. The Council's Land and Property policy Section 10 must be adhered to [Land-and-Property-Policy--November-2023----final--002- \(33\).pdf](#)

3.5.2 Data Protection

In administering its grants, the Council will ensure that it complies with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. The Council will ensure that personal information is collected fairly and lawfully, is accurate, adequate, up to date and not held

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

22

for longer than is necessary. The personal information on the grant application will only be used for the purposes for which it is collected i.e. administering the grant, and for any other purpose for which the applicant has consented e.g. to receive information on other Council grants.

3.5.3 Safeguarding

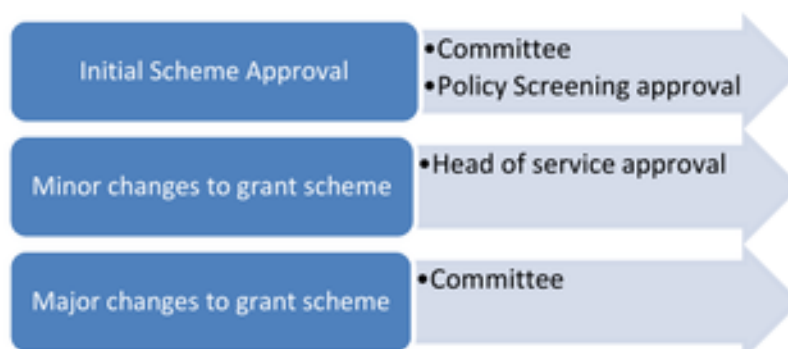
Individuals and organisations working with children, young people and/or adults at risk must have an extant policy for the protection and safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk that ensures good practice guidelines are followed. Where a current policy is not available a requirement exists to adhere to the Ards and North Down Borough Council's Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk, a copy of which will be provided.

3.5.4 Section 75 Monitoring

In order to comply with Section 75 requirements, the Council introduced and have in place section 75 monitoring for all applicants, from April 2017.

3.6 Approval of Scheme

Once a scheme has been developed, approval will be required to be sought as detailed below:



3.7 Open Scheme

3.7.1 Frequency of calls

The frequency of the calls for each particular scheme should be clearly stated when publicising the scheme and clearly state that all are subject to budget availability.

For example, a scheme may be:

- One off
- Annual
- Semi-annual – twice during the financial year
- Multi-annual – spanning over more than one financial year.

3.7.2 Period of grant awards

The award period will depend on the availability of funding, including matched funding from

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

23

Government and therefore some funding award periods will span multiple financial years.

Details of the award period for each grant scheme will be detailed in each application pack.

3.7.3 Publicising Grant Opportunities

All Council grants will be publicly advertised in the local press when available, on the Council's website and through social media. Council will host a Grants Roadshow at the beginning of each financial year to publicise grants offered by Council throughout the financial year.

Each service will also promote their grants via their service led directory.

3.7.4 Duration of grant calls and closing dates

All grants will normally remain open for application, for a minimum of three weeks. Under exceptional circumstances this timeframe may be reduced.

All grant calls will have a specific closing date and time, which must be adhered to by all applicants. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be scored by the assessment panel.

Exceptions will only include rolling grants, whereby the award period will remain open until the programme budget is fully exhausted.

3.7.5 Support for applicants

Council officers will provide support for applicants via a Grants roadshow at the beginning of each financial year where all services that offer grants across Council will be available. In addition, and where required, additional grant workshops will be delivered and/or supporting online videos produced to advise potential applicants on the purpose of the grant and the application process.

Each grant scheme will have a central point of contact for enquiries.

3.7.6 Availability of grant documentation

Grant documentation (grant application and guidance) will be made available on the Council's website or can be requested by contacting the relevant Service. Grants documentation in alternative formats and languages will be made available upon request.

3.7.7 Timescales

A Timeline of grant should be included in the Guidance Notes:

Scheme advertised	< insert date >
Scheme open	< insert date >
Date of Assessment	< insert date >
Award and regret letters	< insert date >

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

24

issued	
Letter of acceptance received	< insert date >
Completion of grant period	< insert date >
Claim to be submitted	< insert date >
Monitoring Form to be Submitted	< insert date >
Close of Scheme	< insert date >

3.8 Evaluate Application

3.8.1 Application assessment process

All grant applications (as a minimum):

- received will be acknowledged in writing (which includes email)
- fully completed and signed applications received by the closing date and time will be assessed against the criteria detailed in the application pack by an assessment panel;
- assessment panels will apply a minimum pass mark of 50%; marking criteria will be detailed in the grant criteria and supporting guidance notes; details of a situation where the amount of grant funding exceeds the available grant budget will be outlined in the grant criteria and supporting guidance notes; and
- all applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of the assessment process.

3.8.2 Conflicts of Interest

Any Council officer, Elected Member or Independent Member who has a Conflict of Interest in any grant application under assessment will not be permitted to take part on the grant assessment panel.

This includes those who have a direct or indirect interest in the application.

All assessment panel members will be required to complete a Declaration of Interest Form (Appendix 1, Declaration of Interest Form) in advance of the assessment process to demonstrate they have no conflicts of interest in any grant application under consideration.

3.8.3 Arrangements if grant call oversubscribed

Council grants are awarded following a competitive application process, whereby applications are assessed against set criteria.

Grant criteria will vary depending on the grant scheme and purpose of the fund. Grant criteria will be clearly detailed in grant guidance documentation including what will happen in the event of the fund being oversubscribed. This may include a percentage reduction to all successful applicants, or allocation of funds to successful applicants until the maximum available funding is reached, ie. based on ranked scores.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

25

3.9 Post Evaluation

3.9.1 Letter of offer

The Council will issue a Letter of Offer (LoO) to all successful applicants, which sets out the details of the project and conditions of the award.

The LoO will specify as a minimum:

- The purpose of the grant
- The grant period
- The payments and claims process
- The reporting period
- The conditions of the offer, to ensure that all grants awarded have been properly spent and accounted for
- Publicity requirements
- A requirement to advise the Council immediately, should any issue arise during the period of the award that prevents the achievement of the agreed objectives and targets.
- Project specific terms and conditions Treatment of surpluses
- Standard terms and conditions

3.9.2 Letter of offer Acceptance

Applicants are required to sign and accept the Councils' Letter of Offer within four weeks of the date of the LoO. Unless otherwise specified, the period of the award will commence from the date that the signed and accepted Letter of Offer is received by the Council.

Where grants are awarded for a two or three year period a LoO will be issued with a fixed sum offered for the first financial year and provisional sums for subsequent year(s).

3.10 Appeals process

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing (in hard copy or by email) of the outcome of their application and the reasons clearly stated.

Appeals can only be made where an applicant can evidence that the process of assessment was not followed in accordance with the criteria detailed in the application pack.

The aim of the appeals process is to ensure a fair and transparent process for the assessment of grant applications. Grants will be assessed based on the criteria set out in the guidance notes as part of the Grants Application Pack.

The Council grants schemes are application led and only those which demonstrate that they meet the required criteria may be awarded funding. The Council will ensure all grants are awarded in line with Ards and North Down Grants Policy objectives to ensure:

1. Council continues to invest in organisations and/or individuals to deliver projects within the borough which contribute to the council's corporate priorities.
2. Grant processes are robust, fair and consistent.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

26

3. There is an efficient and effective framework for grant management that allows budget holders to make decisions in line with the scheme of delegation and within appropriate timescales.
4. Improved customer experience to include the development of a digital grants management system.

If an appeal has been made and the applicant can evidence that the process of assessment was not followed in accordance with the criteria detailed in the application pack the appeal will be escalated to the formal appeal stage.

Formal Appeal

The formal appeal must clearly state the grounds for an appeal. The Head of Service for the awarding grant will convene an independent assessment panel. No new information, other than the information contained within the original application will be considered by the independent panel. The appeals panel will assess an application according to the criteria stated in the guidance notes and score the application accordingly.

The decision of the independent appeals panel is final and binding.

3.11 Publicity post award

Grant recipients are required to:

- Acknowledge the Council's grant support in all press releases and publicity material including social media
- Include the following statement on all printed material "Supported by Ards and North Down Borough Council"

Where grant recipients do not comply with the Council's publicity requirements, 10% of the total grant awarded may be withheld.

3.12 Grant retention

10% of the award may be withheld until the applicant has submitted all financial claims and monitoring information.

3.13 Claw back

The Council reserves the right to claw back any advance payments made to the applicant:

- that it subsequently deems to be ineligible expenditure; or
- in excess of need.

If this situation were to arise the applicant will be advised of the nature of the ineligible expenditure and the amount to be clawed back. The applicant will be invoiced for the amount of grant to be reimbursed.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

27

ADS

Chapter 4 Managing a Grants Scheme

4.0 Claims

Claims will be required for the full value of the grant amount awarded by the Council, including any advance payment.

All claims must be summarised on grant claim form (Appendix 2, Grant Claim Form) and must be supported by receipts, invoices and bank statements. Scanned documents, photographs or printed on-line bank statements will be accepted however proof of original claim documentation may be requested as part of the claim process.

Once verified all payments will be made by bank transfer. Applicants will be notified separately of any expenditure which has been disallowed.

4.1 Issuing of grant advances

Depending on the amount of grant awarded advance payments can be issued by the Council where a specific written request is submitted demonstrating the need for the payment. The need for an advance payment may require a projected cash flow for the life of the project, along with an up-to-date bank statement.

For awards:

- up to £500 the full amount can be paid in advance;
- up to £3000, up to 50% can be paid in advance; and
- up to £10,000 up to 30% can be paid in advance; over £10,000 an agreed payment schedule should be put in place and detailed in Letter of Offer.

Subsequent payments must only be made following satisfactory verification of interim claims.

How surpluses are dealt with should be outlined in your grant scheme but any funds carried forward should not exceed the lesser of £3000 or 10% of the annual award.

For multi-annual awards there can be no carry over at the end of the award period.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

28

ADS

Chapter 5 Monitoring and Evaluation

5.0 Monitoring of grants

The Council is required to monitor the progress of all projects, events and activities supported through grant aid.

Reporting will be proportionate to the size of the grant awarded and should follow the objectives of the award and any agreed performance KPI's.

The Project Evaluation Report template will specify the minimum reporting requirements; however some Council Services may introduce additional monitoring fields which will be detailed in the LoO.

Management should monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of each grant scheme and report this to Council on an appropriate frequency. These reports will consider the following items as a minimum;

- brief details of the scheme and its timeline
- number and value of applications
- level of support required by applications
- number and value of applications awarded support
- number and value of applications refused support
- issues encountered during scheme administration
- summary of benefits (drawn from project monitoring)
- evaluation of scheme against objectives
- suggested amendments for future schemes.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Declaration of Interest
- Appendix 2: Grant Claim form
- Appendix 3: Standard Terms and Conditions (For individual and for organisations)

Standardised Documentation (in progress)

Documents to be standardised (in progress)

- Application Form
- Letter of Offer
- Project Evaluation Report

Unclassified

29

ITEM**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance
Date of Report	22 August 2024
File Reference	26051 - Performance Management
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report 2023/24
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report 2023/24

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement in the delivery of council services in the context of strategic objectives and issues that are important to those who receive the services.

Section 92 of the Act places a requirement on councils to assess and report on their performance against the previous financial years; and to compare its performance, so far as is practicable, with the performance of other councils in the exercise of the same or similar functions. The comparison and assessment report covering 2023/24 should be published by 30th September immediately following the financial year to which it relates.

The purpose of the report is to review our performance in the delivery of our agreed Improvement Objectives for the 2023/24 financial year and to assess our performance in discharging our duties under Section 84 of the Act.

Not Applicable

30

The intention of the report is:

- to provide a transparent and balanced account of the council's position in terms of the priorities agreed in the Corporate Plan Towards 2024 which align to the 5 outcomes set out in The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032;
- to give an assessment of the effectiveness of our continuous improvement arrangements; and
- to provide an assessment of wider performance aspects including against statutory indicators and self-imposed indicators.

The past few years have seen the Council and the Borough face unprecedented challenges; however, Council is confident that it is demonstrating good overall performance and will continue to further develop, monitor and manage its activities to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

The attached draft Self-Assessment Report 2023/24 reflects on performance against the Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24, Statutory Indicators for Waste, Economic Development and Planning and provides some high-level statistics of how the council has performed in key areas identified by its residents. The report also updates progress against proposals made by the NIAO Audit and Assessment Report 2023/24.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approve the attached Self-Assessment Report 2023/2024.



Looking Back Self-Assessment Report **2023/2024**

CONTENTS

1. Introduction and context2

2. Discharging the general duty to secure continuous improvement in 2023/244

3. The cost of our services9

4. How we measure and analyse our performance10

5. How did we do? Our Performance Results for 2023/2411

6. Northern Ireland Audit Office proposals for improvement –
arising from S.95 Audit and Assessment Report 2023/24.....45

7. Your Opinion Matters46

8. Alternative formats46

1. Introduction and context

Introduction

Ards and North Down Borough Council is committed to being a high performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a positive difference for our Borough. At the heart of everything is our drive to continuously improve and deliver excellent quality services, whilst ensuring value for money.

This Self-Assessment Report provides a vehicle for the Council to determine its capacity and ability to deliver 'continuous improvement' by identifying areas where it is performing well and areas that will require particular attention in future years. By assessing where progress has been slower than expected or has not resulted in the levels of desired performance, it can review and adjust the way it uses its resources to ensure maximum benefit for the people living in, working in and visiting Ards and North Down.

This report sets out how the Council performed against its Corporate and Statutory Indicators in the 2023/24 year.

The Council would like to recognise the commitment and professionalism of all its employees during this period.

Context

The Council's Corporate Plan – Towards 2024 was aligned to the outcomes of the Big Plan (Community Plan) for Ards and North Down 2017-2032. It steered our strategic direction up until 2024, shaping our services and setting the performance indicators against which we measured our success.

The Corporate Plan - Towards 2024 set out our Vision for the Borough as "Ards and North Down is a vibrant, connected, healthy, safe and prosperous place to be."

To support achievement of the ambitions of the Corporate Plan, Council set six PEOPLE priorities, that guided our annual business planning process, ensuring that everything we did was aimed at contributing to our desired outcomes as set out in the Big Plan and ultimately delivering our vision for the Borough.

Our PEOPLE priorities were:

- Prosperity: Growing our local economy
- Environment: Growing a cleaner, greener local and global environment
- Opportunity: Growing the lifelong potential of our community
- Pride: Growing empowerment, respect and safety in our community
- Life: Growing the health and wellbeing of our residents
- Excellence: Growing a high-performing Council

The Corporate Plan was informed through a range of sources including public consultation with our residents that told us the top three priorities we should focus on were Life, Prosperity and Environment. During the early stages of the pandemic the Council carried out a Big Conversation Panel Survey around recovery from COVID-19. Residents told us that our focus should be on health and wellbeing, economic recovery and the environment,

further affirming the prioritisation in the Corporate Plan. In subsequent consultations and during consultation on our Performance Improvement Plan residents re-affirmed the top priorities as Prosperity (growing the economy and creating jobs) and Life (supporting businesses and residents to protect and improve their health) in 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

This year, 2024, has seen the Council launch its new and third Corporate Plan 2024-2028, which also aligns with the long-term aspirations of the Borough's Community Plan 2017-2032. The Corporate Plan serves as the Council's strategic framework for 2024-28, setting out our vision to be **A Sustainable Borough**.

The plan is driven by three corporate priorities:

1. **Economic** - Increasing economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses.
2. **Environmental** - Reducing carbon emissions as we transition to net zero.
3. **Social** – Improving wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequalities.

The Plan outlines seven outcomes that support the three priorities. Each outcome is supported by strategic actions detailing the commitments the Council is making for the next four years.

Measures of success, to monitor progress and demonstrate if we have achieved what we set out to, have also been identified within our new Corporate Plan.

The Council is committed to improving our services and resident feedback is critical to this. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year and have a continuous 'Your Opinion Matters' campaign. Suggestions for improvement initiatives can be sent to us by emailing yom@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk or contacting us at:

Transformation Team
Ards and North Down Borough Council
City Hall
The Castle
BANGOR
BT20 4BT

Email: pim@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 013 3333

2. Discharging the general duty to secure continuous improvement in 2023/24

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 places a duty upon Councils to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement and to account for it. At the beginning of each financial year, the Council is required to publish a Performance Improvement Plan, which sets out how it will discharge its duties in the financial year ahead, and by 30 September to publish a Self-Assessment Report to account for its improvement activity and review performance against the Improvement Objectives set in the preceding year.

We seek to discharge our duty to improve through Council's Performance Governance Framework, **PERFORM**, which ensures that the Council's strategic objectives are cascaded throughout the organisation.

At the highest level, **The Big Plan (Community Plan)**, published in April 2017, sets out strategic priorities for the Borough and includes details of the joint activity that will be undertaken by the strategic partners (including Council) to support the delivery of those priorities. The **Corporate Plan** outlines the Council's vision, priorities and objectives and describes its ambition for how local services will be delivered more efficiently and effectively for everyone. The Corporate Plan is underpinned by a number of secondary strategic plans and thematic strategies and supported by detailed operational service plans and individual development plans.

What is Improvement?

Improvement means more than just gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the Council. It is about activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for the residents and businesses in Ards and North Down.

To demonstrate our commitment to improving the areas that matter most to our residents, our annual improvement plan and objectives are aligned to the outcomes set out in [The Big Plan](#) 2017-2032 (the Council's Community Plan) and supports the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Council is committed to ensuring that our improvement objectives are relevant, that the best arrangement for delivering them is in place and that the Council can understand and demonstrate the impact on the outcomes for its citizens. In its 2023/24 Performance Improvement Plan the Council set 5 Improvement Objectives:

PEOPLE priority	Improvement Objective
PROSPERITY	1. We will grow the economy and create jobs.
ENVIRONMENT	2. We will improve the cleanliness of the streets in our borough. 3. We will improve recycling rates.
LIFE	4. We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing.
EXCELLENCE	5. We will use technology to drive change.

and identified a number of local improvement indicators along with the seven statutory performance indicators for Waste, Planning and Economic Development.

Arrangements to secure continuous improvement

Section 90 of the Act requires a Council, during each financial year, to collect information which will allow it to assess its performance in achieving its improvement objectives and to measure its performance against performance indicators or standards set by the Department or any other indicators or standards which the Council chooses to use.

The Council has governance arrangements in place to assure accountability for improvement and to ensure the delivery of its plans takes place in an open, effective, honest and accountable manner.

These arrangements include:

- Alignment of the service planning and budget process to ensure all costs are included in the estimates
- An electronic performance management system, Ideagen, which can:
 - analyse data on a range of frequencies for trends and comparison
 - track the progress of indicators and actions
 - provide and communicate regular and robust performance information to Managers, Elected Members and the public
- Half yearly reporting on Service Plans to relevant standing committees; in December and June
- Half yearly reporting on progress against the Performance Improvement Plan to Audit Committee; in December and June¹ (only reported in June for 2023/24 performance)
- Regular reporting on Capital Projects to Corporate Projects Portfolio Board (CPPB)
- Regular reporting on Transformation Projects to the Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme (STEP) Board
- Regular reporting on Estates Projects to the Estates Development Programme Board (EDPB)
- Reporting to Strategic Policy and Finance Group (SPFG) as and when required
- Appropriate risk management in relation to main programmes of work

These arrangements follow a Strategic Planning Timetable (see Figure 1 below) and are underpinned by the Council's Performance Governance Framework, **PERFORM**:

¹ From 2025/26 the Performance Improvement Plan will be reported to the Corporate Services Committee instead of Audit Committee

Plan

Stating what we will do and why - the Performance Planning and Management process will be used at the following levels:



Community Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be developed every 10-15 years, setting out shared objectives for the local area and its people, to be fulfilled by a range of organisations working in partnership. A review of the plan will be carried out every four years in advance of its fourth-year anniversary.

Corporate Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be developed every 4 years to set out objectives for the Council.

Performance Improvement Plans which set out the Council's plan for a single year.

Service Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be developed every year by each Council service.

Individual (and/or collective Team level) Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be delivered every year.

This approach is designed to facilitate alignment between Community, Corporate, Service and Individual plans, activities and the needs of our stakeholders. It will also focus on assessment of key risks, alignment of the Council's resources, processes and systems to consistently achieve strategic objectives.

Engage

Working together to achieve it - to inspire and motivate staff and stakeholders to be engaged with what the organisation seeks to deliver. It is likely to include focus on developing leadership, culture and values and will typically involve effective inductions, team building, cross-council team working and staff forums.

Resource

Putting our people and budgets where they are needed - to improve organisation and structural design, budget setting and management. It will involve recruitment, learning and development and system investment. It should also ensure a coordinated approach to the development of resources including staff.

Focus

Doing the right thing right – to ensure system and process alignment with organisational objectives. It is likely to involve carrying out service reviews, ongoing coaching, identifying process improvements, reviewing potential suitable systems and ensuring optimum use of systems, technology and equipment.

Operate

Getting on with the job - to ensure continuous improvement. It is designed to promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice. This will typically include ongoing benchmarking exercises to ensure we continually improve our practices and any other identified activities that would encourage continuous improvement.

Relate

Communicating with our stakeholders - to have successful communications. The aim is to encourage engagement and transparency; this stage will include decisions on communication and delivery, including internal/external communication methods, carrying out stakeholder surveys and receiving feedback including complaints. Stakeholder analysis and Partnership working are also likely to be included.

Manage

Reviewing how we are doing and managing improvements - to monitor and reward good performance and address under performance. This will involve reviewing scorecards, feedback etc. for each of the parties involved and determining actual measurement achieved against original objectives/targets.

Timeline	Activity
October – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Planning process Identification of areas for improvement Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)/Head of Service Team (HoST) consultation on Service Plans and key areas for improvement Residents Survey (every 2 years) Budget Planning Process Strike the Rate Employee Appraisals begin Service Plans approved by Standing Committees Report on Performance to December Standing Committees (Quarter 1 and 2) Report on Performance to December Audit Committee (Quarter 1 and 2) – <i>Reported in June for 2023/24</i>
April – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with stakeholders Consultation with employees Consultation with Elected Members Employee Appraisals complete
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Improvement Plan to CLT, Corporate Services Committee and ratification by Council Publish on Council website by 30 June Begin Self-Assessment review of prior year's performance Submit Benchmarking statistics Report on Performance to June Standing Committees (Quarter 3 and 4) Report on Performance to June Audit Committee (Quarter 3 and 4)
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) Fieldwork Draft Self-Assessment Report to CLT and HoST
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-Assessment Report to Corporate Services Committee and ratification by Council Publish Self-Assessment Report by 30 September Budget Setting and Service Plan preparation

Figure 1 - Strategic Planning Timetable 2023/24

(From 2025/26 the Performance Improvement Plan will be reported to the Corporate Services Committee instead of Audit Committee)

We continually assess how we are performing against targets to ensure we are making a difference to our stakeholders. This process, along with delivery planning, is aligned to our corporate priorities, moves through monitoring and reporting performance and considers resident and service user feedback to ensure we identify improvement activity that will deliver positive outcomes.

Additionally, we continuously review the effectiveness of our performance arrangements in support of our General Duty to improve ensuring there are clear linkages between outcomes, priorities, and actions.

Further information on our performance can be found at [Performance Improvement - Ards and North Down Borough Council](#).

3. The cost of our services

A summary of our financial performance for 2023/24 is outlined below.

The Council continues to manage inflationary pressures when delivering services although it benefitted from the fall in energy prices during the year, helping offset another year of salary pressures.

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn
Environmental Health	2,707,000	2,710,100	3,310,512	2,535,062
Community and Culture	3,659,800	3,382,300	3,105,256	3,045,945
Leisure and Amenities (from 2022-23 split into 2 services)	-	-	3,827,436	3,476,156
Leisure	5,825,700	6,129,000	4,655,405	4,647,116
Parks and Cemeteries	4,897,200	4,794,400	-	-
Waste and Cleansing Services	18,583,900	17,768,300	16,347,141	16,175,333
Assets and Property Services	9,390,400	9,359,800	7,210,907	5,770,199
Regulatory Services (formerly Building Control, Licensing etc)	2,666,600	2,701,500	2,389,906	2,298,547
Regeneration	1,152,100	1,219,400	1,243,938	1,176,923
Economic Development	2,079,800	2,107,300	1,499,106	1,330,568
Planning	2,560,400	2,432,600	2,285,275	2,168,954
Tourism	1,653,500	1,833,000	1,409,763	862,231
Finance and Internal Audit	1,221,400	1,147,600	1,187,570	1,266,826
Performance and Projects (from 2019/2020 splits into 2 Services)	-	-	1,783,780	1,629,628
Strategic Transformation and Performance	2,185,700	1,973,500	-	-
Strategic Capital Development	490,900	394,500	339,731	315,250
HR and OD	1,115,900	1,159,200	1,140,210	1,102,945
Administration and Customer Services	4,755,500	4,663,200	3,625,543	3,419,563
Chief Executive's Office	1,896,500	1,547,000	1,239,110	1,136,873
Capital Financing	7,899,100	8,164,600	8,000,223	8,138,739
Total	74,741,400	73,487,300	64,600,812	60,496,858

Our financial statements will be available on the Council's [website](#) from October 2024.

4. How we measure and analyse our performance

Throughout the year, we use key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor how we are delivering services. The KPIs shown in this report are only some of the indicators we use and for the purposes of the report have been aggregated to give an overall assessment of our performance. The indicators we monitor are comprised of:

- **Statutory Indicators**

- Waste Management - the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA) sets the Waste Management indicators and standards and publishes performance by council area on a quarterly basis through the NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics report - information may be accessed using the following link [Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](https://daera-ni.gov.uk/northern-ireland-local-authority-collected-municipal-waste-management-statistics)
- Planning - the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) sets the Planning indicators and standards, which are published by council area on a quarterly basis. Information may be accessed using the following link: [Planning activity statistics | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](https://infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/planning-activity-statistics)
- Economic Development - set by the Department for the Economy (DfE)

- **Self-Imposed Indicators:**

- Those set by services against the objectives and actions in their Service Plans
- A suite of suggested indicators from the Department for Communities (DfC) to allow performance comparison across the sector

5. How did we do? Our Performance Results for 2023/24

A SUMMARY

.....OF THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

As a council we employ nearly 900 people to help deliver leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, planning and many other services. In 2023/24 we worked hard to ensure that council services operated effectively and those who live in, work in and visit the Borough received high-quality services that provided value for money. This section illustrates some of our achievements over the past year.

In 2023/24:



Delivered **207 Business interventions**

to assist local businesses through business advice sessions and business research service

77 jobs created through the Go For It / Go Succeed Programmes

Achieved **83%** residence satisfaction 😊



Increased Household Recycling to **55%**

Performing above NI Average



90,000m²

of Council Maintained

Out of the **25 businesses** a total of **1093 employees**



benefited from various Health and Wellbeing Initiatives on offer through the Small Grant Scheme.

Carried out **9239** Building Control (BC) inspections



3365 BC applications received, and **2440** Building Notice and

Regularisation Applications received with **2898** Property Certificate Applications being received



Issued **107 littering fines** and **16 Fixed Penalty Notices** for dog fouling



Planted **18,269** trees in the Borough



395 home safety visits completed, **2,338** pieces of equipment given out and **171 onward referrals** made



Delivered **£5.9 capital investment**

across the Borough



Reached over **700 Children** through participation in **7** Council and **3** Community Partner Summer Schemes

Delivered **126** diversionary/patrols/sessions to **2958** participants

Reduction in Anti-Social behaviour of **28%** at Bangor Aurora and Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex

Performance against our Corporate Plan Towards 2024

Council monitors performance against its Corporate Plan through biannual reports on Service Plans to Standing Committees. The following tables set out the aggregated values of the projects that support each of the Corporate Indicators.

Taking into account the ongoing financial and resource challenges the Council faces, it is confident that it is demonstrating good overall performance and will continue to develop, monitor and manage its activities to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

PROSPERITY			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
£m investment delivered	935,467	1,248,667	1,954,754
Number of businesses supported	207	286	326
Number of jobs created from the "Start a Business" programme	77	133	189
Higher business occupancy rates	No data available		
£ increase in visitor economy	£52million tourism spend reported in Ards and North Down in 2023 (NISRA Local Government District figures). No data was available in 22/23 or 21/22.		

ENVIRONMENT			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Amount (tonnes) biodegradable waste sent to landfill	14,413	17,124	20,258
Tonnage of municipal solid waste sent to landfill	32,246	35,876	40,124
Amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings	83,895	85,976	91,424
Cleanliness Index Score	73	76	74
£'s Investment RCIF Projects	25,000	80,092	18,494
Environmental Accreditations 2023/24: 1 ISO 14001 Environmental Management Accreditation, 5 Green Flags, 4 Seaside Awards, 4 In Bloom / Best Kept Awards, 1 Business in the Community – Environmental Survey Award, 5 Loo of the Year Awards	20	16	13

OPPORTUNITY			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Number of Council work placement schemes	14	10	0
£'s invested through Sports Forum awards	£48,772	33,421	11,173
% increase in participation in Active Aging programmes (Change to measure in year – Now calculated on the basis of all members over the age of 50)	3,014	+20% (394)	+65% (329)
Number of skills programmes delivered 2023/24: 75 creative classes and 3 Arts based programmes delivered	78	71	72

PRIDE			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Number of people volunteering on Council programmes	11	10	2
Number of interventions through the Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) team <i>2023/24: 126 diversionary/patrols/sessions to 2958 participants</i>	2958	985	439 ²
Number of Environmental Improvements			
Trees Planted	18,269	15,108	12,315
Projects supported	58	45	35
Hectares of Council maintained / ground rewilded	90,000	49,195	22,812

LIFE			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Number of active leisure members	32,862	28,953	25,511
Numbers attending wellbeing programmes funded by Council and delivered by Environmental Health and Economic Development	1093 (Across 25 Businesses)	491 Programme Change	364 (Across 45 businesses)
£'s invested in maintaining public spaces	4,086,408	3,745,893	3,124,863

EXCELLENCE			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Investors in People accreditation status	Assessed every 3 years	Silver ³	Assessed every 3 years
Number of complaints	434	220	12
% transactions made through self-service channels			
Regulatory Services applications: <i>(Building Notice and Regularisation Applications)</i> <i>(Online Property Certificates)</i>	72%/81% 72% 81%	73%	58%
Leisure Class bookings (Leisure Ards)	92%	72%	80%
Leisure parties (ABMWLC)	99%	98%	90%
Leisure Splash and Minor Pool Session (Leisure Ards)	99%	97%	90%
Leisure Memberships ⁴ (Leisure Ards)	67%	99%	0%
Number of Planning Portal applications	785	163 ⁵	N/A
Income sourced per head of population	£81.87	£76.50	£62.63
% payments to suppliers within 10 working days	73%	77%	84%
Cost per head of population	£373.31	£356	£341
% Resident Satisfaction	83%	Measured every 2 years	82%
% Staff reporting ANDBC is a great place to work	In line with Investors in People	71%	70%

² Data for 2021-22 only recorded between 1 December 2021 and 31 March 2022

³ Maintained Silver status from 2019/20

⁴ Leisure facilities closed due to Covid 19. This figure takes account of child add on, Pars and Gold members who cannot apply online. Council staff applications also must be done in centre. Drop in online applications in 2023/24 due to the implementation of a new Leisure Management system, so more applications may have been done manually in the early stages.

⁵ No figures are available for the period 17 October 2022 – 31 March 2023







The following Improvement Objectives are based on an analysis of performance measures reported as part of the normal Service Planning process which underpinned the Corporate Plan Towards 2024 and the Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032. Further information on our performance can be found at

<https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/performance-improvement>.

Big Plan Outcome All people in Ards and North Down	Corporate Plan Towards 2024 PEOPLE priority
benefit from a prosperous economy	Prosperity We will create the conditions for businesses to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable
feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment	Environment We will grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our towns, villages, countryside and coast
fulfil their lifelong potential	Opportunity We will work with partners to develop the potential of our residents, young and old
live in communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure	Pride We will partner with our community to develop positive relationships, community pride, respect and safety
enjoy good health and wellbeing	Life We will support the physical and emotional wellbeing of our residents through our services, facilities and partnerships
	Excellence We will work to be a high-performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference for our Borough

Performance Key

The key outlined below provides definitions for the three Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status levels that have been chosen to measure progress, and the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status levels which have been chosen to determine our overall assessment of progress.

RAG Status	Definition	RAG Overall assessment of progress	Definition
	Target/standard, actions and measures are of concern and are mostly falling short of plan		The majority of measures are on target
	Target/standard, actions and measures are ongoing, but some are falling short of plan		At least 25% of the measures in this outcome are slightly below target
	Target/standard, actions and measures are on track		At least 50% of the measures in this outcome are significantly below target

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST PIP 2023/24

The undernoted table gives an aggregated assessment of the Council's performance against the Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24. The tables following give details of the outcomes of each of the activities against each objective.

PEOPLE priority	Improvement Objective	Aggregated RAG
PROSPERITY	1. We will grow the economy and create jobs	
ENVIRONMENT	2. We will improve the cleanliness of the streets	
	3. We will improve the Borough's recycling rates	
LIFE	4. We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing	
EXCELLENCE	5. We will use technology to drive change	

Each of the areas are described in detail in the following section of this report.

PROSPERITY**Improvement Objective 1: We will grow the economy and create jobs**

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support more local businesses to start-up, develop and grow Attract more investment and visitors to the Borough Greater prosperity through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy More people working in better jobs Create a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest Create conditions for businesses to start, grow and thrive, provide job opportunities and be sustainable
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and deliver programmes to enhance physical and digital infrastructure Develop regeneration improvements in conjunction with Town Advisory Groups (TAGs) Commence Capital Schemes using funding from Covid Recovery Small Settlements Programme Work to optimise funding and collaborate with key partners to create and deliver innovative support initiatives Deliver Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) which replaces previous "Go For It" and other general business support programmes Meet the Schedule 3 Planning Indicators of the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

How well did we perform?					
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Agree a technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the Queen's Parade project with Bangor Marine by September 2023	Yes	No	●	-	-
Progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme to agree a Development Agreement with Ballyholme Yacht Club by March 2024	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Continue to work with the City/Town Advisory Groups to develop regeneration improvements for the urban areas and act as a conduit for other Council services (by March 2024) – No. of meetings held	10	10	✓	20	↓
Commence delivery of the Portaferry Public Realm by September 2023 using funding secured from the Small Settlements Grant	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Develop and deliver 6 projects using the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme	6	6	✓	6	=
Support 12 businesses through the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) programme	12	2	●	13	↓
Create 85 new jobs through "Go for it" Programme (Statutory Indicator – Target reset in-year)	117	77	●	101	↓
Create 123 new jobs through Enterprise Support Service (Statutory Indicator – Target reset in-year)	117	77	●	101	↓
Deliver 4 one-to-one mentoring sessions for Creative Industries Development	4	14	✓	-	-
Deliver and implement the Digital Strategy Action Plan	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Major Planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	30 weeks	84.7 weeks	●	104.5 weeks	↓
Local Planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	15 weeks	16 weeks	●	19.9 weeks	↓
70% of planning enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	70%	55.7%	●	62.9%	↓

ENVIRONMENT

Improvement Objective 2: We will improve the cleanliness of the streets

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the standard of cleanliness on our streets Support residents to live and work sustainably by protecting the environment AND residents feeling pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment Grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our city, towns, villages, countryside and coast
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target identified problem areas for enhanced enforcement and street cleansing activities Deliver "Live Here Love Here (LHLH)" grants through Recycling Investment Fund

How well did we perform?

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Increase LEAMS Cleanliness Index Score to 80	80	73	●	75	↓
Regain top 3 position for Fixed Penalty Enforcement in NI	Yes	No	●	No	=
Increase new maximum fine levels for fouling and litter in 2023	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Deliver £25k grant funding by March 2024	£25,000	£25,000	✓	-	-

ENVIRONMENT

Improvement Objective 3: We will improve the Borough's recycling rates

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Council's recycling rates • Support residents to live and work sustainably by protecting the environment • AND residents feeling pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment • Grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our city, towns, villages, countryside and coast
How we said we were going to do it	<p>Encourage householders to recycle more to reduce the tonnage of household waste being sent to landfill through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a full review of Council's Waste Management Services • Improve the Council's overall reuse, recycling and recovery rates • Add kerbside textiles collection to glass collection service • Deliver a schools'-based programme to encourage younger residents to understand the importance of our landscape, and the need to ensure that more sustainable lifestyle decisions become a part of daily life.

How well did we perform?					
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Reduce the tonnage of municipal solid waste sent to landfill to 35,000	35,000	32,246	✓	35,876	↓
Increase % of household waste recycled, reused and composted to 60% (Statutory Target:55%)	60%	55.48%	⚠	52%	↑
Reduce biodegradable waste that is diverted from landfill	19,017	14,413	✓	17,124	↓
Introduce kerbside collection of textiles by October 2023	Yes	No	✗	-	-
Launch the Environmental, Learning, Lifestyle, Action (ELLA) Project by June 2023	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Rollout ELLA Project to schools September 2023	20	69	✓	-	-

LIFE

Improvement Objective 4: We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater awareness of health in the business community Improved use of outdoor spaces Provide safe and accessible public spaces Enjoying long, healthy, active lives All residents to enjoy good health and wellbeing Enhanced physical and emotional wellbeing of residents through services, facilities and partnerships
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional resources for health and wellbeing and support utilising existing budgets Provide open spaces and parks that are well maintained, managed in an environmentally sustainable manner, accessible to all and to improve biodiversity in the Borough.

How well did we perform?

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Increase the number of business employees registering for Health and Wellbeing initiatives to 24	24	25	✓	27	↓
Host an allergen awareness seminar for all catering businesses within the Borough by March 2024	1	2	✓	-	-
Work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council and Borough with Officer and Elected Member champions (By March 2024)	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Become the first Council in NI to adopt a Whole Systems Approach to Obesity and to plan the delivery of a suitable project utilising this approach (by March 2024)	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Increase the % of people who complete the GP referral programme across all leisure sites to 30%	30%	22%	●	-	-
Increase the number of Fitness Classes per Week delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 250	250	250	✓	200	↑
Increase Active Aging Memberships across Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco sites to 400 (Change to measure in year – Now calculated on the basis of all members over the age of 50)	400	3014	✓	Change to measure	-
Increase numbers enrolled in Swim programmes delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 3500 (Change to measure in year – Now calculated on a cumulative basis)	3,500	6,595	✓	Change to measure	-
Support a more sustainable solution to food poverty by supporting 2 Social Supermarkets within the Borough (by March 2024)	2	2	✓	-	-
Increase the numbers engaging with Museum/Heritage Education Services by March 2024	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Deliver 70 creative class programme sessions	70	75	✓	71	↑
Plant 15,000 trees across the Borough	15,000	18,269	✓	15,108	↑
Retain the Borough's 5 Green Flag awards	5	5	✓	5	=
Increase the m2 of rewilded Council maintained ground to 90,000	90,000m2	90,000m2	✓	49,195m2	↑
30 Community Gardening projects organised	30	58	✓	-	-
100% condition surveys carried out according to schedule	100%	100%	✓	100%	=

EXCELLENCE





Improvement Objective 5: We will use technology to drive change





What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of our customer service including online/mobile services • Improved resident engagement • Digital transformation • Become a high performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference to the Borough
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and Publish Customer Service Excellence Strategy and Action Plan for 2020-2024 • Develop proposals for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents • Develop a Digital Transformation Strategy

How well did we perform?




Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Achieve a 75% rate of resolution of issues or enquiries at first point of contact in Customer Service	75%	99%	✓	93%	↑
Launch digital customer engagement platform to improve stakeholder and resident engagement by December 2023	100%	100%	✓	-	-
Digital Strategy developed by March 2024	Yes	Yes	✓	No	↑

IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 1 MEASURES: RAG Status (RED)						
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' RAG Status
Agree a technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the Queen's Parade project with Bangor Marine by September 2023	Yes	No	●	-	-	There has been continued dialogue between the developer and the Authority regarding the proposed detailed design for the Marine Gardens element of the Queen's Parade redevelopment scheme. Changes to the scheme have been proposed which will necessitate a separate planning application being submitted and approved and therefore the timeline has been extended. It is anticipated that the technical design will be agreed by mid-2024/25, with the design resulting in a more usable and enhanced provision for the waterfront.
Support 12 businesses through the DTFF Programme	12	2	●	13	↓	DTFF Funding programme delayed in starting. Total businesses supported throughout the total programme have been reprofiled into the next 2 years. Total number of businesses being funding does not change.
Create 85 new jobs through "Go for it" Programme (Statutory Indicator)	85 New Target set: 117	77	●	101	↓	The Go-for-It programme was funded by ERDF and an extension to provide the service was granted until the end of September 2023. The new GO Succeed Service did not start until 1 st November 2023 and its implementation was delayed for technical reasons such as the CRM system and the contractors not being able to mobilise their resources on time to deliver the service. The Department for the Economy has stated that they would be flexible on the statutory target this year and that it was largely expected that it would not be met. This is the case for all councils.
Create 123 new jobs through Enterprise Support Service (Statutory Indicator)	123 New Target set: 117	77	●	101	↓	Same as above. 123 was the new statutory target on which we had to report on (we had to report on both the old one - 85 - and the new one) . However, this target has now been further revised to 117 by DfE. The reason for not meeting this target is highlighted above.
Major Planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	30 weeks	84.7 weeks	●	104.5 weeks	↓	While there has been a reduction in weeks taken to process, major applications continue to be affected by a delay in response by statutory consultees and ongoing capacity issues in the NIW


						network. Several major applications are subject to Section 76 legal agreements requiring negotiation between legal reps.
Local Planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	15 weeks	16 weeks		19.9 weeks		Although there has been an improvement in processing times for local applications there remain ongoing issues in resourcing of statutory consultees, impacting on response times. Lack of front loading of applications also leads to delays in processing. The local category of development set in legislation ranges from a domestic extension to housing developments of 49 units which involve a wider range of consultees and studies required by legislation. Many applications require amendments to address material planning objections which add to time taken to resolve where possible by the developer and process.
70% of planning enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	70%	55.7%		62.9%		Enforcement processing, with the exception of Priority 1 cases and cases approaching immunity, were paused during COVID and the enforcement team continues to work through a backlog of cases, some of which are dependent upon outcome of appeals or retrospective applications.

IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 2 Measures: RAG Status (RED)							
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Service	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' RAG Status
Increase LEAMS Cleanliness Index Score to 80	80	73		75		Waste and Cleansing	There were problems with the Keep NI Beautiful (KNIB) independent surveys during 2022/23 leading to spurious results which in turn resulted in the target being raised to 80 for 2023/24 (5 points above the NI average). The survey issue has since been rectified but results were only available for Q3 and Q4 of 2023/24.
Regain top 3 position for Fixed Penalty Enforcement in NI	Yes	No		No		Regulatory Services	ANDBC staffing has reduced and other councils have used external contractors to deliver this measure in past years. The use of contractors is unlikely to be repeated and this will change the balance in relation to this measure.

IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 3 Measures: RAG Status (RED and AMBER)

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Service	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' and 'Amber' RAG Status
Increase % of household waste recycled, reused and composted to 60% (Statutory Target:55%)	60%	55.48%		52%		Waste and Cleansing	The 60% target was almost met, with the statutory target of 55% being met. It should be noted that performance against this measure has shown an improvement from 2022/23.
Introduce kerbside collection of textiles by October 2023	Yes	No		-	-	Waste and Cleansing	The new vehicles were not delivered until January 2024 and in view of the current difficulties being faced by the textile recycling industry, the proposed scheme is on hold until market conditions stabilise.

IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 4 Measures: RAG Status (RED)

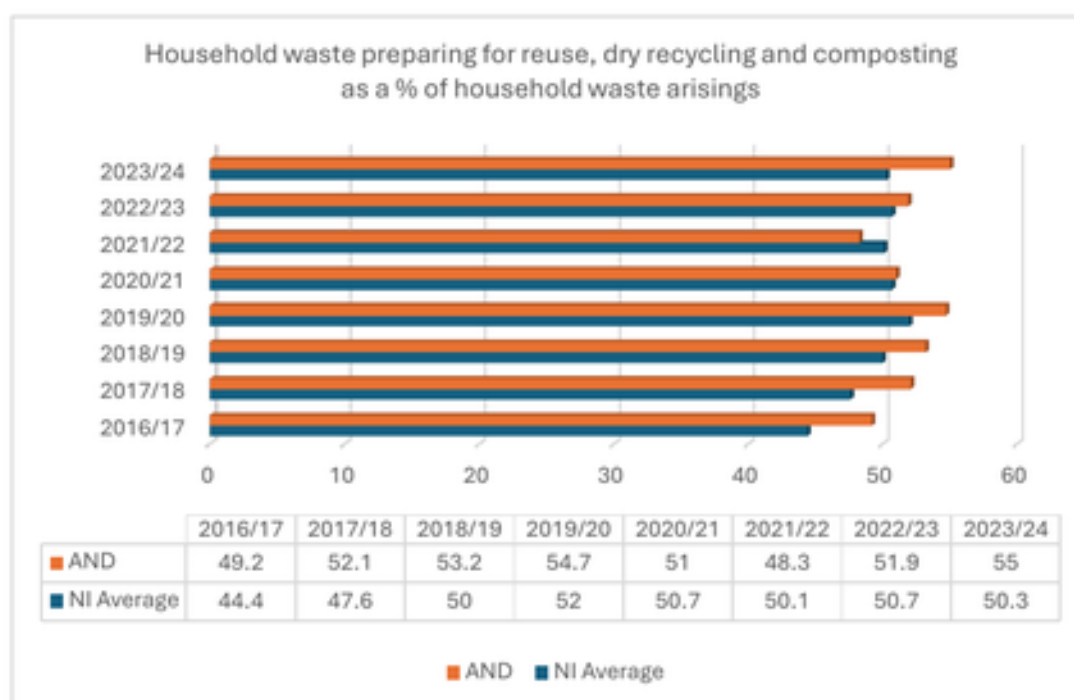
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Service	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' RAG Status
Increase the % of people who complete the GP referral programme across all leisure sites to 30%	30%	22%		-	-	Leisure	The customers who were enrolled on the scheme decided not to complete it. We have limited ability to "encourage" completion.

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

The Council is required to report on how it has performed against the Statutory Indicators⁶ set out in The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. Section 91 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 requires the Council to use this information to assess its performance against the previous year's performance; and so far as is practicable, the performance of other councils in the exercise of the same or similar functions.

Municipal Waste

The 2023/24 year saw a further fall in the Council's municipal waste arisings (down to 83,895 tonnes) and an increase in the recycling rate (to 55%). The new online Household Recycling Centre (HRC) booking system was introduced mid-year and this helped to improve recycling at the HRCs while deterring the use of the HRCs by the commercial sector and non-residents of the Borough. A Task & Finish Working Group was established to undertake a comprehensive review of the Council's kerbside collection service with WRAP appointed to provide an overview and modelling of different collection models using the Kerbside Assessment Tool (KAT). It is intended to complete this study with recommendations by the end of 2024/25.



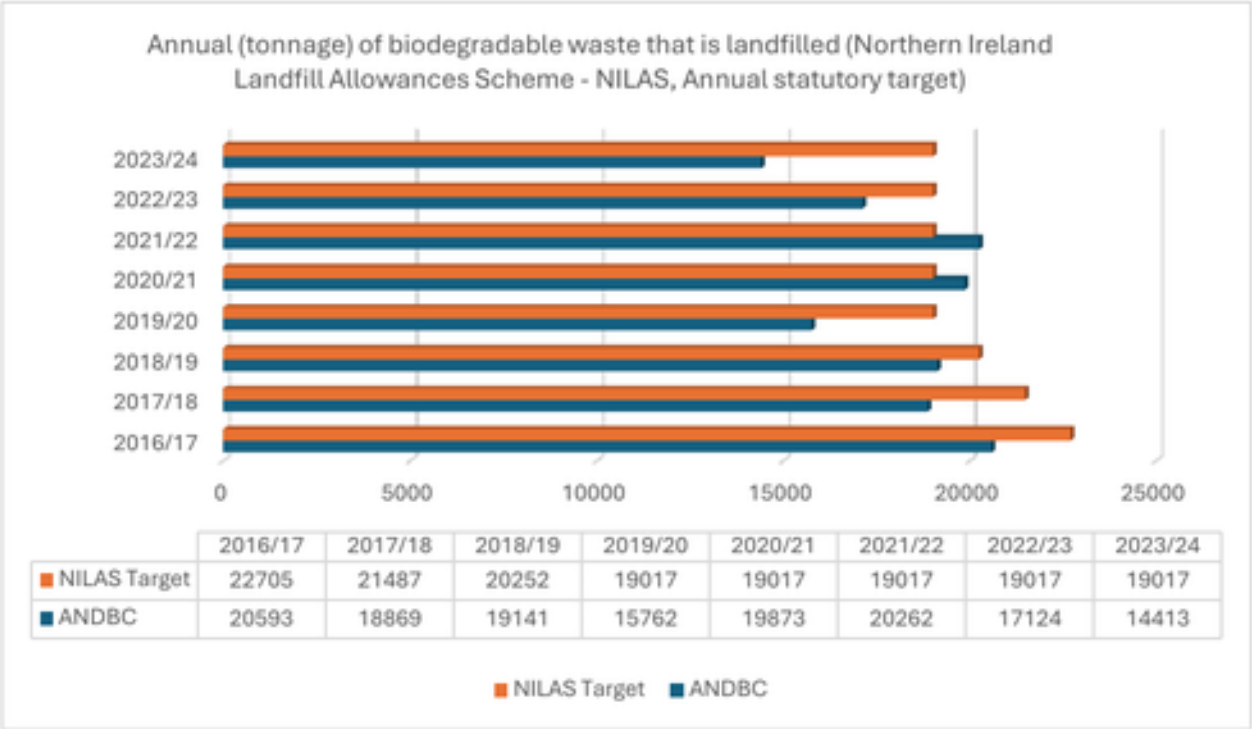
RAG Status	✓
Statutory Target of 55%	
Trend against prior year	↑

⁶ End of year statutory indicators and standards for waste, planning and jobs promoted can be found in Appendix 1

How do we compare?

Waste from households recycling rate as a % of waste from household arisings (Higher % is better)			
Authority	2023/24 (%)	2022/23 (%)	Trend from previous Year
Antrim & Newtownabbey	61.0	60.3	% Increase
Ards & North Down	55.0	51.9	% Increase
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	53.4	54.2	% Decrease
Belfast	40.9	40.8	% Increase
Causeway Coast & Glens	47.8	52.6	% Decrease
Derry City & Strabane	44.8	46.0	% Decrease
Fermanagh & Omagh	46.0	47.4	% Decrease
Lisburn & Castlereagh	51.2	50.5	% Increase
Mid & East Antrim	50.9	51.7	% Decrease
Mid Ulster	58.3	58.4	% Decrease
Newry, Mourne & Down	48.8	49.6	% Decrease
arc21	50.1	49.6	% Increase
NWRWMG	46.4	49.3	% Decrease
Northern Ireland	50.3	50.7	% Decrease

The Council's long-term strategy for reducing reliance on landfill has been based on increasing recycling and the delivery of the arc21 Residual Waste Treatment Project. The Council through arc21 is currently out to tender for the treatment of residual waste arisings as an alternative to the use of landfill. It is anticipated that the Contract will commence in the latter part of 2024/25. Landfill allowances are fixed and remain unchanged.

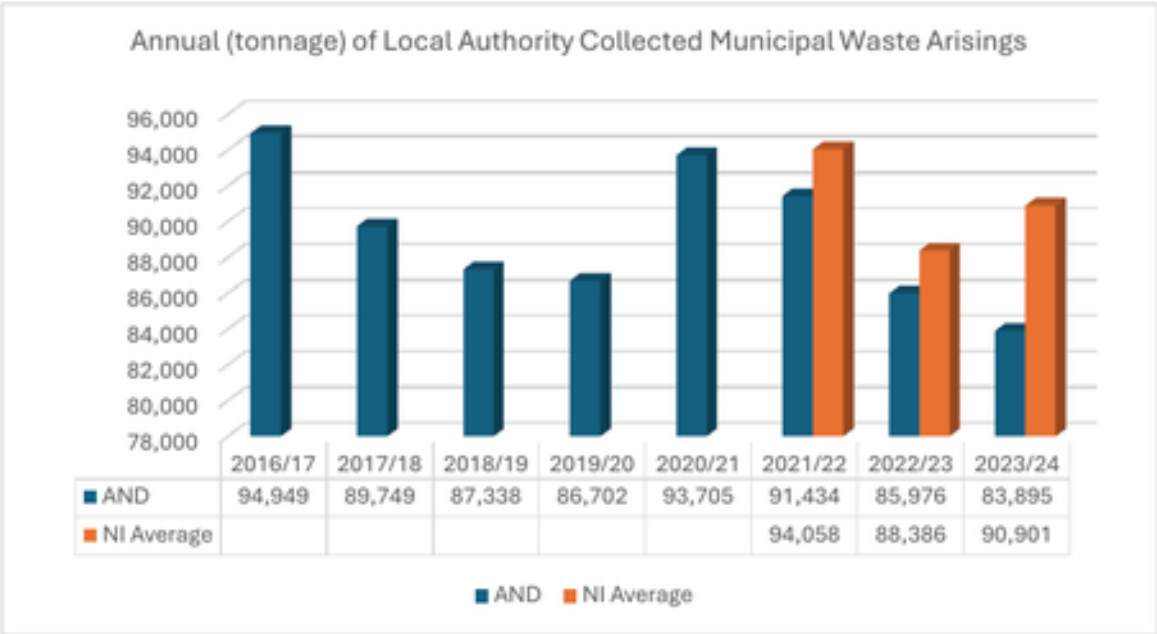


RAG Status	✔
Trend against prior year (lower is better)	↓

How do we compare? (Lower is better)

Authority	2023/24 reported biodegradable LAC municipal waste sent to landfill (tonnes)	Landfill Allowance Allocation
Antrim & Newtownabbey	11,458	16,788
Ards & North Down	14,413	19,017
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2,580	24,417
Belfast	7,218	40,289
Causeway Coast & Glens	10,418	17,062
Derry City & Strabane	4,076	17,929
Fermanagh & Omagh	14,773	13,781
Lisburn & Castlereagh	14,023	16,444
Mid & East Antrim	15,239	16,387
Mid Ulster	369	16,982
Newry, Mourne & Down	937	20,954
arc21	63,288	
NWRWMG	14,494	
Northern Ireland	95,504	220,000

2023/24 saw a further drop in Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings (LACMW). This reflected both the financial pressures faced by consumers due to the cost-of-living crisis and the new tighter access controls at the Council HRCs



RAG Status	✔
Trend against prior year (lower is better)	↓

How do we compare? (lower is better)

Authority	LAC municipal waste arisings (tonnes) 2023/24	Household waste collected per capita (kilogrammes) 2023/24
Antrim & Newtownabbey	106,040	545
Ards & North Down	83,895	476
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	112,335	459
Belfast	160,282	403
Causeway Coast & Glens	80,596	502
Derry City & Strabane	81,027	472
Fermanagh & Omagh	56,521	422
Lisburn & Castlereagh	77,617	458
Mid & East Antrim	74,842	473
Mid Ulster	82,075	476
Newry, Mourne & Down	84,684	426
arc21	587,360	452
NWRWMG	161,623	486
	999,913	
Northern Ireland	(NI Average 90,901)	458

Planning

Major planning applications

While 2023/24 seen a reduction in weeks taken to process major applications, from 104.5 weeks in 2022/23 to 84.7 weeks in 2023/24, major applications continue to be affected by a delay in response by statutory consultees and ongoing capacity issues in the NIW network. Several major applications are subject to Section 76 legal agreements requiring negotiation between legal representation.

It should be noted that the NI planning system does not provide for 'clock-stopping' in respect of requests for further information required by either the Council or in response to statutory consultees, nor in respect of notifications to DFI, all which have significant implications on processing times.

The Planning Service continues to strive to improve on processing times and interact with DFI to contribute to the Planning Improvement Programme which has stemmed from the regional review of planning by both the NI Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee.

In respect of Major development applications, the Planning Service determined 6 proposals over the 2023/24 year (3 in 2022/23) as follows:

Majors - Quarter 1

LA06/2021/0917/F was decided for 58no. dwellings at Ardara in Comber. The application, on land zoned for housing within the Ards and Down Area Plan, was submitted 28 June 2021. All of the consultees required submission of additional information and amended designs, which required re-advertising and re- neighbour notification and the carrying out of further consultation and all subsequent further objections assessed. There were NI Water issues which required a separate legal agreement required to be drafted by the Council's Planning lawyers and then executed between the Council and the applicant and sealed by the Council. The last information submitted by the applicant was November 2022 and the application was presented to Planning Committee on 06 December 2022 with a recommendation of approval, subject to execution of the legal agreement referred to above. The legal agreement was given approval to be signed and sealed at the Council meeting on 26 April 2023. The agreement was then signed and sealed once the call-in period had expired, and the decision notice was issued dated 17 May 2023 (processing time 93.2 weeks).

Majors - Quarter 3

LA06/2021/0061/F for proposed residential development for 188 dwellings, open space (including NS 43), landscaping, children's play area, next phase of the distributor road, internal road network, SuDS Pond, and all associated site and access works and proposed amendment of the section 76 planning agreement for the Rivenwood housing development in Newtownards was approved at Planning Committee meeting in October and decision issued on 03 November. This application was for the development of phases 3a and 3b of the NS20 zoning.

LA06/2023/1959/F was decided for the erection of new arrival and welcome building (Culture Hub), collection & exhibition building (Industry Zone), staff and volunteer hub and other extensive works at Cultra Folk Museum. The application was submitted on 23 June 2023 and was approved at Planning committee meeting on 05 December 2023 subject to NIEA responses (processing time 20 weeks).

Majors – Quarter 4

LA06/2021/0118/F was decided for a housing development of 98 units and detached garages and extension to footpath on Shore Road at St Andrews housing development in Ballyhalbert. The application was presented at planning committee meeting on 07 November 2023. The motion to grant permission, subject to conditions, was carried by members of the Committee following which negotiations were required for the inclusion of a playpark which the developer agreed to and required re-neighbour notification and re-advertising. The application was brought back to the Planning committee meeting in February 2024 and the decision notice issued on 13 February (processing time 144 weeks).

LA06/2022/0873/F was decided for the relocation and redevelopment of Bangor Central Integrated Primary School on vacant site North of Balloo Road, Bangor, to provide a new 22 class primary school building and recreational areas. The application also included a new vehicular access with right turn lane off Balloo Road, internal vehicular configuration and site layout to include car parking, car and bus pick up/drop off areas and pedestrian crossing points. This application was subject to a significant number of objections in relation to intensification of traffic in the area. There were also NI Water capacity issues on site which required an off-site solution to be found by the developer in liaison with NI Water which required a legal agreement to be drawn up (processing time of 62 weeks).

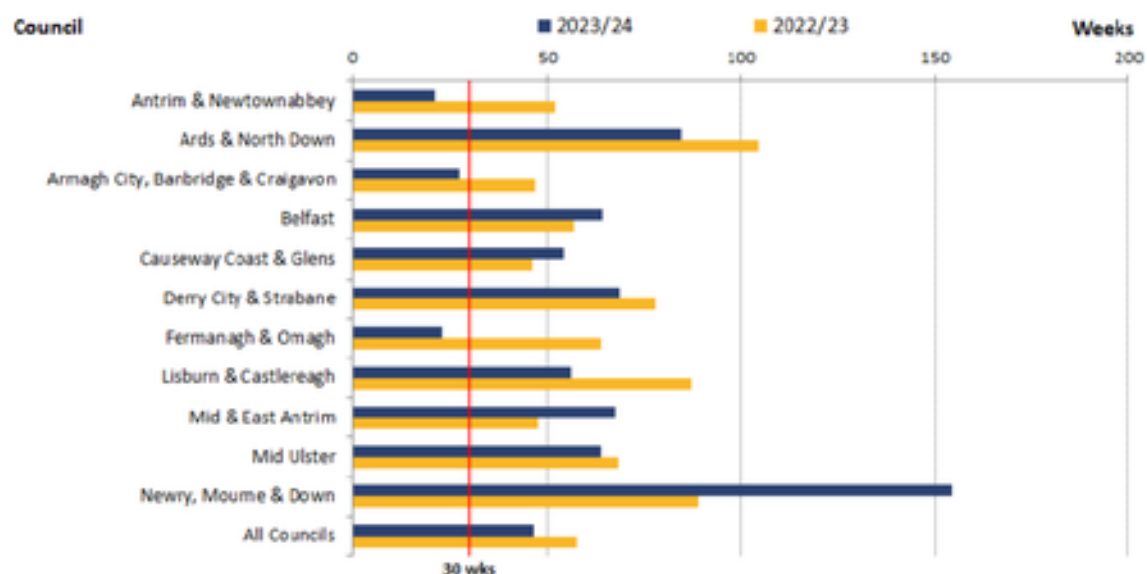
LA06/2023/2434/F - Proposed residential development of 95 dwellings (reduction in density from 108 dwellings approved under LA06/2019/0603/F) to include roads, parking, infrastructure, landscaping and retention of Bawn Wall. Vehicular access to site will be from Castlebawn Drive. The above application for social housing which was subject to funding deadlines was presented at Special Planning committee meeting on 21 March 2024 with a processing time of 16.3 weeks.



RAG Status	●
Trend against prior year	↓

How do we compare?

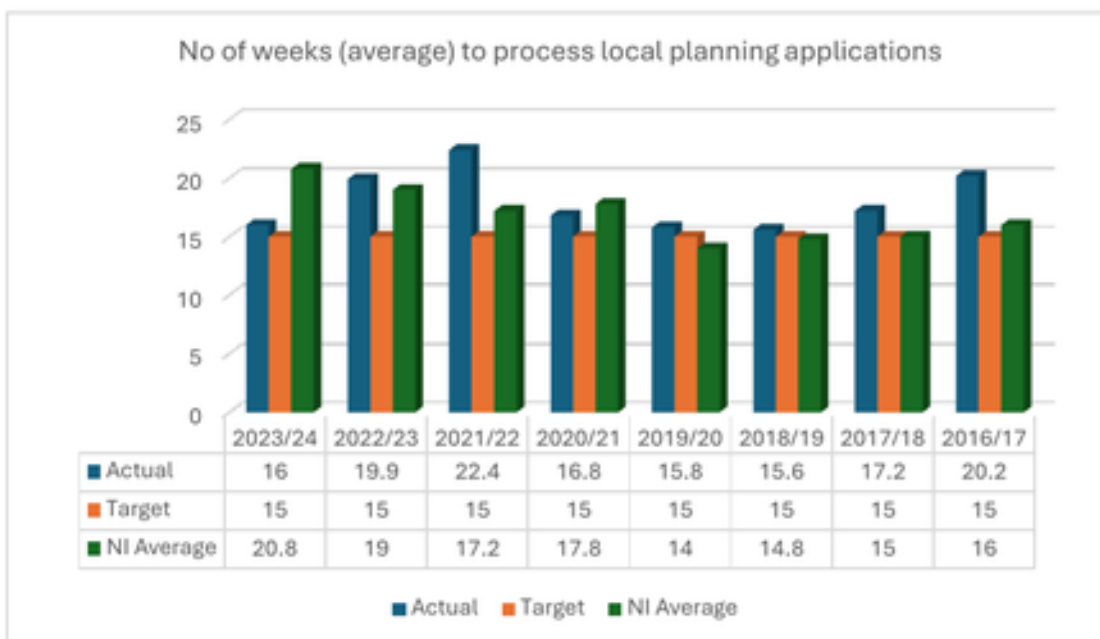
Fig 3.2 Major development average processing times by council, 2022/23 & 2023/24



Note: Whilst Figure 3.2 has been provided for completeness, across councils there may be an insufficient number of major applications processed during the period reported to allow any meaningful assessment of their individual performance.

Local planning applications

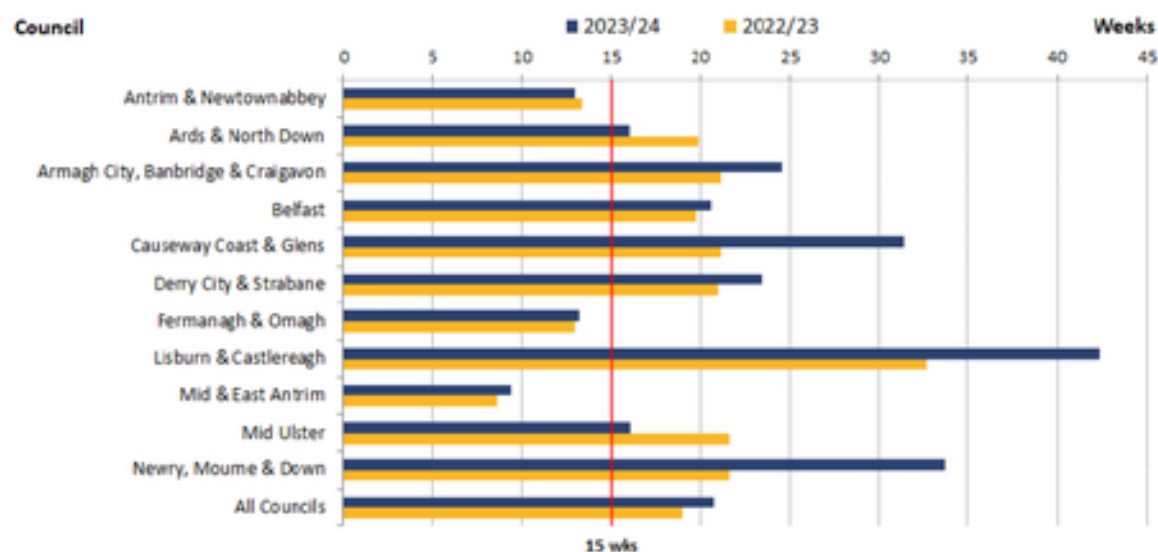
Although there has been an improvement in processing times for local applications there remain ongoing issues in resourcing of statutory consultees, impacting on response times. Lack of front loading of applications also leads to delays in processing. The local category of development set in legislation ranges from a domestic extension to housing developments of 49 units which involve a wider range of consultees and studies required by legislation. Many applications require amendments to address material planning objections which add to time taken to resolve where possible by the developer and process.



RAG Status	Red Circle
Trend against prior year	Green Arrow Down

How do we compare?

Fig 4.2 Local development average processing times by council, 2022/23 & 2023/24



Additional Activity

In addition to the above planning applications, it is important to drawn attention to additional work carried out within the Development Management section, which is not reported upon, but which is required to be completed in parallel to work on planning applications.

Additional activity details the "non-application" workload of the Planning Service, and includes Discharge of conditions, Certificates of Lawfulness (Proposed & Existing), Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)/ Consents to Fell Trees in Conservation Area, Pre-Application Discussions (PADs), Proposals of Application Notice (PANs) and Non-Material Changes. Preparation of Statements of Case for appeals and attendance at hearings is not detailed.

Type	Received 01/04/23 – 31/03/2024	Determined - by 31/03/2024
Discharge of Condition	78	65
Certificate of Lawfulness	46	30
Non-Material Change	46	39
Pre-Application Discussion	37	
Proposal of Application Notice	5	
TPO	55	27

For PADs and PANS, only the received cases are included in the table as it is not considered appropriate to report on decided/withdrawn cases or processing times for these types of activity.

Enforcement

In 2023/24 this Service area received the third highest level of complaints alleging breaches of planning control across the 11 councils, which continues to be investigated accordingly.

Enforcement processing, with the exception of Priority 1 cases and cases approaching immunity, were paused during COVID and the enforcement team continues to work through a backlog of cases, some of which are dependent upon outcome of appeals or retrospective applications.



During 2023/24 the Planning Service opened 330 enforcement cases (down from 366 in the previous year). The following table details the closure reason for the 352 cases closed during the year.

Remedied/Resolved	103
Planning Permission Granted	49
Not Expedient	47
No Breach Identified	128
Immune from Enforcement Action	24
Appeal Allowed / Notice Quashed	1
Total	352

It should be noted that normally enforcement action is held in abeyance in respect of any identified breach of planning control, whilst any retrospective planning application is being assessed, which can impact on closure timeframes.

An enforcement case is concluded when one of the following occurs: a notice is issued; legal proceedings commence; a planning application is received; or the case is closed.

% progress of enforcement cases to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt			
Year	Actual (%)	Target (%)	NI Average (%)
2023/24	55.7	70	76.4
2022/23	62.9	70	74.2
2021/22	41	70	70.4
2020/21	62	70	69.9
2019/20	81.1	70	81.4
2018/19	76.9	70	81
2017/18	73.4	70	77
2016/17	77.7	70	81

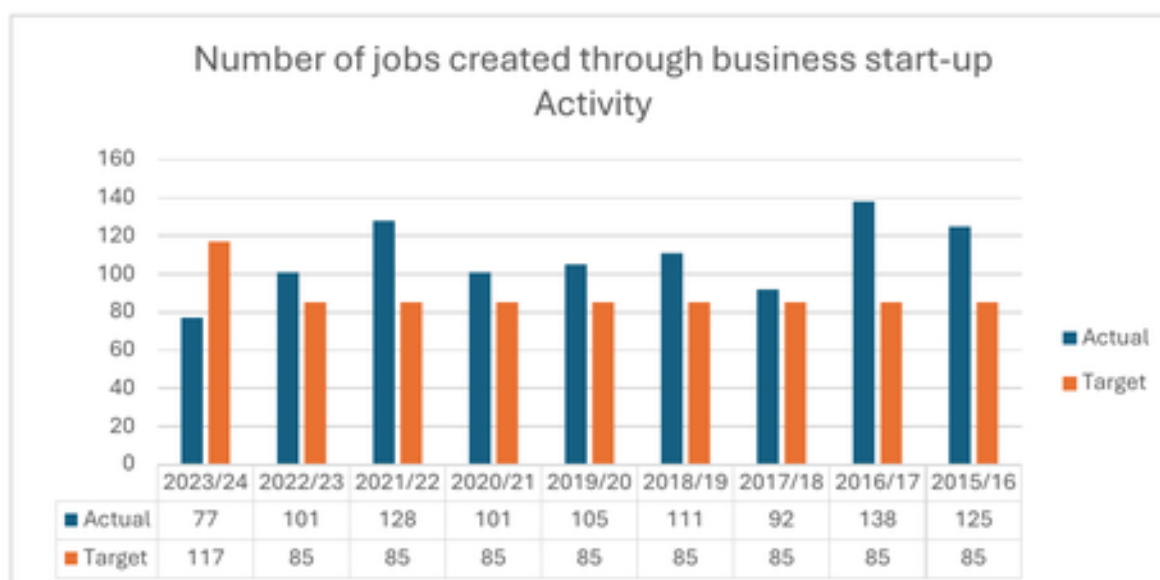
RAG Status	
Trend against prior year	

Economic Development

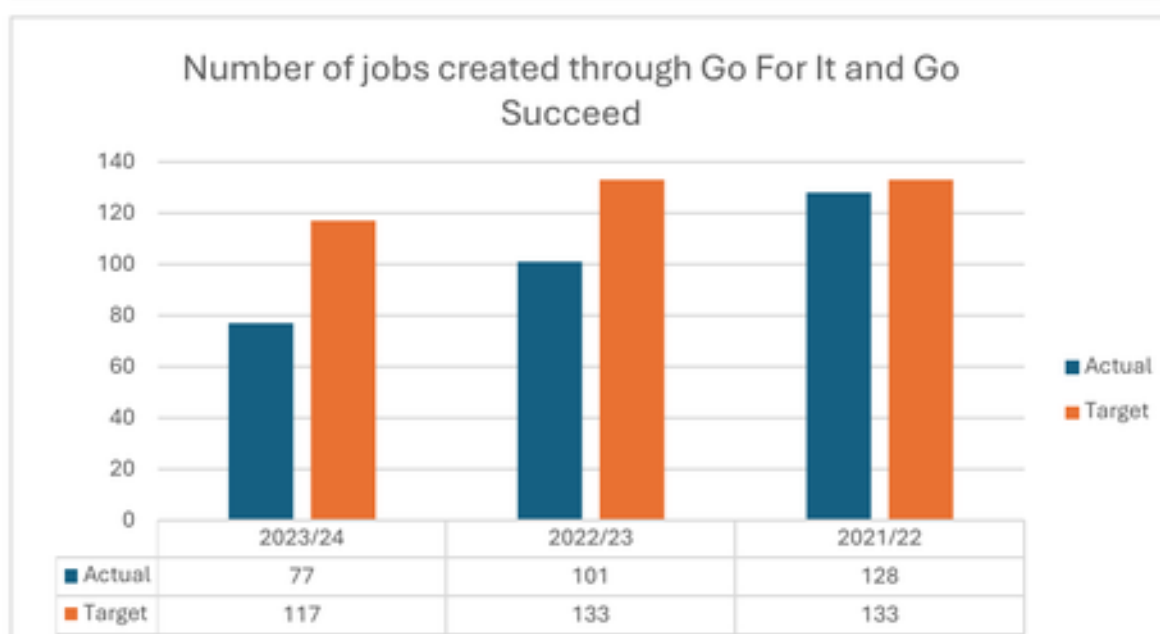
Go For It Programme completed in September 2023 and the councils have seen the introduction of the new Enterprise Support Service (ESS), led by Northern Ireland's 11 local Councils, funded by the UK Government and the government's Levelling Up Fund, known as Go Succeed.

Go Succeed was launched in November 2023. The number of jobs created has remained healthy until September and exceeded the half yearly statutory targets. However, we have seen a decline in the creation of new jobs with the introduction of Go Succeed which took longer to implement and deliver. The Service was introduced in November, but various technical and operational issues meant that the service underperformed in its first 6 months to March 2024.

The council is working closely with the Go Succeed delivery agents to monitor and manage performance and to raise awareness of the support.



RAG Status	●
Trend against prior year	↓



RAG Status	●
Trend against prior year	↓

How do we compare?

UPDATE REQUIRED FOLLOWING BY VERIFICATION															
BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA APRIL 2023 - SEPTEMBER 2023 Go For It								BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA SEP - APRIL 24 NIESS							
COUNCIL AREA	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Total	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total	Total BPA
Antrim & Newtownabbey	8	14	20	11	18	20	91	0	0	0				26	117
Ards & North Down	14	16	14	23	15	14	106	0	0	0				39	145
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	28	29	28	23	26	39	173	0	0	0				23	194
Belfast	40	46	47	31	51	48	263	0	0	0				34	297
Causeway Coast & Glens	18	21	16	13	18	24	110	0	0	0				21	131
Derry & Strabane	15	21	19	19	19	25	118	0	0	0				39	157
Fermanagh & Omagh	25	30	33	18	18	23	147	0	0	0				49	196
Ulster & Castlereagh	16	20	19	19	17	12	103	4	3	0	5			29	132
Mid & East Antrim	13	24	20	13	21	12	113	0	0	0				39	149
Mid Ulster	28	21	20	19	23	25	146	0	0	0				36	181
Newry Mourne & Down	19	31	28	21	26	5	128	0	0	0				23	151
TOTAL	224	273	262	210	252	262	1,483	4	3	0	5	0	36	1,517	1,800

	Actual BPA to Sept 23	Actual Jobs to Sept 23	6 Months Statutory	Jobs Delta versus 6 Month Statutory	6 month BPA delivery via NIESS	6 month Jobs delivery via NIESS	Total Jobs	Statutory Jobs Target (2015)	Variance	Statutory Jobs Target 23/24 (Mid point 2015/2023)	Variance
Antrim & Newtownabbey	91	56	40	16	26	15,982	72	80	8	80	8
Ards & North Down	106	65	43	23	19	11,4	77	85	8	117	40
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	173	106	83	24	21	12,6	119	165	46	179	60
Belfast	263	162	163	-1	84	20,4	182	825	143	325	143
Causeway Coast & Glens	110	68	63	5	21	12,6	80	125	45	127	47
Derry & Strabane	118	73	70	3	39	23,4	96	140	44	140	44
Fermanagh & Omagh	147	90	85	5	49	29,4	120	170	50	170	50
Ulster & Castlereagh	103	63	43	21	32	19,2	83	85	2	111	28
Mid & East Antrim	110	68	43	25	39	23,4	91	85	-6	107	16
Mid Ulster	134	82	79	3	14	8,4	91	210	119	163	72
Newry Mourne & Down	128	79	78	1	23	13,8	92	155	63	170	78
Totals	1,483	912	787	125	317	190,2	1102	1625	523	1689	587

Other Indicators

	2019/20 Actual	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Actual	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Actual	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Actual	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Actual	2023/24 Target	
Staff Absence	6.64%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	6.57%	5%	7.24%	5%	7.59%	7%	⚠
Resident Satisfaction	Not measured this year	83%	Not measured this year	Not measured this year	82%	82%	Not measured this year	Not measured this year	83%	83%	=
Net Cost of Services per head of population	314	318	328	331	341	336	356	350	373	398	✓

Staff Absence

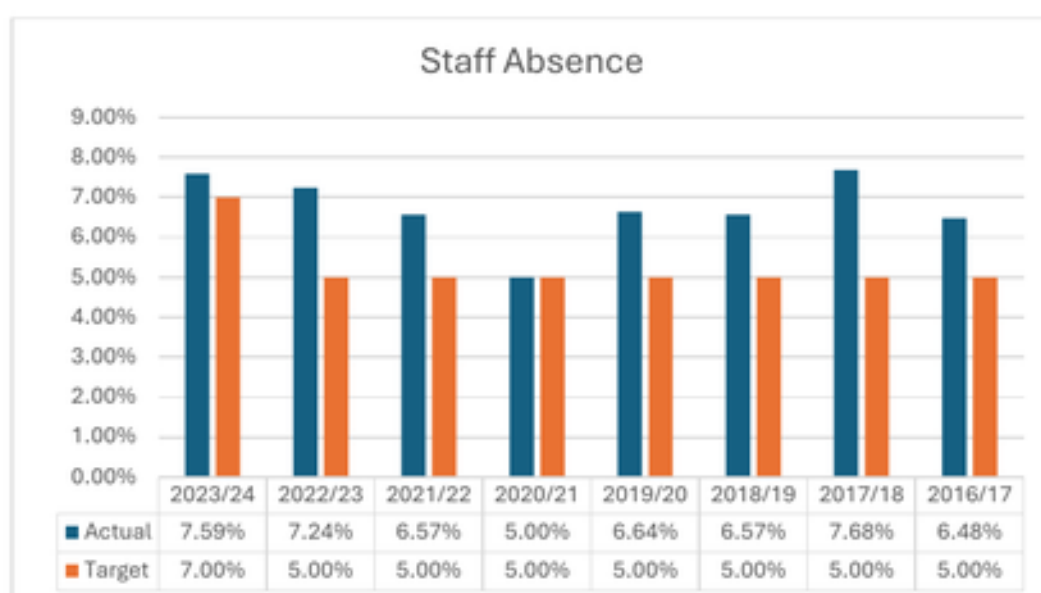
The % staff absenteeism figure for the year ended March 2024 is 7.59% which is 0.35% higher than the absence rate last year. Detailed figures show that short time absence is decreasing, due to effective absence management procedures, however, long term absence accounted for 80.3% of sickness absence in quarter 4 of last year.

Increasing long term absence is of great concern and remains high despite a detailed Absence Management Action plan put in place, following an APSE review. As part of this Action Plan, a number of initiatives have been put in place including 'percentage time lost' and 'average days lost per employee figures' due to sickness being presented to management and Elected Members on a quarterly basis.

The main reason for long term absence last year was because of illness related to mental health e.g. stress, depression and anxiety. Since Council signed the Mental Health Charter in March 2019, work has been ongoing to adhere to the standards contained within the framework set by the Equality Commission. There have been many successes, not least the training of Mental Health First Aiders and the Take 5 steps to wellbeing messages and opportunities afforded by the Employee Health and Wellbeing programme. A new initiative is currently being trialled with a local firm, Insula Wellbeing, who are providing 1-2-1 sessions with staff. It is hoped that this initiative will assist staff before they get to the point of having no other option but to go off sick.

A benchmark survey has also been sent out to other Councils and we have sought further legal advice on how we deal with long term absence, to find out if there is anything more the Council should consider within its current policies and practices to reduce absenteeism.

As the financial cost is substantial, Elected Members and management will continue to closely monitor absence levels and to seek innovative methods to reduce absence figures.



RAG Status	▲
Trend against prior year	▲

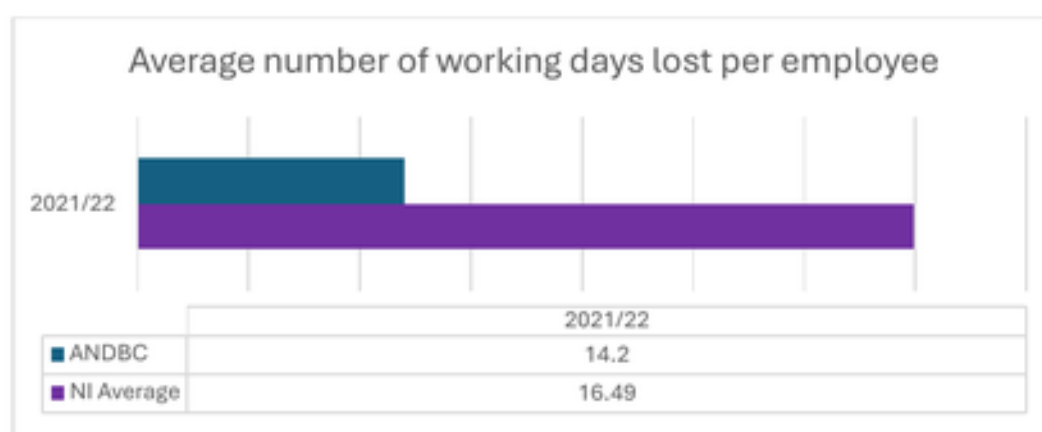
How do we compare?

AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS

(Note: Figures for 2022/23 were not available at the time of writing)

Source: Local Government Auditor Report 2023

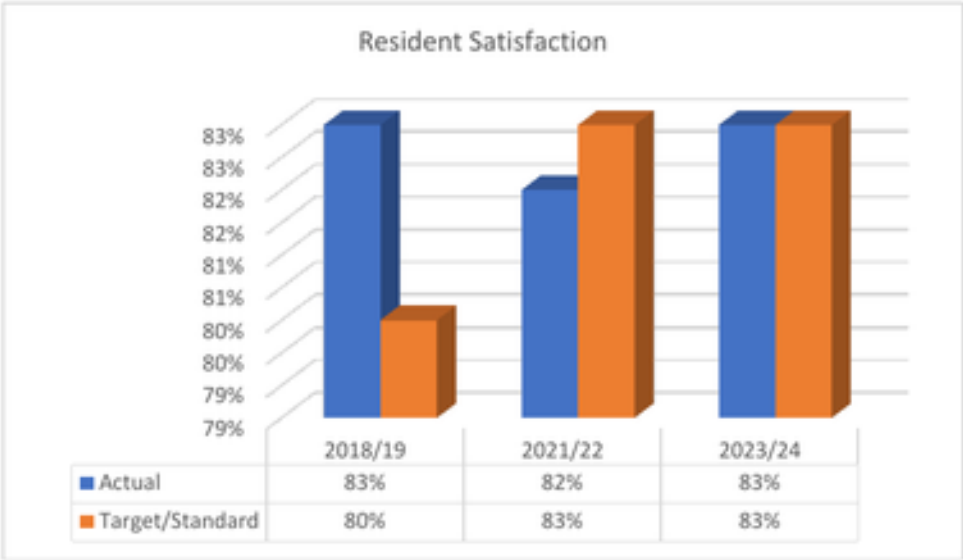
COUNCIL	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Antrim and Newtownabbey	11.9	13.7	13.2	11.1	19.7
Ards and North Down	16.2	14.2	14.2	10.6	14.2
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	16.1	16.7	18.3	15.7	20.5
Belfast	13.7	13.7	13.6	10.9	16.3
Causeway Coast and Glens	15.8	17.1	17.7	12.4	19.2
Derry City and Strabane	14.0	12.3	14.5	10.4	16.8
Fermanagh and Omagh	12.9	10.4	13.8	9.7	13.1
Lisburn City and Castlereagh	16.7	13.3	13.8	11.5	13.6
Mid and East Antrim	17.1	12.5	10.6	4.7	15.2
Mid Ulster	12.4	12.9	11.7	9.7	12.1
Newry, Mourne and Down	17.1	14.7	15.8	13.6	20.7



Resident Satisfaction

The Council undertakes a formal survey of residents every two years to gain an insight into satisfaction levels with the organisation and the services we deliver. The information gathered is shared across all service areas and used to inform a number of performance improvement measures including our annual service plans, performance improvement plan and financial statements.

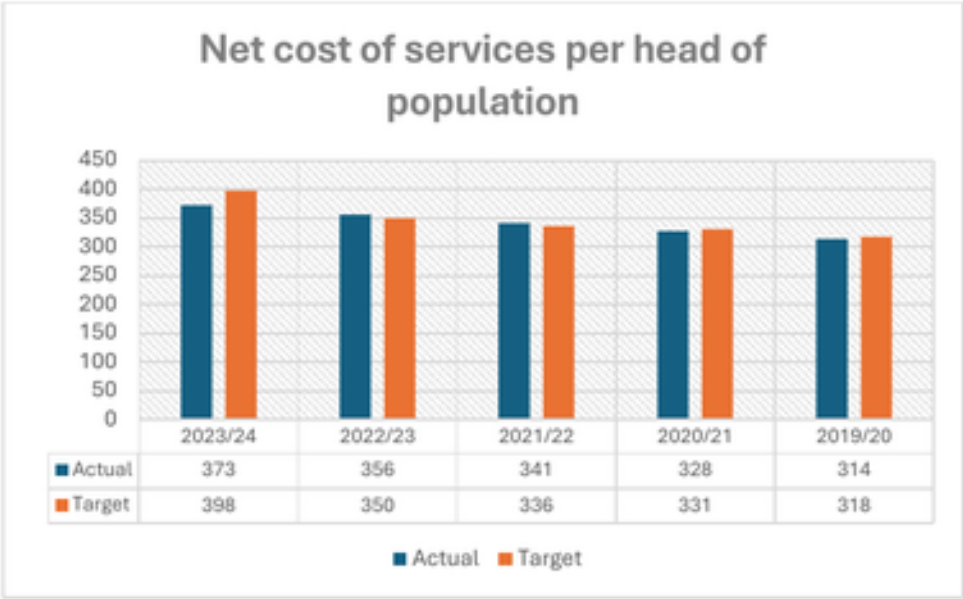
The overall findings from the Resident's Survey completed in Autumn 2023 suggest a high level of satisfaction with the Council overall, with the Council scoring well on specific measures such as providing value for money, satisfaction with Council provided services and Council consultation and engagement activities. In terms of priorities for the Council, residents believe that the focus should be on prioritising attracting jobs and investment, ensuring annual rate increases are kept at or below inflation, and the health and wellbeing of residents and businesses.



RAG Status	✔
Trend against prior year	↑

Net Cost of Services per head of population

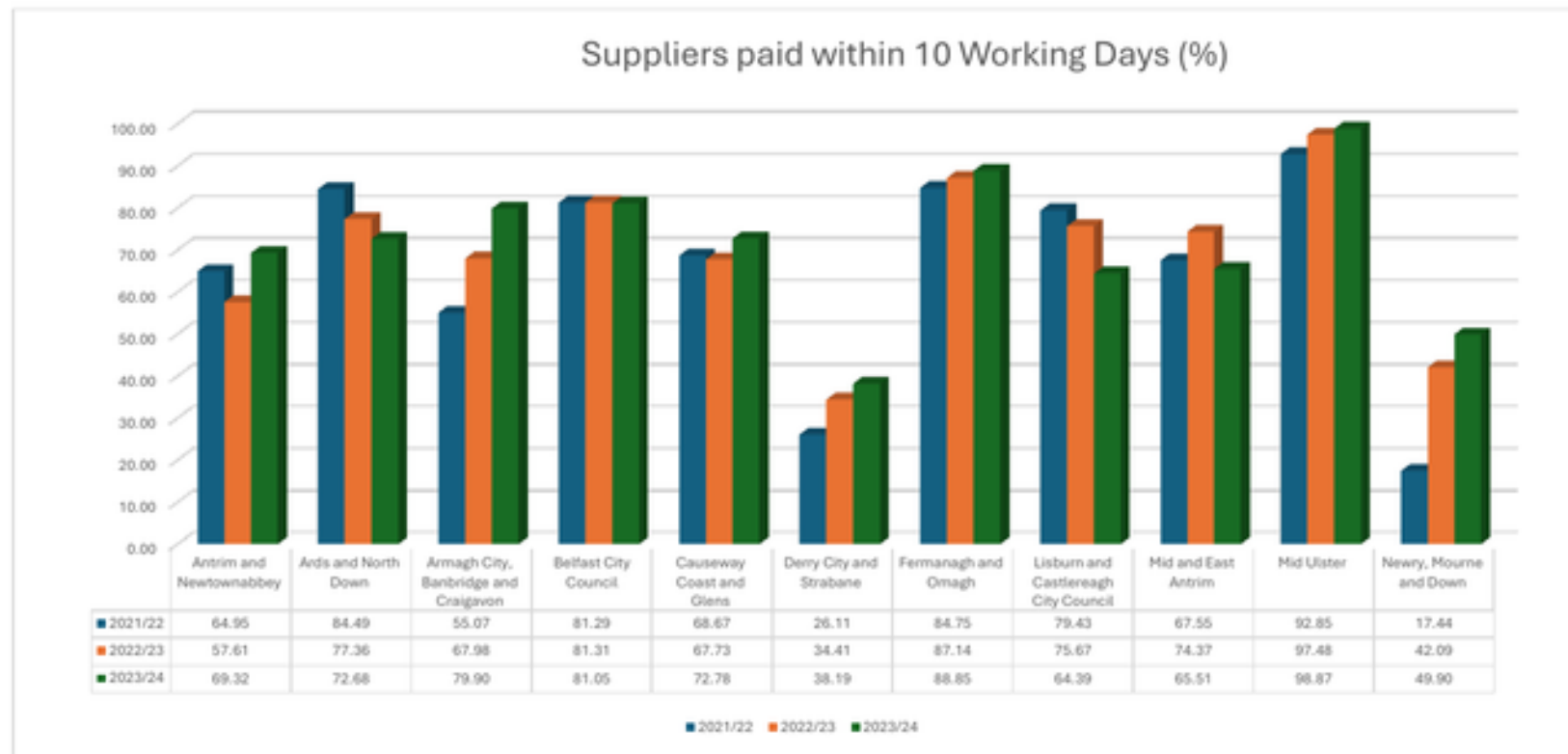
The Council's cost of service per head of population has increased over the past 5 years by around 19%, broadly in line with inflation over the same period (19%). This has enabled the Council to address low pay, in line with national agreements and the national living wage, enhance services offered to residents and visitors by investing substantially in leisure, community and tourism facilities and to work with key partners on regional projects such as the Belfast Region City Deal that will deliver sustainable growth and investment in the Borough.



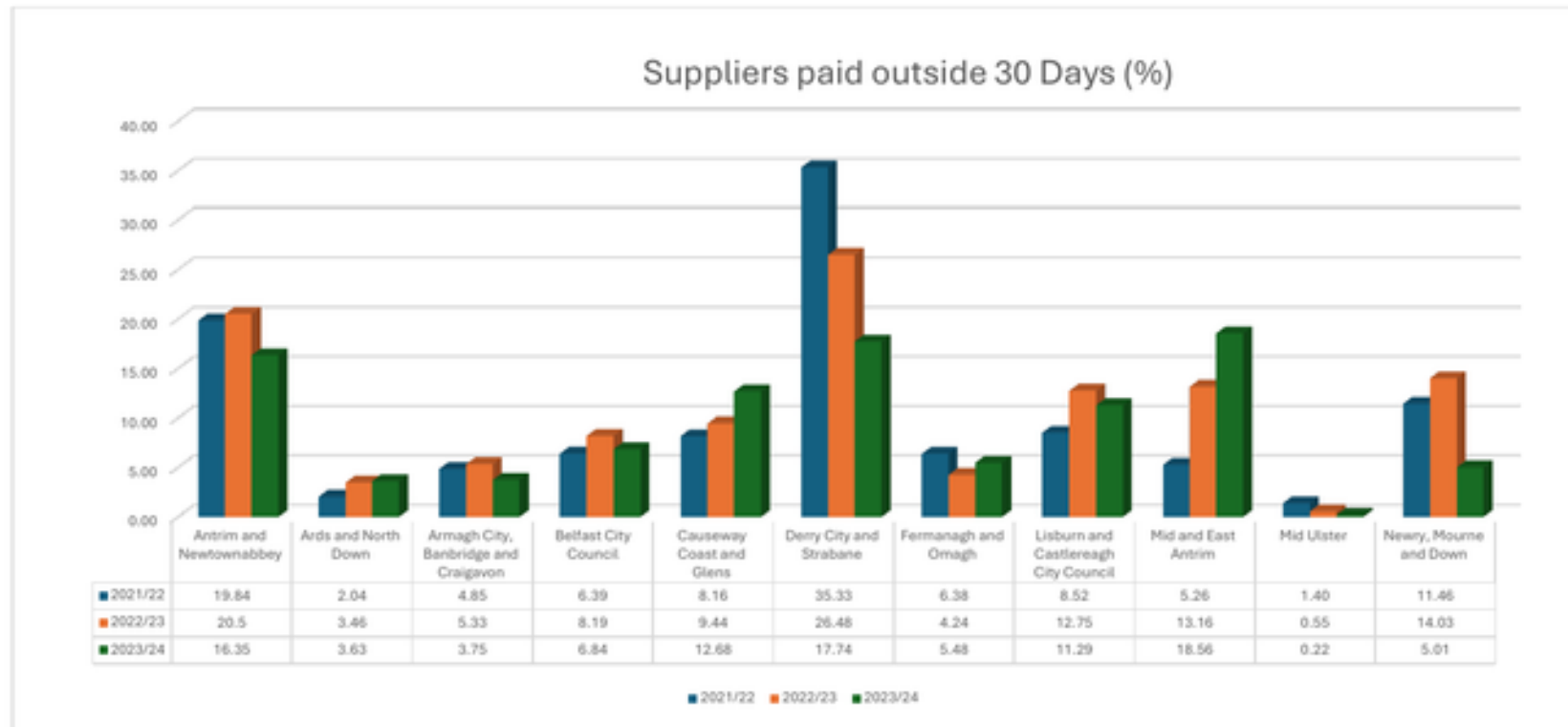
RAG Status	🟢
Trend against prior year	📈

Prompt Payment

Council continues to be in the top 3 performing Councils for payment within 30 calendar days. When identified, Council will continue to implement process improvements to assist suppliers with prompt payment of invoices.







Indicator	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
Annual Prompt Payment of Invoices		
Within 10 days	≥80%	72.68%
Within 30 days	≥95%	96.37%
Outside 30 days	<5%	3.63%

Within 10 Days	
RAG Status	🔴
Trend against prior year	⬇️

Within 30 Days	
RAG Status	🟢
Trend against prior year	⬇️

Outside 30 Days	
RAG Status	🟢
Trend against prior year	⬆️

Source: [Prompt Payments for NI Councils 2023/24 \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk/prompt-payments-for-ni-councils-2023-24)

6. Northern Ireland Audit Office proposals for improvement – arising from S.95 Audit and Assessment Report 2023/24

NIAO Proposal	ANDBC Progress to date
General Duty to Improve	
<p>Governance</p> <p>The Council should ensure that the Performance Improvement Policy is reviewed as part of the planned review of the Performance Management Handbook.</p> <p>The Council may want to consider the need for an audit review on performance improvement given the time that has passed since the previous review and the change in landscape impacting performance objectives in this time. While the service area audits provide focused time on a sample of areas on an annual basis, the Council may also want to consider how Internal Audit can assist with data validation to support the outturn in the quarterly reports.</p> <p>There is limited evidence that the Council's Audit Committee track progress on all proposals for improvement. The Council should consider this going forward.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Currently under review.</p> <p>Currently under review.</p>
<p>Consultation</p> <p>Going forward, it may be beneficial to consider commencing the consultation earlier in the year.</p> <p>The Council should consider whether there is a need to prepare a Consultation Strategy formally documenting the approach to be taken in all Council consultation exercises.</p>	<p>Currently under review.</p> <p>This proposal is being considered at corporate level.</p>

7. Your Opinion Matters

Ards and North Down Borough Council is committed to improving our services and resident feedback is critical to this. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year and have a continuous 'Your Opinion Matters' campaign. Suggestions for improvement initiatives can be sent to us by emailing yom@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk or contacting us at:

Transformation Team
Ards and North Down Borough Council
City Hall
The Castle
BANGOR
BT20 4BT

Email: pim@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 013 3333

8. Alternative formats

This document can be provided in alternative formats if required in relation to language or disability by contacting the Transformation Team at the above address.

Appendix 1: Municipal Waste, Planning and Economic Development Statistics

MUNICIPAL WASTE

THE NORTHERN IRELAND MUNICIPAL WASTE STATISTICS APRIL 2023-MARCH 2024 can be found at [Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

PLANNING

THE NORTHERN IRELAND PLANNING STATISTICS APRIL 2023-MARCH 2024 can be found at [Northern Ireland planning statistics April 2023 - March 2024 | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Dashboard information provided by Department for the Economy NI)

UPDATE REQUIRED FOLLOWING BP VERIFICATION

BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA APRIL 2023 - SEPTEMBER 2023 Go For It								BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA SEP - APRIL 24 NIESS							Total BPs
COUNCIL AREA	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Total	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total	
Antrim & Newtownabbey	8	14	20	11	18	20	91	0	0	0			26	26	117
Ards & North Down	14	16	14	23	15	24	106	0	0	0			19	19	125
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	28	29	28	23	26	39	173	0	0	0			21	21	194
Belfast	40	46	47	31	51	48	263	0	0	0			34	34	297
Causeway Coast & Glens	18	21	16	13	18	24	110	0	0	0			21	21	131
Derry & Strabane	15	21	19	19	19	25	118	0	0	0			39	39	157
Fermanagh & Omagh	25	30	33	18	18	23	147	0	0	0			49	49	196
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16	20	19	19	17	12	103	4	3	0	5		20	32	135
Mid & East Antrim	13	24	20	13	23	17	110	0	0	0			39	39	149
Mid Ulster	28	21	20	19	21	25	134	0	0	0			14	14	148
Newry Mourne & Down	19	31	26	21	26	5	128	0	0	0			23	23	151
TOTAL	224	273	262	210	252	262	1,483	4	3	0	5	0	305	317	1,800

	Actual BPA to Sept 23	Actual Jobs to Sept 23	6 Months Statutory	Jobs Delta versus 6 Month Statutory	6 month BPA delivery via NIESS	6 month Jobs delivery via NIESS	Total Jobs	Statutory Jobs Target (2015)	Variance	Statutory Jobs Target 23/24 (Mid point 2015/2023)	Variance
Antrim & Newtownabbey	91	56	40	16	26	15.9822	72	80	8	80	8
Ards & North Down	106	65	43	23	19	11.4	77	85	8	117	40
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	173	106	83	24	21	12.6	119	165	46	179	60
Belfast	263	162	163	-1	34	20.4	182	325	143	325	143
Causeway Coast & Glens	110	68	63	5	21	12.6	80	125	45	127	47
Derry & Strabane	118	73	70	3	39	23.4	96	140	44	140	44
Fermanagh & Omagh	147	90	85	5	49	29.4	120	170	50	170	50
Lisburn & Castlereagh	103	63	43	21	32	19.2	83	85	2	111	28
Mid & East Antrim	110	68	43	25	39	23.4	91	85	-6	107	16
Mid Ulster	134	82	79	3	14	8.4	91	210	119	163	72
Newry Mourne & Down	128	79	78	1	23	13.8	92	155	63	170	78
Totals	1,483	912	787	125	317	190.2	1102	1625	523	1689	587

Unclassified

81

ITEM 5

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	20 August 2024
File Reference	ADM 24
Legislation	N/A
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Blair Mayne Bursary Sub-Committee
Attachments	Minutes of Meeting of Blair Mayne Bursary Sub-Committee Held on 8th August 202

Attached are the Minutes of the Meeting of the Blair Mayne Bursary Sub-Committee held on 8th August.

Items of note in the minutes are detailed below:

There would be a new narrative for the applicants to aspire to.

The successful applicant will aspire to the example of Blair Mayne including *the relentless pursuit of excellence (academia, sport, and adventure), indomitable spirit (personal resilience in the face of adversity), humility (supporting others), underpinned with a commitment to service.*

Not Applicable

82

The Scoring system was reviewed and amended.

Scoring going forward would be based on:

- **Relentless pursuit of excellence/self-belief**- A history or aspiration to be the very best at what you do
- **Personal Resilience** – The ability to overcome failure, disappointment, and adversity
- **Humility** – A track record and commitment to support others
- **Service (actively engaged in your community)** – A history of service or commitment to be a positive contributor of society.

Patronage and Ambassadors would be considered.

The subcommittee discussed establishing a Patron and Ambassadors.

Application process.

It was agreed that applications can be made by both video 3-minute limit and online written application.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Minutes and the decisions contained therein be adopted and that delegated authority be granted to the Sub-Committee to move forward with the recommendations discussed ready to assess applications and award Blair Mayne Bursaries in February 2025.

Blair Mayne Bursary Sub-Committee

Minutes of Meeting Thursday 8th August 2024 at 3pm Committee Room,
Church Street, Newtownards.

In Attendance

Simon Nicholls – Chair
Councillor Victoria Moore
Councillor Richard Smart
Terence Troughton
Amanda Irvine - Customer Services Manager

Lisa McVea – Note taker

Apologies

Apologies were received from
Jackie Patton
Councillor Steven Irvine
Councillor Stephen McIlveen
Alison Curtis – Head of Administration

Welcome and Introductions

AI welcomed and thanked members of the sub-committee for their attendance. AI advised subcommittee, that it has been agreed by council that prize fund has been increased from £500 to £1000 per category (Sport, Adventure & Academia) and a 4th award to be more inclusive by actively encouraging applicants with physical or mental disabilities.

SN recorded and acknowledged pride in former bursary recipient Rhys McClenaghan winning gold medal in Olympics and apologised for lack of engagement/leadership as chair with having his own work commitments.

New Narrative

It was discussed and reviewed by the subcommittee a new narrative that the applicants will aspire to:

The successful applicant will aspire to the example of Blair Mayne including ***the relentless pursuit of excellence (academia, sport and adventure), indomitable spirit (personal resilience in the face of adversity), humility (supporting others), underpinned with a commitment to service.***

Scoring points on applications

SN displayed email, on screen, which was sent out to subcommittee, prior to meeting, showing rough draft of 4 scoring points for application.

Subcommittee discussed each point and made amendments where they felt appropriate. The 4 points agreed were:

- **Relentless pursuit of excellence/self-belief-** A history or aspiration to be the very best at what you do

- **Personal Resilience** – The ability to overcome failure, disappointment and adversity
- **Humility** – A track record and commitment to support others
- **Service (actively engaged in your community)** – A history of service or commitment to be a positive contributor of society.

Each scoring point will be scored out of 10 (highest possible score – 40 pts).

It was agreed that the 4 points would be helpful to both committee and applicants to help with scoring. SN advised that if there was a big difference in committee members scores, that they would then discuss the scores with each other and agree to round up or round down the score.

Patronage and Ambassadors

The subcommittee have been considering patrons and ambassadors for the bursary. The subcommittee discussed that it would be good to consider Rhys McClenaghan as a Patron for the Bursary possibly by endorsing through a short statement.

Subcommittee discussed trying to establish Ambassadors – 1 per discipline (Sport, Adventure, Academia) and hopefully someone with physical or mental disability. AI is going to look back to find previous recipients. RS suggested inviting someone with a masters.

This is all still under consideration.

Applications

The subcommittee discussed how applicants can apply going forward. VM suggested that it would be good to encourage the young generation with a disability to apply. VM was worried that a written application was disadvantaging some and would result in some not applying. It was suggested that applicants have a choice of applying through written application (word limit) or video application (3-minute limit).

AI called Gary McCormick (Multimedia) during the meeting to ask if applying by video was possible. Gary advised that it could not be done through the website but would be possible to put in attachment on an email.

SN suggested to pilot applying by both written and video applications this year to which Subcommittee agreed.

Advertisement

TT queried why pictures of participants were taken separately and placed in both the spectator and chronicle as this would cost more out of the budget. It was agreed by the subcommittee that all participants should be in one picture and put into one advertisement to save on cost and value for money. It was noted that the papers may run their own articles and photos.

Actions for the next meeting

- SN will send out email to committee members who could not attend meeting to update with what was discussed to get the views of others.

Suggestions for the Agenda for the next meeting:

- To agree on milestone dates
- To agree on application closing date
- To agree on ceremony date
- Final paperwork to be agreed

AOB - None

Date of next meeting

Options were discussed (below suited those in the room) but yet to be confirmed.

- Thursday 19th September
- Wednesday 25th September
- Friday 27th September

Meeting to be held in Committee Room, Church Street, Newtownards.

Unclassified

86

ITEM 6

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	09 August 2024
File Reference	EQ15
Legislation	Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 49a of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Update on proposals requiring EQIAs
Attachments	Appendix 1 Cabinet Office email and guidance

Background

This paper examines three separate but similar requests:

- The renaming of Portavogie Square
- The renaming of Marine Gardens, Bangor
- A memorial to Queen Elizabeth II at Marine Gardens

In March 2023, the Council agreed to a Notice of Motion 'to *rename the square area at Portavogie War Memorial Queen Elizabeth Square in memory of the late Queen Elizabeth II*'.

In January 2024, Council agreed that *'The Marine Gardens, Bangor, once redeveloped be named The Queen Elizabeth II Marine Gardens, subject to equality screening and consultation, and officers continue to engage with the Cabinet Office to seek their approval.'*

Not Applicable

In March 2024, Council agreed that 'in recognition of the 70 years of service rendered by the late her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II gives consideration to the erection of a permanent memorial of Queen Elizabeth II at the redeveloped marine gardens. A report to be brought back to Council to include options on the commissioning and costings of the memorial. Any decision arising from this will be subject to an EQIA.'

Update on Portavogie

It was noted during the Council meeting in March 2023 that this proposal would be subject to new guidance. A request for permission to use a protected title was submitted to the Cabinet Office for approval.

The Cabinet Office has responded (Appendix 1) by suggesting requests that incorporate 'memorial' or 'remembrance' in a proposed name are likely to be looked upon favourably, where possible. The full title of Queen Elizabeth II will continue to be closely protected and only be granted for applications with strong Royal connections.

To ensure the use of Queen Elizabeth II's name continues to be undertaken in a dignified and appropriate manner, approval will be required.

It is suggested that the following information be included in any request:

- Reason(s) why the name is being sought
- A history of the organisation/body
- Details of any Royal connections or associations (where applicable)
- Any other information that is considered appropriate

The Cabinet Office state that the request be resubmitted on completion of the above information and have also suggested **that a public consultation be carried out.**

Update on Marine Gardens

A request for permission to use a protected title was submitted to the Cabinet Office for approval in May 2024 and a follow up sent in September 2024. A response has yet to be received. It is anticipated that a similar response to the request for Portavogie is likely to be received.

Update on a Memorial to Queen Elizabeth II at Marine Gardens

An options paper is expected to be presented to October Corporate Committee. Once a preferred option is chosen, a request for approval will be submitted to the Cabinet Office.

Next steps

The Council has engaged with a consultant for initial advice on these EQIAs. His recommendation is for a single EQIA to be completed for all 3 requests (entitled 'Request to Cabinet Office for Renaming of Council Facilities at: Portavogie Square; Marine Gardens/Queen's Parade; Memorial Statue) and would provide an

Not Applicable

opportunity to gauge opinion on each proposed request both separately and in combination.

The EQIA would proceed once Cabinet Office guidance had been forthcoming for the two further proposals for Bangor - but working to the assumption that the guidance is not likely to be dissimilar.

On completion of the EQIA the Council would then be in a position to approach the Cabinet Office with a request for renaming supported by public consultation.

It should be noted that EQIAs are resource intensive and so therefore in combining them the Council is seeking to maximise efficiency and minimise cost. It will be essential to dedicate necessary time and resources to the consultation process to encourage and maximise participation, particularly by marginalised groups. It is anticipated that the cost of this EQIA exercise will be approximately £6,500. This includes, advertising fees, hire for the venues for consultation and fees for the consultant. This would be considerably higher if the EQIAs were conducted individually.

Consultation process

Public consultation will include an online questionnaire, which will be available through the Council's Citizen Space portal; alternative paper copies and alternative languages can be requested through the Compliance Officer (Equality and Disability). The ECNI recommends that for an EQIA, public authorities allow a minimum consultation period of 12 weeks.

The EQIA will be advertised in The County Down Spectator, The Newtownards Chronicle, and on the Council's Social Media Platforms, as well as being emailed to all consultation groups within Equality and Good Relations Sections.

Three face-to-face public consultations will take place during the consultation phase. These will be held in Bangor, Newtownards, and another area within the Ards Peninsula. Holding a public consultation in the Ards Peninsula will allow those from more rural areas to attend without having to travel a great distance in line with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. Council to agree this location.

A special meeting of the Ards and North Down Consultative Panel will be held in line with the Equality Scheme and within the agreed constitution.

After the 12-week consultation, a final report will be written, presented to the Council, and made available online for the public, prior to any request being sent through to the cabinet Office.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council agrees to the approach outlined (to complete a single EQIA for all 3 requests), subject to:

- Approval of a preferred option for a Memorial to Queen Elizabeth II; and

Not Applicable

89

- Responses from the Cabinet Office regarding the renaming of Marine Gardens and the Memorial to Queen Elizabeth II.

Appendix 2 – Email from Cabinet Office and guidance referred to in email.

Dear Susie

Request for permission to use a protected title

Thank you for your letter dated 15 December 2023 requesting permission to rename the square in the village of Portavogie 'Queen Elizabeth Square'. We apologise for the delay in responding to your request.

Your letter notes that "any approval of the use of name will of course be conditional on following our own Council policy process which includes consultation with the public." Therefore, we propose that this request be revisited upon the completion of the public consultation to support your application.

Additionally, given your request is in memory of Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, we'd like to note that grants of this nature are made sparingly with strict standards applied. Please refer to our Memorialisation Guidance found [here](#) (inserted on next page) which sets out these requirements for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine

Royal Names Team

Cabinet Office

Appendix 2 – Email from Cabinet Office and guidance referred to in email.**PUBLIC ROYAL NAMES MEMORIALISATION GUIDANCE****USE OF NAMES AND TITLES OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II FOR MEMORIALISATION**

Permission to use the title 'Royal', or the names and titles of members of the Royal Family, including the name of the late Queen, and other protected Royal titles is a mark of favour granted by the Sovereign, acting on the advice of his Ministers.

The protected Royal titles are sparingly granted and strict standards are applied. As a matter dealt with under the Royal Prerogative, information about any criteria which may exist and the reasons for the grant or refusal of an application are not disclosed.

Communities, organisations and individuals may wish to mark the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and commemorate her extraordinary reign through the use of her name and title, for example by naming a park, garden or street.

Requests that incorporate 'memorial' or 'remembrance' in a proposed name are likely to be looked upon favourably, where possible. The full title of Queen Elizabeth II will continue to be closely protected and only be granted for applications with strong Royal connections.

To ensure the use of Queen Elizabeth II's name continues to be undertaken in a dignified and appropriate manner, approval will be required. Requests should be directed to the relevant teams below. It is suggested that the following information be included in any request:

- *Reason(s) why the name is being sought*
- *A history of the organisation/body*
- *Details of any Royal connections or associations (where applicable)*
- *Any other information that is considered appropriate*
- *The application should be made by the senior officer of the organisation, e.g. Chairman, President, Chief Executive, or Honorary Secretary.*

Careful consideration will be given in due course to the commissioning of an official national memorial to Queen Elizabeth II.

*Anyone may create and erect or display an **unofficial** statue or portrait, subject to the usual planning regulations and approvals. Formal approval is not required unless there is a commercial element to the project. However, for any large-scale, public-facing projects, organisations may wish to write to the Private Secretary's Office at Buckingham Palace for information purposes as a courtesy.*

Contact information

England & Northern Ireland: royalnames@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Scotland: protocolandhonours@gov.scot

Wales: brandingqueries@gov.wales and royalnames@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Unclassified

92

ITEM 7a**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Finance
Date of Report	30 August 2024
File Reference	FIN23
Legislation	Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Strategic Budget Report - July 2024
Attachments	Strategic Budget Report

Background

This is the first budget report for the financial year. It sets out the variances for expenditure and income for the first four months and shows a budgetary surplus of £171k, thus far.

The budgeting policy agreed during the year requires officers to forecast potential outturn on four occasions during the financial year – these will occur at the end of June, August, November and January. The final column on page 2 of the report show that management are forecasting a potential surplus of around £725k. This is an early indication. The next forecasts two forecasts will feed into the estimates process and allow judgements to be made in respect of potential reserves positions at the year end.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Strategic Budget Report for July.



Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

93

July 2024 Strategic Budget Report



Strategic Budget Report

Category	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	2024/25 Budget £'000	EoY Forecast £'000
Payroll	12,874	13,086	(212)	39,884	39,917
Waste Disposal	2,638	2,673	(35)	7,475	7,453
Energy	1,010	1,104	(93)	3,664	2,964
Maintenance	817	795	22	2,783	2,949
Capital Financing	2,172	2,172	0	8,872	8,782
Other Expenditure	6,548	6,125	422	16,582	18,057
Total Expenditure	26,059	25,954	105	79,169	80,121
Service Income	(4,264)	(4,123)	(141)	(12,602)	(13,367)
District Rates & General Grants	(22,192)	(22,047)	(135)	(66,196)	(66,609)
Non-Service Income – EMF Appropriations	50	50	0	(871)	(870)
Total Income	(26,396)	(26,120)	(294)	79,669	(80,846)
Surplus	(337)	(167)	(171)	(500)	(725)



Payroll

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
12,874	13,086	(212)
Vacancies This equates to approx. 22 vacant FTE posts over the payroll savings budget.		(311)
Other Overtime / Casuals £67k; Miscellaneous £33k.		99



Waste Disposal

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Price	Volume
2,638	2,673	(35)	(32)	(3)
Landfill tonnage down 217 tonnes and slower gate than budget per tonne (£0.47 per tonne).		(33)	(5)	(28)
Blue bin waste up 50 tonnes plus slightly lower gate fee than budget (£0.51 per tonne)		1	(2)	3
Organics 1 (Garden) waste down 171 tonnes plus lower gate fee than budget (£1.72 per tonne)		(14)	(4)	(10)
Organics 2 (Food) waste up 927 tonnes which is partially offset by lower gate fee than budget (£2.09 per tonne)		53	(19)	71
Other waste streams – timber, paint, glass, street sweepings, rubble, plastics		(42)	(2)	(40)



Energy

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
1,010	1,104	(93)
Vehicle fuel		(58)
Electricity		4
Gas		(37)
Heating Oil		(5)



Maintenance

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
817	795	22
Statutory Maintenance – highest spend to date - Ards Blair Mayne (£42k), Bangor Aurora (£41k), North Rd Depot (£24k), Bangor Waste Transfer Station (£19k).		12
Planned Maintenance – highest spend to date – Ards Blair Mayne (£30k).		22
Other Maintenance – reactive, vehicle, playgrounds		(15)



Other Expenditure

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
6,548	6,125	422
Insurance costs - premiums (£107k), self insurance (£116k)		223
Compliance costs – rents, LPS valuation fees offset by increased Compliance income (rents)		20
Recruitment costs		27
Materials - Transport		28
Water / Trade Effluent costs		17
Range of adverse variances across Services. Possibly budget profiling / timing.		107



Service Income

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
(4,264)	(4,123)	(141)
Parks & Cemeteries – franchise and cemetery income		(55)
Leisure – Leisure Centres, Londonderry Park, Community Centres		(139)
Lands & Compliance		(43)
Building Control		(33)
Investment Income		(21)
Planning Fees		80
Off Street Car Parks		63
Waste Services – trade waste & bulky waste collections		42



District Rates & General Grants

YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
(22,192)	(22,047)	(135)
LPS are indicating a positive 24/25 penny product finalisation		(153)
Estimated 24/25 DRG finalisation small clawback		18



By Directorate

	Year to Date Actual £'000	Year to Date Budget £'000	Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Year End Forecast £'000
Community & Wellbeing	3,575	4,002	(445)	12,899	12,101
Environment	9,191	9,400	(209)	28,331	27,516
Prosperity	1,644	1,691	(47)	5,159	5,175
Place	476	505	(28)	1,849	1,761
Corporate Services	4,236	4,134	102	9,265	9,814
Chief Executive	473	484	(11)	1,622	1,528
Payroll Savings Budget	-	(596)	596	(1,729)	-
NET COST OF SERVICES	19,596	19,637	(41)	57,396	57,896
Other Income and Expenditure	(19,934)	(19,804)	(130)	(57,896)	(58,621)
Grand Totals	(337)	(167)	(171)	(500)	(725)

Unclassified

103

ITEM 7b

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Finance
Date of Report	27 August 2024
File Reference	FIN165
Legislation	Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below: Not applicable
Subject	Prudential Indicators & Treasury Management – 2024/25 Qtr 1
Attachments	

Introduction

In February 2024, Council approved its annual Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including the setting of Prudential Indicators (PIs) for the current financial year ending 31 March 2025. These are statutory requirements in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code.

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the PIs and treasury management activity as required by the CIPFA Codes, at the end of July 2024.

Not Applicable

104

1.1 Capital - Expenditure & Financing

The PIs for capital expenditure and financing should ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable. Updates to these PIs are set out below.

	Original Forecast	Revised Forecast
Table 1.11	£m	£m
Capital Expenditure 2024/25 (Current Year)	19.406	15.662

The original estimate of £19.406m has been revised to £15.662m, reflecting the capital expenditure that is now expected to be incurred by 31 March 2025. This is consistent with the deliverability risks outlined in the 2024/25 budget strategy, where it was reported that capital ambition is not being matched by delivery due to reasons including Officer resource, business readiness and planning and funding delays. The main schemes impacted by such risks for this reporting period are Bangor Waterfront, Greenways, Ward Park Redevelopment and the Digital Innovation Hub.

The revised capital expenditure forecasts for the three year plan, together with the capital financing implications and previous year activity are summarised below.

	Actual	Revised Forecast		
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Table 1.12	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Expenditure	6.512	15.662	26.840	39.552
Financed by:				
Loans	4.201	7.293	15.487	19.934
Grants	1.356	6.360	9.991	19.068
Capital Receipts	0.625	1.594	0.967	0.550
Revenue/Reserves	0.330	0.415	0.395	-

1.2 Capital – Capital Financing Requirement and External Borrowings

The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP (minimum revenue provision). See section 1.4 for further information on MRP.

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short term. The Council has complied and expects to continue to comply with this requirement in the medium term as shown below.

Not Applicable

105

	Actual	Revised Forecast		
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Table 1.2	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	75.068	79.978	84.097	97.276
External Gross Borrowing	(59.651)	(56.875)	(64.099)	(77.364)
External Gross Debt (Leases)	-	(4.142)	(3.792)	(3.460)
Under/(Over) Borrowing Requirement	15.417	18.961	16.206	16.452
Gross Borrowing within CFR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The difference between the CFR and the Gross Borrowing figures represents the Council's underlying need to borrow (£18.9m 24/25 forecast) and indicates that historic capital expenditure has been temporarily financed from internal revenue resources. This has been made possible due to an increase in the Council's cash reserves in the current and previous years. The position has been similar for several years now with the Council last taking out long-term borrowings in November 2018.

1.3 Capital - Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit each year, known as the 'Authorised Limit'. In line with statutory guidance, a lower 'operational boundary' is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

The revised forecast for external gross borrowing (including leases) at 31 March 2025 is £61m (table 1.2). The Council is therefore forecast to remain well within both the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary set for the year as follows:

Table 1.3	2024/25
Authorised limit – borrowing	£ 88.926m
Operational boundary – borrowing	£ 83.926m

1.4 Capital - Revenue Budget Implications

Capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget. Instead, interest payable on borrowings and MRP (minimum revenue provision), together known as capital financing costs, are charged to revenue. These financing costs are compared to the net revenue stream ie. the amount funded from District Rates and general government grants, to show the proportion of the net revenue stream which is made up of capital financing costs.

Table 1.4	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Forecast
Financing costs (£m)	£7.9m	£9.2m	£9.6m	£10.2m
Proportion of net revenue stream (%)	12.7%	13.9%	13.6%	13.4%

Not Applicable

106

The forecast financing costs for 2024/25 of £9.2m is in line with the budget set for the year. The increase in the proportion of financing costs to the net revenue stream is due to the inclusion of 'right of use' assets in the financing costs from 1 April 2024 following a change in accounting rules. These costs were previously treated as operating leases and accounted for as revenue rental charges.

2.1 Treasury Management – Debt Activity

The following table summarises the position on long-term borrowings at 31 July 2024.

Table 2.1				
Lender	Balance 01/04/24	New Loans	Repayments	Balance 31/07/24
Dept of Finance	£ 53.376m	£ -	£ -	£ 53.376m
Banks (LOBOs)	£ 6.275m	£ -	£ -	£ 6.275m
Totals	£ 59.651m	£ -	£ -	£ 59.651m

The Council does not currently hold any short-term borrowings.

The revised capital financing requirement (table 1.2) shows that the Council could increase its level of external borrowings to £80m by 31 March 2025. However, an assessment of the Council's cashflow position forecasts that there will be adequate cash reserves to temporarily finance capital expenditure for the remainder of the current year and therefore no further borrowing is anticipated before 31 March 2025.

After repayments on existing long-term loans are made during the remainder of 2024/25, the level of external borrowings at 31 March 2025 is forecast to be £56.9m.

2.2 Treasury Management - Debt Related Treasury Activity Limits

The tables below show the position of all debt related treasury activity limits.

Table 2.21		
Interest rate exposures	Limit 2024/25	Actual at 31/07/24
Quantity of debt held at variable interest rates - upper limit	30%	2%
Quantity of debt held at fixed interest rates - upper limit	100%	98%

Not Applicable

107

Table 2.22			
Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing	Lower Limit 2024/25	Upper Limit 2024/25	Forecast 2024/25
Under 12 months	0%	15%	4.7%
12 months to 2 years	0%	15%	6.0%
2 years to 5 years	0%	20%	13.8%
5 years to 10 years	0%	30%	27.2%
10 years and above	30%	90%	48.3%

2.3 Treasury Management - Investment Activity

The objectives of the Council's investment strategy are safeguarding the repayment of the principal and interest on its investments on time, with the investment return being a secondary objective. The current investment climate continues to be one of overriding risk consideration, particularly that of counterparty risk. In line with advice provided by treasury management consultants, officers continue to implement an operational investment strategy of placing short-term investments with approved high-quality counterparties.

For the period from 1 April to 31 July 2024, Council has earned interest of £218k on investment deals with approved financial institutions as summarised below:

Table 2.31	Average Deposit Size	Average Term	Average Interest Rate	Interest Earned
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£3.0m	Call A/c	5.20%	£52,612
Invesco Investment Mgt Ltd	£2.9m	Call A/c	5.21%	£50,887
State Street Global Advisors	£3.0m	Call A/c	5.20%	£52,406
Barclays Bank	£1.8m	Call A/c	5.00%	£30,655
Bank of Scotland	£2.2m	Call A/c	5.14%	£31,369
Santander	£1.0m	Call A/c	3.35%	£369
Totals				£218,298

This compares favourably to the budget set for the same period of £239k, resulting in a favourable variance of £21k.

The total balance of funds held in investment accounts at 31 July 2024 was £8.35m.

Not Applicable

The table below shows the risk and return metrics on the Council’s investments held at 30 June 2024 against other NI Councils.

Table 2.32	Counterparties	Investments	
	Credit Rating	Liquidity	Rate of Return (%)
ANDBC	A+	100%	5.17%
NI Council Average	A+	65%	5.06%

Source: Arlingclose Ltd Local Authority Quarterly Investment Benchmarking report Jun-24

The Council's limit for total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days is £500k. The Council has not entered into any such investments.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

Not Applicable

109

Source notes

Table 1.11 Original Forecast

Source: [1.2 240213 PI Appendix 2 Capital Strategy 2024-25.docx](#)

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £m

Capital Expenditure by Directorate	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Community & Wellbeing	2.857	11.732	17.271	14.981
Environment	2.550	3.108	2.885	2.500
Place & Prosperity	2.176	3.476	9.998	11.133
Other	0.205	1.090	0.439	1.168
Total Capital Expenditure	7.788	19.406	30.593	29.782
Add Leases onto Balance Sheet	-	4.515	-	-
Total Capital Expenditure (including Leases)	7.788	23.921	30.593	29.782

Table 1.11 Revised Forecast

Source: [Rates Pack 2025-26 v2 \(Q1 PI&TM report\).xlsx](#)

Sheet: Prudential Indicators, table CS1

CS1	Capital Expenditure	Current Year	Future Years			
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
	Capex by Directorate	£	£	£	£	
	Community & Wellbeing	8,783,287	17,515,988	18,029,121	19,129,705	
	Environment	3,113,638	2,885,000	4,500,000	6,500,000	
	Place	2,985,483	5,690,675	15,855,126	26,210,617	
	Other	780,000	748,874	1,167,980	10,286,826	
	Total Capital Expenditure	15,662,407	26,840,537	39,552,227	62,127,149	
	Leases brought onto Balance Sheet	4,514,848				
	Total Capital Expenditure (incl Leases)	20,177,255	26,840,537	39,552,227	62,127,149	

Table 1.12 2023/24 figures

Source: [5 PI&TM 2023-24 Q4 \(Final\) report with source notes.docx](#)

Table 1.12 below summarises how the capital expenditure for 2023/24 of £6.512m has been financed.

Table 1.12	Actual
	2023/24
	£m
Capital Expenditure	6.512
Financed by:	
Grants	(1.356)
Capital Receipts	(0.625)
Revenue/Reserves	(0.330)
Balance to be met from borrowings	4.201

Not Applicable

110

Table 1.12 Forecast Years

Sources:

[Rates Pack 2025-26 v2 \(Q1 PI&TM report\).xlsx](#)

Sheet: Prudential Indicators, Tables CS1 & CS2

CS1	Capital Expenditure	Current Year	Future Years		
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Capex by Directorate	£	£	£	£
	Community & Wellbeing	8,783,287	17,515,988	18,029,121	19,129,705
	Environment	3,113,638	2,885,000	4,500,000	6,500,000
	Place	2,985,483	5,690,675	15,855,126	26,210,617
	Other	780,000	748,874	1,167,980	10,286,826
	Total Capital Expenditure	15,662,407	26,840,537	39,552,227	62,127,149
	Leases brought onto Balance Sheet	4,514,848			
	Total Capital Expenditure (incl Leases)	20,177,255	26,840,537	39,552,227	62,127,149
		-			
CS2	Capital Financing	Current Year	Future Years		
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		£	£	£	£
	Capital Grants & Contributions	6,360,502	9,991,345	19,067,804	26,150,490
	Capital Receipts	1,593,851	967,000	550,000	550,000
	Revenue/Reserves	414,620	395,250	-	-
	Debt (Borrowing)	7,293,434	15,486,943	19,934,422	35,426,659
	Debt (Leases)	4,514,848	-	-	-
	Totals	20,177,255	26,840,537	39,552,227	62,127,149

Also:

[2504 Jul-24 Capital Budget Report.xlsx](#) EOY forecast

1. Gross Capital Expenditure (includes grant funded expenditure)					
Category	Gross Budget £'000	Spend to date £'000	EOY Forecast £'000	Spend to Date Variance £'000	EOY Variance £'000
Major Projects	12,146	482	8,344	(11,664)	(3,802)
Minor Schemes & Purchases	2,825	123	2,521	(2,702)	(304)
Operational & Recurring	4,488	266	4,488	(4,221)	0
In Year changes	281	52	310	0	29
Total Expenditure	19,739	923	15,662	(18,588)	(4,077)

Not Applicable

111

Table 1.2 2023/24 figuresSource: [5 PI&TM 2023-24 Q4 \(Final\) report with source notes.docx](#)

	Estimate	Actual
	31/03/24	31/03/24
Table 1.21	£m	£m
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	81.235	75.068
External Gross Borrowing	63.034	59.651
Under/(Over) Borrowing Requirement	18.201	15.417
Gross Borrowing within CFR	Yes	Yes

Table 1.2 Forecast Years[Rates Pack 2025-26 v2 \(Q1 PI&TM report\).xlsx](#)

Sheet: Prudential Indicators, Tables CS4 & CS6

CS4	Capital Financing Requirement	Current Year	Future Years	
		31/03/2025	31/03/2026	31/03/2027
		£	£	£
	Opening CFR	75,068,159	75,836,404	84,446,774
	Capital Expenditure	15,662,407	26,840,537	39,552,227
	Leases brought onto Balance Sheet at 01/04/24	4,514,848		
	Less Capital Grants & Contributions	(6,360,502)	(9,991,345)	(19,067,804)
	Less Capital Receipts Financing	(1,593,851)	(967,000)	(550,000)
	Less Reserves Financing	(414,620)	(395,250)	-
	Less MRP & VRP (Borrowing)	(6,525,189)	(6,876,572)	(6,773,375)
	Less MRP & VRP (Leases)	(373,104)	(349,728)	(332,149)
	Closing CFR	79,978,148	84,097,047	97,275,673

CS6	Gross Debt and CFR	Current Year	Future Years	
		31/03/2025	31/03/2026	31/03/2027
		£	£	£
	Gross External Debt (Borrowing)	56,875,625	64,099,438	77,364,243
	Gross External Debt (Leases)	4,141,744	3,792,016	3,459,868
	CFR	79,978,148	84,097,047	97,275,673
	Under/(Over) Borrowed	18,960,779	16,205,592	16,451,562
		-	(4,141,744)	(3,792,016)

Not Applicable

112

Table 1.3Source: [Rates Pack 2025-26 v2 \(Q1 PI&TM report\).xlsx](#)

Sheet: Prudential Indicators, Tables CS8 & CS8

CS8	Authorised Limit for External Debt OB plus £5m (borrowing)	Current Year	Future Years	
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
		£	£	£
	Authorised Limit - Borrowing	84,784,129	85,305,030	98,815,805
	Authorised Limit - Leases	4,141,744	3,792,016	3,459,868
	Authorised Limit for External Debt	88,925,873	89,097,046	102,275,673
CS8	Operational Boundary for External Debt Use CFR plus any known adjustments	Current Year	Future Years	
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
		£	£	£
	Operational Boundary - Borrowing	79,784,129	80,305,030	93,815,805
	Operational Boundary - Leases	4,141,744	3,792,016	3,459,868
	Operational Boundary for External Debt	83,925,873	84,097,046	97,275,673

Table 1.4 2023/24 figuresSource: [5 PI&TM 2023-24 Q4 \(Final\) report with source notes.docx](#)

	Estimate	Actual	Variance
Table 1.41	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
Capital financing cost (£m)	£7.867m	£7.867m	£0.0m
Net Revenue Stream	£62.743m	£62.122m	£0.621m
Proportion of net revenue stream (%)	12.5%	12.7%	0.2%

Table 1.4 Forecast YearsSource: [Rates Pack 2025-26 v2 \(Q1 PI&TM report\).xlsx](#)

Sheet: Prudential Indicators, Tables CS9

CS9	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	Current Year	Future Years	
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
		£	£	£
	Loan Interest Payable	2,256,411	2,363,118	3,037,788
	MRP & VRP	6,525,189	6,876,572	6,773,375
	MRP & Interest - Leases	392,856	387,731	387,731
	Total Financing Costs	9,174,456	9,627,422	10,198,894
	Net Revenue Stream (Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income)	66,196,300	70,914,300	76,184,800
	% Financing Costs to Revenue Stream	13.9%	13.6%	13.4%

Not Applicable

113

Table 2.1

Source: TOTAL enquiry on code 80201-8888

From (2025/1) To (2025/4). Cost Centre equals 80201 (Long Term Borrowings). Detail equals 8888 (Bal Sheet Detail)									
Opening Balance		Net Activity		Closing Balance					
-59,650,705.98		0.00		-59,650,705.98					
Internal Ref.	Batch Ref	Trans. Type	Reference 1	Description 1	Period	Reference 2	Description 2	Trans. Date	Credits

Table 2.21

Source: [1.1 Register of Loans.xls](#) No change since 31/03/24

Register of Loans to Ards and North Down Boroc						Updated					31/03/2024		
Loan Number and Type Details						Loan Value Details							
Loan Number	Lender	Legacy Council	Type	Interest Type	Payable	Annual Principal	Annual Interest	Annual Total	Principal Repayment on Maturity	Principal Outstanding at 31/03/24			
58	4439401	DoF	AND	EP	Fixed	Half Yearly	333,333.34	Varies	Varies	0.00	7,666,667		
59	4439901	DoF	AND	EP	Fixed	Half Yearly	361,827.58	Varies	Varies	0.00	7,331,835		
60	4431101	DoF	AND	EP	Fixed	Half Yearly	361,827.58	Varies	Varies	0.00	8,103,440		
61	DR609	BOR	ABC	Ministry	Variable	Half Yearly	0.00	65,900.00	65,900.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000		
62	DR605	BARC	ABC	Ministry	Fixed	Half Yearly	0.00	48,750.00	48,750.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000		
63	DR609	BARC	ABC	Ministry	Fixed	Half Yearly	0.00	192,375.00	192,375.00	4,275,000.00	4,275,000		
Total Principal Outstanding for all Loans as at											£ 59,650,706		
											Fixed	£ 58,650,706	98%
											Variable	£ 1,000,000	2%
											D of F	£ 53,375,706	89%
											Market	£ 6,275,000	11%

Table 2.22

Source: [1.3 Record of Loan Principal repayments due by maturity.xlsx](#)

Year to	Principal Repayments			Total	Loan Principal Outstanding		
	£	£	£		£	As at	
20/03/2025	1,752,991	1,022,969	-	2,775,960	2,775,978	Due in 1 yr	4.65%
20/03/2026	1,559,354	1,022,969	1,000,000	3,582,323	3,582,353	Due in 1-2 yrs	6.02%
20/03/2027	1,577,230	1,022,969	400,000	3,000,199	3,000,199		
20/03/2028	1,587,414	1,022,969	-	2,610,403			
20/03/2029	1,518,432	1,022,969	-	2,541,399	8,236,989	Due in 3 - 5 yrs	13.81%
20/03/2030	1,548,917	1,022,969	3,000,000	5,571,886			
20/03/2031	1,354,324	1,022,969	-	2,377,293			
20/03/2032	1,420,605	1,022,969	-	2,443,574			
20/03/2033	1,461,133	1,022,969	1,000,000	3,484,102			
20/03/2034	1,521,548	1,022,969	-	2,544,516	16,287,318	Due in 6-10 yrs	27.17%
20/03/2035	1,559,350	1,022,969	-	2,582,319			
20/03/2036	1,501,131	1,022,969	1,200,000	3,724,100			
20/03/2037	1,486,969	1,022,969	3,720,472	6,230,410			
20/03/2038	1,519,549	1,022,969	-	2,542,518			
20/03/2039	503,457	1,022,969	-	1,526,426			
20/03/2040	50,034	1,022,969	-	1,073,003			
20/03/2041	-	1,022,969	-	1,022,969			
20/03/2042	-	1,022,969	-	1,022,969			
20/03/2043	-	1,022,969	-	1,022,969			
20/03/2044	-	1,022,969	-	1,022,969			
20/03/2045	-	1,022,969	-	1,022,969			
20/03/2046	-	1,022,969	4,275,000	5,297,969			
20/03/2047	-	1,022,969	-	1,022,969			
20/03/2048	-	172,414	-	172,414			
20/03/2049	-	-	-	-			
20/03/2050	-	-	-	-			
				13	28,838,498	Due in > 10 yrs	48.35%
				21,263,879	21,263,879		100.00%
				54,685,472	54,685,472		
				0.43			
Maturity analysis including short-term variable borrowings at 31/03/24							
				59,650,712	2,775,978	0	4.65%
				0	3,582,353	0	6.02%
				8,236,989	8,236,989	0	13.81%
				16,287,318	16,287,318	0	27.17%
				28,838,498	28,838,498	0	48.35%
				59,650,712	59,650,712	59,650,712	100.00%

Not Applicable

114

Table 2.31Source: [2504-July 24 ST Investments Register.xlsx](#)

Interest earned:

Counterparty	(Avg) Principal Sum	Start Date	Maturity Date	Days to Maturity	Last Interest Date	No. of Days	Average Sum/Total Sum	(Avg) Interest Rate	Interest (50002-9521)		
									Opening Accrual	Earned in year	Paid in year
Barclays Investment	£ 1,834,287	01/04/2024	31/07/2024	0	31/07/2024	122	13.00%	5.00%	£ 6,958.26	£ 30,655.20	£ 23,242
CCLA	£ 3,025,873	01/04/2024	31/07/2024	0	31/07/2024	122	21.54%	5.20%	£ 46,989.89	£ 52,611.75	£ 46,989
Santander	£ 1,000,000	01/04/2024	31/07/2024	0	31/07/2024	4	7.12%	3.35%	£ -	£ 369.18	£ -
BOS	£ 2,246,655	01/04/2024	31/07/2024	0	31/07/2024	99	16.00%	5.14%	£ 12,793.38	£ 31,369.06	£ 12,793
Invesco	£ 2,920,264	01/04/2024	31/07/2024	0	31/07/2024	122	20.79%	5.21%	£ 41,227.70	£ 50,887.40	£ 41,227
SSGA	£ 3,017,839	01/04/2024	31/07/2024	0	31/07/2024	91	21.49%	5.20%	£ 27,278.20	£ 52,406.16	£ 27,278
						560	1.00		£ 134,617.49	£ 238,988.79	£ 158,982

Investment balances:

Deposit Ref	Counterparty	Principal (80101-8888)		
		Opening Balances	Changes in year	Closing Balances
TD25001	Barclays Investment	£ 1,500,000	-£ 1,450,000	£ 50,000
TD25002	CCLA	£ 3,000,000	-	£ 3,000,000
TD25003	Santander	£ -	-	£ -
TD25004	BOS	£ -	£ 900,000	£ 900,000
TD25005	Invesco	£ 3,000,000	-£ 1,600,000	£ 1,400,000
TD25006	SSGA	£ 3,000,000	-	£ 3,000,000
TOTALS		£ 10,500,000	(£ 2,150,000)	£ 8,350,000

Variance from budget at period 4

Source: Revenue budget report

Ards and North Down Borough Council
www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Service Income


YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000
(4,264)	(4,123)	(141)
Parks & Cemeteries – franchise and cemetery income		(55)
Leisure – Leisure Centres, Londonderry Park, Community Centres		(139)
Lands & Compliance		(43)
Building Control		(33)
Investment Income		(21)
Planning Fees		80
Off Street Car Parks		63
Waste Services – trade waste & bulky waste collections		42

Not Applicable

115

Table 2.32

Source: [Report 240630.xlsx](#)

 <p>Investment Benchmarking 30 June 2024</p>			
		<i>Ards & North Down</i>	<i>5 Northern Irish Districts Average</i>
			<i>118 LAs Average</i>
Internal Investments	£10.7m	£17.1m	£63.9m
Cash Plus & Short Bond Funds	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.7m
Strategic Pooled Funds	£0.0m	£0.0m	£11.5m
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	£10.7m	£17.1m	£76.1m
Security			
Average Credit Score	4.87	5.00	4.66
Average Credit Rating	A+	A+	A+
Average Credit Score (time-weighted)	4.87	5.01	4.41
Average Credit Rating (time-weighted)	A+	A+	AA-
Number of Counterparties / Funds	4	5	12
Proportion Exposed to Bail-in	100%	92%	62%
Liquidity			
Proportion Available within 7 days	100%	65%	52%
Proportion Available within 100 days	100%	98%	71%
Average Days to Maturity	1	23	10
Market Risks			
Average Days to Next Rate Reset	42	47	48
Strategic Fund Volatility	-	-	3.3%
Yield			
Internal Investment Return	5.17%	5.06%	5.07%
Cash Plus Funds - Income Return	-	-	3.94%
Strategic Funds - Income Return	-	-	5.16%
Total Investments - Income Return	5.17%	5.06%	5.06%
Cash Plus Funds - Capital Gain/Loss	-	-	1.96%
Strategic Funds - Capital Gain/Loss	-	-	-0.40%
Total Investments - Total Return	5.17%	5.06%	5.24%

Unclassified

116

ITEM 8a**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	10 September 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	18 July 2024
File Reference	NOM 191 - Deep concern at Poor State of the Roads across ANDBC
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Response to Notice of Motion - Deep concern at Poor State of the Roads across Ards and North Down
Attachments	Appendix 1- Letter to DfI from the Chief Executive dated 19 July Appendix 2 - Letter from DfI to Chief Executive dated 23 July

A Notice of Motion was originally agreed by Council:

"That this Council writes to the Department of Infrastructure to once again express our deep concern at the poor state of roads across Ards and North Down.

Council further requests that DfI changes their policy in relation to the depth of potholes that are required to be repaired back to 20 millimetres from the current 50 millimetres in order to improve the quality and safety of our roads network.

Further that Council writes to the Minister for Infrastructure expressing concern that Ards and North Down continues to receive the lowest Roads investment across

Not Applicable

117

Northern Ireland Councils and requests an increase in funding to make road repairs and resurfacing a priority and for fair allocation in funding for coastal defences, roads and pavements resurfacing and street lighting investment across our Borough as a matter of urgency."

Replies were received which were reported back to Committee in June 2024. The Committee subsequently asked for a further letter to be issued asking for the Council to:

Write back to the Minister to seek clarification on the range of weighted indicators being used to allocate resources for road maintenance.

A letter was sent from the Chief Executive to DfI on 17 July 2024. A reply was received on 23 July 2024 and a copy is attached.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes the response.



SMcC/cd/CS18.6.2024, item 16

17 July 2024

Mr John O'Dowd MLA
Minister for Infrastructure
Department for Infrastructure
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB

Sent via email only: info@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter of 28 May 2024. At a meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council it was discussed and unanimously agreed to write back to you to seek clarification on the range of the weighted indicators being used to allocate resources for road maintenance noted in your letter.

I would be grateful if you could please consider this letter and respond accordingly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susie McCullough".

Susie McCullough
Chief Executive

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
JOHN O'DOWD MLA



Susie McCullough
Interim Chief Executive
Ards & North Down Borough Council

Private Office, 3rd Floor,
James House, Gasworks Site,
2 - 4 Cromac Street,
Belfast, BT7 2JA
Telephone: (028) 9054 0540
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Susie.McCullough@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Your reference: SMC/cd/C28.2.2024, item 8.4
Our reference: COR-1506-2024
23 July 2024

Susie, a chara,

INVESTMENT IN ROADS IN THE ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Thank you for your further letter dated 17 July 2024 in response to my letter dated 28 May 2024 (ref COR-1366-2024) requesting clarification on the range of weighted indicators being used to allocate resources for road maintenance.

The weighted indicators used in apportioning Capital (asset improvement, ie resurfacing, large patch repairs, etc) funding are updated annually and relate to;

- length and area of the road network,
- population of the Section Office area, and,
- number of actionable defects identified in the previous 12 months.

The distribution of Resource (routine maintenance, ie potholes, grass cutting, gully cleaning) funding is based on;

- need and the funding required to meet my Department's Limited Service policy.

As outlined in my previous letter, the distribution of funding allocations for road maintenance, are made on the basis of need which aims to ensure, as far as practicable, an equitable distribution of funds across the whole of the North. I can assure you that the Ards & North Down area receives a fair and proportionate share of the funding that is made available to my Department for road maintenance.

I would also reiterate that my Department has been operating in a difficult financial environment for a number of years due to underfunding and austerity by the British Government. This has had a significant impact on my Department's ability to deliver essential services such as road maintenance but my officials will continue to do all they can to carry out inspections and repair any defects meeting the current Limited Service maintenance policy. The value of our infrastructure cannot be overstated, and I will continue to work with Executive colleagues to ensure appropriate investment is made across all of the North.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. O'Dowd', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JOHN O'DOWD MLA
Minister for Infrastructure