

# Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Consultation on the  
draft Performance Improvement  
Objectives 2025-26



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

## Our Duty of Improvement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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







## Our Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

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

These objectives have been selected based on the following criteria:

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

### Legend:

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

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

## Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down

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

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

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

### Our Outcomes

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











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

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

### Council Mission Statement

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

### Council Strategic Objectives

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

## Your voice, your choice!

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

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

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



















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

[www.newrymournedown.org/consultations](http://www.newrymournedown.org/consultations)

Alternatively, if you prefer to provide comments in person, please contact us on:  
Tel: 0330 137 4000  
Email: [performance@nmandd.org](mailto:performance@nmandd.org)

**The closing date for responses is: 09 May 2025.**

## Performance Improvement Objective 1

| We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving leisure facilities and services |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Why this matters</b>   | <p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the top priorities for improving your local area was 'Improving people's health and wellbeing (and reducing health inequalities)</li> <li>• 17% of our residents are not active for a single day each week.</li> <li>• The third most important health and wellbeing opportunity you would like to see more of was 'physical activity opportunities such as leisure centres, gyms and sports facilities'</li> <li>• Between 2018 and 2022 there has been an increase in the number of residents satisfied with the leisure centres across the District, however residents did comment on issues such as the need for modernisation and improving cleanliness</li> <li>• 76% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey agreed with this objective</li> </ul> <p>We know that keeping fit and active can help improve a person's health and wellbeing both physically and mentally and the provision of leisure facilities is key to achieving this. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council plays a key role in helping local communities to live long and healthy lives. The Council remains committed to promoting physical, mental and emotional well-being and encouraging residents to make healthy and informed lifestyle choices and as part of this we need to always be striving to improve our leisure facilities and offerings.</p>  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
| <b>Looking Back:</b><br>What we did between April - September 2024                                    | <table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>334,564 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Recorded 155,659 recorded visits across a total of 10 community trails.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>9,608 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>8 Projects being progressed at different stages for Donard Park, Dundrum, Kilkeel Leisure Centre, Jennings Park &amp; Dunleath</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>9,388 attendances recorded of people taking part in targeted health programmes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>9,153 attendances recorded of young people participating in youth health and wellbeing initiatives</td> </tr> </table> |  | 334,564 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities |  | Recorded 155,659 recorded visits across a total of 10 community trails. |  | 9,608 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities |  | 8 Projects being progressed at different stages for Donard Park, Dundrum, Kilkeel Leisure Centre, Jennings Park & Dunleath |  | 9,388 attendances recorded of people taking part in targeted health programmes |  | 9,153 attendances recorded of young people participating in youth health and wellbeing initiatives |
|                    | 334,564 paid attendances across the 6 leisure facilities   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|                    | Recorded 155,659 recorded visits across a total of 10 community trails.  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|                    | 9,608 memberships across the indoor leisure facilities   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|                    | 8 Projects being progressed at different stages for Donard Park, Dundrum, Kilkeel Leisure Centre, Jennings Park & Dunleath   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|                    | 9,388 attendances recorded of people taking part in targeted health programmes   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|                    | 9,153 attendances recorded of young people participating in youth health and wellbeing initiatives   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |
| <b>Looking Forward:</b> What we will do in 2025-26  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of paid attendances at indoor leisure facilities.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver a range of targeted, sustainable health programmes to encourage participation in physical activity.</li> <li>• Progress the leisure projects agreed within the Capital Programme</li> <li>• Provide funding through financial assistance for capital projects for sports clubs.</li> </ul>   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |

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



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

## Performance Improvement Objective 2

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

#### Why this matters

You told us that:

- 'Improving skills, employability and job prospects' was your top priority for improving the local area in the 2022 residents survey
- 'Supporting local businesses, attracting investment and jobs' is in your top three priorities for improvement
- Investment to grow the economy, create jobs and attract tourists is the most important form of investment
- 71% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey agreed with this objective

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

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

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

Council is leading on the implementation of a new DfE initiative for the establishment of Local Economic Partnership's which will deliver £4.5 Million of investment over a 3-year period, into initiatives that drive the creation of good jobs, productivity growth, sustainability and decarbonisation.

#### Looking Back:

What we did between April-September 2024
















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



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


















179 existing businesses supported to progress growth and scaling ambitions

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

|                                |  |                 |                      |            |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------|----------------------|------------|
| <b>Alignment</b>               |  |                 |                      |            |
| Corporate Plan 2024-27         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the continued growth and development of our local economy</li> </ul>          |                 |                      |            |
| Community Plan                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All people from Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities</li> </ul> |                 |                      |            |
| Draft Programme for Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy</li> </ul>                        |                 |                      |            |
| 7 aspects of improvement       | Strategic effectiveness  | Service quality | Service availability | Innovation |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>     | <b>Director: Economy, Regeneration and Tourism</b>   |                 |                      |            |

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

## Performance Improvement Objective 3
















| <b>We will improve the cleanliness of our District by continuing to promote recycling and addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents</b> |   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Why this matters</b>   | <p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog mess and dog fouling and rubbish or litter lying around are your top two perceived problems in your local area</li> <li>• 6% of the residents surveyed were dissatisfied with the cleansing service provided by the Council.</li> <li>• 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure.</li> <li>• 80% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey agreed with this objective</li> </ul> <p>Issues around street cleanliness continue to escalate largely as a result of the increased number of illicit dumping, littering and dog fouling incidents reported to the Council.</p> <p>To improve the overall cleanliness of the District, the Council is currently reviewing cleansing operations to design a more effective model of service provision. The Council also remains committed to collaborating with partner organisations and local communities to promote responsible dog ownership, address issues around littering and illicit dumping and generate local pride in having a cleaner, greener District for everyone to enjoy.</p> |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Looking Back:</b><br>What we did between April-September 2024  | <table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Issued 12 fixed penalty notices, 10 of which were paid</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Supported 100% of all 12 community clean up requests received</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>15 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Decrease in the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Increase in the rate of recycling, to 52.5%</td> </tr> </table>   |  | Issued 12 fixed penalty notices, 10 of which were paid |  | Supported 100% of all 12 community clean up requests received |  | 15 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme |  | Decrease in the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill |  | Increase in the rate of recycling, to 52.5% |
|    | Issued 12 fixed penalty notices, 10 of which were paid  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
|    | Supported 100% of all 12 community clean up requests received   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
|    | 15 environmental projects funded through the NI 'Live Here Love Here' Scheme  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
|    | Decrease in the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
|    | Increase in the rate of recycling, to 52.5%   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Looking Forward:</b> What we will do in 2025-26  | <p>Address issues around recycling, littering, illicit dumping and dog fouling by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to implement the Enforcement Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Promoting responsible dog ownership through publicity and social media campaigns</li> <li>• Encouraging residents to bring properly sorted surplus recyclable waste to our Household Recycling Centres</li> <li>• Supporting local community clean ups</li> <li>• Continued implementation of a Paint Re-Use Scheme at a further 2 Household Recycling Centres</li> <li>• Exploring options to determine levels of street cleanliness and identify emerging issues and hotspots</li> <li>• Rollout an environmental awareness campaign displayed on Council fleet highlighting simple messages on recycling, littering and dog fouling</li> </ul> <p>Work in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to:</p>   |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |





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

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

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

## Performance Improvement Objective 4













| <b>We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change.</b> |  |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Why this matters</b>   | <p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing waste, reducing climate change, investing in renewable energy etc. was important to you.</li> <li>• Green technology skills were the second most important training support needed to improve the growth of resident employability.</li> <li>• 91% of residents said recycling is important to them, an increase of 5% on the 2018 residents survey figure.</li> <li>• 81% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey agreed with this objective</li> </ul> <p>Our climate is changing, and we need to prepare. Greenhouse gas emissions cause the Earth’s atmosphere to hold more radiation from the sun which increases the overall temperature of the planet. This change in temperature is altering our climate and causing one of the greatest threats of our time. In October 2019 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council declared a ‘Climate Emergency’.</p> <p>NMDDC is acutely aware of how intrinsic sustainability and care of our district is to its future. Within our new Council structure, a Sustainability Department has been created. This is led by a dedicated Assistant Director with responsibility for issues such as Energy, Council Fleet, Facilities Maintenance and Biodiversity.</p> <p>Environmental sustainability has become a key objective in the development of our capital projects, providing economic growth for the region in an inclusive and sustainable way. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council aims to embed the ethos of sustainability throughout its operations and to provide leadership for the community.</p> <p>The Council also forms part of the Local Government Climate Action Network which is helping to deliver the NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme. This network will enable us to collaborate with other Councils and relevant statutory partners to develop a strategic approach for climate action.</p> |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Looking Back:</b><br>What we did between April-September 2024                                | <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Continued to implement the Fleet Replacement Programme</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Planted 34 trees across the District</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Progressed the development of a Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategy</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Progressed the development of a Biodiversity Strategy</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Continued the development of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>  |  | Continued to implement the Fleet Replacement Programme |  | Planted 34 trees across the District |  | Progressed the development of a Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategy |  | Progressed the development of a Biodiversity Strategy |  | Continued the development of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan |
|              | Continued to implement the Fleet Replacement Programme   |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|              | Planted 34 trees across the District   |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|              | Progressed the development of a Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategy  |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|              | Progressed the development of a Biodiversity Strategy  |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|              | Continued the development of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan  |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Looking Forward:</b> What  | <p>Address issues around climate change and sustainability by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing the draft Sustainability and Climate Change strategy ready for consultation, review, approval and then publication.</li> </ul>  |   |  |   |                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |







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



|                                |  |            |            |                |
|--------------------------------|--|------------|------------|----------------|
| Draft Programme for Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment</li> </ul> |            |            |                |
| 7 aspects of improvement       | Strategic Effectiveness  | Efficiency | Innovation | Sustainability |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>     | <b>Director: Sustainability and Environment</b>  |            |            |                |

## Performance Improvement Objective 5

| <b>We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme</b> |   |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Why this matters</b>   | <p>Delivering a more efficient and effective Planning Service for customers is a key priority for improvement for the Council. Planning plays a significant role in promoting sustainable development, regeneration, economic prosperity, investment and job creation for present and future generations of our District. 88% of respondents to our 2024-25 survey also agreed with this objective.</p> <p>The new portal, which launched in December 2022, allowing customers to submit applications online and track live planning applications, is now fully operational and amendments and changes remain ongoing as per agreed structures.</p> <p>Work continues on the Planning Improvement Programme and following discussions with SOLACE and DFI, the programme will be reviewed and updated during 2025-26 to be more reflective of the challenges currently facing planning across NI.</p> <p>Staff retention and recruitment remains challenging with vacancies remaining in the planning team across all functions as per agreed structures. Recruitment remains ongoing. This has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on targets and performance. This remains a priority for Council and Senior Management with ongoing review and monitoring.</p> <p>The Council has not yet achieved the statutory standards for 2024-25 but remain committed to delivering further improvements and providing a high-quality service to all customers.</p> |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
| <b>Looking Back:</b><br>What we did between April-September 2024  | <table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Opened 144 enforcement cases which was the second highest across all the Councils</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Average processing time of 44.2 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 18.8 weeks</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Average processing time of 73.5 weeks for major planning applications, which is less than the regional average of 42.0 weeks. This signifies an improvement of 393.5 weeks since the same period last year</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td>Received 561 local planning applications, which is the third highest across Northern Ireland and accounts for 12% of all the applications received regionally.</td> </tr> </table>  |  | Opened 144 enforcement cases which was the second highest across all the Councils |  | Average processing time of 44.2 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 18.8 weeks |  | Average processing time of 73.5 weeks for major planning applications, which is less than the regional average of 42.0 weeks. This signifies an improvement of 393.5 weeks since the same period last year |  | Received 561 local planning applications, which is the third highest across Northern Ireland and accounts for 12% of all the applications received regionally. |
|    | Opened 144 enforcement cases which was the second highest across all the Councils   |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|    | Average processing time of 44.2 weeks for local planning applications, which is above the regional average of 18.8 weeks  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|    | Average processing time of 73.5 weeks for major planning applications, which is less than the regional average of 42.0 weeks. This signifies an improvement of 393.5 weeks since the same period last year  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|    | Received 561 local planning applications, which is the third highest across Northern Ireland and accounts for 12% of all the applications received regionally.  |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
| <b>Looking Forward:</b><br>What we will do in 2025-26   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of live planning applications and enforcement cases which have been in the system for over 12 months.</li> <li>• Ongoing work with agents and architects to improve the standard of planning applications submitted.</li> <li>• Support employees to deliver service improvements through ongoing training, capacity building and 'planning surgeries'.</li> <li>• Launch the Draft plan Strategy by Q2 2025-26</li> </ul>   |   |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |

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

\*Annual planning figures will be validated by the Department for Infrastructure and published through the Annual Report 2024-25.

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

## Strategic Alignment

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

## Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2025-26

|                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| <b>I am responding:</b> | as an individual                            |  |
|                         | on behalf of an organisation (please state) |  |

### Question 1

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

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

If other, please provide further information below.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

### Question 2

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

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

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

### Question 3

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

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

### Question 4

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

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

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

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

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

**Email:** [performance@nmandd.org](mailto:performance@nmandd.org)

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

**Telephone:** 0330 137 4000

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

**We look forward to hearing from you.**