

Performance Improvement Plan

2023/24



**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, Groomspoint, Helens Bay, Killinchy, Kircubbin, Lisbane, Millisle, Portaferry, Portavogie, Seahill and Whiterock. The Council has a population of 162,056 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 objectives set out in the Council's [Corporate Plan Towards 2024](#).

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 Performance Indicators, both statutory and self-imposed where relevant, 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 fulfil their lifelong potential.
- **Outcome 2:** All people in Ards and North Down enjoy good health and wellbeing.
- **Outcome 3:** All people in Ards and North Down live in communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure.
- **Outcome 4:** All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy.
- **Outcome 5:** All people in Ards and North Down feel pride as they have access to a well-managed sustainable environment.

Corporate Plan Towards 2024

Our Corporate Plan has been developed in consideration of the complex landscape in which we operate. Taking its lead from the Borough's Community Plan, the Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032, sets out Our Vision, Outcomes, Focus and Values and states how the Council will contribute towards the high-level aspirations and outcomes contained within the Community Plan and how we will measure success.

The Corporate Plan was informed through a range of sources including research undertaken by an internal project team, review of the 2018 Residents Survey, Elected Member workshops, public consultation and latterly to ensure the plan recognised the impacts of the global pandemic it was reviewed against data collected via the Big Conversation Panel - Surveys One and Two, where respondents were asked what we should prioritise and what could be done to make Ards and North Down a better place for people to live, work and socialise.

There are six PEOPLE priorities which will guide our annual business planning process and ensure that everything we do is aimed at achieving these priorities, contributes to our outcomes and ultimately realises our vision for the Borough.

The six PEOPLE priorities are illustrated in Figure 1:



Figure 1 - PEOPLE priorities

The Corporate Plan is currently under review and will be relaunched in April 2024.

Annual Service Plans

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

- detail how the organisation will deliver its services;
- 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.

Agreed by Directors and Heads of Service and adopted by the relevant standing committee, Service Plans are open to public scrutiny via the Council's [website](#).

Employee Appraisal Scheme

The Employee Appraisal Scheme (formerly Pride in Performance Conversation) 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
October – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Planning process • Identification of areas for Improvement • CLT/HoST consultation of Service Plans and key areas for improvement • Budget Planning Process • Strike the Rate • Report on Performance to Standing Committees
April – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with stakeholders • Consultation with employees • Consultation with Elected Members • Service Plans approved by Standing Committees • Pride in Performance conversations begin
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Improvement Plan to CLT, Corporate Committee and ratification by Council • Publish on Council website by 30 June¹ • Begin Self-Assessment review of prior year's performance • Submit Benchmarking statistics • Citizen Satisfaction Survey (every 3 years) • Report on Performance to Audit Committee
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIAO Fieldwork • Draft Self-Assessment Report to CLT and HoST
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Self-Assessment Report to Corporate Committee and ratification by Council • Publish Self-Assessment Report by 30 September • Pride in Performance conversations complete • Budget Setting and Service Plan preparation • Citizen Satisfaction Survey Report to CLT/HoST/Council • Report on Performance to Audit Committee

¹ As 2023 is an Election year publication date was moved to 30 September

3. Performance improvement objectives for 2023/24

Our Performance Improvement Plan for 2023/24 sets out 5 improvement objectives which have been carried forward from the improvement objectives for 2022/23. 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; for more information on those details, the Council's Service Plans can be accessed on our website [here](#).

Summary Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-24

1. We will grow the economy and create jobs
2. We will improve the cleanliness of the streets in our borough
3. We will improve recycling rates
4. We will support our business and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing
5. We will use technology to drive change

The selection of the improvement objectives for inclusion in the Improvement Plan was informed by:

- Priorities identified in the Corporate Plan Towards 2024, which was based on input from Elected Members, officers and wider consultation;
- Feedback from residents and stakeholders arising from consultation on the Corporate Plan Towards 2024;
- Outcomes identified in the Big Plan for Ards and North Down;
- Improvement initiatives identified during the Budget and Service Planning process;
- Feedback from Big Conversation Panel Surveys 1 and 2;
- Feedback from 2 Focus Groups on the Performance Improvement Plan during August 2021; and
- Resident Survey conducted early Summer 2021.

and has been further supplemented by information derived from:

- Review of Election 2024 Party Manifesto and identification of common themes
- Feedback from Focus Groups August 2023
- Feedback from PIP Survey in August 2023

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 Towards 2024 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 3](#)).

The 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 Towards 2024. 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.

Improvement Objective 1:		We will grow the economy and create jobs					
Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)		Outcome 1 We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy Outcome 6 We have more people working in better jobs Outcome 10 We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest.					
Associated Community Plan Objective Outcome 4		All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy					
Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority PROSPERITY		We will create the conditions for businesses to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable.					
Why are we focussing on this priority?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents identified this as a priority (evidence from research) AND saw an increase of 162 jobs in 2021 but had the lowest number of employee jobs across 11 councils AND has the lowest GVA per head of population in NI Almost 1 in 4 of AND working population is economically inactive There has been an increase of 2.1% in the unemployment claimant count between July 2022 and July 2023 						
What we hope 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 are we going to do it and how will we measure progress?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and deliver programmes to enhance physical and digital infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree a Technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the Queen's Parade project with Bangor Marine by September 2023 Progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme to agree a Development Agreement with Ballyholme Yacht Club by March 2024 Develop regeneration improvements in conjunction with Town Advisory Groups (TAGs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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) Commence Capital Schemes using funding from Covid Recovery Small Settlements Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence delivery of the Portaferry Public Realm by September 2023 using funding secured from the Small Settlements Grant Develop and deliver 6 projects using the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Work to optimise funding and collaborate with key partners to create and deliver innovative support initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 12 businesses through the DTFF programme Deliver NIESS which replaces previous "Go For It" and other general business support programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create 85 new jobs through "Go for it" Programme (Statutory Indicator) Create 123 new jobs through Enterprise Support Service (Statutory Indicator) Delivery 4 one-to-one mentoring sessions for Creative Industries Development Deliver and implement the Digital Strategy Action Plan Meet the Schedule 3 Planning Indicators of the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks (Statutory Indicator) Local Planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks (Statutory Indicator) 70% of planning enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks (Statutory Indicator) 						
Senior Responsible Owner(s)	Director of Place Director of Prosperity						
7 aspects of Improvement	Service Effectiveness ✓	Service Quality ✓	Service Availability ✓	Fairness	Sustainability ✓	Efficiency	Innovation ✓

Improvement Objective 2:		We will improve the cleanliness of the streets					
Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)		Outcome 2 We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment					
Associated Community Plan Objective Outcome 5		All people in Ards and North Down feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment.					
Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority ENVIRONMENT		We will grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our towns, villages, countryside, and coast.					
Why are we focussing on this priority?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% of households in the Borough are concerned for the environment (71% across NI, NISRA CHS, 2019²) The most common suggestions for Council improvement included: dog fouling and improved street cleansing in our Resident Survey conducted June 2021 and feedback from the Performance Improvement Plan Consultation Focus Groups 2022. The Live Here Love Here Cleanliness Index Score for AND has been static since 2019/20 at 73 						
What we hope 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 towns, villages, countryside and coast 						
How are we going to do it and how will be measure progress?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target identified problem areas for enhanced enforcement and street cleansing activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase LEAMS Cleanliness Index Score to 80 Regain top 3 position for Fixed Penalty Enforcement in NI Increase new maximum fine levels for fouling and litter in 2023 Deliver "Live Here Love Here (LHLH)" grants through Recycling Investment Fund (RCIF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver £25k grant funding by March 2024 						
Senior Responsible Owner(s)	Director of Environment						
7 aspects of Improvement	Service Effectiveness	Service Quality	Service Availability	Fairness	Sustainability	Efficiency	Innovation
	✓	✓	✓		✓		

² Latest available data.

Improvement Objective 3:		We will improve the Borough's recycling rates					
Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)		Outcome 2 We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment					
Associated Community Plan Objective Outcome 5		All people in Ards and North Down feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment.					
Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority ENVIRONMENT		We will grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our towns, villages, countryside, and coast.					
Why are we focussing on this priority?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% of households in the Borough are concerned for the environment (71% across NI, NISRA CHS, 2019³) £4.3 million paid in landfill costs 2022/23 an increase of 1% on the previous year. 						
What we hope 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, incl. our towns, villages, countryside and coast 						
How are we going to do it and how will be measure progress?	<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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the tonnage of municipal solid waste sent to landfill to 35,000 Improve the Council's overall re-use, recycling and recovery rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase % of household waste recycled, reused and composted to 60% Reduce biodegradable waste that is diverted from landfill (2022/23 17,124⁴) Add kerbside textiles collection to glass collection service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce kerbside collection of textiles by October 2023 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Environmental, Learning, Lifestyle, Action (ELLA) Project by June 2023 Rollout ELLA Project to schools September 2023 						
Senior Responsible Owner(s)	Director of Environment						
7 aspects of Improvement	Service Effectiveness	Service Quality	Service Availability	Fairness	Sustainability	Efficiency	Innovation
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

³ Latest available data

⁴ Unverified figure – 2022/23 annual reports will be published late November/early December 2023.

Improvement Objective 4:		We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing.					
Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)		Outcome 4 We enjoy long, healthy, active lives.					
Associated Community Plan Objective Outcome 2		All people in Ards and North Down enjoy good health and wellbeing					
Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority LIFE		We will support the physical and emotional wellbeing of our residents through our services, facilities, and partnerships.					
Why are we focussing on this priority?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents have identified improving health and wellbeing as a priority (research evidence⁵) 						
What we hope 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 are we going to do it and how will we measure progress?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional resources for community health and wellbeing and support utilising existing budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of business employees registering for Health and Wellbeing initiatives to 24 Host an allergen awareness seminar for all catering businesses within the Borough by March 2024 Work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council and Borough with Officer and Elected Member champions (By March 2024) 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) Increase the % of people who complete the GP referral programme across all leisure sites to 30% Increase the number of Fitness Classes per Week delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 250 Increase Active Aging Memberships across Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco sites to 400 Increase numbers enrolled in Swim programmes delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 3500 Support a more sustainable solution to food poverty by supporting 2 Social Supermarkets within the Borough (by March 2024) Increase the numbers engaging with Museum/Heritage Education Services by March 2024 Increase number of creative class programme sessions delivered to 70 sessions 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant 15,000 trees across the Borough Retain the Borough's 5 Green Flag awards Increase the m2 of rewilded Council maintained ground to 90,000 30 Community Gardening projects organised 100% condition surveys carried out according to schedule 						
Senior Responsible Owner(s)	Director of Community, Health and Wellbeing Director of Environment						
7 aspects of Improvement	Service Effectiveness ✓	Service Quality ✓	Service Availability ✓	Fairness ✓	Sustainability ✓	Efficiency	Innovation ✓

⁵ Residents' Survey 2021 and feedback from Performance Improvement Plan consultation 2022

Improvement Objective 5:		We will use technology to drive change.					
Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority EXCELLENCE		We will work to be a high-performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference for our Borough					
Why are we focussing on this priority?	Council recognise that to be a high-performing organisation it needs to change how it operates. Council has developed a Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme which will help deliver improved services and achieve efficiencies. These efficiencies don't just mean reducing spend but are about delivering better outcomes for residents and using the funds it has at its disposal in the best way possible.						
What we hope 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 are we going to do it and how will we measure progress?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and Publish Customer Service Excellence Strategy and Action Plan for 2020-2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieve a 75% rate of resolution of issues or enquiries at first point of contact in Customer Service • Develop proposals for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launch digital customer engagement platform to improve stakeholder and resident engagement by December 2023 • Develop a Digital Transformation Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategy developed by March 2024 						
Senior Responsible Owner(s)	Chief Executive Director of Corporate Services						
7 aspects of Improvement	Service Effectiveness ✓	Service Quality ✓	Service Availability ✓	Fairness ✓	Sustainability	Efficiency ✓	Innovation ✓

4. Consultation

Our Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24 process commenced in September 2022 with the Corporate Leadership Team and Heads of Service Team being asked to identify service development/improvement areas during the 2023/24 Service Planning and Budget process.

The draft plan has been developed taking account of:

- The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032
- Corporate Plan Towards 2024
- Big Conversation Panel Surveys 1 and 2 where we asked what the public sector should prioritise to support Covid recovery and what improvements could be made to create a better Ards and North Down. There were 717 responses to the surveys with 266 giving us their opinion on what should be prioritised to help recovery and 300 offering their views on what could create a better AND.
- Age Friendly Surveys which were carried out during the latter part of 2020. There were 455 responses gathered through Zoom Focus Groups and telephone interviews.
- Residents' Survey (RS) that was carried out in June 2021 and identified the key priority areas of Prosperity (jobs and the economy), Life (health and wellbeing) and Excellence (improving Council performance) for Council. The RS was based on a representative sample of 406 residents and was conducted by telephone in accordance with the ISO20252 Standard.
- A review of Election 2024 Party Manifesto and identification of common themes.

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

- 4 online 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 platform
- Local press advertisement

Results of the consultation can be found in Appendix 2 A more in-depth analysis of the survey will be published on the Council's CitizenSpace Survey platform.

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 2 illustrates how Council funds its £75.2m budget.

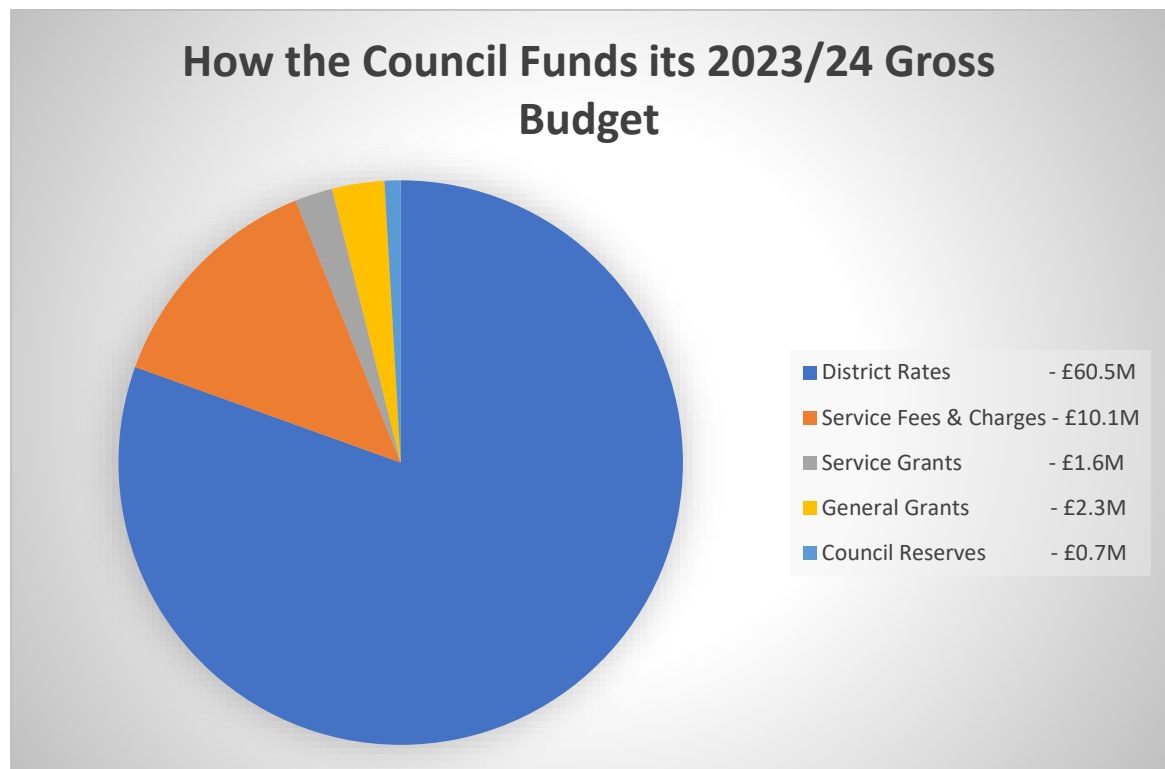


Figure 2

Table 1 sets out how we have allocated our revenue budget across our services for the 2023/24 financial year and gives the previous two years for comparison.

		2023/24	2022/23	2021-22
		Gross Expenditure Budget	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn
		£	£	£
110	Environmental Health	2,933,000	2,710,100	2,297,440
120	Community and Culture	3,476,900	3,382,300	3,105,180
140	Parks and Cemeteries	4,912,400	4,794,400	3,723,941
150	Leisure	5,871,600	6,129,000	5,748,116
210	Waste and Cleansing Services	18,003,300	17,768,300	16,347,137
220	Assets and Property Services	11,080,800	9,359,800	7,210,904
230	Regulatory Services	2,781,500	2,701,500	2,396,802
600	Chief Executive's Office	1,928,100	1,547,000	1,239,644
720	Economic Development	1,849,500	2,107,300	1,504,252
730	Planning	2,704,700	2,432,600	2,592,826
740	Tourism	1,625,300	1,833,000	1,434,404
810	Regeneration	1,291,500	1,219,400	936,640
820	Strategic Capital Development	424,000	394,500	339,731
1020	Finance & Internal Audit	1,234,800	1,147,600	1,089,851
1030	Strategic Transformation and Performance	2,011,100	1,973,500	1,958,224
1040	HR & OD	1,127,100	1,159,200	983,033
1050	Administration	4,131,300	4,663,200	3,783,314
910	Capital Financing	7,866,800	8,164,600	8,041,738
		75,253,700	73,487,300	64,733,177

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

The seven 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	85
Indicator awaiting Ministerial approval: 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%
WASTE MANAGEMENT INDICATOR ⁶	Annual Standard
W1: Percentage of household waste collected by the district council that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for re-use)	55% by 2025
W2: The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority collected municipal waste that is landfilled	<17,124 tonnes (unvalidated)
W3: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings	<85,976 tonnes (unvalidated)

⁶ Annual report with fully validated figures for 2022/23 is scheduled to be published in November 2023 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	2023/24 Target
Staff Absence	7.00%
Resident Satisfaction (conducted biennially)	≥83%
Net Cost per head of population	£397.80
Annual Prompt Payment of invoices	
Within 10 days	≥80%
Within 30 days	≥95%
Outside 30 days	<5%

We will continue to progress performance on the following indicators, set out in our Corporate Plan Towards 2024, and report progress on them in the Self-Assessment Report.

PROSPERITY	£m investment delivered Number of businesses supported Number of jobs created from the “Start a Business” programme Higher business occupancy rates £ increase in visitor economy
ENVIRONMENT	Waste and recycling tonnages Cleanliness score £s investment Environmental accreditations
OPPORTUNITY	Number of Council work placement schemes £s invested through Sports Forum Awards % increase in participation in Active Ageing programmes Number of skills programmes delivered
PRIDE	Number of people volunteering on Council programmes Number of interventions through the Anti-social Behaviour team Number of Environmental improvements
LIFE	Number of active leisure memberships Numbers attending wellbeing programmes funded by Council £s invested in maintaining public spaces
EXCELLENCE	Investors in People accreditation status Number of complaints % transactions made through self-service channels Income sourced per head of population % payments to suppliers within 10 days Cost per head of population % Resident satisfaction % staff reporting ANDBC is a great place to work

7. Recording and reporting progress

The Improvement Objectives are delivered alongside all other Council work included in the Service Plans for 2023/24. 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 4) 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 Audit 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 <http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/about-the-council/equality>

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 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:

Performance Improvement Unit
Ards and North Down Borough Council
City Hall
The Castle
BANGOR
BT20 4BT

Email: 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 Performance Improvement Unit.

12. Appendix

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. The first plan produced will be considered an interim plan and will be for a shorter time span. The interim plan should be reviewed within two years of publication.



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

Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) 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 | 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.

Performance Improvement Objective 1: Grow the Economy and Create Jobs

- The majority (88%) in the groups agreed that growing the economy and creating jobs is an important performance improvement objective for the Council to be focusing on. Those who did not agree were of the view that residents of Bangor and Newtownards often see Belfast as their place of employment and, therefore, job creation in Belfast is more important to them than job creation in the Borough.
- Among the different actions to deliver the objective of growing the economy and creating more jobs, manage and deliver programmes to enhance physical and digital infrastructure was identified as the most important (59%), followed by develop regeneration improvements in conjunction with Town Advisory Groups (TAGs) plans (13%).
- 75% of residents in the focus groups were supportive of this objective, with 25% unsupportive.
- 86% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective, with 15% unsupportive.

Performance Improvement Objective 2: Improve the cleanliness of the streets

- All but one of the 32 residents (99%) agreed that improving the cleanliness of the streets in the Borough is an important performance improvement objective for the Council to be focusing on.
- The majority of residents (84%) in the focus groups said that targeting identified problem areas for enhanced enforcement and street cleansing activities was most important.
- All residents in the focus groups were supportive of this objective.
- 90% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective, with 10% unsupportive.

Performance Improvement Objective 3: Improve the recycling rates

- All residents in the focus groups were supportive of this performance improvement objective.
- All residents in the focus groups said this is an important objective for the Council, with 94% (n=15) saying the most important objective is a new communications campaign to highlight and reinforce all recycling services currently provided by the Council.
- 89% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective, 4% were unsupportive and 7% did not provide a response.

Performance Improvement Objective 4: Support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing

- All residents in the focus groups were supportive of this performance improvement objective.
- All residents in the focus groups said this is an important objective for the Council with all residents supportive of the actions to meet this objective. A majority (63%, n=10) of residents said that providing additional resources for community health and wellbeing and support utilising existing budgets is the most important action, with relatively fewer residents saying each of the other actions is most important.
- 91% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective, with 9% unsupportive.

Performance Improvement Objective 5: Use technology to drive change

- All residents in the focus groups were supportive of this performance improvement objective.
- All residents in the focus groups said this is an important objective for the Council with all residents supportive of the actions to meet this objective. Fourteen of the 16 residents (89%) in the groups identified developing proposals for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents as the most important of the Council's proposed actions to use technology to drive change.
- 89% of consultees in the Council's survey were supportive of this objective, with 11% unsupportive.

Most Important Performance Improvement Objective

- Residents in the focus groups most commonly said that growing the economy and creating jobs is the most important performance improvement objective (n=6, 38%), with similar numbers (n=4, 25%) saying that supporting businesses and residents to protect and improve their health, and improving the cleanliness of streets, are most important.
- 38% of residents in the survey said that supporting businesses and residents to protect and improve their health is the most important performance improvement objective, with a similar number (37%) saying that growing the economy and creating jobs is most important.

Key Conclusions

The findings from both the focus groups and the survey are consistent, with the overwhelming majority of residents supportive of the Council's performance improvement objectives.

In terms of priorities for residents, the findings from the focus groups and the survey were closely aligned, with growing the economy and supporting businesses and residents to protect and improve their health, the top ranked objectives.

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. Furthermore, the consultation has also provided residents and other stakeholders with an opportunity to identify other areas of focus within each of the performance improvement objectives. The detailed feedback from residents and other stakeholders will further support the Council in delivering on its overall performance improvement plan.

		FOCUS GROUP AND SURVEY CONSULTATION RESULTS		
		Very supportive / Supportive	Not very supportive / Not at all supportive	Not answered
Improvement Objective 1 We will grow the economy and create jobs	Focus Group Online	75% 86%	25% 15%	
Improvement Objective 2 We will improve the cleanliness of the streets in our borough	Focus Group Online	99% 90%	1% 10%	
Improvement Objective 3 We will improve the recycling rates	Focus Group Online	100% 83%	- 17%	
Improvement Objective 4 We will support our business and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing	Focus Group Online	91% 91%	9% 7%	2%
Improvement Objective 5 We will use technology to drive change	Focus Group Online	56% 78%	44% 20%	2%

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

Appendix 3 | 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. Therefore, during 2015-16, a council may select strategic objectives as performance objectives even if its community plan has not been agreed – these objectives will be part of the council's corporate plan, as noted above.

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 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