



# Looking Forward Performance Improvement Plan **2025/2026**



**Ards and  
North Down**  
Borough Council

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## 1. Introduction

Ards and North Down Borough Council was established in 2015 as part of government's Local Government Reform programme. The Council consists of 40 elected councillors to represent the people of the Borough across 7 District Electoral Areas with the 5 main towns of Bangor, Newtownards, Donaghadee, Comber and Holywood and 19 smaller villages of Balloo, Ballygowan, Ballyhalbert, Ballywalter, Carrowdore, Conlig, Cloughey, Crawfordsburn, Greyabbey, Groomsport, Helens Bay, Killinchy, Kircubbin, Lisbane, Millisle, Portaferry, Portavogie, Seahill and Whiterock. The Council has a population of 164,223 people and covers an area of over 228 square miles and has around 115 miles of coastline, one of the longest in Northern Ireland.

## 2. Duty to Improve and arrangements for continuous improvement

The Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 to publish a Performance Improvement Plan each year that sets out at least one of the main short-term issues (improvement objectives) it wants to improve for people living and working in the Borough during the year ahead.

### ***Definition of Improvement***

*“Improvement” in the context of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 means more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the Council.*

Improvement for Ards and North Down Borough Council focusses our efforts on the issues that are most important to our residents and customers, ensuring that the things we do will enhance the sustainable quality of life and environment for our citizens helping us to create a better future for all.

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 2024-2028.

## Arrangements to secure continuous improvement

The Council has put in place arrangements to support performance management and improvement which will drive and provide assurance that we are delivering on our vision, shared outcomes and improvement objectives. To support its approach to continuous improvement and performance management Council has put in place a bespoke framework, PERFORM (see [Appendix 1](#)), which is used in recognition that successful performance is multi-faceted, that is, it is not sufficient to only prepare plans and monitor performance, as much else is necessary to deliver effective performance including engaging, developing, and inspiring staff, working with partners, having excellent processes and systems and communications with our customers, and stakeholders.

The diagram below illustrates how strategic objectives within the Community and Corporate Plans cascade through the organisation to each employee. Each plan sets out the expected outcomes and key actions to allow us to continuously monitor, report and review performance.





## The Big Plan 2017-2032

The Big Plan 2017-2032 (the Council's Community Plan) was published in April 2017 and provides an overarching framework setting out a shared vision and ambition that Ards and North Down's Strategic Community Planning Partnership has agreed to work towards over the next 15 years.

The Vision is "Ards and North Down is a vibrant, connected, healthy, safe and prosperous place to be".

The overarching, cross-cutting ambition of The Big Plan is to have empowered, resilient individuals and communities, to reduce inequalities; to promote good relations and sustainability; and to improve the accessibility of all public services. The Big Plan for Ards and North Down explains how we want to make life better for all the people who live in the Borough.

The Big Plan contains five outcomes. These are ambitious statements that we aspire to accurately reflect the situation of the people who live in Ards and North Down by the year 2032:

- **Outcome 1:** All people in Ards and North Down benefit from opportunities to fulfil their lifelong potential
- **Outcome 2:** All people in Ards and North Down benefit from being equipped to enjoy good health and wellbeing
- **Outcome 3:** All people in Ards and North Down benefit from communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure
- **Outcome 4:** All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous and inclusive economy
- **Outcome 5:** All people in Ards and North Down benefit from an environment that is valued, well-managed and accessible

## Corporate Plan 2024-2028

This is the third Corporate Plan for Ards and North Down Borough Council.

It aligns with the long-term aspirations of the Borough's Community Plan (The Big Plan 2017-2032).

The Corporate Plan serves as the Council's strategic framework for 2024-2028, setting out our vision to be **A Sustainable Borough**.

The Corporate Plan is underpinned by a range of strategic and service unit plans, which set out in more detail how we will deliver and resource the activities needed to work towards our vision.

The plan is driven by three corporate priorities:

1. **Economic** - Increasing economic growth 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 the Corporate Plan.



## Annual Service Plans

The Council's Service Planning process takes place between October and March each year. The Service Plans are working documents that:

- Detail how the organisation will deliver its services to meet the Corporate Plan Outcomes, Priorities and Vision to be A Sustainable Borough;
- Identify areas for improvement; and
- Detail the Key Performance Indicators that will be used to measure if it is achieving its purpose and progress towards its vision.

Service Plans are agreed by Directors and Heads of Service and adopted by the relevant standing committee annually with progress being reported every six months.

## Employee Appraisal Scheme

The Employee Appraisal Scheme is a mutually beneficial 1 to 1 conversation that an employee has with his/ her line manager annually. Resulting in joint agreement on enhancing performance and identifying learning and development needs, there are 4 main steps:

1. Review of progress
2. Colleague ideas for service improvement
3. Setting individual objectives for the year ahead
4. Agreeing learning and development needs

The emphasis is on the quality of the conversation and resulting outcomes.

## Our Values

The Council is committed to delivering on its Improvement Objectives within the context of our core values:



**Progression:** We will be proactive, ambitious, innovative, forward thinking and outward looking.

**Respect:** We will treat everyone in a fair and equitable manner, respecting diversity and each other's roles.

**Integrity:** We will always be open, honest, transparent, trustworthy and accountable in our business relationships.

**Delivery:** We will ensure a “can do” attitude, being passionate about achieving results, performance-driven and outcome focussed.

**Excellence:** We will strive to deliver continuously improving and excellent quality services whilst ensuring value for money.

## Performance Management System

Council has in place an electronic performance management system which allows it to:

- 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.

Further information on our how we are performing can be found [here](#).

## Strategic Planning Timetable

| Timeline               | Activity  |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>October – March</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Setting and Service Planning process</li> <li>• Identification of areas for improvement</li> <li>• CLT/ HoST consultation on Service Plans and key areas for improvement</li> <li>• Citizen Satisfaction Survey (every 2 years)</li> <li>• Service Plans approved by Standing Committees</li> <li>• Strike the Rate</li> <li>• Report on Performance to December Standing Committees (Quarter 1 and 2)</li> <li>• Report on Performance Improvement Plan to December Corporate Committee (Quarter 1 and 2)</li> </ul> |
| <b>April – May</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with community, stakeholders, employees and Elected Members with regard to performance improvement measures</li> <li>• Employee Appraisals</li> <li>• Draft Performance Improvement Plan to HoST and CLT</li> </ul>   |
| <b>June</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Improvement Plan to Corporate Committee and ratification by Council</li> <li>• Publish on Council website by 30 June</li> <li>• Begin Self-Assessment review of prior year's performance</li> <li>• Submit Benchmarking statistics</li> <li>• Report on Performance to June Standing Committees (Quarter 3 and 4)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>August</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NIAO Fieldwork</li> <li>• Draft Self-Assessment Report to HoST and CLT</li> </ul>  |
| <b>September</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Assessment Report to Corporate Committee and ratification by Council (includes report on Performance Improvement Plan for Quarter 3 and 4)</li> <li>• Publish Self-Assessment Report by 30 September</li> <li>• Budget Setting and Service Plan preparation</li> </ul>  |



### 3. Performance improvement objectives for 2025/26

In 2024/25 the Council set 4 Improvement Objectives for the year:

1. We will increase economic growth by attracting more business and creating jobs
2. We will improve the cleanliness and attractiveness of our borough
3. We will improve the recycling rates
4. We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing

Council's new Corporate Plan 2024-2028 was launched in 2024 setting out our Vision of *A Sustainable Borough*. To become *A Sustainable Borough*, the Corporate Plan will be driven by 3 corporate priorities: Economic, Environmental and Social. In addition, 7 outcomes and 17 strategic actions were also identified within the new Corporate Plan that will help ensure progress is made towards our goal of becoming *A Sustainable Borough*.

The annual Performance Improvement Plan is a mechanism to help deliver the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028 and therefore it is important that the objectives and measures within the annual Performance Improvement Plan align with the priorities and strategic actions set out in our new Corporate Plan.

A number of measures are carried forward from 2024/25 under each of the objectives which allows continuity and the ability to track performance on our objectives.

#### Summary Performance Improvement Objectives 2025/26

The proposed objectives for 2025/26 are:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Improvement Objective 1 | We will increase economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses   |
| Improvement Objective 2 | We will reduce carbon emissions as we transition to net zero              |
| Improvement Objective 3 | We will improve wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality |
| Improvement Objective 4 | We will be a high-performing organisation                                 |

The selection of the improvement objectives was originally informed by:

- Priorities/ strategic actions identified in the recently developed Corporate Plan 2024-28, which was based on input and feedback from Elected Members, officers, residents and stakeholders and in line with the Big Plan for Ards and North Down (2017-2032).
- Areas of improvement identified during the Budget and Service Planning process and Residents Survey conducted late 2023.
- Feedback from Focus Groups and PIP Survey held in 2024.

and has been further supplemented by information derived from:

- Feedback from Focus Groups held in 2025
- Feedback from PIP Survey in 2025.

The objectives have been developed within the context of the Council's PERFORM framework ensuring:

- There are clear links to The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032, Corporate Plan 2024-2028 and Annual Service Plans
- They are based on evidence provided by the residents of the Borough
- They are aligned to at least one of the seven aspects of improvement (see [Appendix 2](#)).

Whilst the Performance Improvement Plan focuses specifically on the key areas identified for improvement this year, we are still seeking to bring about improvement in other areas. The plan is not designed to describe all of the Council's day to day work.

The narrative and tables in the following section set out the expected improvement (Improvement Objective), how it links to Programme for Government, The Big Plan for Ards and North Down and the Corporate Plan 2024-2028. For each improvement we state:

- Why we chose it;
- What we hope to achieve;
- How we plan to do it;
- How we will measure progress;
- The Senior Responsible Owner; and
- How it aligns to the seven aspects of improvement.

| Objective 1: We will increase economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses |  |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
|--|--|----------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Link to NI Programme for Government  | Priority: Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy<br>Mission: Prosperity   |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| The Big Plan Outcome (s)   | Outcome 1: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from opportunities to fulfill their lifelong potential.<br>Outcome 4: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous and inclusive economy |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| Corporate Plan Priority  | Economic   |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| Senior Responsible Owner   | Director of Place and Prosperity   |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| 7 aspects of Improvement   | Service Effectiveness<br>✓   | Service Quality<br>✓ | Service Availability<br>✓ | Fairness | Sustainability<br>✓ | Efficiency | Innovation<br>✓ |

### Why we are focusing on this objective...

- The non-domestic (business) rate base has decreased year-on-year since 2015.
- There are 4,815 VAT/ PAYE registered businesses in Ards and North Down (AND) (2023) with 63% of these businesses with turnover over £100k and 19% with turnover over £500k. While this is above the NI average, the corresponding decrease in the non-domestic rates base suggests a need to diversify the type of businesses investing within the Borough, and the location where they set up.
- The GVA per head at current basic price was £13,327 in AND, continuing to be lowest among all NI Local Government Districts (2021).
- 23.6% of AND working age population (16-64 years) were economically inactive (2021).
- The median gross weekly earnings for AND residents working outside the Borough was £464 and only £394 for those working within the Borough, both below the NI average of £498 (2022).
- In the most recent Residents Survey completed late 2023, residents identified the top two Council priorities as: attracting jobs and investment into the local economy (1<sup>st</sup>) and ensuring annual rate increases are kept at or below inflation (2<sup>nd</sup>).

### What we hope to achieve...

- Grow the Council's non-domestic rate base.
- Develop programmes, and participate in initiatives, that help support business growth within Ards and North Down.
- Develop programmes, and work in partnership, to increase people's employability.
- Help businesses access training, knowledge, skills and innovations that will assist with the transition to low carbon.
- Maximise opportunities for people to take part in volunteering.
- Maximise the use of Council-owned assets to generate economic return for the Borough.
- Reprioritise our capital plan towards supporting a thriving, low carbon, sustainable economy.
- Develop partnerships and deliver activities that improve digital connectivity to benefit local businesses.
- Deliver a focussed Borough-wide programme of events and activities.
- Start to see delivery of the ambitions within the Belfast Regional City Deal projects.

- Invest in high-quality, low carbon, built infrastructure.
- Deliver the Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy.
- Effectively apply the policies within the Local Development Plan to make well considered and timely planning decisions.
- Achieve sustainable visitor numbers, meaning there is a balance between the number of visitors to the Borough, the capacity of local infrastructure and benefits to local people and communities.

## How we are going to do it and how will we measure progress?

Council plans to.....

| Strategic Action:   | Proposed Measures for 2025/26   | Lead Service                             |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Support the growth of key business sectors by focusing on business support, employability skills and required infrastructure</b> | Develop a capital grant scheme for vacant or derelict properties, aimed at transforming vacant properties into vibrant spaces, fostering redevelopment, boosting the local economy and increasing the non-domestic rate base. | Regeneration                             |
|   | Deliver the Strategic Capital Projects Portfolio for 2025/26 (ensuring our Capital Plan supports a thriving, low carbon, sustainable economy).  | Strategic Capital Development            |
|   | Develop a Master Plan and Outline Business Case by 31st March 2026 for the delivery of a business park at the former NIE site.  | Regeneration                             |
|   | Develop the Belfast Regeneration City Deal Waterfront development projects to Integrated Design Team stage.   | Strategic Capital Development            |
|   | Oversee the development works of Phase One to Marine Gardens and the McKee Clock Arena in keeping with the agreed Quality Specification as part of the Queen's Parade redevelopment scheme.                                   | Regeneration                             |
|   | Implement Social Value in Council Procurement Policy by 31st March 2026 to consider how the services we commission and procure can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area.                      | Strategic Transformation and Performance |
|   | Develop a strategy to secure new private sector commercial development in the Bangor Waterfront Area.   | Regeneration                             |
|   | Create a trial Social Value initiative by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026.  | Parks and Cemeteries                     |
| <b>Strategic Action: Participate in partnerships to improve connectivity (e.g. digital) across the Borough</b>                      | Implement the Mini Digi Hubs project at Comber Community Centre.  | Economic Development                     |
|   | Develop the Innovation Hub project to support the growth of the Creative and Digital Tech sectors in Film and TV production.  | Economic Development                     |

|   |   |                      |
|---|---|----------------------|
| <b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Help people maximise their lifelong potential by increasing their skills, knowledge and employability</b>        | Create 123 new jobs through the “Go Succeed” Programme (Statutory Indicator).   | Economic Development |
|   | Deliver 12 projects in 2025/26 through Labour Market Partnership Action Plan (subject to funding).                                | Economic Development |
|   | Develop a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) action plan.   | Economic Development |
|   | Support 18 businesses in 2025/26 through the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund programme.                                      | Economic Development |
| <b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Develop the culture, natural and built heritage assets of the Borough</b>  | Develop/ work up a minimum of 5 projects aligned to the City/ Town Masterplans and Village Plans.                                 | Regeneration         |
| <b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Work with businesses and communities to enhance and promote the Borough as a sustainable visitor destination</b> | Assist up to 4 groups to deliver Neighbourhood Tourism community initiatives via a pilot grant scheme.                            | Tourism              |
|   | Raise the profile of the Borough as a visitor destination by increasing the number of followers to Visit AND social media by 25%. | Tourism              |
|   | Implement a new Food standards delivery model.  | Environmental Health |



| Objective 2: We will reduce carbon emissions as we transition to net zero |   |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Link to NI Programme for Government                                       | Priority: Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy<br>Mission: Planet                                      |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| The Big Plan Outcome (s)  | Outcome 5: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from an environment that is valued, well-managed and accessible. |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| Corporate Plan Priority   | Environment   |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| Senior Responsible Owner  | Director of Environmental Services  |                      |                           |          |                     |            |                 |
| 7 aspects of Improvement  | Service Effectiveness<br>✓  | Service Quality<br>✓ | Service Availability<br>✓ | Fairness | Sustainability<br>✓ | Efficiency | Innovation<br>✓ |

### Why we are focusing on this objective...

- The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 sets a target of at least 100% reduction in net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050.
- In Ards and North Down it is predicted summer heatwaves will become more common. Winters will be warmer and wetter, and sea levels could rise by almost 20cm by 2050.
- Residents being fully committed to recycling is key to the Council delivering on its Waste Management Strategy. The most recent Resident survey completed late 2023 found that most residents stated their commitment to recycling is high (58%), however this level of commitment has fallen significantly from the figure of 67% recorded in 2021.
- The most common suggestions for Council improvement in the most recent Resident Survey completed late 2023 included: keeping areas clean and tidy, reducing litter, reducing fly tipping, street cleaning and keeping grassed areas weed free.

### What we hope to achieve...

- Baseline and reduce our carbon footprint.
- Agree a plan to transition to net zero carbon, including fleet and building emissions, and integrate it within our Roadmap to Sustainability.
- Reduce our energy consumption with a continued focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Increase the percentage of waste that is sent for recycling and reduce landfill.
- Maximise opportunities to attract external funding and build reserves to support the transition to net zero carbon that reduces the financial impact on the ratepayer.
- Increase tree planting across the Borough to meet our target of 160,000 trees planted by 2032.
- Maintain high standards of cleanliness in our city, towns and villages.
- Participate in partnerships that help tourism operators and visitors make more sustainable choices.
- Participate in partnerships that help protect our valuable natural and coastal assets to enable us to sustainably use them for recreation and climate adaption.

## How we are going to do it and how will we measure progress?

Council plans to.....

| Strategic Action:   | Proposed Measures for 2025/26   | Lead Service         |
|---|---|----------------------|
| <b>Develop and implement a fully funded plan to transition Council operations towards our long-term net zero carbon targets</b>                       | Increase % of household waste collected that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for re-use) to 60% (Statutory Indicator: 55.5%).                         | Waste and Cleansing  |
|   | Reduce the amount (tonnage) of Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings to less than 83,895 (Statutory Indicator). (Previous year's target: 85,976 tonnes). | Waste and Cleansing  |
|   | Reduce annual household waste collected per capita - 475kg.   | Waste and Cleansing  |
|   | Carry out refurbishments to Council estate according to agreed schedule.  | Assets and Property  |
|   | Increase the m2 of rewilded Council maintained ground from 120,000 to 130,000.  | Parks and Cemeteries |
|   | Plant 15,000 trees across the Borough in 2025/26.   | Parks and Cemeteries |
| <b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Promote responsible behaviours that focus on reducing carbon emissions while enabling resilience to climate change</b> | Set milestones for energy reduction in order to meet our 2030 target.   | Assets and Property  |
|   | Implement recommendations within NIPSO Report – Strengthening Our Roots: Prepare and publish a guidance document on Trees and Development in the Borough.             | Planning             |
|   | Implement the Action Plan arising from the Sustainable Energy Management Strategy.  | Assets and Property  |
|   | Develop and implement a Climate Action Plan for Council.  | Administration       |
|   | Develop a Motorhomes Strategy.  | Regulatory Services  |
|   | Put in place 36 Project ELLA delivery targets.  | Regulatory Services  |
| <b>And</b><br><br><b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Prioritising economic growth within the low carbon sector</b>  | Continue with a total number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued to a minimum of 425; targeting areas of concern to reduce issues (2024/25 Target: 425).                  | Regulatory Services  |
|   | Reduce the average CO <sub>2</sub> generated by each dwelling (tonnes based on standardised dwelling figures) (3.79 tonnes - lower figure is better).                 | Regulatory Services  |
|   | Achieve 21.5% of Borough housing stock meeting general disability standards (taking 2001 standard as baseline).   | Regulatory Services  |
|   | Develop 'Sustainable Transport at Events' Delivery Plans to maximise opportunities for visitors to attend tourism events in a sustainable manner.                     | Tourism              |

| <b>Objective 3: We will improve wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality</b> |   |                             |                                  |                      |                            |                   |                        |
|---|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Link to NI Programme for Government</b>  | <b>Priority: Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy</b><br><b>Priority: Safer Communities</b><br><b>Priority: Ending Violence Against Women and Girls</b><br><b>Mission: People, Planet</b>  |                             |                                  |                      |                            |                   |                        |
| <b>The Big Plan Outcome (s)</b>   | <b>Outcome 1: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from opportunities to fulfill their lifelong potential.</b><br><b>Outcome 2: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from being equipped to enjoy good health and wellbeing</b><br><b>Outcome 3: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure.</b> |                             |                                  |                      |                            |                   |                        |
| <b>Corporate Plan Priority</b>  | <b>Social</b>   |                             |                                  |                      |                            |                   |                        |
| <b>Senior Responsible Owner(s)</b>  | <b>Director of Community and Wellbeing</b>  |                             |                                  |                      |                            |                   |                        |
| <b>7 aspects of Improvement</b>   | <b>Service Effectiveness</b><br>✓   | <b>Service Quality</b><br>✓ | <b>Service Availability</b><br>✓ | <b>Fairness</b><br>✓ | <b>Sustainability</b><br>✓ | <b>Efficiency</b> | <b>Innovation</b><br>✓ |

### **Why we are focusing on this objective...**

- The economically inactive rate for those living with a disability in Ards and North Down in 2022 was 56.1%, a significant 47.3 percentage points higher than the economically inactive rate for those without a disability.
- 3.6 years (male) and 2.5 years (female) - the gap in life expectancy between AND residents living in deprived areas and non-deprived areas (2019-21).
- 12.2% of young people in Ards and North Down Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs).
- In the most recent Resident Survey completed late 2023, residents identified supporting businesses and residents' health and wellbeing as a top priority for Council (top 3).

### **What we hope to achieve...**

- Develop and implement a Leisure Strategy.
- Deliver our Greenways and Urban Trail Development.
- Improve the quality of our playparks and implement a Play Strategy that encourages physical activity in children and young people.
- Complete Phase 1 of the Whitespots Country Park development.
- Deliver our services to maximise environmental protection and the wellbeing of people.
- Support health and wellbeing initiatives that focus on physical activity, mental health and early intervention.
- Reduce absenteeism and increase the wellbeing of employees.
- Develop and implement interventions and programmes that help reduce anti-social behaviour, create harmonious communities and increase community resilience that focus on respecting culture and diversity.
- Provide opportunities for people to add value to their communities through the development, and local management, of community spaces.
- Use our policies to enhance relationships with community and third-party sector organisations to deliver projects with a focus on safe, connected communities and social wellbeing.
- Increase the area for growing spaces available.

- Invest in our green spaces to improve biodiversity, increase community growing opportunities and encourage responsible use.

### How are we going to do it and how will we measure progress?

Council plans to....

| Strategic Action:   | Proposed Measures for 2025/26  | Lead Service          |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| Work in partnership with statutory agencies to promote safe communities and improve good relations  | Support the implementation of the Programme for Governments Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework in the Ards and North Down Borough by implementing a Change Fund grants programme. | Community and Culture |
|   | Provide 4,700 no. participants the opportunity to have a positive learning experience using community development direct provision services.   | Community and Culture |
| Strategic Action:<br>Work in partnership with citizens to help develop and promote culture and diversity  | Provide 40 no. participants the opportunity to take part in a programme of Living History visits to places that can be perceived as contentious, followed by meaningful discussion.                        | Community and Culture |
| Strategic Action:<br>Develop sustainable communities by creating safe public spaces that encourage social interaction and help to improve wellbeing | Launch 20 no. PEACEPLUS Projects.  | Community and Culture |
|   | Support a minimum of 140 households by the social supermarket's, with a target of 50% of those households to be enabled to break the cycle of poverty and to have a positive social value outcome.         | Community and Culture |
|   | Deliver 4 no. community arts-based projects that help address areas of social need.  | Community and Culture |
|   | Deliver 3 no. group engagements with North Down Museum Adult SEND Programme.   | Community and Culture |
|   | Retain 7 no. Green Flag awards for the Borough.  | Parks and Cemeteries  |
|   | Establish 5 no. Friends Groups.  | Parks and Cemeteries  |
|   | Invest £30,000 in 'In Bloom' Projects.   | Parks and Cemeteries  |
|   | Provide annual report of progressing corporate action of 1,250sqm (0.125ha) of community growing space per 10,000 households by 2028.  | Parks and Cemeteries  |
|   | Retain 4 no. of in Bloom/ Best Kept awards.  | Parks and Cemeteries  |
|   | Increase the number of Community Projects in Parks organised from 40 to 70 (now incorporates Play Events).   | Parks and Cemeteries  |
|   | Complete 100% of monthly car park inspections to identify key issues requiring cross directorate remediation.  | Regulatory Services   |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | Achieve 100% success in Loo of the Year Awards (Gold or Platinum Award) across 5 public toilets.  | Waste and Cleansing                                    |
| <b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Improve physical and mental wellbeing for all abilities</b> | Increase the number of businesses registering for Health and Wellbeing initiatives to 24.   | Economic Development                                   |
|  | Complete a Leisure Strategy for the Borough and implement Year 1 recommendations.   | Leisure  |
|  | Maintain 4 no. QUEST Awards across leisure sites.   | Leisure  |
|  | Increase number of fitness classes delivered per week by Leisure Ards and Northern Community Leisure Trust (NCLT/Serco) from 220 (2024/25 target) to 250.           | Leisure  |
|  | Embed 5 Steps to Wellbeing into all aspects of our Service with 20 (5 internal and 15 external) focussed information sessions, activities and programmes delivered. | Parks and Cemeteries                                   |
| <b>Strategic Action:</b><br><b>Encourage active and sustainable travel</b>                 | Develop 5.4km Greenway - Floodgates to Green Road Project.  | Strategic Capital Development/<br>Parks and Cemeteries |
|  | Seek planning permission for the development of Greenway - Comber to Newtownards Project.   |  |



| Objective 4: We will be a high performing organisation |   |                      |                           |               |                     |            |                 |
|--|---|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Link to NI Programme for Government                    | <b>Priority: Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy</b><br><b>Priority: Reform and Transformation of Public Services</b><br><b>Mission: People, Planet, Prosperity</b> |                      |                           |               |                     |            |                 |
| The Big Plan Outcome (s)                               | All   |                      |                           |               |                     |            |                 |
| Corporate Plan Priority                                | Economic, Environment, Social   |                      |                           |               |                     |            |                 |
| Senior Responsible Owner                               | Director of Corporate Services  |                      |                           |               |                     |            |                 |
| 7 aspects of Improvement                               | Service Effectiveness<br>✓  | Service Quality<br>✓ | Service Availability<br>✓ | Fairness<br>✓ | Sustainability<br>✓ | Efficiency | Innovation<br>✓ |

### Why we are focusing on this objective...

- When the Council is performing at its most efficient and effectiveness, its staff, citizens, customers and residents will all benefit. Ensuring our resources (physical, human and financial) are fit-for-purpose will be fundamental to the success of the organisation and the Borough.

### What we hope to achieve...

- Implement Council's digital strategy to facilitate digital connectivity and deliver across all Council services.
- Implement a Workforce Planning Strategy that enables us to understand the capacity and capabilities required for a high performing Council.
- Implement Council's Customer Service Strategy to ensure our customers' needs are met.
- Review our organisational design to ensure our services are delivered in an effective and efficient way.
- Right size the Council's estate to have the right number of employees and buildings to work effectively.
- Invest in leadership programmes and training that creates and nurtures high performing teams/ leaders throughout the Council.
- Embed our Behaviour Charter\* and PRIDE\*\* values as part of the everyday work of our employees.
- Increase our financial resilience to safeguard the Council's long-term sustainability.
- Develop partnerships that result in shared activities and involve democratic evidence-based decision-making.
- Examples across all our service areas of mechanisms used to consult and engage with residents, businesses, visitors and other stakeholders as appropriate.

*\*The Behaviour Charter is a document for Council employees that demonstrates the Council's preferred approach and attitudes to work.*

*\*\*The PRIDE values (Progression, Respect, Integrity, Delivery and Excellence) are the core values of the Council and are embedded in everything that we do.*

## How are we going to do it and how will we measure progress?

Council plans to....

| Strategic Action:   | Proposed Measures for 2025/26   | Lead Service                             |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Deliver high-quality, cost-effective services that meet people's needs</b>   | Develop and implement an Electronic Document and Records Management System for Council.   | Strategic Transformation and Performance |
|   | Develop and implement a new Financial Management System across Council by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026.  | Finance                                  |
|   | Increase % of complaints dealt with within timescale to 100%.   | Administration                           |
|   | Carryout an independent review of Community Centres and Halls provision and operating model in Ards and North Down Borough that provides recommendations of future provision for 2026 – 2035. | Leisure                                  |
| <b>Strategic Action:<br/>Ensure that all people have equitable access to Council services</b>   | All Council policies screened for Equality, Good Relations, Sustainability, Rural Needs and Data Protection.  | Administration                           |
|   | Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan reviewed and agreed by September 2025.  | Administration                           |
| <b>Strategic Action:<br/>Attract, retain, develop and support skilled and motivated staff</b>   | Reduce days lost due to sickness per employee across the Council.   | HR and Organisational Development        |
|   | Achieve 100% uptake to Council's Apprenticeship Scheme in-year.   | HR and Organisational Development        |
| <b>Strategic Action:<br/>Proactively broaden our community, business and stakeholder engagement approach to include co-design and participation where appropriate</b> | Community planning partnerships – Facilitate/participate in at least 20 Community Planning Workstreams.   | Community Planning                       |
|   | 9 Community Centre and Halls Customer Engagement Sessions carried out.  | Community Centres and Halls              |
|   | Complete a survey to identify needs and values of the Economic Development and business support services.   | Economic Development                     |

## 4. Consultation

Our Performance Improvement Plan 2025/26 process commenced in September 2024 with the Corporate Leadership Team and Heads of Service Team being asked to identify service development/ improvement areas during the 2025/26 Service Planning and Budget process.

The Plan has been developed taking account of:

- Priorities/ strategic actions identified in the recently developed Corporate Plan 2024-28, which was based on input and feedback from Elected Members, officers, residents and stakeholders and in line with the Big Plan for Ards and North Down (2017-2032).
- Areas of improvement identified during the Budget and Service Planning process and Resident Survey conducted late 2023.
- Feedback from Focus Groups and PIP Survey in 2024.

Following approval from Corporate Leadership Team a public consultation was undertaken and included:

- 4 Focus Groups
- Online survey published on the Council's consultation platform
- Emails to all staff requesting their views on the proposed improvement objectives
- Emails to Statutory Partners seeking their views
- Promotion through the Council's social media platforms
- Local press advertisement

A summary of the results of the consultation can be found in **Appendix 3**.

## 5. Linking our improvement objectives to our available budget

Council receives income from the District Rates, specific Government Grants and charging for some of its services.

The level of rates income is the major driver determining how much financial resources the Council has to deliver its services.

Figure 1 illustrates how Council funds its 2025/26 Gross Budget.

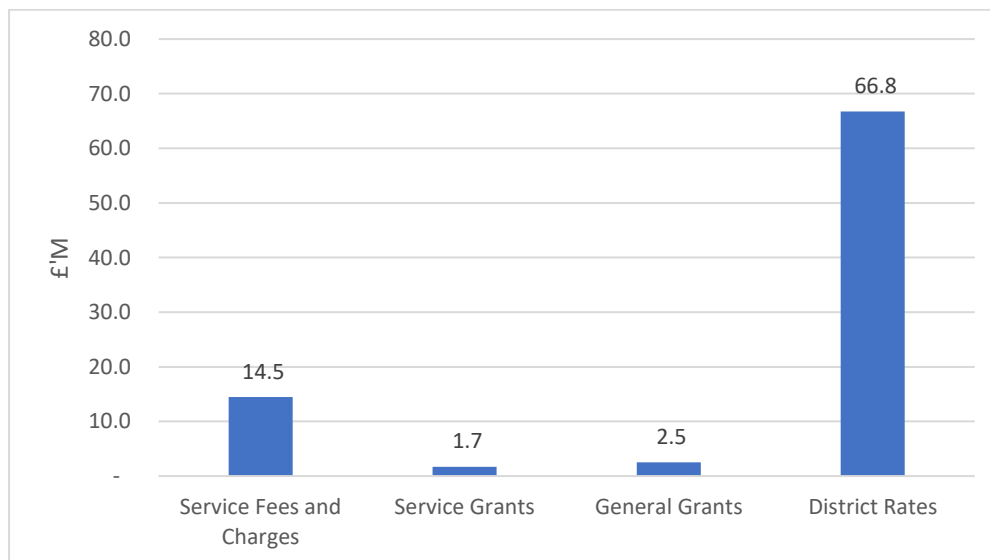


Figure 1

Table 1 sets out how we have allocated our revenue budget across our services for the 2025/26 financial year and gives the previous two years for comparison.

| <b>Gross Expenditure</b>                   |                     |                      |                      |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|  | <b>25/26 Budget</b> | <b>24/25 Outturn</b> | <b>23/24 Outturn</b> |
| <b>Service</b>                             | <b>Total</b>        | <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>Total</b>         |
| Environmental Health                       | 3,131,800           | 2,885,300            | 2,707,000            |
| Community and Culture                      | 3,766,200           | 3,930,200            | 3,659,800            |
| Parks and Cemeteries                       | 6,051,700           | 5,618,700            | 4,897,200            |
| Leisure                                    | 6,308,000           | 6,076,300            | 5,825,700            |
| Waste and Cleansing                        | 19,255,000          | 18,654,000           | 18,583,900           |
| Assets and Property                        | 10,400,600          | 10,735,600           | 9,390,400            |
| Regulatory Services                        | 2,918,400           | 2,803,800            | 2,666,600            |
| Chief Executive's Office                   | 1,666,600           | 1,510,200            | 1,896,500            |
| Economic Development                       | 1,801,000           | 2,349,400            | 2,079,800            |
| Planning                                   | 3,054,800           | 2,559,500            | 2,560,400            |
| Tourism                                    | 2,229,500           | 1,853,300            | 1,653,500            |
| Regeneration                               | 1,869,800           | 1,086,100            | 1,152,100            |
| Strategic Capital Development              | 692,700             | 439,700              | 490,900              |
| Finance & Internal Audit                   | 1,624,900           | 1,415,900            | 1,221,400            |
| Strategic Transformation & Performance     | 2,891,000           | 2,549,600            | 2,185,700            |
| Human Resources & Organisation Development | 1,515,300           | 1,345,600            | 1,115,900            |
| Administration                             | 6,087,300           | 5,369,400            | 4,755,500            |
| Capital Financing & Fund Appropriations    | 10,136,500          | 13,880,200           | 7,899,100            |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>85,401,100</b>   | <b>85,062,800</b>    | <b>74,741,400</b>    |

Table 1

A full list of the Services we provide is included within [Appendix 4](#).



## 6. Statutory and Corporate Indicators

The Council has a suite of Corporate Indicators on which it reports. This suite is made up of the Statutory Indicators as set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and a range of self-imposed (non-statutory) indicators with corresponding targets (standards) to be achieved to enable us to monitor and compare our performance.

### STATUTORY INDICATORS

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

- Inclusion within the Performance Improvement Plan, with progress being reported to the Corporate Committee half-yearly;
- Inclusion within the relevant Annual Service Plans with progress being reported half-yearly to the relevant Standing Committees; and
- Data submission to relevant Government Departments, with reports being issued to monitor the performance of each Council, outlining regional trends and comparisons.

The six statutory performance indicators and standards are set out in the following table:

| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INDICATOR   | Annual Standard          |
|--|--------------------------|
| ED1: Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity  | 123                      |
| PLANNING INDICATOR   | Annual Standard          |
| P1: Average processing time of major planning applications*  | <30 weeks                |
| P2: Average processing time of local planning applications*  | <15 weeks                |
| P3: Percentage of enforcement cases processed and concluded within 39 weeks*   | 70%                      |
| <i>*Statutory Planning targets being met are reliant on receipt of timely input from various external statutory bodies</i> |                          |
| WASTE MANAGEMENT INDICATOR <sup>1</sup>  | Annual Standard          |
| W1: Percentage of household waste collected that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for re-use).              | 60%<br>(55.5% statutory) |
| W2: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings   | <83,895 tonnes           |

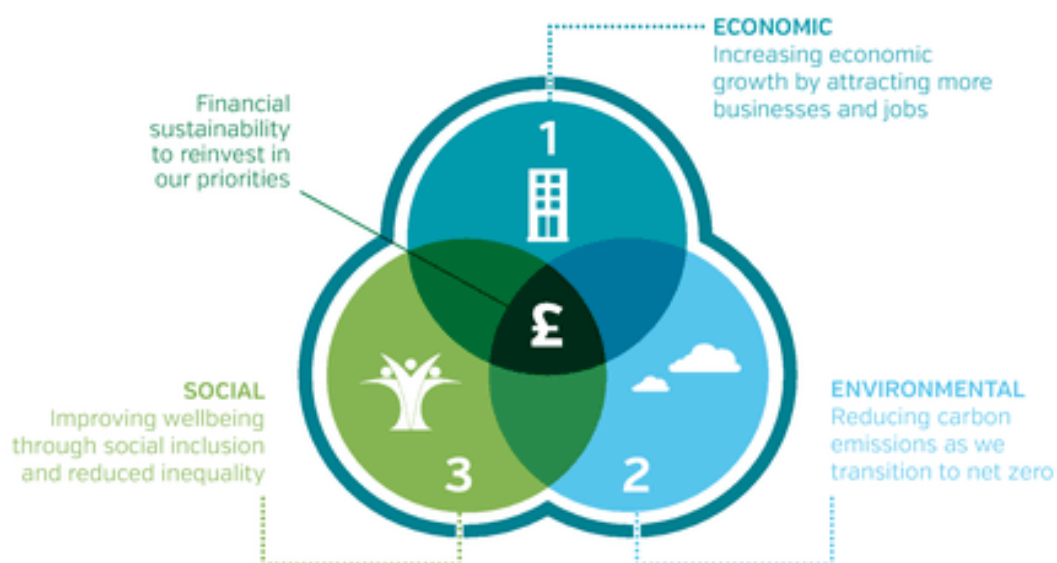
<sup>1</sup> Annual report with fully validated figures will be available from [DAERA website](#)

## SELF-IMPOSED (Corporate) INDICATORS

Performance against corporate indicators is reported half-yearly to Standing Committees for consideration before being approved by Council and will be published in our Annual Report.

| Indicator   | 2025/26 Target |
|---|----------------|
| Staff Absence                                     | 5.00%          |
| Resident Satisfaction (conducted every two years) | ≥83%           |
| Annual Prompt Payment of invoices                 |                |
| Within 10 days                                    | ≥80%           |
| Within 30 days                                    | ≥95%           |

We will continue to progress performance on the priorities, outcomes and strategic actions, set out in our [Corporate Plan 2024-2028](#), and report progress on them in the Self-Assessment Report.



## 7. Recording and reporting progress

The Improvement Objectives are delivered alongside all other Council work included in the Service Plans for 2025/26. These plans are developed for a one-year period at the beginning of each financial year and run concurrently with the Council's Improvement Plan.



Through our PERFORM framework (see Appendix 1) we will continually assess how we are doing against targets and ensure we are making a difference to our stakeholders.

Progress on delivery of our improvement objectives against performance will be monitored and reported throughout the year and are subject to the Council's usual governance arrangements: report to Corporate Committee; consideration by Standing Committee; and ratification by Council.

Each year we will publish by 30 September an assessment of the Council's performance for the previous year.

## 8. Promotion of Equality

The Improvement Plan, which reflects our responsibility to promote Equality and Good Relations, is embedded as a part of the duty to secure continuous improvement and the process of choosing its Improvement Objectives is in keeping with the Council's Equality Scheme.

Details of Equality Scheme can be found on our website at:

[Equality and Safeguarding - Ards and North Down Borough Council](#)

## 9. Your opinion matters

The Council is committed to improving its services and it is important that we listen to what the community have to say. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year and suggestions for improvement initiatives can be sent to us by emailing [yom@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:yom@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk) or writing to us at the address in section 10.

## **10. Further information**

If you would like any further information, or to request a copy of this plan please contact:

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

Email: [pim@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:pim@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0300 013 3333

## **11. Alternative formats**

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

## 12. Appendices



## Appendix 1| PERFORM Framework

### 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, 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.

## Appendix 2 | Specified aspects of improvement (as defined in Section 86 Local Government Act 2014)

**Strategic effectiveness** is key to linking the community plan (or corporate plan, in the absence of a community plan), and the ongoing processes that underpin it, with a council's improvement processes. The Department would expect that a council's community planning outcomes and objectives should be central to that council's improvement activity. In doing this, councils should be able to develop a clear narrative around their plans for improvement that will resonate with the citizens and communities that they serve.

Strategic effectiveness is likely to be a key focus for a council's performance improvement activity, and the Department acknowledges that councils will require time to build the required consensus to establish their community plans.

**Service quality, availability and fairness** all relate to service provision, by aiming to meet the needs of citizens, and ensuring fair ease of access to the most suitable services that meet their needs. Clearly, all of these objectives can be demonstrated individually, or collectively.

**Fairness** can also be demonstrated by exercising non-service functions in ways which reduce disadvantage and improve social well-being, for instance by improving citizens' access to information.

When carrying out its functions or providing services, a council may demonstrate improvement when it operates in a way that contributes towards the **sustainability** of its area. Equally, on-going **efficiency** may also be shown if fewer resources are utilised while maintaining provision of substantially similar, or better, services. Should a council choose to alter the manner by which a service is provided, and in so doing it uses fewer resources or more integrated services, it will not only be demonstrating efficiency but may demonstrate improved sustainability as well.

The **innovation** aspect is slightly different. It covers any changes to service design and delivery methods that are intended to yield improvement under any other aspect and are reasonably likely to do so. This allows councils to make changes which may not have tangible effects within the same reporting year, but are likely to in subsequent years, and still count them as improvements.

## Appendix 3 | Consultation Results

The following are the key findings from the Focus Groups and Survey. The Council wish to thank all of the participants for contributing to this.

### General views on the Council

- Most residents (97%) were happy and satisfied with the Council and with the services that they received.
- A number made positive comments on the Council magazine, recycling and how well kept the public spaces are.
- Overall, most thought that the Council was doing a good job.

### Performance Improvement Objective 1: We will increase economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses

- Residents were very supportive of the Council's plans to increase economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses (more than 9 out of 10 residents [94%] in the focus groups were very supportive or supportive).
- There was a strong desire for the Borough to be a place where people both live and work, rather than just a dormitory for larger employment centres.
- Residents saw a positive connection between economic growth and the creation of employment opportunities, particularly for young people.
- 87% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective.

### Performance Improvement Objective 2: We will reduce carbon emissions as we transition to net zero

- There was a high level of support for the Council taking action to achieve net zero (94% of the focus group participants were either very supportive or supportive).
- Many residents believed that everyone — individuals and organisations — must play their part in meeting climate targets.
- Most residents supported the Council progressing towards net zero at a steady, considered pace rather than rushing.
- Some residents welcomed the Council's intention to improve recycling rates.
- However, concerns were raised that recent changes to the recycling centre booking system and visit limits have discouraged increased recycling.
- 74% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective.

### Performance Improvement Objective 3: We will improve wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality

- Residents were unanimously supportive of this objective with all (100%) of those in the focus groups either very supportive or supportive.
- There was strong support for the Council to reduce anti-social behaviour by increasing social inclusion efforts with young people.

- Residents welcomed the inclusion of violence against women and girls as an issue to be addressed.
- It was suggested that the Council should work in partnership with specialist agencies to achieve the best outcomes on violence against women and girls.
- A number of disabled residents felt the Council should prioritise installing access ramps in public areas across the Borough.
- Disabled residents also called for action against parked cars that block disabled access.
- 90% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective

#### **Performance Improvement Objective 4: We will be a high performing organisation**

- Residents were very supportive of the Council striving to be a high-performing organisation (overall 97% of residents in the focus groups were either very supportive or supportive).
- Residents appreciated the focus on engaging with residents and stakeholders.
- Some residents felt the Council should be more open to people from the Borough, showcasing its work and engaging with residents' ideas.
- Some residents expressed interest in understanding how performance management contributes to overall high Council performance.
- 79% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective.

#### **Overall ranking Performance Improvement Objectives**

- Residents in the focus groups ranked 'increasing economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses' as the most important performance improvement objective (44%), followed by 'improving wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality' (31%), 'reducing carbon emissions as we transition to net zero' (13%), and the Council being 'a high performing organisation' (13%).
- Consultees ranked 'increasing economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses' as the most important performance improvement objective (51%) followed by 'improving wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality' (23%), the Council being 'a high performing organisation' (16%) and 'reducing carbon emissions as we transition to net zero' (10%).

#### **Other Areas for Improvement suggested by Residents**

At the end of the focus groups, residents were invited to share any further comments.

- Some residents expressed concerns about the amalgamation of North Down and Ards under the local government reform initiative.
- They felt the two areas never fully integrated and that teamwork between them appeared ineffective.
- Others, particularly long-term residents, were less concerned and felt generally content, though unsure about the reasons behind the amalgamation.
- There were concerns about a lack of transparency and limited consultation, with decisions often announced only on social media.

- Some residents felt the Council was good at starting initiatives but lacked long-term support, citing the discontinuation of free green bin bags as an example.
- Others noted that initial engagement with the Council through local groups (e.g., “Friends of” groups) faded over time, with communication ceasing and support diminishing, leading to the dissolution of some groups.

## Key Conclusions

The findings from the focus groups show that a substantial majority of residents (94% or more in all cases) are supportive of the Council’s performance improvement objectives. These findings align with the view of consultees, with majority support for each of the objectives. ‘Increasing economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses’ was considered to be the most important of the Council’s objectives, followed by ‘We will improve wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality’. Even though focus group participants ranked improving wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality as the second most important objective, 100% were supportive of the Council implementing this objective. Again, consultees prioritised ‘Increasing economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses’ and ‘improving wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality’ in the same order as the focus group participants. The consultation provides robust evidence for the Council that its strategic direction, in terms of performance improvement objectives, aligns closely with the views, expectations and priorities of residents and other stakeholders. The consultation has also provided residents with an opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of each objective and to identify other areas of focus within each of the performance improvement objectives. In further validation of the Council’s improvement objectives, the findings from both consultation elements were closely aligned.

The following table illustrates the levels of support for the Improvement Objectives.

|  |                       | FOCUS GROUP AND SURVEY CONSULTATION RESULTS |   |              |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|--------------|
|  |                       | Very supportive / Supportive                | Not very supportive / Not at all supportive | Not answered |
| Improvement Objective 1  <br>We will increase economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses   | Focus Group<br>Online | 94%<br>87%                                  | 6%<br>13%                                   | -<br>-       |
| Improvement Objective 2  <br>We will reduce carbon emissions as we transition to net zero              | Focus Group<br>Online | 94%<br>74%                                  | 6%<br>26%                                   | -<br>-       |
| Improvement Objective 3  <br>We will improve wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequality | Focus Group<br>Online | 100%<br>90%                                 | 0%<br>10%                                   | -<br>-       |
| Improvement Objective 4  <br>We will be a high-performing organisation                                 | Focus Group<br>Online | 97%<br>79%                                  | 3%<br>21%                                   | -<br>-       |

## **Appendix 4 | The services we provide**

### **Council Services**

- waste collection and disposal
- recycling and waste management
- local planning functions
- civic amenity provision
- grounds maintenance
- street cleaning
- cemeteries
- public conveniences
- food safety
- health and safety
- environmental protection
- environmental improvement
- estates management - building design and maintenance
- building control - inspection and regulation of new buildings
- dog control
- licensing, such as entertainment licensing
- enforcement byelaws such as those around litter
- sports, leisure services and recreational facilities
- parks, open spaces and playgrounds
- community centres
- community development
- arts, heritage and cultural facilities
- registration of births, deaths and marriages

### **Planning**

- local development plan functions
- development control and enforcement

### **Roads**

- off-street parking (except Park and Ride)

### **Local economic development**

- Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows
- youth entrepreneurship (such as Prince's Trust)
- social entrepreneurship
- Investing for Women

### **Local tourism**

- providing business support including business start-up advice, along with training and delivery of customer care schemes
- providing advice to developers on tourism policies and related issues

### **Heritage**

- control of alterations, extension and demolition of listed buildings
- conservation area designation and management



- listed building enforcement notices
- compensation where listed building consent has been revoked or modified
- issuing of Building Preservation Notices. This will allow a council to temporarily list a building for a period of six months pending Northern Ireland Environment Agency assessment of permanently protected status as a listed building. [This is commonly called spot-listing]
- issuing notices to require Urgent Works to preserve a building
- community listing (previously called Local Listing) of buildings of special architectural or historic interest

### Other services

- neighbourhood renewal funding relating to enterprises initiatives
- local water recreational facilities
- local sports (greater involvement of local government in local sports decisions)
- Donaghadee Harbour